

**A meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee will be held on Tuesday 14 September at 3pm.**

**Members may attend the meeting in person or via remote online access. Webex joining details will be sent to Members and Officers prior to the meeting. Members are requested to notify Committee Services by 12 noon on Monday 13 September how they intend to access the meeting.**

**In the event of connectivity issues, Members are asked to use the *join by phone* number in the Webex invitation.**

**Please note that this meeting will be recorded for internal administrative use only.**

ANNE SINCLAIR  
Interim Head of Legal Services

**BUSINESS**

**\*\* Copy to follow**

1. <b>Apologies, Substitutions and Declarations of Interest</b>	<b>Page</b>
<b>PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT</b>	
2. <b>COVID-19 Update with Recovery Plans</b> ** Report by Interim Service Director Environment & Economic Recovery	<b>p</b>
3. <b>Finance Services Performance Report</b> Report by Interim Service Director, Corporate Services & Organisational Recovery	<b>p</b>
4. <b>Corporate Policy and Performance Update Report</b> Report by Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development	<b>p</b>
5. <b>Revenue Budget Updates</b> Report by Chief Executive, Interim Service Director, Corporate Services & Organisational Recovery and Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development	<b>p</b>
6. <b>Policy &amp; Resources Capital Budget and 2021/24 Capital Programme</b> Report by Chief Financial Officer	<b>p</b>
<b>NEW BUSINESS</b>	
7. <b>Supporting Alcohol, Substance Use and Gambling Concerns in the Workplace Policy</b> Report by Head of Organisational Development, Policy & Communications	<b>p</b>

8.	<b>Review of the Effectiveness of the Long Term Empty Homes Council Tax Policy</b> Report by Interim Service Director Corporate Services & Organisational Recovery	<b>p</b>
9.	<b>Members' Services Review</b> Report by Interim Head of Legal Services	<b>p</b>
10.	<b>NRS Mid-2020 Population Estimates, Scotland</b> Report by Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development	<b>p</b>
11. **	<b>HM The Queen Platinum Jubilee 2022</b> Report by Head of Organisational Development, Policy & Communications	<b>p</b>

The reports are available publicly on the Council's website and the minute of the meeting will be submitted to the next standing meeting of the Inverclyde Council. The agenda for the meeting of the Inverclyde Council will be available publicly on the Council's website.

Enquiries to – **Colin MacDonald** – Tel 01475 712113

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<b>Report To:</b>	<b>Policy &amp; Resources Committee</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>14 September,2021</b>
<b>Report By:</b>	<b>Interim Service Director of Corporate Services &amp; Organisational Recovery</b>	<b>Report No:</b>	<b>FIN/51/21/AP/LA</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Alan Puckrin</b>	<b>Contact No:</b>	<b>01475 712223</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Finance Services Performance Report</b>		

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## 1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide updates to Committee regarding a number of service and finance related matters and to seek Committee decisions as appropriate.

## 2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 Revenues & Customer Services and ICT like many Council teams have faced unprecedented pressures during the Covid period with vital financial support being provided to the business community, payments to the vulnerable and those self-isolating and ICT support to employees, pupils and partners at the same time as trying to maintain core tasks much of this whilst operating remotely. The Accountancy team have continued to support services with budget management despite the large volume of new funding streams allocated often at short notice.
- 2.2 The Revenues & Benefits Team have delivered higher numbers of Scottish Welfare Fund and Discretionary Housing Payments throughout the Covid period but eligibility criteria and award levels are under constant review to ensure that budgets are not exceeded now that Scottish Government grant funding is returning to nearer pre-pandemic levels.
- 2.3 Some significant changes in the administration of social security benefits are planned/in progress and updates are included in section 5 of the report regarding developments in respect of the Child Payment, Child Disability Payment, Adult Disability Payment and Pension Age Disability Payment including a review of information protocols and processes.
- 2.4 Time limited Covid Funds have been used to provide support to families with the costs of meals over the School Holidays since the summer of 2020. The Scottish Government have announced the intention to continue this initiative and implement a Scottish Child Payment - Bridging Payment. Decisions are required from Committee regarding the scope of entitlement to these payments within Inverclyde given the locally enhanced eligibility criteria for Free School Meals and Clothing Grants. It is proposed at this stage that the Committee confirm the treatment for 2021/22 with future years addressed as part of the 2022/23 Budget. Section 6 provides more details.
- 2.5 Each year officers provide a report on the previous year's Debt Recovery Partnership performance. The 2020/21 performance is set out in Section 7. Clearly Covid has had a significant impact with new debt recovery action suspended from April to August 2020 and a phased implementation of recovery processes thereafter. Even so the in-year Council Tax collection performance of 94.5% was extremely encouraging given the challenges faced by the Council and many Council Tax payers. Appendices 2 and 3 provides further detail.

2.6 Section 8 and Appendices 4 and 5 provide an update on ICT performance and progress against to ICT and Digital Strategy Action Plans. The ICT team has seen unprecedented levels of demand over the last 12-18 months and it is likely that much of this increased demand will remain given the increased use of ICT during the pandemic by employees, pupils and citizens. Some cost pressures in relation to extra ICT support have been approved on a recurring and one-off basis with further requests expected as part of the 2022/25 Capital Programme development.

### **3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

3.1 It is recommended that the Committee note the various updates provided in this report and recognise the considerable efforts of the officers within the Finance Service over the period of the pandemic.

3.2 It is recommended that the Committee agree to continue using the enhanced eligibility criteria/ payment levels for making payments relating to Holiday Meals and Scottish Child Payment - Bridging Payments for the remainder of 2021/22.

3.3 It is recommended that the Committee note the intention to consider the eligibility criteria to be used beyond 2021/22 as part of the 2022/23 Budget.

**Alan Puckrin**  
**Interim Service Director of Corporate Services & Organisational Recovery**

## **4.0 BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 Revenues & Customer Services and ICT like many Council teams have faced unprecedented pressures during the Covid period with vital financial support being provided to the business community, payments to the vulnerable and those self-isolating and ICT support to employees, pupils and partners at the same time as trying to maintain core tasks much of this whilst operating remotely. The Accountancy team have continued to support services with budget management despite the large volume of new funding streams allocated often at short notice.
- 4.2 Prior to the pandemic Committee received quarterly updates in respect of the ICT/Digital Strategies, cyclical updates in respect of Welfare Reforms and an annual Debt Recovery Partnership report. This report seeks to provide updates to Committee on these matters plus any other relevant issues.

## **5.0 WELFARE REFORM/SCOTTISH SOCIAL SECURITY AGENCY**

- 5.1 The number of people claiming Universal Credit increased by 40% over the 15 month period of Covid-19 restrictions from 6,455 at March 2020 to 9,057 by June 2021. The percentage of people who had earnings included in their assessment of their UC award, which may or may not be final earnings, increased from 27% to 34% over this period. The temporary Covid-19 related uplift to Universal Credit of £20 per week will stop at the end of September. UK Government currently expects all households claiming legacy benefits and tax credits to have moved across to UC by September 2024. The latest estimate of the number of households still on legacy benefits and tax credits is 4,639 compared with 7,994 households on Universal Credit. Details of the migration delivery programme are still to be released.
- 5.2 The core Scottish Government Scottish Welfare Fund allocation of £756k in 2021/22 is supplemented by an underspend of £174k carried from extra funding given in 2020/21. Expenditure to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2021 was £388k, comprising Crisis Grants of £92k and Community Care Grants of £296k. In August 2021 the Committee agreed to reduce the priority categorisation for Community Care Grants from Medium to High in order to avoid an overspend on the 2021/22 Scottish Welfare Fund budget of £930k.
- 5.3 The Council is reimbursed in full by the Scottish Government for Discretionary Housing Payment expenditure on the mitigation of the Social Sector Size Criteria (SSSC). DHP to mitigate the SSSC in 2021/22 at August 2021 is £1.218m. The Council's DHP policy for purposes other than SSSC has been expanded over a number of years and more recently in response to the impact of Covid 19 restrictions. The 2021/22 allocation of £160k is supplemented by £69k, a share of the national underspend of Covid related funding released late in 2020/21. While the additional funding will meet the current DHP policy priority criteria, adjustments will be needed to ensure future years' expenditure is contained within budget.
- 5.4 The latest Scottish Child Payment statistics published by the Scottish Government show that between the benefit launching on 15<sup>th</sup> February 2021 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021, 1295 applications were approved and £56,190 had been paid (1.6% of the national total). The next set of data for the period up to 30 June 2021 is due to be published on 31 August 2021.
- 5.5 The Scottish Government has delivered ten benefits administered through the Scottish Social Security Agency (SSSA) since October 2018. Seven of these benefits are new in Scotland, including the new Scottish Child Payment. The next phase, Scottish disability assistance launched in July and is more complex to administer than the benefits delivered to date. The Scottish Government has asked Councils, health boards and GPs to play a key role with the delivery of the Scottish disability assistance, involving the provision of information to support claims.

- 5.6 Disability Living Allowance (Children), known as “Child DLA” will be replaced in Scotland by Child Disability Payment. This is a form of assistance for children and young people up to the age of 18 years who have mobility or care needs as a result of their disability, or who have a terminal illness. A pilot of the Child Disability Payment is underway and will open for new applications from 22 November 2021. Starting later this year, existing Child DLA claims will transfer without the need for a new claim to the new Child Disability Payment. Payments will not change and will be paid at the same rates and at the same time as their Disability Living Allowance.

Personal Independence Payment, known as “PIP” will be replaced by Adult Disability Payment. A pilot will launch in Spring 2022 and will be available across Scotland in summer 2022. Attendance Allowance will be replaced by Pension Age Disability Payment. Timescales for the delivery of Pension Age Disability Payment are still under review in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic.

- 5.7 Under the current Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) model the onus is firmly on the customer to provide supporting information for Child DLA, PIP and Attendance Allowance claims. Social Security Scotland will instead offer to help collect information from a professional which could be from Education or Social Work services to support their application, for example, confirmation of their diagnosis or information about support the client needs in their day to day life. The process will be tested and the national funding model to offset new burdens created by these new data sharing requirements will be established during the Child Disability Payment pilot.
- 5.8 The Council receives a daily file from the DWP containing relevant information about a host of welfare benefits. This data share removes the need for customers to contact the Council to report new benefits or changes to their entitlements; it ensures Housing Benefit and CTR are paid accurately and significantly reduces manual processing. Officers are pressing the Scottish Government to develop an automated data feed from the SSSA to replicate the service provided by the DWP.
- 5.9 The new processes will involve Education, Social Work, IT, information governance and welfare rights and so an officer group with representation from each of these service areas is being established to prepare for the new data share responsibilities and to ensure smooth implementation.

## **6.0 EDUCATIONAL ANTI POVERTY PAYMENTS AND PROJECTS UPDATE**

- 6.1 The Council and the Scottish Government announced one off funding during 2020 to allow meals to be provided over school holidays either through direct provision or via financial support. The Council agreed initially to provide support at £2.50/day to all pupils which met the enhanced eligibility criteria and this was increased to £3.00/day from December 2020 to reflect increased costs due to lockdown. Over a full year this extra £0.50/day is estimated to cost £107,000. Appendix 1 compares the differences between the current Scottish Government and Council criteria.
- 6.2 Another initially time limited initiative was to make one off payments of £100 to pupils who met the Free School Meal eligibility criteria and again the Council agreed that it would use the enhanced criteria. Two £100 payments have been made to date in 2021/22 and current figures indicate that this increases the costs to the Council by around £66,000 per occasion. The Scottish Government have announced its intention to make these payments during 2021 and 2022 with 4 payments totalling £520/pupil throughout the year.
- 6.3 Officers estimate that the extra cost in 2021/22 of making the remaining £320 using the enhanced criteria will be around £211,000. In addition, continuing to pay the extra £0.50 per day and using the enhanced criteria for the remainder of 2021/22 for the Holiday Meals is estimated to cost £91,000. If Committee agree to continue the payments using the enhanced eligibility criteria for the remainder of 2021/22 it would be proposed that this is funded from Covid Hardship Grants.

## 6.4 Anti-Poverty Update

In May 2021, Committee approved a series of Anti-Poverty initiatives and agreed to vire the unallocated Welfare Reform Budget to the Anti-Poverty budget, creating an available sum to £1.08 million to mitigate poverty in Inverclyde. Progress has been made against all projects during the summer and project initiation and identification of lead officers has taken place. Several projects will provide grants to community organisations and lead officers are working with procurement to take this forward. The advertising of staff and the development of monitoring and governance groups has been established for each of the relevant initiatives.

The Strategic Group and the Implementation Group have been established and are providing strategic governance and monitoring of the initiatives. The Anti-Poverty team leader is now in post and is working with the lead officers to monitor progress and establish medium term outcomes.

## 7.0 2020/21 DEBT RECOVERY PARTNERSHIP PERFORMANCE

- 7.1 The Council's response together with a package of interventions by the UK and Scottish governments limited the financial impact of the public health emergency on the Council's collection performance during 2020/21. An agreement with the Council's Debt Recovery Partner to suspend new recovery actions was in place over a 6 month period between March and September 2020. Even with this, in year Council Tax collection remained high at 94.4% against the Scotland average of 94.8% with Inverclyde ranked 23rd of the 32 Scottish Councils.
- 7.2 Prior year debt can be difficult to collect and becomes increasingly difficult with the passage of time and exacerbated in 2020/21 due to a moratorium on new recovery action. Prior year collections decreased by £128k (9.6%) during 2020/21 to £1.206m. More details are shown in Appendix 2 & 3. Collection of all Council Tax billed since 1993 at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020 was 96.8%, an improvement of 0.05% since the same point in 2020. The Council is achieving the budgeted collection rate of 96.8% on all years prior to 2018/19.
- 7.3 Payment by Direct Debit increased by 1.4% to 81.4% of in year receipts. Direct Debit continues to be promoted as the preferred payment method. Council Tax Online, launched in January 2020 allows council tax payers to manage their account remotely. Functions include opting for e.billing; setting up or changing a direct debit; making payments; viewing their Council Tax account balance and recent payments; obtaining a copy of a recent bill; reporting a house move; applying for discounts and exemptions. 1576 Council Tax payers have online accounts and of these 1140 have opted for an e.bill.
- 7.4 Businesses in Inverclyde benefited from £7.7m in Covid 19 Retail, Hospitality, Leisure and Aviation relief, which provided 100% Non-Domestic Rates relief during 2020/21 for businesses in those sectors. The collection rate for businesses liable for rates was 93.49%, a decrease of 2.94% from 2019/20.
- 7.5 The gross debt as at 31 March 2021 is £24.8 million as shown in Appendix 2. There is a bad debt provision of £18.9 million, leaving a net debt of £5.9 million. Appendix 3 provides more detail, highlighting new debts raised, payments received and debts written off. All Bad Debt provisions have been calculated in accordance with Council policies and reconcile to the 2020/21 Accounts.
- 7.6 The impact of Covid-19 restrictions on employment, the withdrawal of associated temporary funding including the uplift of Tax Credits and Universal Credit and the phasing out of the Job Retention Scheme will undoubtedly affect the financial position of many Council Tax payers and consequently, the level of "in-year" Council Tax collection. Services are in place to support people who ask for help by way of spreading payment over 12 months instead of 10 and/or help to claim Council Tax Reduction. A sensitive approach continues to be followed by the Council's Debt Recovery Partner.

7.7 Significant reliefs continue to be provided by the Scottish Government in 2021/22 for Non Domestic Rates payers in response to the impact of Covid-19. 100% rates relief is available to those operating in the retail, hospitality and leisure sectors who apply and meet the criteria. A number of larger retail and hospitality businesses have chosen not to apply for the relief or to apply only for a limited period while restrictions remained. The latest position is that the relief in 2021/22 amounts to £3.67m, this compares with £7.7m in 2020/21.

## 8.0 ICT/DIGITAL STRATEGIES & ICT ACTIVITY

8.1 The ICT and Digital Strategies develop and build on the work of the previous strategies and also the response to the COVID pandemic. They aim to increase and promote the range of digital services available to employees and customers and to exploit the opportunities digital services can achieve by:

- Improving user experience and interaction with Council Services
- Reducing cost to deliver services via channel shift opportunities
- Improving efficiencies and productivity of services

8.2 A core requirements was the implementation of Cloud Based tools including migration to Microsoft 365. License procurement has been completed and the process of “onboarding” to the Microsoft Cloud Platform has begun. A pilot programme is proceeding within ICT Services before being rolled out to the wider estate. Updates on both strategies are included in Appendix 4.

8.3 The latest performance information is shown in Appendix 5. A continued increase in the number of contacts and payments being completed by e form is noted. The use of the online service for the vast majority of Garden Waste Permit payments indicates the ability of the most customers for that service to use the digital route to engage with the Council.

8.4 The Servicedesk continues to deliver a high quality service however, there remains a challenge to ensure that this is maintained in light of on-going and increasing resource pressures as a result of COVID-19 Pandemic and recovery. Extra resources funded by Covid monies have been recruited and extra recurring budget was agreed from 2022/23 as part of the 2021/22 Budget process.

## 9.0 IMPLICATIONS

### 9.1 Finance

#### Financial Implications:

#### One off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Years	Proposed Spend this Report	Virement From	Other Comments
Covid Grants/EMR	Other payments	2021/22	Approx £302k		Reflects 2x£160 further payments and continuing the £3.00/day Meal payment in 2021/22 to those who meet the enhanced criteria

#### Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact	Virement From (If Applicable)	Other Comments



## 9.2 Legal

None

## 9.3 Human Resources

None

## 9.4 Equalities

### Equalities

(a) Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out?

X

YES (see attached appendix)

NO – This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a substantive change to an existing policy, function or strategy. Therefore, no Equality Impact Assessment is required

(b) Fairer Scotland Duty

If this report affects or proposes any major strategic decision:-

Has there been active consideration of how this report's recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome?

X

YES – A written statement showing how this report's recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage has been completed.

NO

(c) Data Protection

Has a Data Protection Impact Assessment been carried out?

X

YES – This report involves data processing which may result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals.

NO

## 9.5 Repopulation

There are no repopulation implications arising from this report.

## 10.0 CONSULTATIONS

10.1 The MBWG support the proposals in Section 6 of the report.

## 11.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

11.1 None.

Appendix 1

Support for Pupils - Eligibility & Payments

1) Earnings Thresholds	Monthly UC Earnings	Tax Credit Claimant Annual Income	
Scottish Government	£625	£7500	
Inverclyde Council	£970	£11916	

2) Eligible Pupils	SG	IC	Difference
Holiday Meals	2540	3200	660
SCG	2540	3200	660
Pandemic Payments	2540	3200	660

3) Payment Rates	SG	IC	Difference
Holiday Meals/day	£2.50	£3.00	£0.50
School Clothing Grants - Primary	£120	£150	£30
- Secondary	£150	£150	-
Pandemic Payments*	£100	£100	-

\*Increasing £130 on average from 2021/22.

Note - The only extra cost which is "hard wired" into the Council budget is the extra cost for School Clothing Grants. Holiday Meals and Pandemic Payments are being met from Covid Reserves at present.

AP/LA

9/8/21

**Analysis of Debt Recovery Partner Performance 2020/21**

**Appendix 2**

**Council Tax**

**Non Domestic Rates**

Financial Year	Payments Received
	£000's
1993/94	0
1994/95	0
1995/96	2
1996/97	1
1997/98	2
1998/99	3
1999/00	4
2000/01	11
2001/02	10
2002/03	12
2003/04	8
2004/05	10
2005/06	15
2006/07	18
2007/08	20
2008/09	19
2009/10	24
2010/11	25
2011/12	29
2012/13	33
2013/14	38
2014/15	53
2015/16	56
2016/17	79
2017/18	107
2018/19	174
2019/20	453
2020/21	546
<b>Total</b>	<b>1752</b>

Financial Year	Payments Received
	£000's
1993/94	0
1994/95	0
1995/96	0
1996/97	0
1997/98	0
1998/99	0
1999/00	0
2000/01	0
2001/02	0
2002/03	0
2003/04	0
2004/05	0
2005/06	0
2006/07	0
2007/08	0
2008/09	0
2009/10	0
2010/11	0
2011/12	0
2012/13	0
2013/14	0
2014/15	0
2015/16	3
2016/17	2
2017/18	1
2018/19	5
2019/20	16
2020/21	188
<b>Total</b>	<b>215</b>

Debt Recovery Partnership Performance  
Comparison 2019/20 & 2020/21

Appendix 3

	2019/20 £000's	2020/21 £000's	Differenc e £000's	%
Council Tax	2517	1752	-765	-30.39%
Non Domestic Rates	241	215	-26	-10.79%
Total	2758	1967	-791	-28.68%

ICT & Digital Strategies August 2021 Update

ICT Strategy Action Plan 2021 – 2024

Action Area 1	Action	Milestones	Success Criteria	Update	Responsibility
Asset Management Programme & Cloud Migration Strategy	Hardware Refresh Programme reviewed to reflect new ways of working	Sufficient Funding in place  March 2022  Staff have the appropriate equipment to work effectively and efficiently from the most appropriate location  From 2023	Sustainable refresh programme embedded  Staff satisfaction surveys reflect confidence in IT Services.  Line Managers are satisfied that staff have appropriate equipment	Budget process underway.  Standard specification for equipment agreed by CMT. Hybrid working options being identified by Organisational Recovery Group	Chief Financial Officer/ICT Service Manager  ICT Service Manager
	Education Services – review services provided to schools to reflect new ways of teaching and delivery	Strategy approved and funding agreed  March 2022  Students and Staff have the appropriate equipment to learn in a flexible and rewarding way.  From 2023	Sustainable funding model approved  Feedback from Education Services reflect satisfaction in service delivery	Discussions continuing to identify funding sources.  Draft Digital strategy prepared for discussion/consultation.	ICT Service Manager/Chief Financial Officer  Head of Schools/ICT Service Manager
	Cloud Migration Strategy	Deliver Office 365 Licensing and implement initial Cloud Migration  From August 2021  Agree approach to deliver Telephony and other Communications Systems in the Cloud  March 2022	Cloud services including MS Teams deployed to staff  Contracts awarded for new Telephony approach	Contract Awarded August 2021.  Initial Test deployments underway  Supplier engagement and Options appraisal continuing.	ICT Service Manager

Action Area 2	Action	Milestones	Success Criteria	Update	Responsibility
Service Provision	Maintain Service Levels across Support Services	Meet agreed Service Level Targets for Incident and Service Requests.  Ongoing through life of Strategy	Customer satisfaction with service provided	SLA Statistics reported to P&R  5 extra temporary Service Desk Technician posts approved and recruitment ongoing.	ICT Service Manager
	Core Systems	Engage with services to ensure that existing systems are being used effectively. Focussing on collaboration and communication tools including the Cisco telephony systems, Customer Management and EDRMS.  March 2022	Services have access to the tools and functions required to provide effective efficient services to customers and staff.	ICT Service Manager to visit DMTs to discuss EDRMS projects	ICT Service Manager

Action Area 3	Action	Milestones	Success Criteria	Update	Responsibility
Information Security	Network and System Security	<p>Maintain a Secure Network Infrastructure</p> <p>Support the Information Governance group in dealing with the individual data management responsibilities of each member of staff.</p> <p>Ongoing through life of Strategy</p>	<p>Minimise Cyber Security Incidents,</p> <p>Corporate approach to data handling and electronic document management.</p>	Annual P&R Report scheduled late 2021	ICT Service Manager
	Security Accreditation Compliance	<p>Use of industry partners to provide Security Assurance through the Penetration Test &amp; IT Health check process.</p> <p>Ongoing through life of Strategy</p> <p>Maintain Cyber Essentials Plus and PSN Code of Connection compliance/accreditation</p> <p>Annual Compliance Process</p>	<p>Provision of report and implementation of recommendations</p> <p>PSN Compliance Certificate</p>	PSN Accreditation on place for 2021/22	ICT Service Manager

Action Area 4	Action	Milestones	Success Criteria	Update	Responsibility
Procurement Strategy	Use of National Frameworks to deliver value for money services	National frameworks the default approach for available systems and services  Ongoing	Delivery of Value for Money Systems and Services	Two contracts awarded via Scottish Government Frameworks in August 21	ICT Service Manager
	Account Management	Meet with suppliers to review and ensure best value and most efficient levels of delivery and support of systems  Ongoing	Appropriate level of supplier support and best value delivery	Supplier meetings ongoing	ICT Service Manager
	Project Management	Use temporary increase in Project Management resources to deliver support to services in planning and deploying projects and services  2021/23	Business Cases are developed and projects are delivered on time and on budget	Candidate appointed August 2021	ICT Service Manager



### Digital Strategy Action Plan 2021 – 2024 Update

Action Area 1	Action	Milestones	Success Criteria	Update	Responsibility
Provide Improved online Services	Work with suppliers to fully enable the ability of customers to book and pay for calendared and transactional services such as bulky uplifts.	Allow customers to book & pay for services online. Increase the range of services available via Web Self-Service  October 2021	Delivery of extended range of services available.	First tranche of Online Forms are live. Integration with new payment engine pending.	ICT Service Manager with Heads of Service.
	Review and Develop additional services to be digitised or enhance existing online services to provide additional functionality	Additional Services available online  March 2022	Delivery of extended range of services available.  Over Strategy Period	DMTs to be visited to discuss opportunities for migrating services online	ICT Service Manager with Heads of Service

Action Area 2	Action	Milestones	Success Criteria/Target Date	Update	Responsibility
Channel Shift	Open new channels of communication including messaging and Social Media routes  Increase convenience for customers.	The number of ways customers can interact with the council increases reflecting changes in demographics  September 2022	Delivery of extended range of services available.	To be reviewed in 2022	ICT Service Manager with Corporate Communication Manager
	Identify channels which can be closed.	Review of Channels and identify if any can or should be closed  April 2023	Provide only those channels needed by customers  Over Strategy Period	To be reviewed in 2022 following return to more normal levels of service delivery	ICT Service Manager with Heads of Service

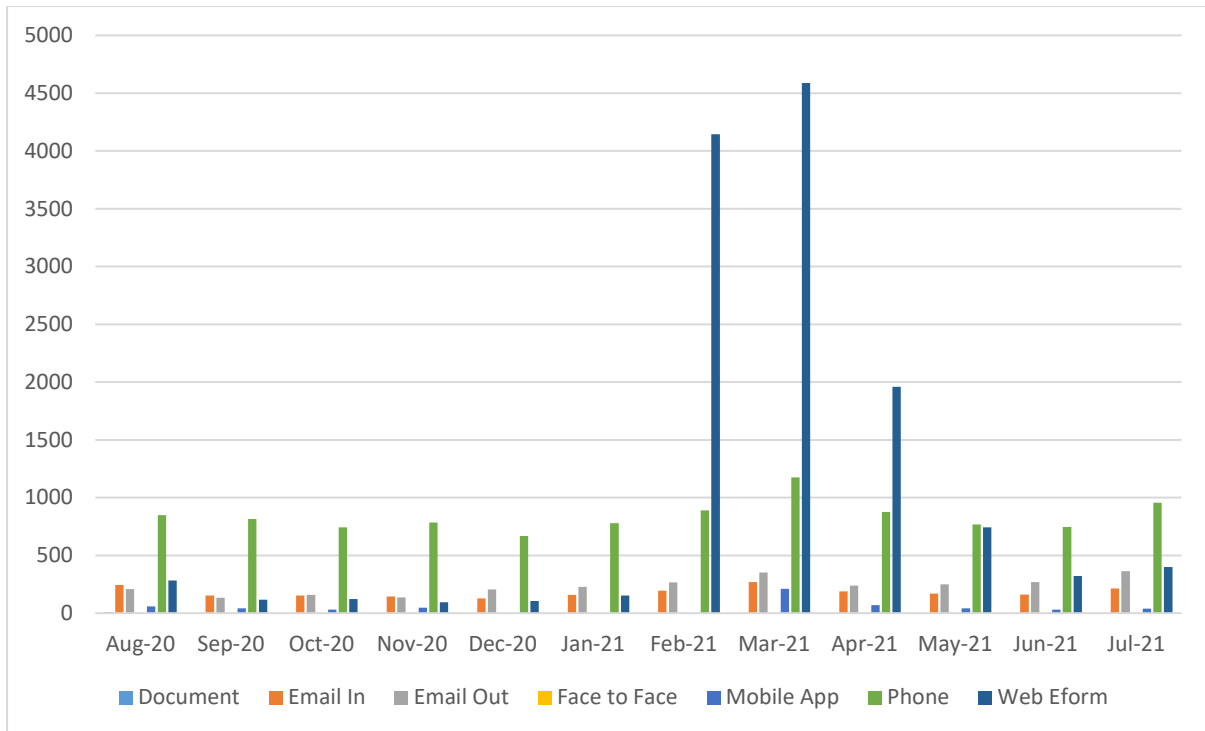
Action Area 3	Action	Milestones	Success Criteria	Update	Responsibility
Mobile & Agile Working	As part of Organisational Recovery following the COVID 19 Pandemic, all Services to review and if necessary develop systems to allow enhanced home and remote working	Opportunities identified as part of the Business Continuity short term Recovery Actions- September 2021  Projects developed to allow greater flexible working – December 2021  Funding agreed – March 2022	Efficiencies achieved and increases in productivity through roll out of mobile / agile working across council workforce	Business Cases developed Dec 2021	CMT and all Heads of Service
	As part of Organisational Recovery following the COVID 19 Pandemic , Office layouts to reflect greater flexible/remote working	Develop Proposals for CMT consideration – October 2021 Funding considered- March 2022 Project Delivery – From 2022	Better use of Council office estate	Funding approved 2022/23 Budget  Adjustments delivered from 2022	Interim Head of Property Services/ ICT Service Manager
	As part of Organisational Recovery, ensure the appropriate policies are in place to support new ways of working	Review Mobile Working and related HR Policies by September 2021	Staff can work safely and securely backed by appropriate policies and support	Hybrid and Home Working policies in draft for consultation	Head of ODHR

Action Area 4	Action	Milestones	Success Criteria	Update	Responsibility
Other Digital Strategies	Education Services Digital Strategy	Coordinate with Education Services to ensure provision of Digital Services to schools meets the requirement of modern learning and teaching.  Over Strategy Period	Delivery of extended range of services in schools	Draft policy prepared for consultation.	ICT Service Manager/Head of Education
	Health & Social Care Partnership Digital Strategy	Coordinate with HSCP to ensure provision and delivery of Digital Services to staff, patients and other service users that meet the needs of delivering digital Health and Social Care. Over Strategy Period	Delivery of extended range of services for staff and service users	Draft policy prepared for consultation.	ICT Service Manager with HSCP

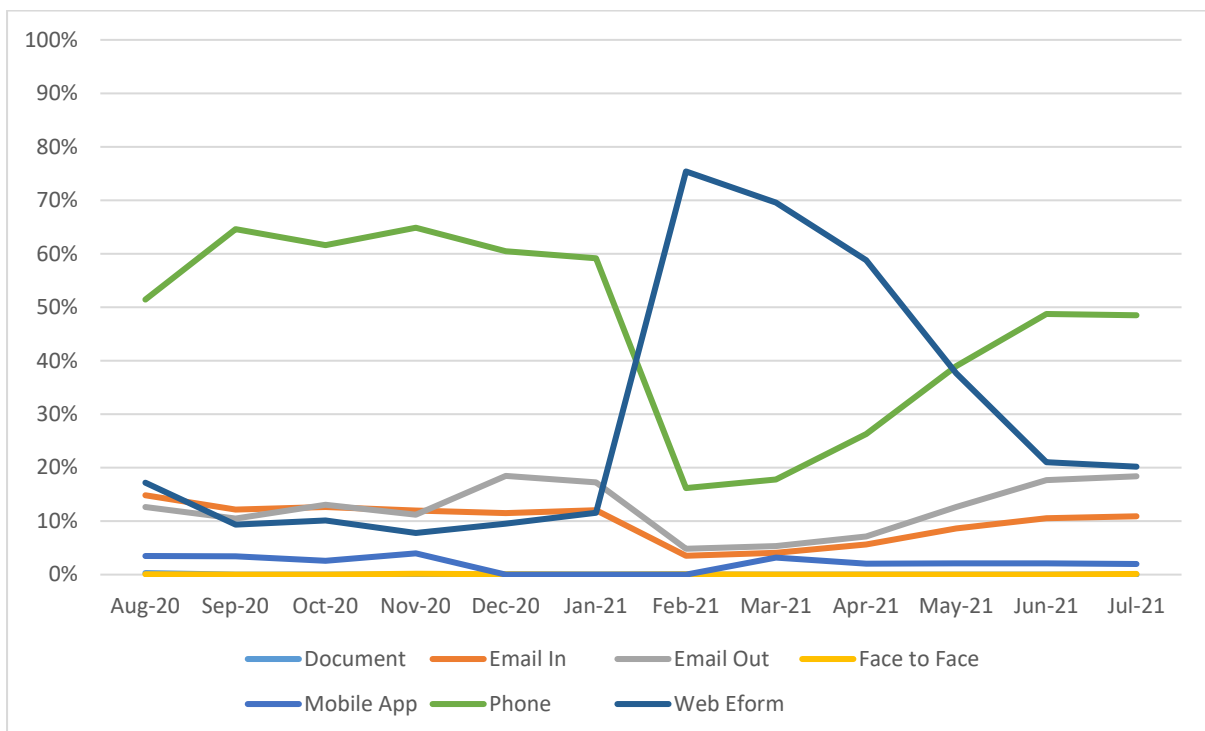
**Service Statistics – 31<sup>st</sup> July 2021**

**Section 1 – Channel Shift**

**1.1 Total Number of Contacts by Channel**

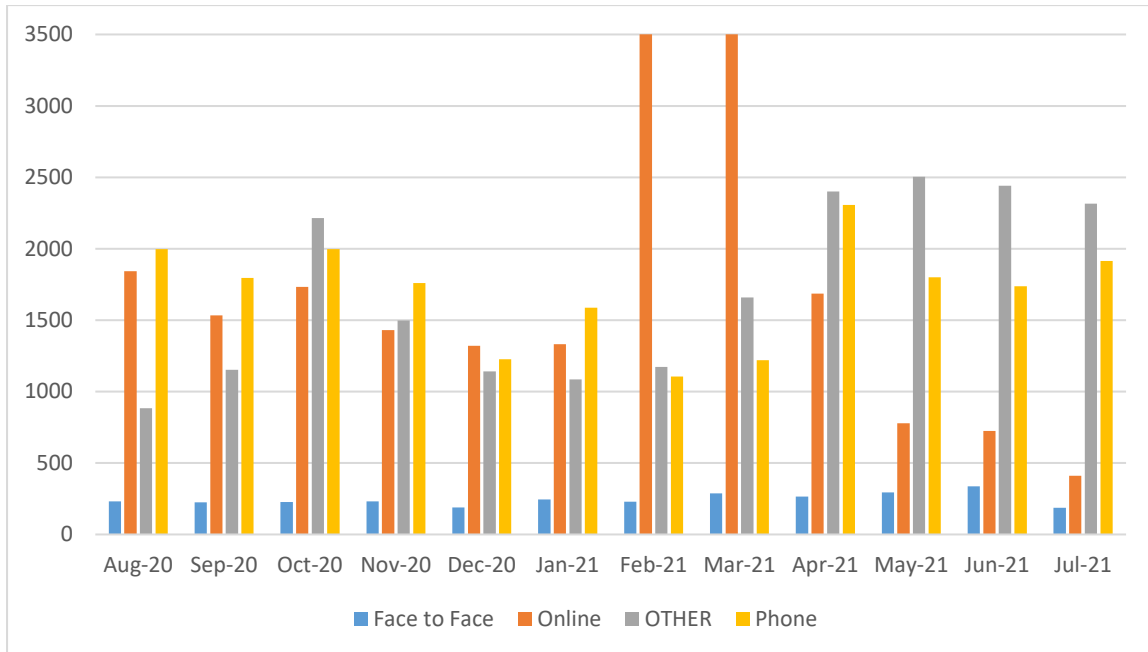


**1.2 Percentage of Contacts by Channel – Trend**

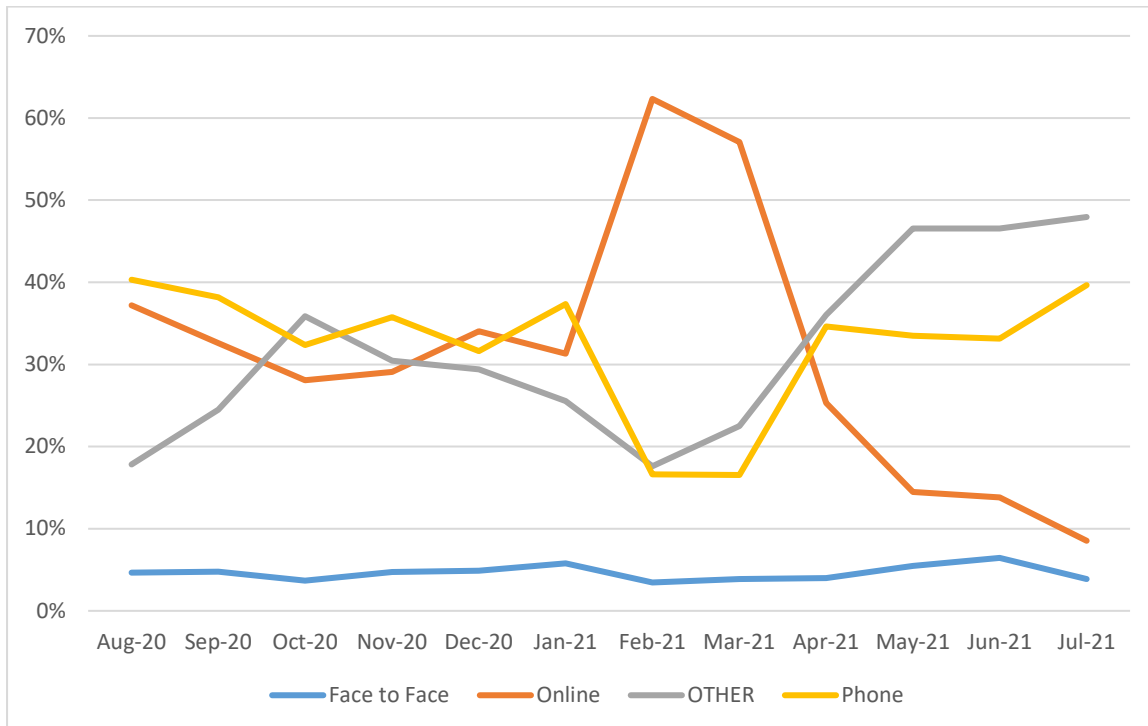


Service report data : Abandoned Vehicles, Bins and Bags, Dog Fouling, Graffiti, Grounds Maintenance, Illegal Dumping & Fly Tipping, Potholes, Refuse Collection & Litter, Roads and Footpaths, Stair, lighting, Street & Traffic Lights, Street Cleaning, Uplifts, Winter Planning, Winter Planning Grit Bin, Winter Planning Pavements

### 1.3 Total Number of Payments by Channel



### 1.4 Percentage of Payments by Channel – Trend

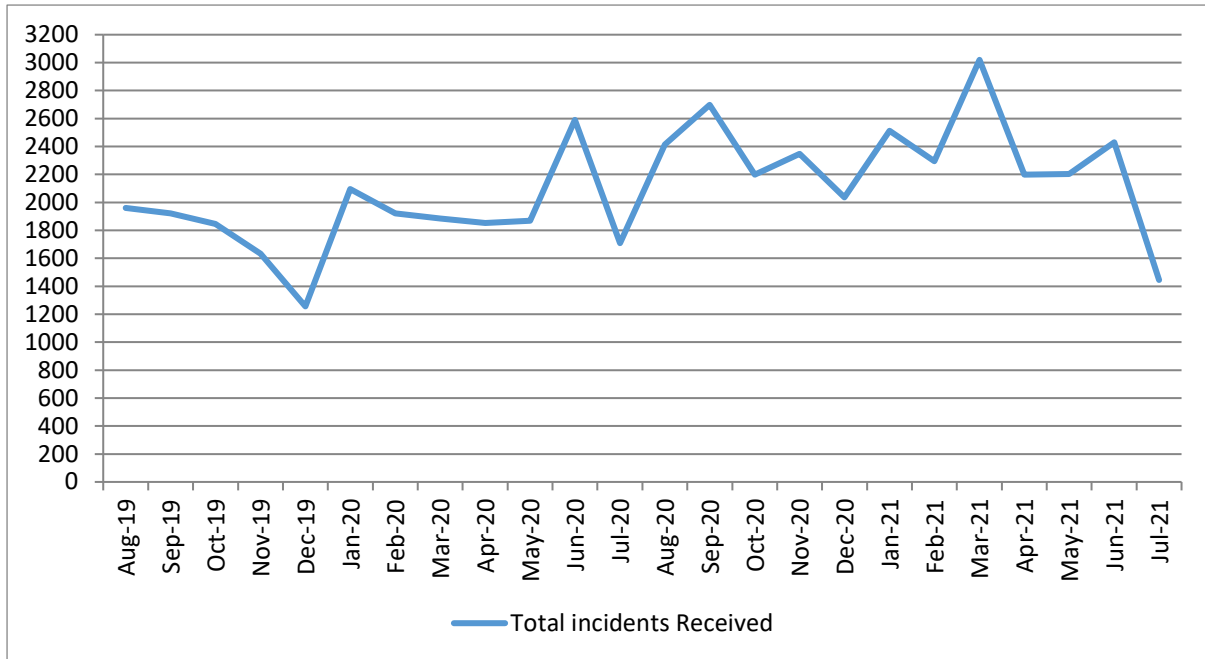


The Others Channel records monies that are posted direct via BACS, other transfer methods and cheques to the Council's Bank Account. This would include anything that customers pay via the bank account including Debtors Invoices, it will also include any Government or other grants that the Council may be awarded.

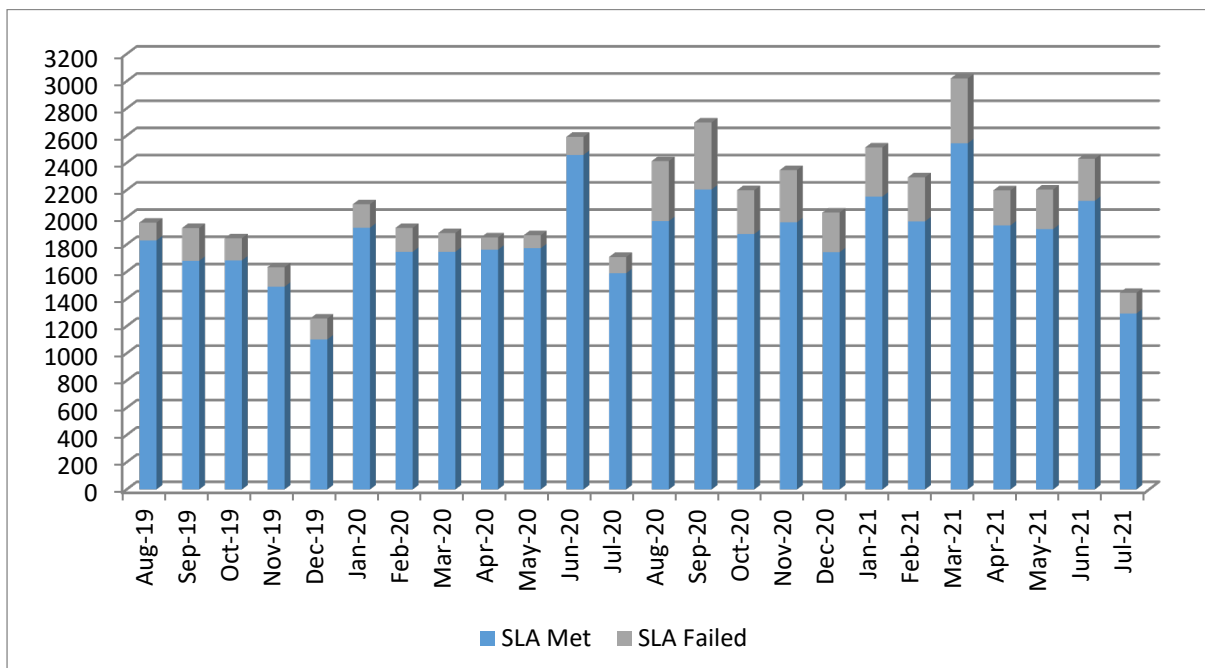
## Section 2 - Servicedesk

### 2.1 Incidents

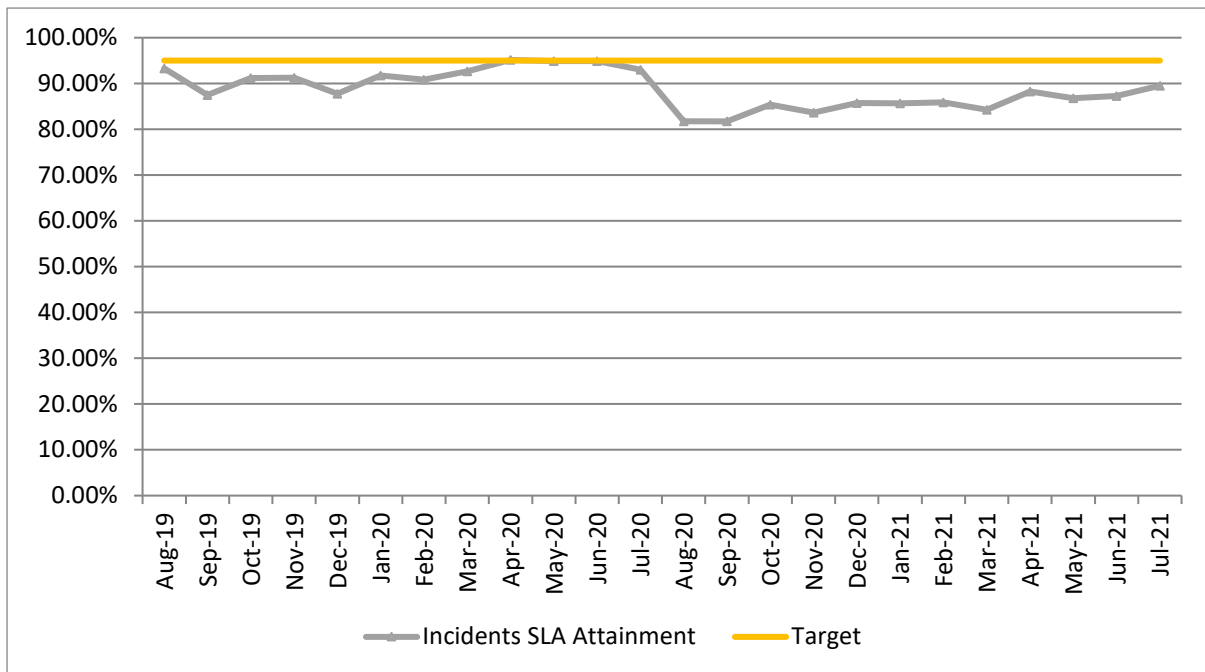
#### Incidents Received



#### 2.1.1 - Incidents Met/Failed within SLA



### 2.1.2 - Monthly Service Level Attainment - Incidents



#### SLA Details

##### VIP Users

Priority	Target Resolution Time
Critical	3 hours
High	4 hours
Normal	7 hours
Low	21 hours
Long Term	No target

##### Standard Users

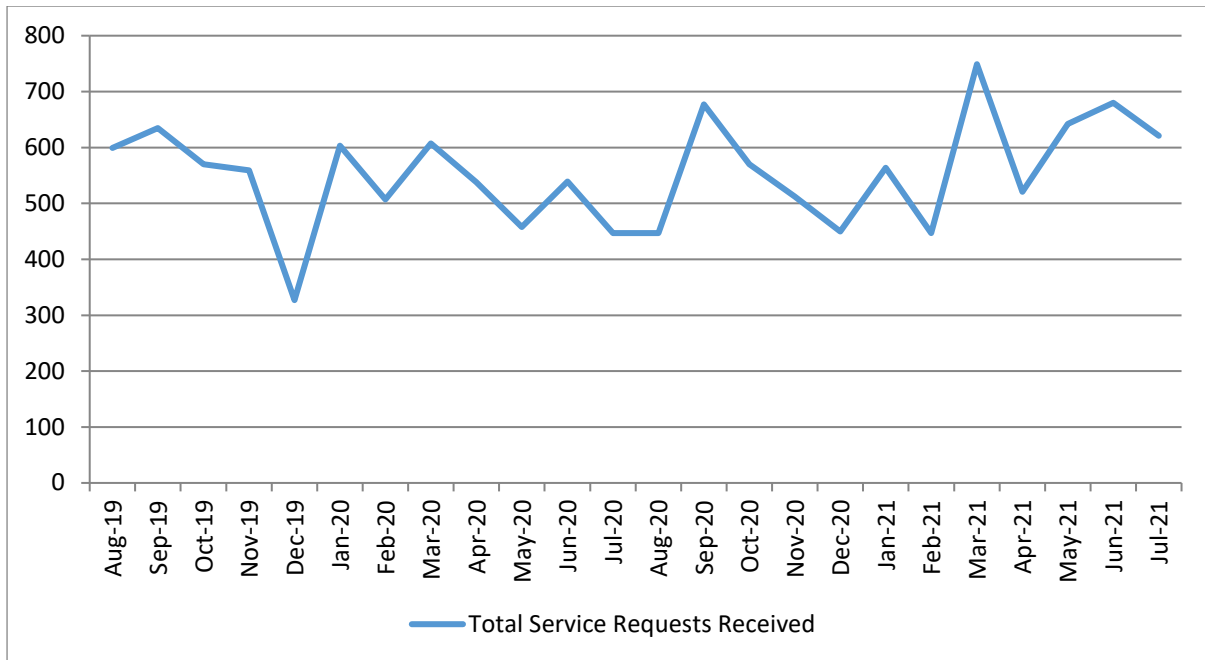
Priority	Target Resolution Time
Critical	4 hours
High	7 hours
Normal	21 hours
Low	35 hours
Long Term	No target

SLA Attainment is 95% of incidents resolved within Target Resolution Time (90% until July 2017)

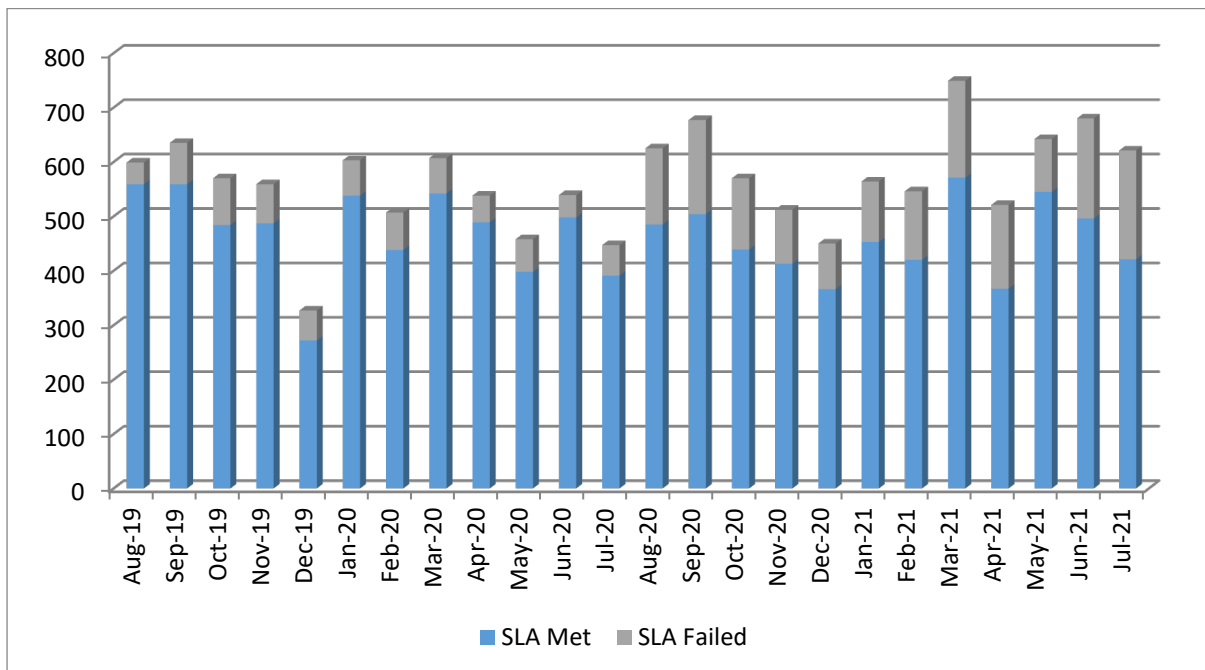
A typical Service request is unlocking a user account or password, software errors, PC faults, PDA, whiteboard and projector issues.

## 2.2 - Service Requests

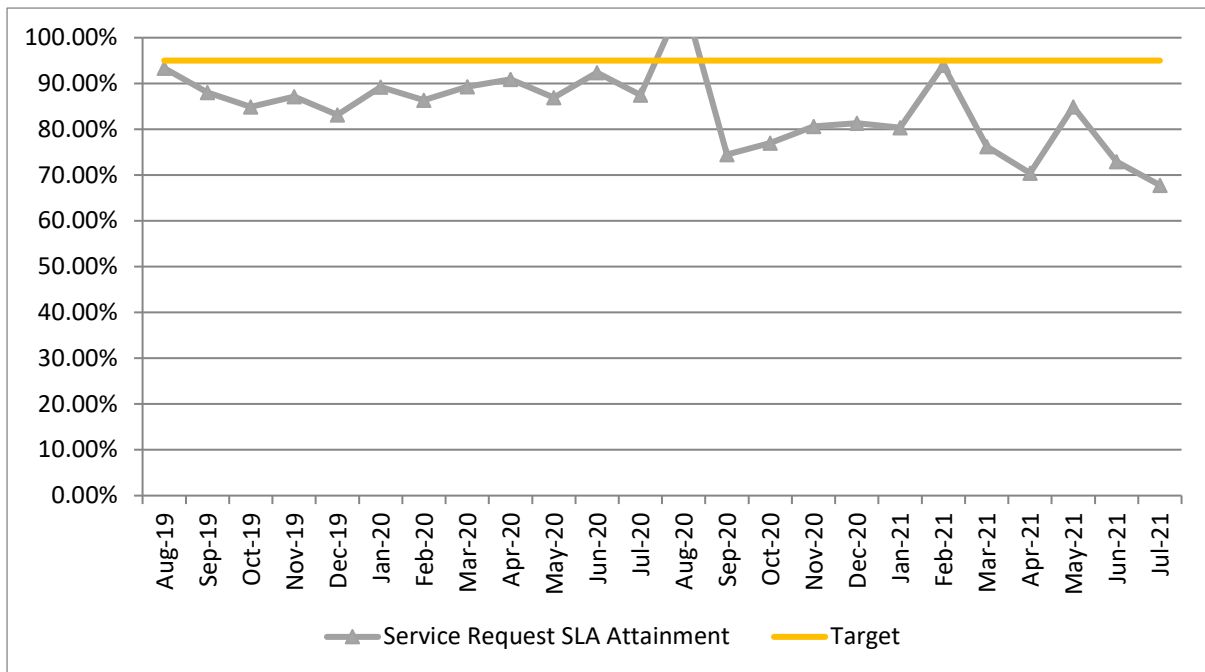
### 2.2.1 - Service Requests Received



### 2.2.2 - Service Requests Met/Failed within SLA



### 2.2.3 - Service Level Attainment – Service Requests



SLA Attainment is 95% of incidents resolved within Target Resolution Time (90% until July 2017)

A typical Service request is provision of a new user account, a new PC or Laptop, relocation of existing services.



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<b>Report To:</b>	<b>Policy &amp; Resources Committee</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>14 September 2021</b>
<b>Report By:</b>	<b>Ruth Binks, Corporate Director Education, Communities, &amp; Organisational Development</b>	<b>Report No:</b>	<b>PR/14/21/KM</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Andrina Hunter, Corporate Policy and Partnership Manager</b>	<b>Contact No:</b>	<b>01475 712042</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Corporate Policy and Performance Update Report</b>		

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## **1.0 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Policy and Resources Committee with an update on a number of matters relating to corporate policy and performance.

## **2.0 SUMMARY**

- 2.1 This report provides the Committee with an update on a number of performance and policy matters relating to:
- The Corporate Directorate Improvement Plans (CDIPs) progress reports at the end of year 2 and the annual CDIP refreshed improvement plan for year 3 for both the ERR and ECOD Directorates;
  - An update on the current Strategic Planning and Performance Management Framework (SPPMF), including a proposal to roll forward the current planning term by a year;
  - An update on the national approach to Best Value and Best Value Auditing, including details of how Inverclyde Council measures outcomes and proposals for the future reporting of the Inverclyde BVAR Improvement Plan

## **3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Policy & Resources Committee:
- a. Note the progress that has been made in the delivery of the CDIP Improvement Plans in year 2 and approve the refreshed Corporate Services Improvement Actions for year 3,
  - b. Approve the proposal to extend the current SPPMF framework for a further year (to March 2023) and note that proposals for a more streamlined planning approach will be brought to this Committee in due course;
  - c. Note the developments in relation to Best Value and Best Value Auditing; and the variety of way in which Inverclyde Council measures and reports on outcomes.
  - d. Note that the ongoing progress reporting of the remaining BVAR improvement actions will be via the regular CDIP progress reports, as well as separate reports to Committee as appropriate.

**Ruth Binks**  
**Corporate Director**  
**Education, Communities & Organisational Development**

#### 4.0 UPDATE IN RELATION TO CORPORATE DIRECTORATE IMPROVEMENT PLANS

- 4.1 CDIPs are a key element of the council's Strategic Planning and Performance Management Framework. They are the principal vehicle for the delivery of the organisational priorities in the Corporate Plan 2018/22, as well as the wellbeing outcomes.
- 4.2 The Council's CDIPs are subject to annual review to ensure that the improvement actions remain relevant and reflect any emerging challenges or legislation that will impact on the Directorate in the coming year. Scrutiny of the Plans is provided by the Policy and Resources; Education and Communities and Environment and Regeneration Committees. Under normal circumstances, progress reports on the delivery of the CDIP Improvement Plans are presented to every second meeting of the relevant Committee, however due to Covid-19, this reporting schedule has been subject to change and it was necessary to roll the Improvement Plans for year 2 forward by several months until the refreshed Improvement Plans could be brought for approval.
- 4.3 The final year 2 CDIP progress reports and the refreshed CDIP Improvement Plans (year 3 plans) for both the ECOD and the ERR Directorates can be accessed via the **Directorate and Service Planning** webpage on the Inverclyde Council website. Navigation to the CDIP Performance Reports is via the **Related Links** section on the CDIP web page. The web links are also provided below:

CDIP Performance reports

<https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/council-and-government/performance/performance-reports>

CDIP refresh

<https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/council-and-government/strategies-policies-and-plans/directorate-and-service-planning/education-communities-and-organisational-development>

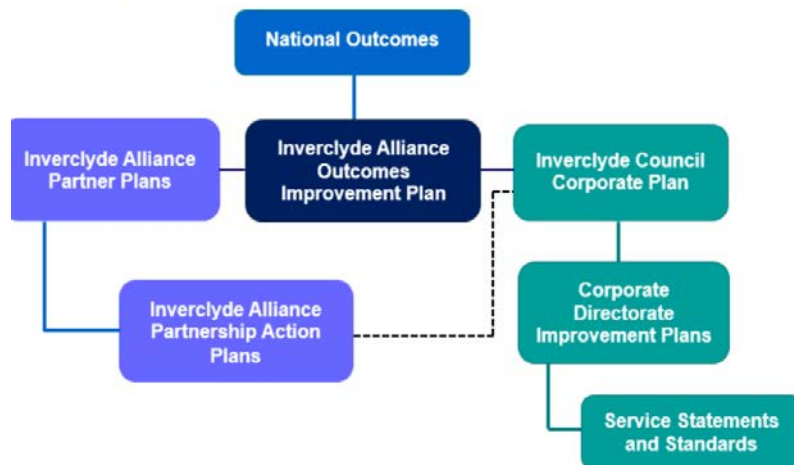
<https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/council-and-government/strategies-policies-and-plans/directorate-and-service-planning/environment-regeneration-and-resources>

Alternatively, a hard copy of all the reports is available by contacting the Corporate Policy and Partnership team.

#### 5.0 UPDATE IN RELATION TO STRATEGIC PLANNING AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

- 5.1 The current Strategic Planning and Performance Management Framework (SPPMF) sets out the strategic context for how the Council plans the delivery of services, and how it manages the performance of those services within the context of the Scottish Government national outcomes, and also the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (2017-22), which is the key plan for Inverclyde Alliance Community Planning Partnership. The linkages are shown below:

Figure 1- Inverclyde Council SPPMF



- 5.2 The Inverclyde LOIP, Inverclyde Council Corporate Plan and the Corporate Directorate Improvement Plans are all approaching the end of their planning term (March 2022) providing an opportunity to review the current framework with a view to developing a more streamlined approach. The Committee will also be aware that the Council and partners have developed Covid-19 recovery plans (Organisational and Partnership) for 21/22, any remaining actions at the end of March 2022 are to be incorporated into the Council's CDIPs and the Alliance's LOIP as appropriate.
- 5.3 The Council's future priorities, as well as the wider review of the SPPMF, will undoubtedly be shaped by the views of the incoming Chief Executive. Additionally, the local government elections are due to take place in May 2022 and as a key stakeholder, it is important that all Members are provided with the opportunity to shape the agreed strategic priorities. In view of this, it is proposed to extend the Corporate Plan and CDIP's planning term for a further year until April 2023, to ensure that all key stakeholders (current and future) have the opportunity to be consulted on their views. The current Recovery Plan actions could still transition into the CDIPs as part of the ongoing CDIP refresh in early 2022.
- 5.4 The Alliance Board will also be asked to consider extending the current Inverclyde LOIP for a further year until March 2023 at its meeting in October 2021.
- 5.5 The options for a new streamlined approach in strategic planning and performance management will be the subject of a report to a future Policy & Resources Committee which will set out all considerations and take into account views of all stakeholders.

## 6.0 UPDATE IN RELATION TO BEST VALUE

### ***A) National developments in relation to Best Value and Best Value Auditing***

- 6.1 Revised statutory guidance on Best Value for local authorities and public bodies has been published by the Scottish Government. The new guidance replaces the original 10 characteristics of Best Value with 7 key themes and is designed to help Councils demonstrate continuous improvement in their performance. The Committee can find the full guidance here: [Best Value: revised statutory guidance 2020 - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/best-value-revised-statutory-guidance-2020/pages/12/index.aspx)
- 6.2 On a related matter, the Accounts Commission is currently consulting with key stakeholders on a new audit approach to Best Value Auditing, to be implemented from 2022/23. It is anticipated that the new approach will fully integrate Best Value audit activity within the annual audit work, with the assessment of a Council's Best Value performance being reported via the Annual Audit Report. More information on this will be brought to this Committee once published.

- 6.3 The national cycle of Best Value audit (BVARs), has been extended to reflect the pressures on auditors and audited bodies arising from Covid-19. An overview of the main issues identified for each Council in the BVARs published in the past year is provided below.

Moray Council (August 2020)

The Commission found that there has been a significant decline in services since the previous report in 2015 and that a renewed focus to drive forward strategic change must be maintained. Committed and decisive leadership is needed to make the required changes, including tackling relatively low educational attainment delivered within a schools' estate in the worst condition in Scotland. A follow-up audit has been instructed to report back within 18 months.

Dundee City (September 2020)

The Council was found to be well led, with a clear vision for the future, alongside a good understanding of the problems affecting residents. It was recommended that the pace of change be increased to address complex and deep-rooted problems such as poverty, and the high levels of drug-related deaths. Narrowing of the educational attainment gap was also highlighted as a priority. The Commission also found that the financial sustainability of the Integration Joint Board to be a significant risk.

Aberdeenshire (October 2020)

Noted strengths within Aberdeenshire include Council officers and Councillors working well together, residents are positive about services, finances are well-managed and a strong emphasis on partnership working. The Commission recommended that the Council set out more clearly what it intends to achieve from its high-level priorities and increase its focus on deprivation, exacerbated by Covid-19, and address the significant gap in educational attainment. It was also recommended that the Council put in place a long-overdue strategy to better manage its workforce.

The City of Edinburgh (November 2020)

The Commission found that many services have improved since 2016, its finances are well-managed and ambitious strategies have been agreed. Progress at a strategic level across community engagement and continuous improvement has been mixed with more needing to be done to embed community empowerment. It was recommended that a long-term financial strategy and a more effective workforce plan be put in place to address the pressures of the impact of Covid-19 and support how it will fund and manage its vision for the future.

Aberdeen City Council (June 2021)

Aberdeen City Council was commended on the improvement and ambition that has been put in place since previous BV reports. The Council was found to be self-aware and well placed to manage future challenges due to sound financial planning. The response to the pandemic was also praised. There is however a substantial need for improvement in the performance of housing and education services and the need to ensure that its pace of transformation helps to positively address outcomes for communities. The progression of locality planning was also highlighted as being important to planning for recovery.

***B) Best Value and reporting on outcomes***

- 6.4 Whilst details of the new Audit approach are not yet published, it is anticipated that it will focus more heavily on outcome delivery. Since the publication of its BVAR in 2017, Inverclyde Council has strengthened the measurement and reporting of outcomes with updates on this work being reported through the BVAR Improvement Plan progress report. Further information on this was requested by this Committee at its meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> September 2020.
- 6.5 Reporting on outcome delivery is often split into two categories, those that can be objectively or independently measured, e.g. using national or key performance measures and those that are measured subjectively, i.e. individual perception. Where the measurement is subjective, measuring the difference that has been achieved is not straightforward, as the outcome is often unique and shaped by a range of factors.

- 6.6 Inverclyde Council has embedded both objective and subjective measures in its strategic planning and performance management framework, which has been strengthened in recent years to be more outcome focused:
- The Inverclyde Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP) replaced the SOA with a small number of focused partnership priorities, underpinned by a performance framework;
  - A Corporate Plan 2018/22 was developed setting out a number of organisational priorities that support the delivery of the IOIP. The Corporate Plan is also underpinned by a performance framework;
  - Annual reports are published for both the LOIP and Corporate Plan, containing the latest performance data and case studies, helping to demonstrate the progress that has been made in the delivery of strategic and organisational priorities;
  - The quality and range of public performance information published by the Council was fully reviewed in 2019 and improvements made to make it easier for the public to measure progress. The Council's website has a dedicated performance page for the public.
- 6.7 There are also examples across the organisation of outcome tools, e.g. the 'Outcomes Star', being used at an individual level which captures feedback from service users. This subjective feedback helps to assess the impact that has been achieved while KPIs provide additional evidence. In addition, proxy measures are used by the Council e.g. at a population level, the Inverclyde Citizens' Panel, is the main tool used to gather qualitative feedback.
- 6.8 At a national level, the Community Planning Outcomes Profile (CPOP) developed by the Improvement Service, is an outcomes tool consisting of 18 performance measures which helps the Council and CPPs assess if the lives of the people in their communities is improving. The CPOP and the data for all CPPs can be found on the **Performance Management and Benchmarking** webpage on the Improvement Service website, or alternatively the web link is provided here: <https://scotland.shinyapps.io/is-community-planning-outcomes-profile/>
- 6.9 Councils also have a statutory duty to report to the public progress in improving local outcomes and demonstrating Best Value, as set out in the Accounts Commission's Statutory Performance Indicator Direction 2018. Examples of the range of performance information published by Inverclyde Council to meet the requirements of the Direction is provided in Appendix 1. It should be noted however that this is not intended to be an exhaustive list and that many Council services also publish their own performance reports throughout the year.
- 6.10 Audit Scotland, in its "Inverclyde Council Management Report 2019/20", stated that progress can be seen to be made by the Council towards the achievement of outcomes and that a clear link is in place between corporate priorities, desired outcomes and performance indicators at both a local and national level. This assessment would indicate that the Council is making good progress in this area.
- 6.11 As part of its overall approach to delivering continuous improvement, the Council will continue to strengthen its work around the measurement and reporting of outcomes, including engaging with experts, learning from good practice elsewhere and building on local strengths. Locality planning for example, provides an opportunity for ongoing engagement with our customers and stakeholders to help us assess the results of what we do and the impact being achieved.

### **C) Inverclyde Best Value Assurance Report (BVAR)**

- 6.12 The Inverclyde Council BVAR published in June 2017 contained a number of key recommendations which were developed into an Improvement Plan, with progress reported to this Committee every six months. Of the original 10 BVAR improvement actions, 6 have been reported as complete since March 2020. In addition to the BVAR Improvement Plan, the remaining 4 actions also feature in the current CDIPs. Additional information is provided below:

**Action. Community Empowerment:** To progress community empowerment to the level that the Act requires, the Council will need to further develop the capacity of communities. It will need to raise awareness of the possibilities for communities, and look at the

level of funding and staffing required to work with communities to progress initiatives including the transfer of assets and participatory budgeting.

**Comment:** In addition to the BVAR Improvement Plan and CDIP progress reports on this, the Policy and Resources Committee also receives more detailed reports relating to the Council's specific responsibilities under the Community Empowerment Act.

**Action: Measuring impact and outcomes:** A range of improvement activity takes place across the Council but it needs to be clearer how this activity makes a difference to the outcomes the Council and its partners want to achieve.

**Comment:** Progress on this action is also reported to the Policy and Resources Committee in the Corporate Services CDIP Progress Report. More detail is provided in section 6b of this report.

**Action: City Deal:** The Council has experienced delays in its City Deal projects. Councillors and officers should continue to focus significant efforts on developing these projects with private sector partners.

**Comment:** Progress in relation to the Glasgow City Region City Deal is reported via the Environment and Regeneration CDIP progress report and also in separate reports to the Environment and Regeneration Committee. At a partnership level, progress is reported to the Inverclyde Alliance Board via the Repopulation Partnership quarterly performance reporting.

**Action: Shared Services:** Although not explicitly referenced in the BVAR recommendations, the Council's BVAR Improvement Plan also contains an action relating to Environment and Commercial Services and the development of Shared Services.

**Comment:** Similar to City Deal, this work stream is subject to additional scrutiny via the Environment and Regeneration CDIP progress report as well as individual reports to the Environment and Regeneration Committee and the Shared Services Joint Committee.

- 6.13 It is proposed that progress on the remaining actions continues to be reported through the CDIPs as well as separate reports as required, whilst updates in relation to Best Value will continue to be brought to this Committee as appropriate to ensure that the Committee is kept apprised of any wider developments in relation to Best Value, both locally and nationally.

## 7.0 IMPLICATIONS

### 7.1 Financial Implications

Cost Centre	Budget heading	Budget year	Proposed spend this report	Virement from	Other comments
	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Financial Implications - Annually Recurring Costs/(Savings)

Cost centre	Budget heading	With effect from	Annual net impact	Virement from (if applicable)	Other comments
n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

- 7.2 Human Resources: There are no direct human resources implications arising from this report.

7.3 Legal: There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

7.4 Equalities: The CDIPs set out their commitment to ensuring equality of opportunity in everything they do. There is a specific section in both plans about what the Directorate is doing in relation to equality and diversity.

(a) Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out?

	YES
X	NO – This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a substantive change to an existing policy, function or strategy. Therefore, no Equality Impact Assessment is required.

(b) Fairer Scotland Duty

If this report affects or proposes any major strategic decision:-

Has there been active consideration of how this report's recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome?

	YES – A written statement showing how this report's recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage has been completed.
X	NO

(c) Data Protection

Has a Data Protection Impact Assessment been carried out?

	YES – This report involves data processing which may result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals.
X	NO

7.5 Repopulation: The provision of services that are subject to close scrutiny with the aim of delivering continuous improvement for current and potential citizens of Inverclyde supports the Council's priority of retaining and enhancing the local population.

## 8.0 CONSULTATION

8.1 None,

## 9.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

9.1 None.

**APPENDIX: HOW INVERCLYDE COUNCIL IS MEETING THE ACCOUNTS COMMISSION SPI DIRECTION, 2018**

Each council will report a range of information in the following areas:

<b>Statutory Performance Indicator 1: <i>Improving local services and local outcomes</i></b>			
<b>SPI 1 Criteria</b>		<b>Inverclyde Council 2020/21 (in place)</b>	<b>Inverclyde Council 2021/22 (planned)</b>
A.	Performance in improving local public services, provided by (i) the council itself and (ii) by the council in conjunction with its partners and communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corporate Plan Annual Report</li> <li>• Annual Performance Report (SPIs)</li> <li>• Dedicated performance webpages with links to service performance reports</li> <li>• CDIP performance reports</li> <li>• LGBF Annual Performance Report</li> <li>• Inverclyde Outcomes Improvement Plan Annual Report</li> <li>• Quarterly Performance Reports on strategic priorities (available on Inverclyde Alliance Board papers)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corporate Plan Annual Report</li> <li>• Annual Performance Report (SPIs)</li> <li>• Dedicated performance webpages with links to service performance reports</li> <li>• CDIP performance reports</li> <li>• LGBF Annual Performance Report</li> <li>• Inverclyde Outcomes Improvement Plan Annual Report</li> <li>• Quarterly Performance Reports on strategic priorities</li> <li>• Covid-19 Recovery Plans</li> </ul>
B.	Progress against the desired outcomes agreed with its partners and communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corporate Plan Annual Report</li> <li>• Inverclyde Outcomes Improvement Plan Annual Report</li> <li>• Quarterly Performance Reports on strategic priorities (available on Inverclyde Alliance Board papers)</li> <li>• Strategic Needs Assessments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corporate Plan Annual Report</li> <li>• Inverclyde Outcomes Improvement Plan Annual Report</li> <li>• Quarterly Performance Reports on strategic priorities</li> <li>• Strategic Needs Assessments</li> <li>• Covid-19 Partnership Recovery Plan</li> <li>• Progress reports on Locality Plans</li> </ul>



**APPENDIX: HOW INVERCLYDE COUNCIL IS MEETING THE ACCOUNTS COMMISSION SPI DIRECTION, 2018**

<b>Statutory Performance Indicator 2: <i>Demonstrating Best Value</i></b>			
<b>SPI2 Criteria</b>		<b>Inverclyde Council 2020/21 (in place)</b>	<b>Inverclyde Council 2021/22 (planned)</b>
A.	The council's assessment of how it is performing against its duty of Best Value, and how it plans to improve against this assessment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performance pages contain an extensive range of key performance indicators</li> <li>• Self-evaluation</li> <li>• Financial Strategy, Statements and Annual Audited Accounts published on website</li> <li>• Internal Audit Reports / Assessments</li> <li>• BVAR reports of other Council scrutinised by CMT and brought to P&amp;R Committee</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performance pages contain an extensive range of key performance indicators</li> <li>• Self-evaluation findings (using BV thematic criteria)</li> <li>• Financial Strategy, Statements and Annual Audited Accounts published on website</li> <li>• Internal Audit Reports / Assessments</li> <li>• BVAR reports of other Council scrutinised by CMT and brought to P&amp;R Committee</li> </ul>
B.	Audit assessments of its performance against its Best Value duty, and how it has responded to these assessments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BVAR on Inverclyde Council</li> <li>• BVAR Improvement Plan progress reports</li> <li>• Annual Audit Report</li> <li>• Inverclyde Council Management Report</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BVAR on Inverclyde Council</li> <li>• BVAR Improvement Plan progress reports</li> <li>• Annual Audit Report</li> <li>• Inverclyde Council Management Report</li> </ul>
C.	In particular, how it (in conjunction with its partners as appropriate) has engaged with and responded to its diverse communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inverclyde Citizens' Panel</li> <li>• Individual Locality Planning events</li> <li>• Individual consultation undertaken by services on specific issues e.g. tackling poverty</li> <li>• 'Our Place Our Future' Survey results published on website</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inverclyde Citizens' Panel</li> <li>• Communication and Engagement Groups</li> <li>• Individual consultation undertaken by services on specific issues</li> <li>• 'Our Place Our Future' Survey results published on website</li> </ul>

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<b>Report To:</b>	<b>Policy &amp; Resources Committee</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>14 September 2021</b>
<b>Report By:</b>	<b>Chief Executive, Interim Service Director, Corporate Services &amp; Organisational Recovery, Corporate Director Education, Communities &amp; Organisational Development</b>	<b>Report No:</b>	<b>FIN/53/21/AP/AE</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Angela Edmiston</b>	<b>Contact No:</b>	<b>01475 712143</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Revenue Budget Updates</b>		

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## 1.0 PURPOSE

1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise Committee of the 2020/21 Revenue Budget outturn and the 2021/22 projected outturn for the Policy & Resources Committee. Report also details the position of the General Fund Reserve Budget including a 2021/22 COVID update.

## 2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Committee's own budget out-turned an underspend of £646,000 in 2020/21, which was an increase in expenditure of £40,000 since reported to the period 11, as detailed in Appendix 1. The major variances making up this underspend were an underspend within the Inflation Contingencies offset by under recoveries within various Legal Licence budget lines and Internal Resource Interest.
- 2.2 The total revised Committee budget for 2021/22 is £18,187,000. This excludes Earmarked Reserves of £2,474,000. The latest projection, excluding Earmarked Reserves, is an overspend of £125,000, service breakdown and detailed material variances is detailed in Appendices 3 & 4. This projection excludes COVID19 expenditure which is shown against the COVID19 Reserve Fund. The main variances making up this overspend are a projected overspend within employee costs and an under-recovery for Statutory Additions income.
- 2.3 There is a projected underspend in the year of £30,630 within the Common Good Fund resulting in a projected surplus fund balance of £131,810 at 31 March 2022, breakdown included within Appendix 5. This is largely attributed to the cancellation of 2 events due to lockdown.
- 2.4 The Committee's own Earmarked Reserves for 2021/22 totals £2,474,000 of which £870,000 is projected to be spent in the current financial year. To date expenditure of £59,000 (2.38%) has been incurred which is £9,000 more than the phased budget. The Earmarked Reserves reported in Appendix 6 excludes Earmarked Reserves for Asset Plans and Strategic Funds.
- 2.5 It can be seen from Appendix 7 that as at 31 July 2021 the General Fund is projecting a £231,000 overspend (excluding Health & Social Directorate) which represents 0.1% of the net Revenue Budget. The position comprises, Education & Communities Committee currently projecting £220,000 underspend, Policy & Resources Committee £125,000 overspend and £326,000 overspend within the Environment & Regeneration Committee. Further details have been reported to the individual Committees. It should be noted this position assumes that the 2021/22 pay inflation pressure will be contained within the overall inflation allowance.

- 2.6 Appendix 8 shows the latest position in respect of overall Earmarked Reserves, excluding those relating to Asset Plans and Funding Models, it can be seen that as at 31 July 2021 expenditure totalled £406,000 which equates to 6.68% of the planned spend in 2021/22. It can also be seen from Appendix 8 that at 31 July 2021 actual expenditure is £17,000 more than phased budget.
- 2.7 Appendix 9 shows the latest position in respect of the General Fund Reserves and shows that the projected balance at 31 July is £4.659 million which is £659,000 more than the minimum recommended balance of £4 million. This position is prior to the conclusion of the audit of the 2020/21 Accounts. The audited position will be incorporated within the November Committee report.
- 2.8 Appendix 10 lists a number of adjustments to be applied as part of the 2022/23 Revenue Budget. Further adjustments will be presented to future Committees.
- 2.9 Appendix 11 highlights the current position of the COVID Fund. Expenditure of £14.932m will be funded from Government Grant to be received 2021/22 and funding carried forward from 2020/21 as an Earmarked Reserve. As seen from Appendix 11, there is £1.061 million unallocated contingency to meet any unbudgeted costs associated with Covid from 2021/22 onwards.
- 2.10 On the 26 August the Environment & Regeneration Committee agreed to remit a request for up to £1 million funding to allow a revised Clune Park Estate Purchase Plan to be progressed by Officers. It is proposed that should Committee approve the funding that the source of funding be finalised as part of the 2022/23 Budget.

### **3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Committee notes the update in respect of the Policy & Resources Committee budget including the 2020/21 Revenue Budget out-turn and the 2021/22 projected overspend of £125,000.
- 3.2 It is recommended that the Committee notes the projected 2021/22 surplus of £30,630 for the Common Good Budget.
- 3.3 It is recommended that the Committee notes the overall overspend of £231,000 projected as at Period 4, 31 July 2021 for the General Fund, its overall Earmarked Reserves position and the position of the Free Reserves.
- 3.4 It is recommended that the Committee approve the 2022/23 Budget Adjustments listed in Appendix 10.
- 3.5 It is recommended that the Committee notes the update relating to COVID expenditure and funding shown in Appendix 11.
- 3.6 It is recommended that the Committee approve the allocation of £1 million towards the Clune Park Estate Purchase Plan and that the source of funding be finalised as part of the 2022/23 Budget.

**Aubrey Fawcett**  
**Chief Executive**

**Alan Puckrin**  
**Interim Service Director**  
**Corporate Services &**  
**Organisational Recovery**

**Ruth Binks**  
**Corporate Director**  
**Education, Communities**  
**& Organisational Development**

## 4.0 BACKGROUND

4.1 The Council Budget was agreed in March 2021 and approved a budget of £18.231million for the Policy & Resources Committee. This report provides an update on all matters relating to the Committee budget and the General Fund as at 31 July, 2021.

## 5.0 2020/21 COMMITTEE OUT-TURN

5.1 Appendix 1 details the Service variations from budget in 2020/21 with detailed material variances noted below.

5.2 The following material variances relate to the Environment, Regeneration & Resources Directorate:

### **Finance - £127,000 underspend (£37,000 increase in underspend since P11)**

Employee Costs: Final outturn is £108,000 underspend due to additional turnover savings being achieved. This is a £17,000 increase in turnover achieved since last reported to the Committee.

Administration Costs: £151,000 final underspend, an increase in underspend of £5,000 since last reported to Committee. This is mainly due to £134,000 underspend within Legal Expenses which is off-set within income.

Income: Final over-recovery of £167,000, this is mainly due to an under recovery within Legal Expenses, and overspend the Housing Subsidy off-set with recharge income within ICT.

### **Legal & Property - £61,000 overspend (£17,000 decrease in costs since P11)**

Income: Final outturn is £76,000 under-recovery, mainly due to under-recovery for various licences

5.3 The following material variances relate to the Education, Communities & Organisational Development Directorate:

### **Organisational Development, Policy & Communications - £14,000 overspend (£8,000 increase in overspend since P11)**

Various projections all of which are below £20,000.

5.4 The following material variances relate to the Miscellaneous budget:

### **Miscellaneous – £600,000 underspend (£88,000 decrease in underspend since P11)**

Non-Pay Inflation Contingency: Final underspend of £419,000 based on current estimated calls on inflation contingency. No change since last reported to Committee at P11.

Pay Inflation Contingency: Final underspend of £230,000 due to lower than anticipated requirements, mainly auto-enrolment costs being contained within the Service. No change since last reported to Committee at P11.

Internal Resource Interest: Final outturn is £61,000 under-recovery. This was not reported at P11 Committee.

5.5 The following material variances relate to the Chief Executive budget:

**Chief Executive – £6,000 overspend (£2,000 decrease in overspend since P11)**

Various minor projections all of which are below £10,000.

**6.0 2021/22 COMMITTEE CURRENT POSITION**

6.1 The current projection for 2021/22 is an overspend of £125,000. The material variances are identified in Appendix 4.

6.2 The following material variances relate to the Environment, Regeneration & Resources Directorate:

**Finance - £93,000 overspend**

Material Variances are noted below;

Employee Costs: £43,000 projected overspend, mainly due to an over-recovery of turnover savings within Finance and Revenues partly off-setting unachieved turnover target to within ICT.

Administration Costs: Projecting £59,000 underspend. This underspend is mainly due to £28,000 underspend within Mobile Phone recharges and £22,000 underspend within Line Rental recharges which are off-set with an under-recovery within income

Income: An under-recovery of £104,000 is being projected; £28,000 within Mobile Phone recharges, £22,000 under-recovery for Line Rental recharges as off-set within Administration Costs above and an over recovery of ICT recharges to internal customers. In addition there is a projected £81,000 under-recovery within Statutory Additions income in line with 2020/21, officers are investigating the reasons for this in more detail.

**Legal & Property - £14,000 underspend**

Projected variances are all below £20,000.

6.3 The following material variances relate to the Education, Communities & Organisational Development Directorate:

**Organisational Development, Policy & Communications - £32,000 overspend**

Employee Costs: £32,000 projected overspend, mainly due to unachieved turnover target to date.

6.4 The following material variances relate to the Miscellaneous budget.

**Miscellaneous – outturn on budget**

All budgets within Miscellaneous are projected on target however this assumes that the pay award can be contained in the overall Inflation Contingency. Updates will be provided to future meetings.

6.5 The following position relates to the Chief Executive budget:

**Chief Executive – £14,000 overspend**

Projected variances are all below £20,000.

## **7.0 COMMON GOOD FUND**

7.1 The Common Good Fund is projecting a surplus fund balance of £30,630. Which results in projected surplus fund balance of £131,810 at 31 March 2022.

## **8.0 COMMITTEE EARMARKED RESERVES**

8.1 Appendix 6 gives a detailed breakdown of the current earmarked reserves position. Total funding is £2,474,000 of which £870,000 is projected to be spent in 2021/22 and the remaining balance of £1,604,000 to be carried forward to 2022/23 and beyond. It can be seen that expenditure of £59,000 has been achieved which is £9,000 over that the phased budgeted spend to date and represents 6.78% of the annual projected spend.

## **9.0 GENERAL REVENUE FUND POSITION**

9.1 It can be seen from Appendix 9 that as at 31 July 2021 the General Fund is projecting a £231,000 overspend (excluding Health & Social Directorate) which represents 0.1% of the net Revenue Budget.

9.2 The overspend consists of the Education & Communities Committee currently projecting an underspend with all other Committees projecting overspends:-

The main issues relating to the four Service Committees are:-

Policy & Resources Committee – Projected overspend of £125,000 (0.69%) mainly due to overspends within employee costs and an under-recovery for Statutory Additions.

Environment & Regeneration – Projected overspend of £326,000 (1.45%) mainly due to an under-recovery for Cremations and Trade Waste income lines and overspends within Residual and Green Waste mainly due to increased tonnage.

Education & Communities – Projected underspend of £220,000 (0.24%) mainly due to additional turnover savings achieved.

Health & Social Care – Projected overspend of £554,000 (1.01%) overspends within external residual placements within Children & Families and fostering, adoption and kinship. Any overspend will be met from the IJB Reserves at the year end.

9.3 Appendix 8 shows the latest position in respect of Earmarked Reserves, excluding those relating to Asset Plans and Funding Models, it can be seen that as at 31 July 2021 expenditure totalled £406,000 which equates to 6.68% of the planned spend in 2021/22. It can also be seen from Appendix 8 that at 31 July 2021 actual expenditure is ££17,000 more than phased budget.

9.4 Appendix 9 shows the latest position in respect of the General Fund Reserves and shows that the projected balance at 31 July is £4.659 million which is £659,000 more than the minimum recommended balance of £4 million. This is based on the 2020/21 unaudited accounts and the next report will reflect the audited accounts position.

## **10.0 2022/23 BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS**

10.1 Appendix 10 details £200,000 budget adjustments to be applied from 2022/23. There are five expenditure budgets that can be reduced mainly due to the Scottish Government now supporting this expenditure rather than council core revenue budget.

## 11.0 COVID19 – COST & INCOME BREAKDOWN

- 11.1 It can be noted from Appendix 11 that £14.932million has been allocated for COVID19; £11.547million in 2021/22 and £3.358million in 2022/23. The detailed breakdown within appendix 11 is an estimate and will change as COVID19 pressures change.
- 11.2 This expenditure is matched from income consisting of; £7.875 Government Grants, £70,000 Other Funding and £7.805 unused Council Reserves from 2020/21.
- 11.3 It can be seen from Appendix 11 that there is an unallocated Contingency of £1.061 million which will be used to meet any unbudgeted costs associated with Covid from 2021/22 onwards.

## 12.0 VIREMENT/REMITTS

- 12.1 No virement to be reported at P4.
- 12.2 On the 26 August the Environment & Regeneration Committee agreed to remit a request for up to £1 million funding to allow a revised Clune Park Estate Purchase Plan to be progressed by Officers. It is proposed that should Committee approve the funding that the source of funding be finalised as part of the 2022/23 Budget.

## 13.0 IMPLICATIONS

### 13.1 Finance

#### Financial Implications:

##### One off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Years	Proposed Spend this Report £000	Virement From	Other Comments
Clune Park	Property Purchase	2021/22 onwards	1000		Funding source to be finalised as part of the 2022/23 Budget.

##### Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact £000	Virement From (If Applicable)	Other Comments
Various		2022/23	(£200)		See Appendix 10

### 13.2 Legal

There are no specific legal implications arising from this report.

### 13.3 Human Resources

There are no specific human resources implications arising from this report.

### 13.4 Equalities

(a) Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out?

Yes See attached appendix

No This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a change to an existing policy, function or strategy. Therefore, no Equality Impact Assessment is required.

(b) Fairer Scotland Duty

If this report affects or proposes any major strategic decision:-

Has there been active consideration of how this report's recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome?

<input type="checkbox"/>	YES – A written statement showing how this report's recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage has been completed.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO

(c) Data Protection

Has a Data Protection Impact Assessment been carried out?

<input type="checkbox"/>	YES – This report involves data processing which may result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO

### 13.5 Repopulation

There are no repopulation issues arising from this report.

## 14.0 CONSULTATIONS

14.1 The CMT support the contents of this report and the MBWG support the proposals in Appendix 10.

## 15.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

15.1 There are no background papers for this report.



**REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT****2020/21 OUTTURN**

<b>OBJECTIVE ANALYSIS</b>	Revised Budget 2020/21 £000	Out-turn 2020/21 £000	Variance to Budget £000	Variance to Budget %	Movement since P11 £000
Finance	8,032	7,905	(127)	-1.58%	(37)
Legal Services	1,862	1,923	61	3.28%	(17)
<b>Total Net Expenditure Environment, Regeneration &amp; Resources</b>	<b>9,894</b>	<b>9,828</b>	<b>(66)</b>	<b>1.69%</b>	<b>(54)</b>
Organisational Development, Policy & Communications	2,086	2,100	14	0.67%	8
<b>Total Net Expenditure Education, Communities &amp; Organisational Development</b>	<b>2,086</b>	<b>2,100</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>0.67%</b>	<b>8</b>
Chief Executive	321	327	6	1.87%	(2)
Miscellaneous	3,769	3,169	(600)	-15.92%	88
<b>TOTAL NET EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>16,070</b>	<b>15,424</b>	<b>(646)</b>	<b>-11.68%</b>	<b>40</b>
Earmarked Reserves	(380)	(380)			0
<b>Total Net Expenditure excluding Earmarked Reserves</b>	<b>15,690</b>	<b>15,044</b>	<b>(646)</b>	<b>-4.12%</b>	<b>40</b>

**Policy & Resources Budget Movement - 2021/22****Period 4: 1st April - 31st July 2021**

Service	Approved Budget	Movements			Revised Budget	
	2021/22 £000	Inflation £000	Virement £000	Supplementary Budgets £000	Transferred to EMR £000	2021/22 £000
Finance	6,415	8				6,423
Legal	1,846		124			1,970
Organisational Development, Policy & Communications	2,073					2,073
Chief Exec	323					323
Miscellaneous	7,574	(176)				7,398
<b>Totals</b>	<b>18,231</b>	<b>(168)</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>18,187</b>

**Supplementary Budget Detail**

£000

Inflation

Finance/ICT - inflationary uplift

8

Miscellaneous:

Non Pay Inflation Contingency

(176)

(168)

Virements

Legal - Council Officers transfer from Property Services

124

124

**Total Inflation & Virements****(44)**

**REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT****CURRENT POSITION****PERIOD 4: 1st April 2021- 31st July 2021**

2020/21 Actual £000	SUBJECTIVE ANALYSIS	Approved Budget 2021/22 £000	Revised Budget 2021/22 £000	Projected Out-turn 2021/22 £000	Projected Over/(Under) Spend £000	Percentage Over/(Under)
8,526	Employee Costs	7,413	7,537	7,607	70	0.9%
411	Property Costs	441	441	441	0	-
672	Supplies & Services	961	961	966	5	0.5%
2	Transport & Plant	4	4	4	0	-
1,102	Administration Costs	1,320	1,320	1,261	(59)	(4.5%)
30,516	Payments to Other Bodies	37,802	37,634	37,634	0	-
(26,649)	Income	(29,710)	(29,710)	(29,601)	109	(0.4%)
<b>14,580</b>	<b>TOTAL NET EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>18,231</b>	<b>18,187</b>	<b>18,312</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>0.7%</b>
	Earmarked reserves				0	
<b>14,580</b>	<b>Total Net Expenditure excluding Earmarked Reserves</b>	<b>18,231</b>	<b>18,187</b>	<b>18,312</b>	<b>125</b>	

2020/21 Actual £000	OBJECTIVE ANALYSIS	Approved Budget 2021/22 £000	Revised Budget 2021/22 £000	Projected Out-turn 2021/22 £000	Projected Over/(Under) Spend £000	Percentage Over/(Under)
7,517	Finance	6,415	6,423	6,516	93	1.4%
1,883	Legal Services	1,846	1,970	1,956	(14)	(0.7%)
<b>9,400</b>	<b>Total Net Expenditure Environment, Regeneration &amp; Resources</b>	<b>8,261</b>	<b>8,393</b>	<b>8,472</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>0.9%</b>
2,093	Organisational Development, Policy & Communications	2,073	2,073	2,105	32	1.5%
<b>2,093</b>	<b>Total Net Expenditure Education, Communities &amp; Organisational Development</b>	<b>2,073</b>	<b>2,073</b>	<b>2,105</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>1.5%</b>
327	Chief Executive	323	323	337	14	4.3%
2,760	Miscellaneous	7,574	7,398	7,398	0	-
<b>14,580</b>	<b>TOTAL NET EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>18,231</b>	<b>18,187</b>	<b>18,312</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>0.7%</b>
	Earmarked reserves				0	
<b>14,580</b>	<b>Total Net Expenditure excluding Earmarked Reserves</b>	<b>18,231</b>	<b>18,187</b>	<b>18,312</b>	<b>125</b>	

	Approved Reserves £000	Revised Reserves £000	21/22 Budget £000	Projected Spend £000	Projected Carry Forward £000
Earmarked Reserves	2,474	2,474	870	870	1,604
<b>Policy &amp; Resources Overall Expenditure</b>	<b>2,474</b>	<b>2,474</b>	<b>870</b>	<b>870</b>	<b>1,604</b>

**POLICY & RESOURCES****REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT****MATERIAL VARIANCES (EXCLUDING EARMARKED RESERVES)****PERIOD 4: 1st April 2021 - 31st July 2021**

Outturn 2020/21 £000	Budget Heading	Budget 2021/22 £000	Proportion of Budget £000	Actual to 31/07/21 £000	Projection 2021/22 £000	Over/(Under) Budget £000
	<b><u>Finance/ICT</u></b>					
4,579	Employee Costs	4,051	1,243	1,249	4,094	43
308	Admin costs - Mobile Phone Recharges	333	111	125	305	(28)
55	Admin Costs - ICT Line Rental Recharges	59	20	19	37	(22)
(215)	Income - Statutory Additions	(294)	(98)	(68)	(213)	81
(112)	Income Recharges	0	0	(34)	(34)	(34)
(306)	Income - Mobile Phone Recharges	(333)	(111)	(124)	(305)	28
(55)	Income - ICT Line Rental Recharges	(58)	(19)	(29)	(36)	22
	<b><u>Organisational Development, Policy &amp; Communications</u></b>					
1,771	Employee Costs	1,768	543	545	1,800	32
<b>6,025</b>	<b>TOTAL MATERIAL VARIANCES</b>	<b>5,526</b>	<b>1,688</b>	<b>1,683</b>	<b>5,648</b>	<b>122</b>

**COMMON GOOD FUND****REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT 2021/22****PERIOD 4 : 1st April 2021 to 31st July 2021**

	<b>Final Outturn 2020/21</b>	<b>Approved Budget 2021/22</b>	<b>Budget to Date 2021/22</b>	<b>Actual to Date 2021/22</b>	<b>Projected Outturn 2021/22</b>
<b><u>PROPERTY COSTS</u></b>	<b>24,420</b>	<b>29,000</b>	<b>9,300</b>	<b>24,490</b>	<b>34,500</b>
Repairs & Maintenance	490	9,000	3,000		9,000
Rates	21,020	19,000	6,300	24,490	24,500
Property Insurance	2,910	1,000			1,000
<b><u>ADMINISTRATION COSTS</u></b>	<b>24,190</b>	<b>7,700</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>3,140</b>	<b>12,700</b>
Sundries	17,990	1,500	500	3,140	6,500
Commercial Rent Management Recharge	2,200	2,200			2,200
Recharge for Accountancy	4,000	4,000			4,000
<b><u>OTHER EXPENDITURE</u></b>	<b>1,110</b>	<b>61,400</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>430</b>	<b>31,400</b>
Christmas Lights Switch On		10,500			10,500
Gourock Highland Games		20,000			0
Armistice Service	1,670	8,300		430	8,300
Comet Festival		10,000			0
Fireworks		12,600			12,600
Bad Debt Provision	(560)				
<b><u>INCOME</u></b>	<b>(147,280)</b>	<b>(105,000)</b>	<b>(34,800)</b>	<b>(51,030)</b>	<b>(109,230)</b>
Property Rental	(167,850)	(158,050)	(52,700)	(77,130)	(158,050)
Void Rents	55,760	53,550	17,900	26,130	48,920
Internal Resources Interest	(90)	(500)		(30)	(100)
Disposal of Land	(35,100)				
<b><u>NET ANNUAL EXPENDITURE</u></b>	<b>(97,560)</b>	<b>(6,900)</b>	<b>(25,000)</b>	<b>(22,970)</b>	<b>(30,630)</b>
<b><u>EARMARKED FUNDS</u></b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b><u>TOTAL NET EXPENDITURE</u></b>	<b>(97,560)</b>	<b>(6,900)</b>	<b>(25,000)</b>	<b>(22,970)</b>	<b>(30,630)</b>

Fund Balance as at 31st March 2021

101,180

Projected Fund Balance as at 31st March 2022

131,810**Notes:****1 Rates (Empty Properties)**

Rates are currently being paid on empty properties, projection reflects current Rates levels however all historic Rates costs are being examined to ensure all appropriate empty property relief has been obtained. Any subsequent credit will be included in future reports.

**2 Current Empty Properties are:**Vacant since:

12 Bay St  
6 John Wood Street  
10 John Wood Street  
15 John Wood Street  
16 John Wood Street  
17 John Wood Street

April 2015, currently being marketed  
January 2019  
August 2018  
June 2017, currently being marketed  
October 2019, currently being marketed  
March 2014, currently being marketed

## EARMARKED RESERVES POSITION STATEMENT

COMMITTEE: Policy &amp; Resources

C a t e g o r y	Project	Lead Officer/ Responsible Manager	Total Funding	Phased Budget To Period 4	Actual To Period 4	Projected Spend	Amount to be Earmarked for 2022/23 & Beyond	Lead Officer Update
			2021/22	2021/22	2021/22	2021/22	2022/23 & Beyond	
			£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	
C	Equal Pay	Steven McNab	200			200	0	Balance for equal pay relates to janitors tied houses and other employee Equal Pay costs and is under review on an annual basis.
C	Digital Strategy	Alan Puckrin	194	0	6	28	166	Project officer £88k over 2 years starting 01/10/21.
C	Welfare Reform - Operational	Alan Puckrin	216	30	28	75	141	Employee costs to 31.3.22. Further £20k 22/23.
C	Revenue Contingency	Alan Puckrin	43	0	0	18	25	£23k currently uncommitted.
C	Anti-Poverty Fund	Alan Puckrin	996	0	5	200	796	Proposals to Sept P&R
C	Resilience & Insurance Claims - Training	Steven McNab	20	0	0	20	0	HR training as required eg. £5k moving and handling training, £1.5k face fit testing & HR Mental Health training.
C	GDPR	Anne Sinclair	50	0	0	19	31	Information governance system contract awarded (2yr+1yr+1yr). Spend committed - £10k per year. Corporate training is being organised.
C	Promotion and Tourism (ERR)	George Barbour	50		0	50	0	Additional marketing and support for events.
C	Recruitment of Chief Executive	Steven McNab	20	10	10	20	0	Recruitment costs to cover recruitment of new Chief Exec which has now taken place.
C	Covid Recovery - Increased Occ Health Provision - 24 Months	Steven McNab	30	10	10	30	0	Approved P&R 25/05/21 - Covid Recovery Plans
C	Covid Recovery - Additional HR Support to Services - 24 Months	Steven McNab	95	0	0	29	66	HR Advisor post to start mid August
C	Covid Recovery - Flu Vaccines	Steven McNab	15			15	0	Budget to be fully spent in 2021/22.
C	Covid Recovery - Additional ICT Service Desk Technicians - 18 Months	Alan Puckrin	105	0	0	26	79	Posts are being recruited.
C	Covid Recovery - 10% Contingency for new initiatives/increased costs	Alan Puckrin	440	0	0	155	285	Approved P&R 25/05/21 - Covid Recovery Plans
<b>Total Category C to E</b>			<b>2,474</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>885</b>	<b>1,589</b>	

Policy & Resources CommitteeRevenue Budget Monitoring ReportPosition as at 31th July 2021

Committee	Approved Budget 2021/22	Revised Budget 2021/22	Projected Out-turn 2021/22	Projected Over/(Under) Spend	Percentage Variance
	£,000's	£,000's	£,000's	£,000's	
Policy & Resources	18,231	18,063	18,188	125	0.69%
Environment & Regeneration	22,691	22,515	22,841	326	1.45%
Education & Communities <b>(Note 1)</b>	95,925	92,581	92,361	(220)	(0.24%)
Health & Social Care	54,652	54,652	55,206	554	1.01%
<b>Committee Sub-Total</b>	<b>191,499</b>	<b>187,811</b>	<b>188,596</b>	<b>785</b>	<b>0.42%</b>
Loan Charges (Including SEMP)	11,586	16,174	16,174	0	0.00%
Identified Savings <b>(Note 2)</b>	4	4	4	0	0.00%
Earmarked Reserves	0	645	645	0	0.00%
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>203,089</b>	<b>204,634</b>	<b>205,419</b>	<b>785</b>	<b>0.38%</b>
<b>Financed By:</b>					
General Revenue Grant/Non Domestic Rates	(169,418)	(170,963)	(170,963)	0	0.00%
Contribution from General Reserves	(1,049)	(1,049)	(1,049)	0	100.00%
Council Tax <b>(Note 3)</b>	(32,622)	(32,622)	(32,622)	0	0.00%
Integration Joint Board - Contribution to Reserves	0	0	(554)	(554)	100.00%
<b>Net Expenditure</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>231</b>	<b>231</b>	

**Note 1 - Reduction reflects loans charges and earmarked reserves.**

**Note 2 - Identified savings to be allocated**

**Note 3 - Council Tax reflects the estimated impact in collection rates due to COVID**

**Earmarked Reserves Position Statement**

**Appendix 8**

**Summary**

<u>Committee</u>	<u>Total Funding 2021/22</u>	<u>Phased Budget to</u>	<u>Actual Spend To 31 July 2021</u>	<u>Variance Actual to Phased Budget</u>	<u>Projected Spend 2021/22</u>	<u>Earmarked 2022/23 &amp; Beyond</u>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
Education & Communities	4,537	98	98	0	2,857	1,680
Health & Social Care	3,123	199	209	10	1,013	2,110
Regeneration & Environment	6,623	42	40	(2)	1,334	5,289
Policy & Resources	2,474	50	59	9	870	1,604
	16,757	389	406	17	6,074	10,683

<u>2021/22 %age Spend Against Projected</u>	<u>2021/22 %age Over/(Under) Spend Against Phased Budget</u>
3.43%	0.00%
20.63%	5.03%
3.00%	(4.76%)
6.78%	18.00%
6.68%	4.37%

**Actual Spend v Phased Budget Ahead Phasing = £17k 4.37%**

**Last Update (Period 3) Behind of Phasing = (£12k)**

**Movement in slippage v Phasing £29k**



**Appendix 9**

**GENERAL FUND RESERVE POSITION**  
**Position as at 31/07/21**

	<u>£000</u>	<u>£000</u>
Unaudited Balance 31/03/21 <b>Note 1</b>		4890
Projected Surplus/(Deficit) 2021/22	(231)	(231)
Projected Unallocated Balance 31/03/22		<b><u>4659</u></b>

**Minimum Reserve required is £4 million**

**Note 1** Any adjustments identified through the audit will be reported to November Policy & Resources Committee

**2022/23 Budget  
Adjustments for Sept Policy & Resources Committee**

	Savings 2022/23 £000	Savings 2023/24 £000	Comments	FTE
<b>ERR</b>				
1/				
2/				
3/				
<b>ECOD</b>				
1/ Clothing Grants- Substitution of existing Council funding with Scottish Government funding	70	70	Funding commenced August 2021 so there is a one off saving in 2021/22 as well	
2/ Curriculum Income Grant	56	56	Part of the 1st 100 days funding from the Scottish Government. As the Council ceased charging several years ago, this is found money	
3/ Music Tuition Income- Balance of Government funding	9	9	As part of the 1st 100 days commitment the Scottish Government is providing funding to Councils to stop charging for music tuition. This represents the difference between the funding and current income budget.	
4/ ASN Review -Net saving	60	60	Following a review of the job roles/ grades and levels of funding a saving has been identified. The review has previously been reported to the Education & Communities Committee	0
5/ Reduction in IL Management Fee- Transfer of Kirn Drive Community Centre	5	5	Follows approval of the transfer of the Kirn Drive Community Centre to the Scouts	
6/				
<b>HSCP</b>				
1/				
2/				
3/				
<b>Corporate</b>				
1/				
2/				
3/				
<b>Total</b>	200	200		0

16 August,2021

**COVID 19 Fund - Costs and Income 2021/22 on- Position as at 18.8.21**

Proposal	Total Estimated Cost £'000	Estimate 2021/22 £'000	Estimate 2022/23 £'000
<b>Education, Communities &amp; ODHR</b>			
Inverclyde Leisure	2,543	1,745	798
Balance from FSM/£100 payments grants	92	92	
Summer/Winter 2021 £100 payments	631	631	
FSM Holiday Payments Summer 21 - Easter 22	532	532	
Schools Digital Exclusion - Devices	37	37	
Loss of School Meal Income	0	0	
Lower provision of School Meals	0	0	
Loss of Wrapround income	30	30	
Cleaning/PPE 2021/22	182	182	
Additional School Cleaning costs	117	117	
Additional ELC Cleaning costs	40	40	
Allowance for Handsanitiser/PPE - Council Wide	100	100	
Balance of Education Recovery Grant	28	28	
Extra teachers & support staff-20/22	829	829	
Extra teachers & support staff -21/22	951	951	
Support for Education during lockdown	714	714	
Homeworking equipment	39	39	
Increased support for Health & Wellbeing of employees	35	35	

Comments
Based on net income loss and IL Draft 20/21 Figures. Post May21 P&R approval
£83k FSM and £9k £100 Easter payments balance. Funding shortfall in school holiday payments arising from £0.50/day extra Council payment plus £9k towards £100 payments below.
£408k from share of £23.066m Grant which = 80% of expected funding. Claim to be made for the balance which is estimated to be £100k.£123k vired from Hardship Fund to fund more generous qualifying criteria. £9k to come from B/Fwd Resources above
Share of £21.75million grant. Actual cost estimated to be £615k including £0.50/day extra cost funded from B/Fwd balance of £92k above
Share of £25million specific grant. £37k unused revenue grant carried forward
Figures to 30 June 2021. Fund from 20/21 ELC Underspend.
Balance of £220k Budget pressure net of £38k allocated to corporate estate
Covers period to 30.6.21 .Funded from £1.185m Recovery Grant
Funding to come from ELC 20/21 Underspend
Includes allowance for 21/22. Funded from £1.185m Recovery Grant
Balance of £1.185m Recovery Grant.
Funded by SG Grant for period to 30.6.22
Funded by £60 million SG Grant in 2021/22
Funded by SG £25m (Teachers) , Digital Inclusion £10m, Home Learning Support £10m. Total Council share £717k.Allocated, £180k Wifi, £206k extra delegated resources to schools and £331k teachers per Delegated Powers paper 2.2.21.
After transfer of £39k to ICT for headsets,
Increased staffing and Occupational Health costs

<b>Environment, Regeneration &amp; Resources</b>			
Increased Cleaning- Non School/ELC Buildings	38	38	
Planning income - reduction in demand	0	0	
Discretionary Business Grants	415	415	
Parental Employment Support Fund Boost	88	88	
2 x Temporary Business Development Officers	120	80	40
Vaccination Centre Costs 1.4.21-30.6.21	198	198	
Waste Collection - Social Distancing - Agency Drivers	118	118	

Non-School part of £220k Pressure funding
<b>Draft report prepared for CMT</b>
Funded by Government Grant
Funded by Government Grant
Funded from Town Centres EMR
Claimed from the SG. Relates to hires/staffing/transport
To 30.9.21

**COVID 19 Fund - Costs and Income 2021/22 on- Position as at 18.8.21**

Proposal	Total Estimated Cost £'000	Estimate 2021/22 £'000	Estimate 2022/23 £'000
Extra EHO/Trading Standards Resources	46	46	
ICT: Equipment for Homeworking	25	25	
Extra technicians to support School Digital Inclusion	85	65	20
Scottish Welfare Fund - Crisis Grants	174	174	
Administration of £130 CTR payments	20	20	
Self Isolation Support Grants Admin to 30.9.21	17	17	
Other minor Expenditure areas	0	0	

Comments
Funded from £2.9m SG Grant, £27k funded 21/22
Docking stations, screens, keyboards, headsets inc £39k transferred from HR Homeworking Fund for headsets
2 posts to 30.6.22. Funded from pressures thereafter
C/Fwd funded by increased Scottish Government Grant. Fully spend by 31.7.21
Extra resource to manage the circa 10,000 payments
To help fund DPT costs in 21/22 of Self Isolation Support Grants

Corporate Expenditure			
Council Tax, Loss of Income due to reduced collection levels	125	125	
Council Tax Reduction	293	293	
Hardship Fund C/Fwd	426	426	
Level 4 Restrictions-C/fwd balance	248	248	
Recovery Plans- Short Term Actions	35	35	
Recovery Plans -Medium/Longer Term Actions	4,500	2,000	2,500
<b>Unallocated Contingency</b>	<b>1,061</b>	<b>1,061</b>	
<b>Gross Expenditure -</b>	<b>14,932</b>	<b>11,574</b>	<b>3,358</b>
<b>Government Grants</b>			
£100 2021 Summer/Christmas- Admin	(20)	(20)	
£100 2021 Summer/Christmas Payments	(408)	(408)	
£100 2021 -Claim for balance (est)	(100)	(100)	
Low Income £130 CTR Payment-Administration	(77)	(77)	
2021/22 FSM Holiday Payments	(532)	(532)	
EHO/Trading Standards	(27)	(27)	
Test & Protect 1.4.21-30.6.21	(39)	(39)	
Test & Protect 1.7.21-30.9.21	(38)	(38)	
SISG -Administration Costs	(17)	(17)	
Business Grants-Administration	(28)	(28)	
Vaccinations 2020/21	(149)	(149)	
Vaccinations 2021/22	(198)	(198)	
School Staffing 2021/22 Term	(951)	(951)	
General Covid support 28.1.21	(3,875)	(3,875)	
2021/22 Budget Announcement	(598)	(598)	

Based on a 0.75% reduction in 21/22 leading to a 0.375% increase in Bad Debt
No specific funding in 2021/22 .
Funding £100 CTR payments (£393k), Is after £123k virement for summer/winter 2021 £100 payments. £33k unallocated
<b>Use TBC</b>
£10 HLF Bid and £25k Economic Study
Approved March Council plus £500k per May P&R
<b>Balancing figure</b>
Share of £800,000 Grant-21/22 GRG
Share of £23.066m Grant- 21/22 GRG
To be claimed 31.8.21 and 31.1.22
Share of £3.82million Grant-21/22 GRG
Share of £21.75million Grant- 21/22 GRG
Share of Funding- GRG 21/22
Share of £2.275million - GRG 21/22
Share of £2.275million - GRG 21/22
Share of £823k Grant for 2021/22-Specific Grant
Share of £3 million -GRG 21/22
Specific Grant paid in 2021/22
Claim for 1.4.21-30.6.21 submitted 17.8.21
Share of £60million, 2021/22 GRG
Share of £259 million Grant -GRG 21/22
Share of £40million Grant- GRG 21/22

**COVID 19 Fund - Costs and Income 2021/22 on- Position as at 18.8.21**

Proposal	Total Estimated Cost £'000	Estimate 2021/22 £'000	Estimate 2022/23 £'000	Comments
<b>Gross Income</b>	<b>(7,057)</b>	<b>(7,057)</b>	<b>0</b>	
<b>Net Expenditure</b>	<b>7,875</b>	<b>4,517</b>	<b>3,358</b>	
<u>Other Funding</u>				
Early Years Grant Underspend 20/21	(70)	(70)		£30k Wraparound Income, £40k extra cleaning
Corporate Resources				
Resources carried forward from 2020/21	(7,805)	(7,805)		Carry forward of Unused SG Grants and Council reserves from 2020/21
	(7,875)	(7,875)	0	
Balance to be Funded	0	(3,358)	3,358	

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<b>Report To:</b>	<b>Policy &amp; Resources Committee</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>14 September 2021</b>
<b>Report By:</b>	<b>Chief Financial Officer</b>	<b>Report No:</b>	<b>FIN/52/21/AP/MT</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Matt Thomson</b>	<b>Contact No:</b>	<b>01475 712256</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Policy &amp; Resources Capital Budget and 2021/24 Capital Programme</b>		

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## 1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide Committee with the latest position of the Policy & Resources Capital Programme and the 2021/24 Capital Programme.

## 2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 On March 18 2021 the Council approved the 2021/24 Capital Programme as part of the overall Budget approval.
- 2.2 The Capital Programme reflects the confirmed 2021/22 capital grant and a revised estimate of capital grants for the period 2022/24. The significant reduction in the Capital Grant seen in 2020/21 continued into 2021/22 and the Scottish Government have advised that this is likely to remain the case until 2026/27, based on this the 2022/23 & 2023/24 estimated grants have also been reduced to £6.4m per year.
- 2.3 In order to address the reduction in Capital Resources the Council approved a number of measures including a reduction in the RAMP allowance to £2.4m from 2023/24 and the allocation of £1.7m from General Fund Reserves.
- 2.4 An over provision of projects against estimated resources of up to 5% is considered acceptable to allow for increased resources and/or cost reductions. Currently the Capital Programme is reporting a deficit of £2.775m which represents 4.62% of the 2021/24 resources.
- 2.5 The Policy & Resources capital budget is £3.136m and the current projection on budget. The budget for 2021/22 is £1.427m with no slippage being reported at this stage. Spend to date is £0.057m which is 4% of projected spend. Further detail on the Policy & Resources Capital Programme can be found in Appendix 1 and section 5 of the report.
- 2.6 As a result of material shortages and resultant project delays and price increases in the construction industry Policy & Resources Committee on 10<sup>th</sup> August approved the use of £100,000 Prudential Borrowing to borrow up to £1.6m to meet the potential increase in capital costs throughout 2021/22 and 2022/23. This £1.6m allowance is reflected in the Policy & Resources Capital Budget and will be allocated out to specific projects as the need is identified. All such allocations will be reported to this Committee.
- 2.7 In terms of the overall Capital Programme it can be seen from Appendix 3 that as at 31<sup>st</sup> July 2021 expenditure in 2021/22 was 11.2% of projected spend. Phasing and project spend has been reviewed by the budget holders and the relevant Director. The position in respect of each individual Committee is reported in Appendix 2 and Section 6 of the report. Overall committees are projecting to out turn on budget.
- 2.8 In the current year net advancement of 1.1% is currently being reported. This is due to advancement within the Education & Communities Committee (£0.269m) and Health & Social Care (£0.499) offset by slippage within Environment & Regeneration Committee (£0.538m).

2.9 The Council's City Deal projects lie outwith the General Fund Capital Programme and are not included in this report. Progress on the 3 City Deal projects is reported to Environment & Regeneration Committee.

### **3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

3.1 It is recommended that Committee note the current position of the 2021/24 Policy & Resources Capital Budget and that allocations from the £1.6m Cost Pressures Allowance will be reported to future Committees.

3.2 It is recommended that Committee note the current position of the 2021/24 Capital Programme.

**Alan Puckrin**  
**Chief Financial Officer**

## **4.0 BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 On March 18 2021 the Council approved the 2021/24 Capital Programme as part of the overall Budget approval.
- 4.2 The Capital Programme reflects the confirmed 2021/22 capital grant and a revised estimate of capital grants for the period 2022/24. The significant reduction in the Capital Grant seen in 2020/21 continued into 2021/22 and the Scottish Government have advised that this is likely to remain the case until 2026/27, based on this the 2022/23 & 2023/24 estimated grants have also been reduced to £6.4m per year.
- 4.3 In order to address the reduction in Capital Resources the Council approved a number of measures including a reduction in the RAMP allowance to £2.4m from 2023/24 and the allocation of £1.7m from General Fund Reserves.
- 4.4 An over provision of projects against estimated resources of up to 5% is considered acceptable to allow for increased resources and/or cost reductions. Currently the Capital Programme is reporting a deficit of £2.775m which represents 4.62% of the 2021/24 resources.
- 4.5 The Policy & Resources Capital Programme contains the previously reported 2021/23 allocations as well as the annual allocation of £363,000 for 2023/24. In addition a £1.6m Cost Pressures allowance has been added to the Policy & Resources programme to address anticipated price increases in the construction industry as a result of cost increases and project delays arising from material shortages and supply chain issues. This allowance will be allocated out to specific projects as the need is identified. All such allocations will be reported to this Committee.

## **5.0 POLICY & RESOURCES CAPITAL BUDGET UPDATE**

- 5.1 The Policy & Resources capital budget is £3.136m and the current projection on budget. The budget for 2021/22 is £1.427m with no slippage being reported at this stage. Spend to date is £0.057m which is 4% of projected spend. Further detail on the Policy & Resources Capital programme can be found in Appendix 1.
- 5.2 PC Refresh Programme – ICT has moved to a laptop refresh strategy to provide flexibility for home and hybrid working. It has identified the next tranche equipment to be replaced during the refresh programme which is scheduled to begin in December 2021, concluding by February 2022.
- 5.3 Server and Switch Replacement – A number of maintenance replacements are scheduled and are being scoped at present. Refresh of core Firewall and Anti-Virus appliances are also scheduled for this financial year and discussions with vendors and manufacturers is ongoing.
- 5.4 ICT & Digital Strategies - Business Cases for investment as part of the Council's Digital Strategy in Electronic Document Management to enable home and hybrid working are being developed in conjunction with services as appropriate.

## **6.0 2021/24 CAPITAL PROGRAMME UPDATE**

- 6.1 Appendix 2 shows that over the 2021/24 period the Capital Programme is reporting a £2.775m deficit. This is within an acceptable level of up to 5% over provision.
- 6.2 The position in respect of individual Committees for 2021/22 is as follows:

### Policy & Resources

No slippage is being reported at this stage with spend to date of £0.057m against an approved budget of £1.427m.



### Environment & Regeneration

Expenditure as at 31<sup>st</sup> July 2021 is £0.860m against an approved budget of £12.619m. Net slippage of £0.538m (4.26%) is being reported due to advancement within the Cemetery Development (£0.125m), offset by slippage in the SPT projects (£0.214m), Spaces for People (£0.230m) and Parks, Cemeteries and Open Spaces AMP (£0.113m).

### Education & Communities

Expenditure as at 31<sup>st</sup> July 2021 is £1.403m against an approved budget of £5.617m. Net advancement of £0.269m (4.79%) is being reported due to advancement/cost increases in Gourrock Primary School Extension (£0.778m) and Direct Access works at various Early Years Centres (£0.150m) offset by slippage in Indoor Tennis Facility (£0.400m) and Waterfront Leisure Centre Moveable Pool Floor (£0.274m).

### Health & Social Care

Advancement of £0.499m is being reported in connection with Crosshill Children's Home Replacement, with spend of £0.038m for the year to date against an approved budget of £1.229m.

- 6.3 Overall in 2021/22 expenditure is 11.2% of projected spend for the year and that projected net advancement of the programme is £0.230m (1.1%).

## **7.0 CONSULTATION**

- 7.1 This report reflects the detail reported to Service Committees.

## **8.0 IMPLICATIONS**

### **8.1 Finance**

#### Financial Implications

All financial implications are shown in detail within the report and in Appendices 1 & 2

One off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Years	Proposed Spend this Report £000	Virement From	Other Comments
N/A					

Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact £000	Virement From (if Applicable)	Other Comments
N/A					

### **8.2 Legal**

There are no legal implications.

### **8.3 Human Resources**

There are no direct staffing implications in respect of this report and as such the Head of Organisational Development, HR & Communications has not been consulted.

## 8.4 Equalities

(a) Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out?

	YES (see attached appendix)
X	NO – This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a substantive change to an existing policy, function or strategy. Therefore, no Equality Impact Assessment is required

(b) Fairer Scotland Duty

If this report affects or proposes any major strategic decision:-

Has there been active consideration of how this report's recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome?

	YES – A written statement showing how this report's recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage has been completed.
X	NO

(c) Data Protection

8.5 Has a Data Protection Impact Assessment been carried out?

	YES – This report involves data processing which may result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals.
X	NO

(a) Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out?

## 8.6 Repopulation

The Council's continuing significant capital investment levels will have a positive impact on regeneration, job creation and hence repopulation.

## 9.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

9.1 None.

## COMMITTEE: POLICY &amp; RESOURCES

Project Name	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	Est Total Cost	Actual to 31/3/21	Approved Budget 2021/22	Revised Est 2021/22	Actual to 31/7/21	Est 2022/23	Est 2023/24	Future Years
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
<b>Environment, Regeneration &amp; Resources</b>								
<b>ICT</b>								
Storage/Backup Devices/Minor Works and Projects	25		25	25		0	0	0
Rolling Replacement of PC's	305		305	305	40	0	0	0
Whiteboard/Projector Refresh	30		90	30		0	0	0
Server & Switch Replacement Programme	169		169	169	17	0	0	0
Annual Allocation	884		38	98		423	363	0
<b>ICT Total</b>	<b>1,413</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>627</b>	<b>627</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>423</b>	<b>363</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Finance</b>								
Modernisation Fund	123	112	0	0		11	0	0
Cost Pressure Contingency	1,600		800	800		800		
<b>Finance Total</b>	<b>1,723</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>800</b>	<b>800</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>811</b>	<b>0</b>	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,136</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>1,427</b>	<b>1,427</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>1,234</b>	<b>363</b>	<b>0</b>

Capital Programme - 2021/22 - 2023/24Available Resources

	A	B	C	D	E
	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Future	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Government Capital Support	6,405	6,400	6,400	-	19,205
Capital Receipts (Note 1)	835	275	296	-	1,406
Capital Grants (Note 2)	2,227	1,184	-	-	3,411
Prudential Funded Projects (Note 3)	1,052	8,479	2,953	207	12,691
Balance B/F From 20/21	15,105	-	-	-	15,105
Capital Funded from Current Revenue	6,525	1,383	483	-	8,391
	<u>32,149</u>	<u>17,721</u>	<u>10,132</u>	<u>207</u>	<u>60,209</u>

Overall Position 2021/24

Available Resources (Appendix 2a, Column A-C)	<u>£000</u>
Projection (Appendix 2b, Column B-D)	60,002
(Shortfall)/Under Utilisation of Resources	<u>(2,775)</u>
(Shortfall)/Under Utilisation of Resources %	<u>(4.62)%</u>

Notes to Appendix 2a

Note 1 (Capital Receipts)

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Future	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Sales	525	275	296	-	1,096
Contributions/Recoveries	310	-	-	-	310
	835	275	296	-	1,406

Note 2 (Capital Grants)

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Future	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Government Grant - Place Based Funding	675	-	-	-	675
Early Years	-	-	-	-	-
Renewal of Play Parks	65	-	-	-	65
Cycling, Walking & Safer Streets	406	-	-	-	406
SPT	575	-	-	-	575
Spaces for People	248	-	-	-	248
Nature Restoration Fund	88	-	-	-	88
HES - Watt Complex	26	-	-	-	26
Electric Vehicles	19	-	-	-	19
Sustrans	70	-	-	-	70
Watt Complex Creativity Space	55	-	-	-	55
RCGF - King George VI	-	1,184	-	-	1,184
	2,227	1,184	-	-	3,411

Note 3 (Prudentially Funded Projects)

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Future	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Vehicle Replacement Programme	(420)	217	839	-	636
Asset Management Plan - Offices	-	84	-	-	84
Asset Management Plan - Depots	37	305	-	-	342
Capital Works on Former Tied Houses	-	76	90	207	373
Watt Complex Refurbishment	-	-	-	-	-
CCTV	15	-	-	-	15
Clune Park Regeneration	27	334	-	-	361
Neil Street Childrens Home Replacement - CoS	2	11	-	-	13
Crosshill Childrens Home Replacement	185	106	-	-	291
Modernisation Fund	-	11	(11)	-	-
New Learning Disability Facility	406	6,292	635	-	7,333
SWIFT Upgrade	-	243	-	-	243
Additional Prudential Borrowing to Fund Capital Programme	-	-	1,400	-	1,400
Additional Prudential Borrowing to meet anticipated Cost Pressures	800	800	-	-	1,600
	1,052	8,479	2,953	207	11,091

Capital Programme - 2021/22 - 2023/24Agreed Projects

Committee	A Prior Years	B 2021/22	C 2022/23	D 2023/24	E Future	F Total	G Approved Budget	H (Under)/ Over	I 2021/22 Spend To 31/07/2021
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Policy & Resources	112	1,427	1,234	363	-	3,136	3,136	-	57
Environment & Regeneration	6,110	12,081	15,058	7,152	364	40,765	40,765	-	860
School Estate	5,488	5,127	3,466	3,500	1,001	18,582	18,582	-	1,403
Education & Communities (Exc School Estate)	360	759	2,647	370	-	4,136	4,136	-	-
HSCP	1,556	1,728	7,230	635	-	11,149	11,149	-	38
<b>Total</b>	<b>13,626</b>	<b>21,122</b>	<b>29,635</b>	<b>12,020</b>	<b>1,365</b>	<b>77,768</b>	<b>77,768</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,358</b>

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<b>Report To:</b>	<b>Policy &amp; Resources Committee</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>14 September 2021</b>
<b>Report By:</b>	<b>Head of Organisational Development, Policy &amp; Communications</b>	<b>Report No:</b>	<b>HR/20/21BMcQ</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Barbara McQuarrie/ Margaret Watson</b>	<b>Contact No:</b>	<b>01475 712845</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Supporting Alcohol, Substance Use and Gambling Concerns in the Workplace Policy</b>		

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## 1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Policy & Resources Committee on the updated Supporting Alcohol, Substance Use and Gambling Concerns in the Workplace Policy and seek its approval to implement the attached Policy. The Policy will comply with our commitment and action plan for Healthy Working Lives.

## 2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 Inverclyde Council and HSCP hold the Healthy Working Lives Gold Award and in order to maintain this status we are required to have a Drugs and Alcohol Policy. The Policy was originally developed in 2004 and updated in 2007 to comply with Healthy Working Lives criteria. It has been updated now to reflect legislative changes, develop more supportive language, enhance management guidance and include gambling issues in the workplace.
- 2.2 Inverclyde Council is committed to providing a safe and effective working environment and to improving the health, fitness and wellbeing of its employees, ensuring effective interventions, treatment, training and support services are available for Council employees when required. It is therefore essential that we have support mechanisms in place to allow management to feel capable and confident to discuss sensitive issues with staff and to support them to get the help they need. The Policy (and Procedure with more detailed guidance which will also be issued) will ensure that employees are aware of what support is available to them, should they need it, including signposting to external professional sources of help.

## 3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 It is recommended that The Policy & Resources Committee:
- Approves the Supporting Alcohol, Substance Use and Gambling Concerns in the Workplace Policy attached at Appendix 1.

**Steven McNab**  
**Head of Organisational Development,**  
**Policy & Communications**

## **4.0 BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 Alcohol and substance use are significant concerns in Scotland and those living in the most deprived areas of Scotland are nearly three times as likely to have gambling concerns, than those living in the least deprived areas. These findings show that alcohol, substance use and gambling concerns affect more people than is commonly thought and have a detrimental effect on people's lives, families and communities. In addition, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and predicted economic downturn we recognise that the widespread uncertainty about people's livelihoods, increased stress and pressure, and feelings of being socially isolated as a result of the numerous lockdowns and social distancing measures has led to concern about whether people may be more likely to use alcohol, substances and gambling as a coping mechanism.
- 4.2 The addition of support for gambling concerns will ensure employees know that the Council has a positive attitude to the issue and that support will be available as required.
- 4.3 Inverclyde Council is committed to providing a safe and effective working environment and to improving the health, fitness and wellbeing of its employees, ensuring effective interventions, treatment, training and support services are available for Council employees when required.
- 4.4 The Inverclyde Council Supporting Alcohol, Substance Use and Gambling Concerns in the Workplace Policy aims to:
- prevent, reduce and support the incidence of alcohol, substance or gambling-related work impairment
  - alert employees to the risks associated with extensive use of alcohol and substance, or gambling and enhance the health and wellbeing of employees by promoting a zero tolerance approach to alcohol, substance use and gambling
  - support those employees with alcohol, substance or gambling concerns and help reduce the impact experienced by them, their families, friends and colleagues
  - encourage and assist employees, who suspect or know that they have an alcohol, substance or gambling related concern, to seek help voluntarily at an early stage from Counselling Agencies or via the Council's procedures
  - where, in the course of invoking the disciplinary procedures, it is suspected or known that the employee's misdemeanor is due to an alcohol, substance or gambling related concern, the Council will offer the employee referral to an appropriate Counselling Agency for diagnosis and, if necessary, treatment (however defined).
  - create a climate which removes the tendency to conceal, deny and cover up the problem and give both management and the Trade Unions confidence to deal with it.

## **5.0 IMPLICATIONS**

### **Finance**

- 5.1 N/A



Financial Implications:

One off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Years	Proposed Spend this Report £000	Virement From	Other Comments
N/A					

Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact £000	Virement From (If Applicable)	Other Comments
N/A					

**Legal**

5.2 Legislation

As an employer the Council has a statutory duty under the following legislation:

- **Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 - section 2** - places a duty on an employer to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of their employees.
- **Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999** - places a duty on an employer to assess the risks to the health and safety of employees. This means an employer can be prosecuted if they knowingly allow an employee to continue working while under the influence of alcohol or substances and their behaviour places the employee themselves or others at risk.
- **Misuse of Drugs Act 1971** - makes it an offence for someone to knowingly permit the production, supply or use of controlled substances on their premises except in specified circumstances (for example medication prescribed by a doctor).
- **Psychoactive Substances Act 2016 (PSA)** - The (PSA) came into force on 26 May 2016 and created a blanket ban on the production, distribution, sale and supply of psychoactive substances in the United Kingdom for human consumption. Psychoactive substances (legal highs), together with 'new psychoactive substances' or 'NPS' are any substance which is capable of producing a psychoactive effect in a person who consumes it, and is not an exempted substance.
- **Road Traffic Act 1988** - states that any person who, when driving or attempting to drive a motor vehicle on a road or other public place, is unfit to drive through alcohol or substances shall be guilty of an offence.
- **Equality Act 2010** – Alcohol and substance misuse or abuse does not fall within the Equality Act 2010. However, medical conditions resulting from alcohol or substance misuse or abuse may be covered by the Equality Act 2010.

**Human Resources**

5.3 As outlined in the Report and Policy.

**Equalities**

5.4 Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out?

NO

## **Repopulation**

5.5 N/A.

## **6.0 CONSULTATIONS**

6.1 The Trade Union Liaison Committee, Workforce Planning & Development Group and Scottish Drugs Forum have been consulted in the development, and amendment, of the Policy (and Procedure).

## **7.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

7.1 Appendix 1 – Supporting Alcohol, Substance Use and Gambling Concerns in the Workplace Policy

# Inverclyde Council Supporting Alcohol, Substance Use and Gambling Concerns in the Workplace Policy



**INVERCLYDE COUNCIL IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES EMPLOYER  
THIS POLICY BOOKLET IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST, IN LARGE PRINT,  
BRAILLE, ON AUDIOTAPE, OR CD.**

## DOCUMENT CONTROL

Document Responsibility		
Name	Title	Service
Mary Bannon	HR Advisor	Human Resources
Margaret Watson	HR Advisor	Human Resources

Change History		
Version	Date	Comments
0.1	November 2004	
0.2	January 2007	Updated to comply with Healthy Working Lives criteria
0.3	April 2008	Changed to new layout - no change to content.
0.4	June 2011	Updated to refer to the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 at Section 8
0.5	July 2021	Changed to include gambling concerns and general update

Distribution		
Name	Title	Location
All Directors & Heads Of Service		

*Distribution may be made to others on request*

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## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 General

- 1.1.1 The Council believes that it is essential to have a positive policy designed to encourage early identification of alcohol, substance use or gambling concerns in the workplace, thus providing the Council with a constructive and preventive strategy to support alcohol, substance use and gambling concerns in its workforce.
- 1.1.2 The *Supporting Alcohol, Substance Use and Gambling Concerns in the Workplace Policy* is designed to ensure that employees are aware of the risks associated with, and the damage which alcohol, substance use and gambling concerns does to the health of both the user and to those who are exposed to the persons' habit, including the legal consequences of their actions. Accordingly, Inverclyde Council recognises that employees with such concerns may require help and treatment, there may be occasions when colleagues need to be supportive and sympathetic during the course of treatment and rehabilitation or recovery of a fellow employee with an alcohol, substance use or gambling concern. The Council is, therefore, prepared to take appropriate measures to safeguard the interest and welfare of such employees.
- 1.1.3 The Policy, along with the *Supporting Alcohol, Substance Use and Gambling Concerns in the Workplace Procedure* (which should be read along with this document and can be found on ICON), aims to set out clear information for Managers and employees that explain the duties and responsibilities of all concerned and the procedures to be followed to identify and resolve concerns at the earliest opportunity.
- 1.1.4 The Policy does not annul the Council's legal obligations under the *Misuse of Substances Act 1971*, e.g. trafficking. The trafficking and/or supplying of illegal substances for financial gain or otherwise will be dealt with under the Council's agreed disciplinary procedures.
- 1.1.5 The confidential nature of any records of employees or clients with alcohol, substance use; or gambling concerns will be strictly preserved. GDPR requirements will be maintained.
- 1.1.6 Notwithstanding the above, if information comes to light which raises concerns about the welfare of a child or vulnerable adult, the Council has a legal obligation under the Children Scotland Act 1995 to report these concerns to the appropriate authorities. Please refer to Appendix 1 for further details.

### 1.2 Equal Opportunities Commitment

- 1.2.1 Under this policy, the Council will ensure that everyone receives equal consideration by the Council and that the needs of all are taken into account irrespective of gender, gender reassignment, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, religion or belief, marital status/civil partnership, disability, sexuality or sexual orientation, age, pregnancy/maternity or economic status.

## **2 AIMS & PRINCIPLES**

### **2.1 Aims**

2.1.1 The aims of the *Supporting Alcohol, Substance Use and Gambling Concerns in the Workplace Policy and Procedure* are:

- To prevent and reduce and support the incidence of alcohol, substance or gambling-related work concerns/impairment
- To alert employees to the risks associated with extensive use of alcohol and/or substance, or gambling and enhance the health and wellbeing of employees by promoting a zero tolerance approach to alcohol, substance use and gambling
- To support those employees with alcohol, substance or gambling concerns and help reduce the impact experienced by them, their families, friends and colleagues
- To encourage and assist employees, who suspect or know that they have an alcohol, substance or gambling related concern, to seek help voluntarily at an early stage from Counselling Agencies or via the Council's procedures
- Where, in the course of invoking the disciplinary procedures, it is suspected or known that the employee's misdemeanor is due to an alcohol, substance or gambling related concern, the Council will offer the employee referral to an appropriate Counselling Agency for diagnosis and, if necessary, treatment (however defined).
- Create a climate which removes the tendency to conceal, deny and cover up the concern and give both management and the Trade Unions confidence to deal with it.

### **2.2 Principles**

2.2.1 The principles of this policy are to:

- Provide a safe and effective working environment and to improve the health, fitness and wellbeing of staff.
- To assist employees who have a serious long-term alcohol, substance or gambling related concern, and/or whose difficulties are relatively less serious and/or short-term.
- To engage in preventive action and support a range of referral options which depend partly upon the employee's alcohol, substance or gambling concern and his/her work difficulty.
- To raise awareness of the risks associated with extensive alcohol and/or substance misuse and gambling and the consequences, including the legal consequences, of their actions.

2.2.2 In the context of the workplace, use of alcohol can be defined as any alcohol use which directly interferes with a person's health and social functioning and/or any work capability or conduct. Substance use refers to the use of illegal substances and the use, whether deliberate or unintentional of prescribed Substances, 'over the counter' Substances, and substances, such as solvents and psychoactive substances (legal highs).

Gambling refers to an individual who has developed a physical and psychological dependence which interferes with their health and social functioning and/or work capability or conduct.

2.2.3 As an employer the Council has a statutory duty under the following legislation:

- **Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 - section 2** - places a duty on an employer to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of their employees.
- **Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999** - places a duty on an employer to assess the risks to the health and safety of employees. This means an employer can be prosecuted if they knowingly allow an employee to continue working while under the influence of alcohol or substances and their behaviour places the employee themselves or others at risk.
- **Misuse of Drugs Act 1971** - makes it an offence for someone to knowingly permit the production, supply or use of controlled substances on their premises except in specified circumstances (for example medication prescribed by a doctor).
- **Psychoactive Substances Act 2016 (PSA)** - The (PSA) came into force on 26 May 2016 and created a blanket ban on the production, distribution, sale and supply of psychoactive substances in the United Kingdom for human consumption. Psychoactive substances (legal highs), together with 'new psychoactive substances' or 'NPS' are any substance which is capable of producing a psychoactive effect in a person who consumes it, and is not an exempted substance.
- **Road Traffic Act 1988** - states that any person who, when driving or attempting to drive a motor vehicle on a road or other public place, is unfit to drive through alcohol or substances shall be guilty of an offence.
- **Equality Act 2010** – Alcohol and substance use does not fall within the Equality Act 2010. However, medical conditions resulting from alcohol or substance use may be covered by the Equality Act 2010.

2.3 In relation to gambling concerns the Acceptable Use of Information Systems, Code of Conduct, covers the use of the Council's company ICT systems for internet access by employees.

2.4 The provision of a Policy which supports alcohol, substance use and gambling concerns is consistent with meeting these obligations.

### 3 APPLICATION & SCOPE

3.1 This policy and associated procedure covers all persons using Council premises. For the avoidance of doubt this includes all employees. The principles of this will apply to contractors, visitors, customers, clients and Elected Members. Each Service should have their own guidance in how to deal with visitors/clients who present themselves under the influence of alcohol and/or substances.



## 4 RESPONSIBILITIES

- 4.1 In order to deal effectively with alcohol, substance and gambling concerns, it is necessary to accept responsibility on an individual basis for the policy and to assist in intervention. Every employee, from the Chief Executive downwards, must take some responsibility for making the policy work. General responsibilities are as follows:
- 4.2 **Management**  
It is the role of management to set a good example; to be familiar with the policy and procedure; to ensure that the policy is understood; to monitor changes in work performance, timekeeping, attendance, sickness and absence patterns; to intervene when concerns occur, to refer employees for assistance where appropriate; and to identify aspects of the working environment which may contribute to the concern. It is not the role of the manager to assess whether a particular employee has an alcohol, substance use or gambling concern, that is the role of the counselling agency. Nor should it be assumed that management involvement ends with the referral for counselling.
- 4.3 **OD, Policy & Communication Services**  
It is the role of the Head of OD, Policy & Communications to have responsibility for the implementation and co-ordination of the policy and procedure; to promote awareness; to co-ordinate referrals; to monitor progress; and to ensure that adequate training is provided to relevant staff on the policy. Further information can be found in the *Supporting Alcohol, Substance Use and Gambling Concerns in the Workplace Procedure*.
- 4.4 **Trade Union Representatives**  
It is the role of the representatives to take part in discussions about the policy; to help inform the workforce; to encourage members to seek help voluntarily; to assist members in their rehabilitation where appropriate; and to represent members where appropriate.
- 4.5 **Employees**  
All employees are encouraged to be supportive of colleagues who may have alcohol, substance use or gambling concerns and to urge colleagues to seek assistance; and operate in a manner consistent with the policy.

## 5 POLICY AND CONCERN IDENTIFICATION

### 5.1 *Use of Alcohol/Substances/participating in Gambling During and Around the Working Day*

- 5.1.1 Events involving clients – It is accepted that social events with clients can be important to enhance the therapeutic culture in which clients in areas of e.g. day care are involved. If alcohol is to be available, then such events must be properly planned/risk assessed and effectively supervised with the prior consent of a senior manager. Employees must not consume alcohol provided at such events.

- 5.1.2 Employees attending conferences/external events during working hours are considered to be at work and are therefore not permitted to consume alcohol. For events outwith normal working hours e.g. evenings, employees must be aware that they may only consume alcohol if there is no risk of them attending the workplace and they are attending the event in their own time. employees should not be using their own smart phones etc. to gamble in workplace
- 5.1.3 Social events organised through the workplace – employees should ensure that they comply with the Code of Conduct.
- 5.1.4 During the Covid-19 pandemic, a large number of staff have been required to work from home and therefore home is essentially your workplace. Employees should be aware that they are expected to behave sensibly and reasonably at all times (including online meetings) and that they are representing the Council. The principles of this policy apply to those who cannot work from home but are at home self isolating or cannot come into council buildings/normal workplace.

## **5.2 Possession on Site**

- 5.2.1 Alcohol  
Employees are strictly prohibited from having an open or partially used container of alcohol within the workplace. This is a matter of health & safety and to ensure that the individual does not inadvertently find themselves in a position which might be misconstrued.
- 5.2.2 Illegal drugs  
Employees are not permitted to have in their possession within the workplace, or store within the workplace, (unless they are required to handle or store them in pursuance of their duties) illegal drugs for which they could be liable to criminal prosecution. In the event that any employee is found to be in possession of such drugs on Inverclyde Council premises, Inverclyde Council may inform Police Scotland and will co-operate in any investigation they undertake. In addition the incident will be investigated under the Council's Disciplinary Policy and Procedures. As a consequence of any finding of such misconduct employees may have their registration/professional body notified.
- 5.2.3 Over the counter medication and prescription drugs  
The Policy also recognises the legitimate use of over the counter and prescribed medication which may impair performance. Where employees have been prescribed substances in relation to a diagnosed medical condition which may affect their behaviour and/or ability to carry out their work, they must inform their line manager. The line manager must carry out a risk assessment to ensure that the employee, colleagues or members of the public are not put at risk. A referral to Occupational Health may be made if appropriate.
- 5.2.4 Gambling  
Employees are not permitted to participate in any form of gambling online (using Council equipment; or personal smart phone/equipment) nor are they permitted to gamble outwith the premises during a break in the working day, particularly if there is a possibility they have a gambling concern and by doing so would impact on their ability to carry out their role i.e. lateness, unauthorised breaks.

## **6 RELATED PROCEDURES AND TRAINING**

### **6.1 Disciplinary Procedures**

6.1.1 In accordance with the terms of the Council's *Disciplinary Policy and Procedures*, when an employee is required to attend a formal Disciplinary Hearing and, at any point in the process, indicates that they may have an alcohol, substance use or gambling concern, the Hearing should be conducted as normal. Support will be offered but is on a voluntary basis. Where an employee agrees to support through the relevant alcohol, substance or gambling services, they will be required to sign a mandate which will confirm that they agree to be tested for alcohol or substance use during the referral and support period and comply with the requirements of the gambling support service.

Further advice on dealing with alcohol, substance and gambling related concerns can be found within the *Disciplinary Policy and Procedures* and the *Supporting Alcohol, Substance Use and Gambling Concerns in the Workplace Procedure* document.

### **6.2 Management Guidelines**

6.2.1 Guidance on this policy is covered in the *Supporting Alcohol, Substance Use and Gambling Concerns Procedure* to assist supervisors and managers develop early recognition techniques for identifying any employee who may have an alcohol, substance use or gambling concern.

### **6.3 Trade Unions**

The Council welcomes the support of the Trade Unions in the implementation of this Policy. Full consultation has taken place with the Trade Union Liaison Group and the Workforce Planning & Development Group regarding the development of this policy.

### **6.4 Policy Development**

The Policy and Procedure will be monitored annually and reviewed every three years or in line with any new initiatives, changes in the legal position or good practice. Any concerns identified with this policy should be reported to the OD and HR Service Manager. These will be considered in line with review procedures.

## **7 APPENDIX 1 - PROTECTING CHILDREN & VULNERABLE ADULTS - STATUTORY DUTIES**

1. While it is important to emphasise the supportive role given to employees and their families who find themselves experiencing difficulties, it should also be noted that there is a statutory requirement for the Council, and by implication, its employees, to protect children and vulnerable adults
2. If any Council employee hears information or directly sees things which makes them worried about a child or adult being ill-treated, exploited, neglected or abused, all employees are responsible for taking at least one of the following actions:
  - o Speak promptly with your line manager or another manager and talk through your concern.
  - o You or your line manager should then contact: Social Work: Request for Assistance based in Hector McNeil House (for children) or Information Worker (for vulnerable adults) Tel: 01475 714100 in office hours; or Glasgow and Partners Emergency Social Work (Standby) Service Tel: 0141 305 6930; Fax No: 0141 334 8577 / 0141 357 4309; Email: [standby@glasgow.gov.uk](mailto:standby@glasgow.gov.uk) or your nearest police office.
3. It is essential that concerns are passed to the appropriate agencies who will have staff qualified to make assessments and decisions about what action, if any, might be needed to protect the child or adult and assist the family while they are addressing their difficulties.
4. When contacting the appropriate agency employees should give as much information as possible about the child or adult and his or her family. Employees must not delay in taking action or passing on information as it could ensure the safety of a vulnerable child or adult.
5. Employees must be aware we are all responsible for the care of the vulnerable in our society.

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<b>Report To:</b>	<b>Policy &amp; Resources Committee</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>14 September 2021</b>
<b>Report By:</b>	<b>Alan Puckrin, Interim Service Director Corporate Services &amp; Organisational Recovery</b>	<b>Report No:</b>	<b>FIN/54/21/AP/WR</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Alan Puckrin</b>	<b>Contact No:</b>	<b>01475 712090</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Review of the Effectiveness of the Long Term Empty Homes Council Tax Policy</b>		

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## 1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Committee with the outcome of the review of the effectiveness of and results from the public consultation in relation to the Long Term Empty Property and Second Homes Council Tax Policy and to seek decisions from the Committee regarding the next steps.

## 2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 At its meeting of 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2021 the Policy & Resources Committee tasked Officers to review the effectiveness of the Long Term Empty Property and Second Homes Council Tax Policy, the review to incorporate public consultation. A short-life Working Group of relevant Officers was convened to progress the policy review and public consultation element.
- 2.2 A 30 day public consultation was launched on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2021 in the form of an online questionnaire based survey. During that time Officers reviewed the effectiveness of the Policy and both elements are reported on in the remainder of this report and ultimately form the review of the effectiveness of the Long Term Empty and Second Home Policy.
- 2.3 The range of consultation responses and the associated degree of awareness of respondents give some confidence that the views reflected have a reasonable degree of validity and are appropriate for consideration in informing the review.
- 2.4 The review indicates that the Policy has been effective in reducing the number of LTEs in Inverclyde and the consultation responses confirm an ongoing public and professional desire to reduce the number of LTEs. Overall, the review has identified the successes of the application of the Policy and circumstances where a tailored policy may yield further reductions of LTEs.

## 3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Committee:
- Note the outcome of the review by officers into the effectiveness of the Council's Long Term Empty Property and Second Homes Council Tax Policy
  - Considers the results of the public consultation detailed in the report and appendix;
  - Considers whether, aside from the addition of the exemption of properties within the Clune Park Estate from the LTE Levy, any further changes are required;
  - Note that Officers will continue to engage with RSLs;
  - Note that an update report to the Environment & Regeneration Committee will be provided on the matters raised in 9.5; and,

- Agrees that a revised Long Term Empty Property and Second Homes Council Tax Policy be presented to the February meeting for approval.

**Interim Service Director  
Corporate Services & Organisational Recovery**

## **4.0 BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 At its meeting of 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2021 the Policy & Resources Committee tasked Officers to review the effectiveness of the Long Term Empty Property and Second Homes Council Tax Policy after undertaking public consultation. A short-life Working Group of relevant Officers was convened to progress the policy review and public consultation element.
- 4.2 An empty home is a residential property which has been unoccupied for 6 months or more, is not someone's sole or main residence and does not fall within the definition of second home. A residential property which has been empty for longer than 12 months is known as a long term empty home (LTE).
- 4.3 A second home is defined as being furnished and lived in for at least 25 days in any twelve month period, but not as someone's sole or main residence. The classification of a second home aims to ensure that only homes which are likely to be reasonably well maintained and which the owner is likely to visit regularly and therefore make some contribution to the local economy qualifies as a second home.
- 4.4 The Council Tax (Variation for Unoccupied Dwellings) (Scotland) Regulations 2013 provides local authorities with a discretionary power to remove the empty property 50% discount or set a council tax increase of up to 100% on certain properties which have been empty for 1 year or more. The level of increase (the levy) for LTEs was introduced at 30%, increased to 50% in April 2018 and was set at 100% of the Council Tax charge from April 2019. The policy includes mandatory and discretionary exemptions from the levy, recognising specific circumstances when it is acceptable for property to remain empty.
- 4.5 The rationale for the discretionary power is set out in the Guidance to Local Authorities letter of 21st May 2013 and confirms that it is intended as an additional tool to help local authorities encourage owners to bring empty properties back into use, both to increase the supply of housing for those who need homes and to reduce the blight on communities caused by houses being left empty and allowed to fall into disrepair. It is noted that the council tax increase can be used as part of a wider approach to tackle long-term empty homes including support and guidance to owners and provision of loans or grants if available. It is further noted that the income generated from the new legislation through reducing the discount on LTEs below the previous 10% limit or increasing Council Tax is not ring-fenced and can be used as the local authority sees fit on housing or other priorities.
- 4.6 Under the legislation, local authorities are prevented from varying council tax charges in a way that gives more favourable treatment to unoccupied social rented dwellings simply on the basis that they are owned by a Registered Social Landlord (RSL). This is reinforced by the comment that it is important that all owners take steps to bring unoccupied homes back into use as soon as possible, rather than leaving them empty.

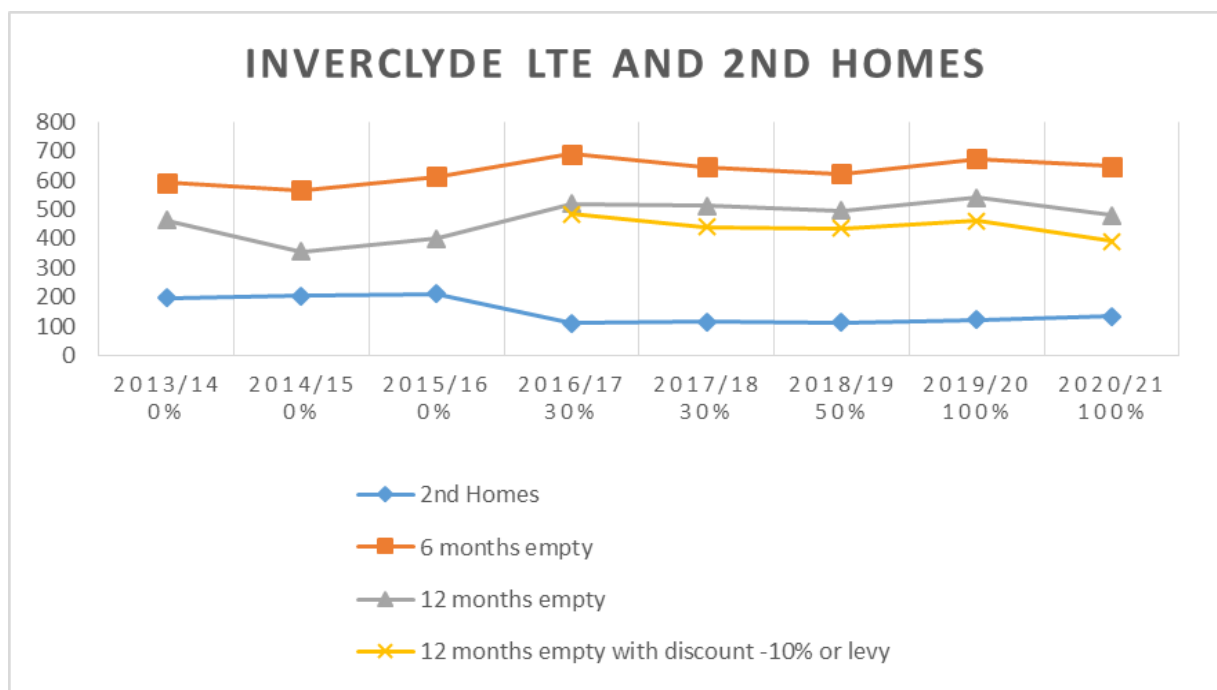
## **5.0 THE REVIEW METHODOLOGY**

- 5.1 Three key factors were identified as being essential to inform the review of the effectiveness of the policy and these were –
  - Data analysis
  - Outcomes of direct engagement
  - Public consultation
- 5.2 The data in relation to LTEs and Second Homes was sourced from internal Council Tax records, national datasets and information from other Services. The outcomes of direct engagement was sourced from the Empty Homes Officer. Public consultation was undertaken by the promotion of an online survey which ran from 1<sup>st</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> July.

- 5.3 The factors leading to the existence of LTEs and second homes are multiple, but crucially the factors are different for each. The decision to maintain a second home is largely choice based and is often linked to work or lifestyle choices, whilst an LTE is more commonly an investment decision, an inherited property or is linked to a negative equity situation. The decision to maintain a second home is not affected by the same financial factors as an LTE in that it is not a decision made nor influenced by a core desire for a financial return.
- 5.4 These different influences and financial factors create a level of resilience to change within the second home market which is not seen amongst LTE properties. Therefore, the report will focus mainly on LTEs as a distinct housing market area where the Council seeks to exert an influence to promote the positive outcomes of an increase in the number of LTE properties brought back into use and an overall reduction in LTEs.
- 5.5 In reviewing the LTE data it was clear that the Clune Park area of Port Glasgow exerts a significant influence which affects the analysis of LTE data at an Inverclyde level. The Clune Park estate is affected by long standing issues of high density unpopular housing resulting in low demand and high void rates; it has considerable tenure imbalance, higher than average sale transactions and a multiplicity of physical and social issues. Therefore after taking into account the recent VAC decision re the application of the LTE levy within the Clune Park estate LTEs within the Clune Park Regeneration Area have been removed from the figures and are commented on separately. For clarity, the regeneration area for the purpose of this report comprises of the 430 flats set out in the 5 distinct u-shaped blocks between the North side of Robert Street and the A8 dual carriageway.

## 6.0 THE REVIEW OUTCOME – HEADLINE NUMBERS

- 6.1 Analysis of the total number of LTE and 2<sup>nd</sup> Homes Data across the period 2013/14 to 2020/21 gives a clear picture of the number of LTEs and 2<sup>nd</sup> Homes in Inverclyde both pre and post introduction of the levy on LTEs. Graph 6.1 below illustrates the changes and trends across all types of empty and second homes in Inverclyde, with the application of the levy on LTEs being illustrated from 2016/17 onwards.



(Graph 6.1)

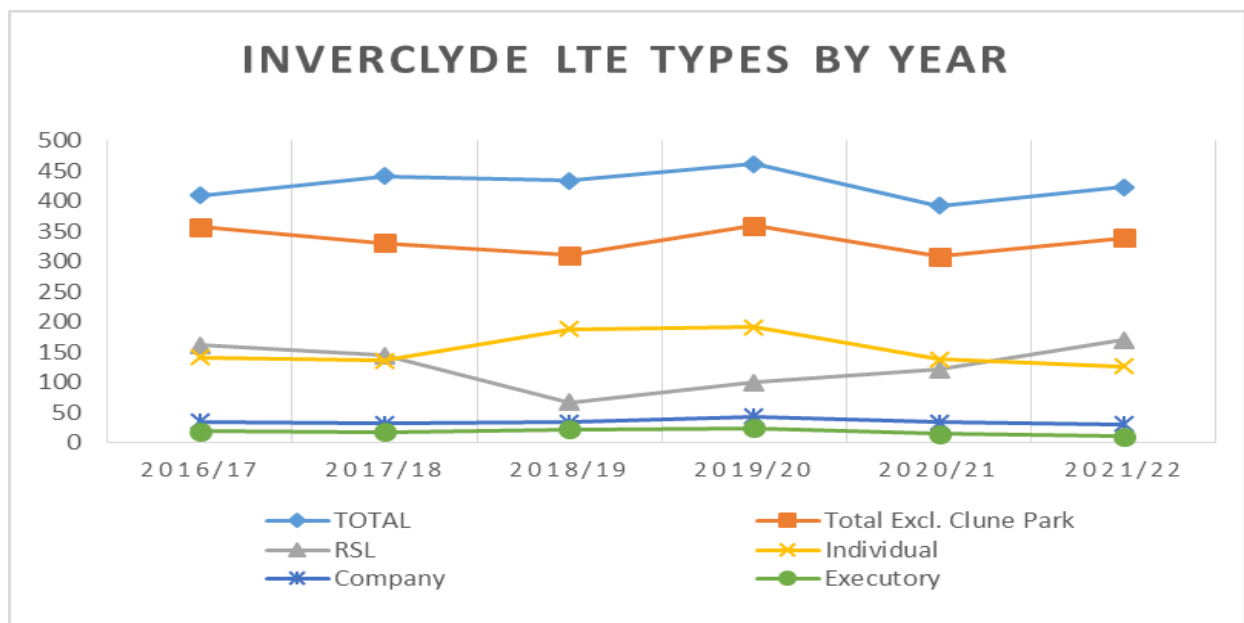


6.2 The second home discount set by Inverclyde Council reduced from 10% to 0% from 1st April 2017. A review of 2<sup>nd</sup> home discounts prior to the change resulted in a number of these properties being re-classified as LTE. This accounts for the evidenced reduction in 2<sup>nd</sup> Homes and increase in LTEs around the time of the introduction of the LTE levy. Since then the number of 2<sup>nd</sup> Homes has remained stable. This suggests that there is a higher degree of financial resilience either tied to the property being for work purposes or where there is a strong desire to have a 2<sup>nd</sup> Home in Inverclyde to suit lifestyle choices. The number of long-term empty properties which attract a levy has decreased by 19% to below 400 properties since the introduction of the levy.

## 7.0 THE REVIEW OUTCOME – TENURE ANALYSIS

7.1 Inverclyde has a housing stock of 39,107 houses which is broadly split into the following tenures - Owner-occupied 63%; Social Rented Housing 27%; Private Rented Sector 10%. Long Term Empty Homes and Second Homes across all tenures represent 2% of the total housing stock, with just over 1% of the housing stock being LTEs. Tenure based analysis of LTEs was carried out to increase the understanding of the impact of the levy on the social rented sector and private housing markets.

7.2 Graph 7.2 below illustrates the changes and trends across the social rented and private housing market for the period since the introduction of the levy. All reported figures exclude Clune Park as previously noted, with the exception of the 'Total'.



(Graph 7.2)

7.3 At the time of the introduction of the 50% levy, LTEs in the private housing market represented approximately 80% of all LTEs, by 2020/21 this had become 60% and currently the private housing market represents 50% of all LTEs.

7.4 To aid analysis the private housing markets were sub-divided to identify individual owners, properties owned by companies (e.g. landlords and letting agents) and properties in Confirmation (Executory). This allows for a greater understanding of the effectiveness of the policy on Registered Social Landlords (RSLs), individual owners and portfolio owners.

7.5 The number of LTE properties in Confirmation at any given time is largely consistent. As these properties are wholly affected by the external factor of due legal process no further comment is offered.

7.6 The number of LTEs owned by businesses has remained relatively consistent representing 19% of the total number of LTEs in the private sector. The business sector has not seen the same level of changes as the individually owned LTEs which suggests a high degree of financial resilience within the business based sector of the private housing market.

- 7.7 The number of LTE properties owned by individuals has seen an overall decrease of 10% since the introduction of the levy. The initial application of the levy at 30% appears not to have had an effect on the number of LTEs, however the increase in numbers at that time can largely be attributed to a reclassification of properties which had previously been self-defined as 2<sup>nd</sup> Homes. Since the levy was increased to 100% there has been a 34% reduction in the number of individually owned LTEs. No significant external factors were identified within the private sector housing market which could provide a rationale for this considerable decrease and therefore it is reasonable to assume a direct impact of the increase in the levy. This decrease is outwith the national trend, however analysis at a national level would be required to fully understand and allow further comment on that comparison.
- 7.8 The 30% levy which was applicable across 2016/17 & 2017/18, combined with the 50% levy in 2018/19 led to a decline in the number of empty homes across these years and on the face of it appears to have had an impact on the RSL sector in years 2-3. Conversely, and in direct contradiction of the private sector, the RSL sector has seen a significant increase in the number of empty homes since year 3 and the introduction of the 50% and 100% levy.
- 7.9 When the data is interrogated further it reveals that RSL numbers are dominated by the LTE properties of River Clyde Homes, averaging 91% of all LTE empties across the 6 years. The LTE properties of RCH can be largely be placed into two categories, planned regeneration and low demand areas. The regeneration areas of Broomhill and Slaemuir are now largely complete and no longer significantly impact LTE numbers in the RSL sector. Similarly, small groupings of LTEs in other RSLs no longer affect LTE numbers. RCHs low demand areas of Kelburn Terrace and Highholm St figure across the 6 years and in recent years Belville Street and Weir Street in Greenock and John Wood Street, Station Road, Montgomerie Street and Wilson Street in Port Glasgow have come to the fore and largely account for the rise in LTE numbers within the RSL sector.
- 7.10 Whilst the locations of the RSL LTEs are identifiable and the reasons for being LTE can be realistically estimated, the length of time they remain LTEs is less clear and is thought to be tied to a combination of financial resilience within the business, accounting for the levy as a consequential business cost and management/board acceptance of LTEs as a supply/demand issue linked to the timescales involved in developing long-term housing investment plans to address low demand housing as part of a fully funded area renewal programme. The RSLs have been engaged as part of the survey and their responses are summarised in Section 9.0 of the report.
- 7.11 It is important to note that, whilst reported on separately, there are established linkages between the private housing and social rented markets particularly in low demand areas where both markets can be affected by low demand and negative equity giving rise to a symbiotic relationship which requires a holistic, problem solving, approach to address the issues.

## **8.0 THE REVIEW OUTCOME – PUBLIC CONSULTATION**

- 8.1 There were 74 responses received in total and these can broadly be defined as 35% have or have had an LTE, 20% are affected by or live near an LTE and 45% describe themselves as general members of the public. Of the total number of respondents 72% stated they had an awareness of the LTE issue, with 10% having a general awareness and 18% stating they had no awareness. The rate of response and the awareness of respondents give some confidence that the views reflected have a reasonable degree of validity and are appropriate for consideration in informing the review.
- 8.2 There was a high degree of agreement that the Council should seek to reduce the number of LTEs in Inverclyde, with 74% supporting this view. In terms of the actions required to reduce the number of LTEs in Inverclyde the responses selected can be summarised as information & advice delivered through direct engagement with owners and the provision of financial assistance in the form of grants.

- 8.3 In respect of views on an increase in Council Tax for LTEs the responses were perhaps more balanced than expected, with 46% for and 54% against. There was a greater division of opinion regarding the application of the levy, with 68% supporting the principle of exemption for some properties or owners.
- 8.4 There was a low response rate of 19 in respect of the question asking about the type of LTE property, but this coupled with anecdotal evidence and the informed view of the Empty Homes Officer indicates that tenemental properties figure large in the total number of LTEs.
- 8.5 There was a similarly low response rate in respect of the question directly asking whether or not the levy had an effect on the person's decision to have an LTE. Of the responses received 58% advised that the levy had had a financial impact. This could be seen as being one of the aims of the levy.

## **9.0 THE REVIEW OUTCOME – RSL CONSULTATION**

- 9.1 Responses to the RSL specific questionnaire were received from two of the four local RSLs who operate in Inverclyde. There was a strong view that the levy had a financial impact on tenants and communities, with both respondents expressing their view that the levy is an unfair tax on social tenants.
- 9.2 Similar to the responses from the public consultation there was agreement that the Council should seek to reduce the number of LTEs in Inverclyde with the actions being the provision of information & advice delivered through direct engagement with owners and the provision of financial assistance. Unlike the public responses there was no support for the application of the levy. The option of exemptions from the levy was supported with reasons for exemption including difficulties in renting or selling and ongoing regeneration plans.
- 9.3 Overall, the responses from the RSLs indicated a strong dislike for the levy and a strong desire for direct engagement with the Council to develop partnership based, cross-RSL, long-term regeneration plans for Inverclyde's housing stock which includes a focus on reducing LTEs. It should be noted that currently 172 RSL properties receive an exemption from the policy, having met the relevant criteria and these properties are split between River Clyde Homes and Oak Tree Housing Association on a respective 128 and 44 properties basis.
- 9.4 The Council works with RSL partners to deliver sustainable, good quality, social housing for Inverclyde residents. This aim is encompassed in the outcomes of the current Local Housing Strategy (LHS) and indeed is also set out in the 30 year housing stock transfer agreements which exist for both Cloch and RCH. Officers will continue to work with RSL partners and the Scottish Government in preparation of the next LHS in the coming months to ensure RSL business planning meets the aims of and strengthens the outcomes of the current Local Housing Strategy and Stock Transfer Agreements; ensures that appropriate stock and asset management plans are in place; ensures that best use is made of the available residential development sites; and, crucially, ensures that appropriate plans are put in place for low demand housing stock.
- 9.5 An update on the discussions with RSLs in respect of the linkages between LTEs the LHS and Stock Transfer Agreements will be presented to the Environment & Regeneration Committee to ensure appropriate oversight of the sustainable management of social housing stock in Inverclyde.

## **10.0 THE REVIEW OUTCOME – EMPTY HOMES USE**

- 10.1 Inverclyde Council, River Clyde Homes and the Scottish Empty Homes Partnership (Shelter Scotland) jointly funded the role of Inverclyde Empty Homes Officer from 2017/2018 to 2020/21.
- 10.2 The role of the EHO is preventative as much as reactive and this sees direct engagement with owners of LTEs who are outwith the 12 month period which precedes the application of the

levy. This means that the work of the EHO is not restricted to the properties noted at Section 6.0 and they engage with a wider audience. To date, the EHO has provided over 400 owners of empty homes with advice and information and through direct engagement has brought over 50 empty homes back into use.

**11.0 THE REVIEW OUTCOME – SUMMARY**

- 11.1 The review outcome indicates that the LTE Policy has been effective in reducing the number of LTEs in Inverclyde and the consultation responses confirm that there is an ongoing desire to reduce the number of LTEs through the provision of information & advice and financial assistance.
- 11.2 The consultation responses display a strong strand of support for exemptions from the levy and this is particularly well represented in the RSL responses. However, there is conflict between the desire of the RSLs and the Government Guidance which will require detailed consideration and discussion. It should be noted that in addition to the 172 exempt RSL properties, there are currently 21 privately owned properties receiving exemption via the use of the discretionary powers.
- 11.3 Overall, the review has identified the successes of the application of the LTE Policy across Inverclyde. However, it has also identified circumstances where a nuanced delivery of the policy may yield greater long-term results, particularly between charging the levy whilst funding repairs or regeneration.
- 11.4 Therefore, it is proposed that the current policy is maintained, with the exception of the Clune Park Regeneration Area, that RSLs are directly engaged to discuss in greater detail their business plans and the development of regeneration plans and that consideration is given to a review of the policy which seeks to build in flexibility to reflect the additional external factors which affect the ability of an owner to bring an LTE back into the local housing supply. Subject to consideration of this report by the Committee it is the intention that a final proposed revised Policy be presented to the February 2022 meeting of this Committee for approval.

**12.0 IMPLICATIONS**

**12.1 Finance**

The LTE levy raises approximately £370k per year from the 100% levy. Any reduction in the sum raised will impact on the overall Revenue Budget.

Financial Implications:

One off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Years	Proposed Spend this Report	Virement From	Other Comments

Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact	Virement From (If Applicable)	Other Comments

12.2 **Legal**

No Legal implications. The use of existing guidelines ensures compliance with relevant legislation.

12.3 **Human Resources**

No Human Resources implications.

12.4 **Equalities**

Equalities

(a) Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out?

	YES (see attached appendix)
X	NO – This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a substantive change to an existing policy, function or strategy. Therefore, no Equality Impact Assessment is required

(b) Fairer Scotland Duty

If this report affects or proposes any major strategic decision:-

Has there been active consideration of how this report's recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome?

	YES
X	NO

(c) Data Protection

Has a Data Protection Impact Assessment been carried out?

	YES
X	NO

12.5 **Repopulation**

No impact on repopulation.

13.0 **CONSULTATIONS**

13.1 A public consultation and consultation with housing professionals was carried out.

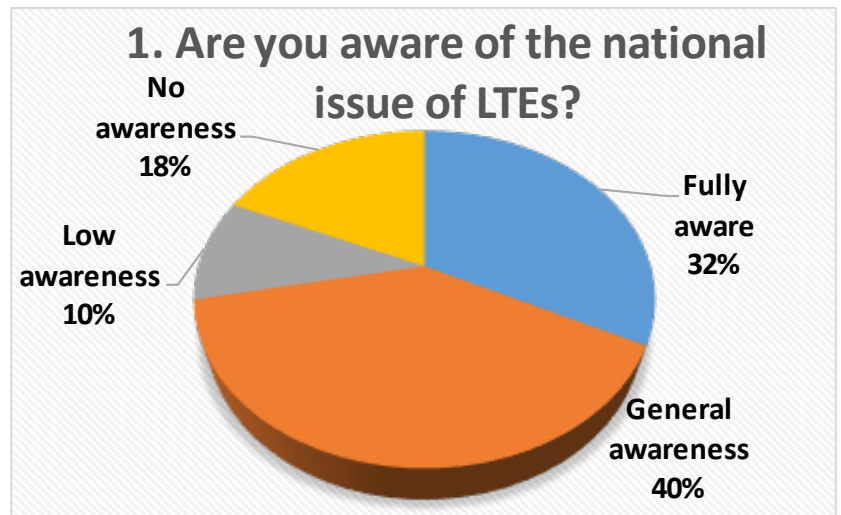
14.0 **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None

**Review of the Effectiveness of the Long Term Empty Homes Policy  
Questionnaire Responses**

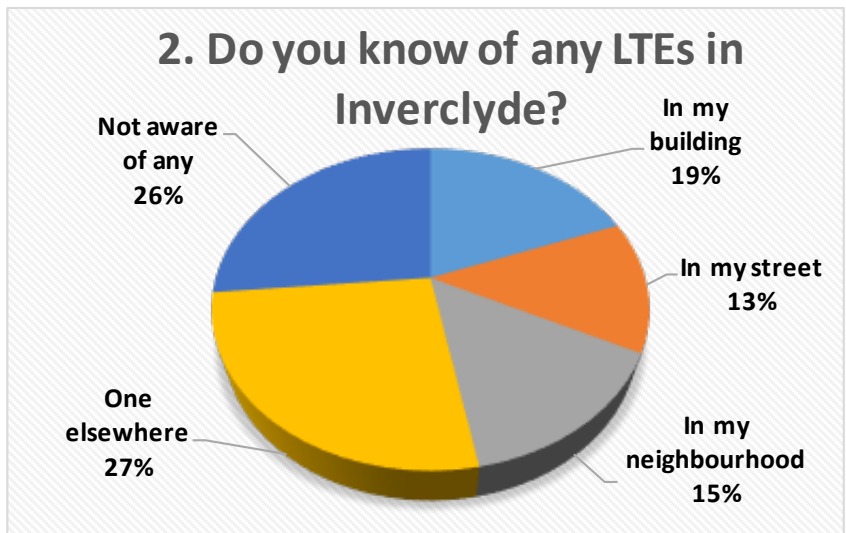
1. Are you aware of the national issue of long term empty homes? (please select one option)

Total No. of Responses - 71



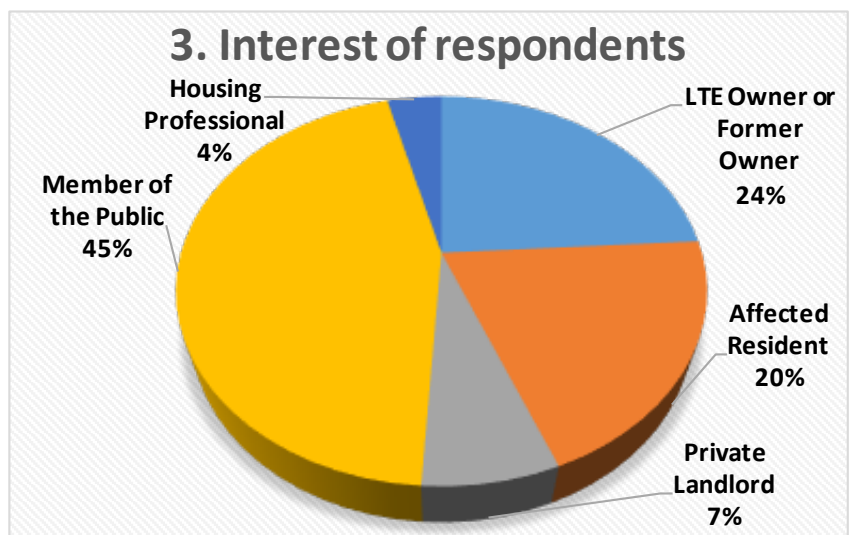
2. Do you know of any Long Term Empty homes in Inverclyde? (please select the option most relevant to you)

Total No. of Responses - 68



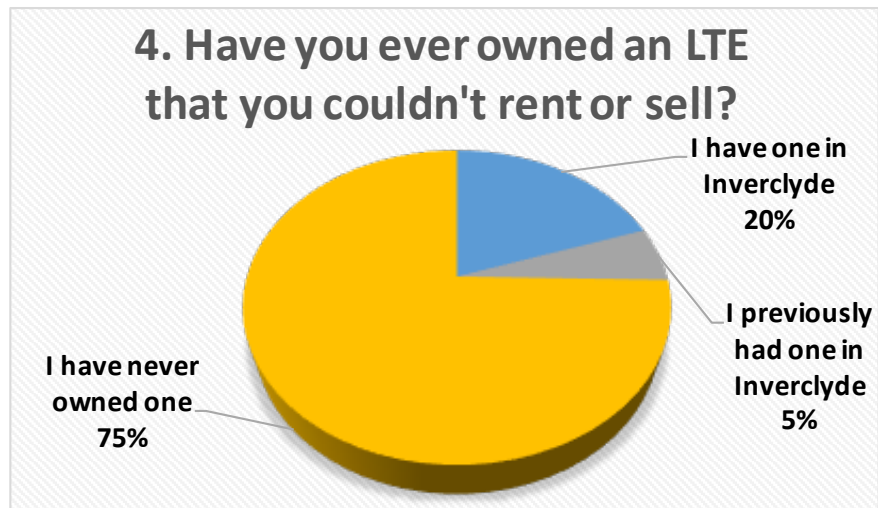
3. In what capacity are you responding to this questionnaire? (please select the option most relevant to you)

Total No. of Responses - 71



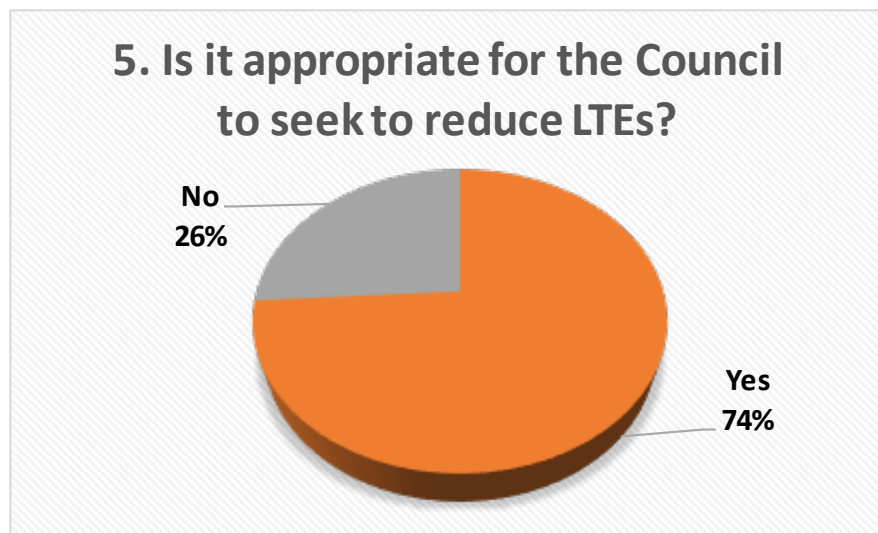
4. Have you ever owned an LTE that you couldn't rent or sell? (please select one option)

Total No. of Responses – 71



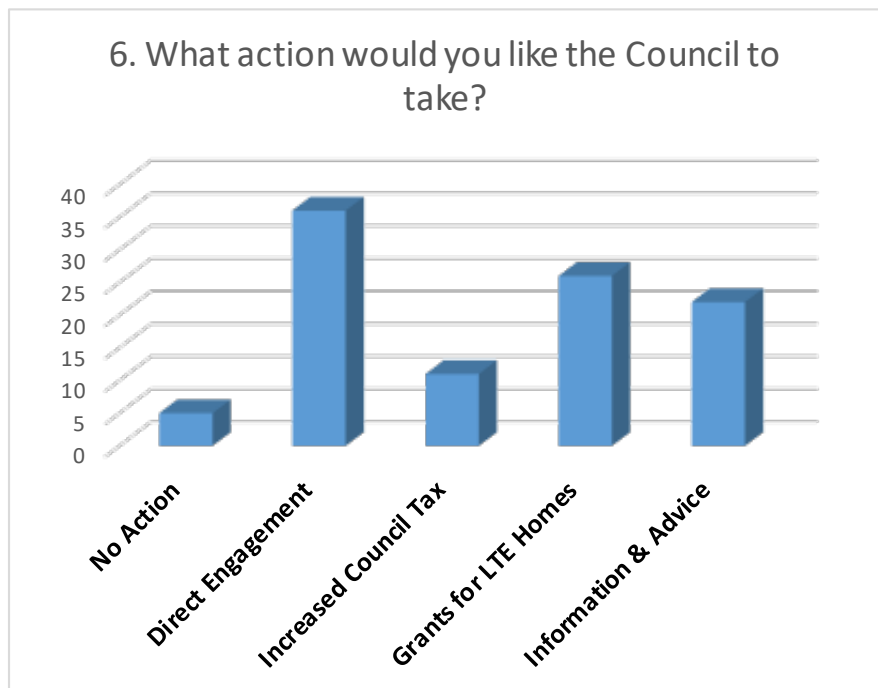
5. Is it appropriate for the Council to seek to reduce LTEs?

Total No. of Responses – 70



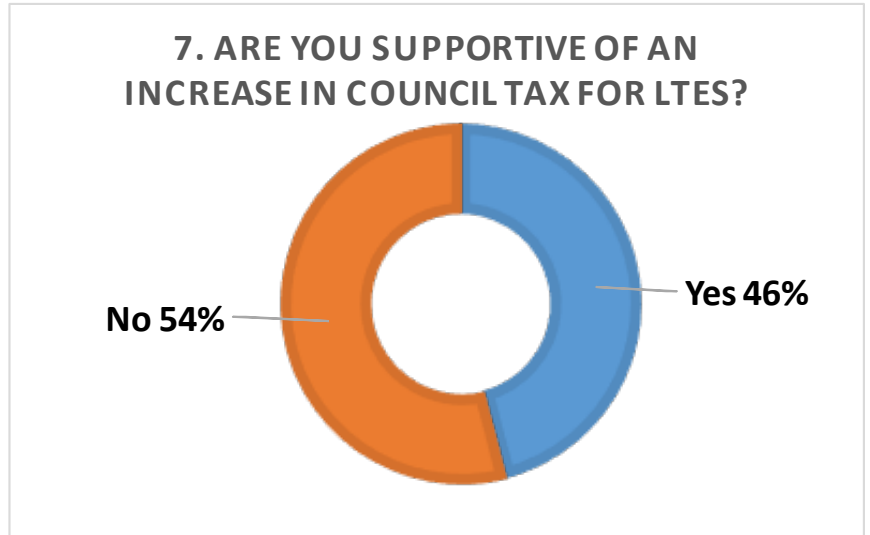
6. What type of action would you like to see the Council take in relation to long term?

Total No. of Responses – 70



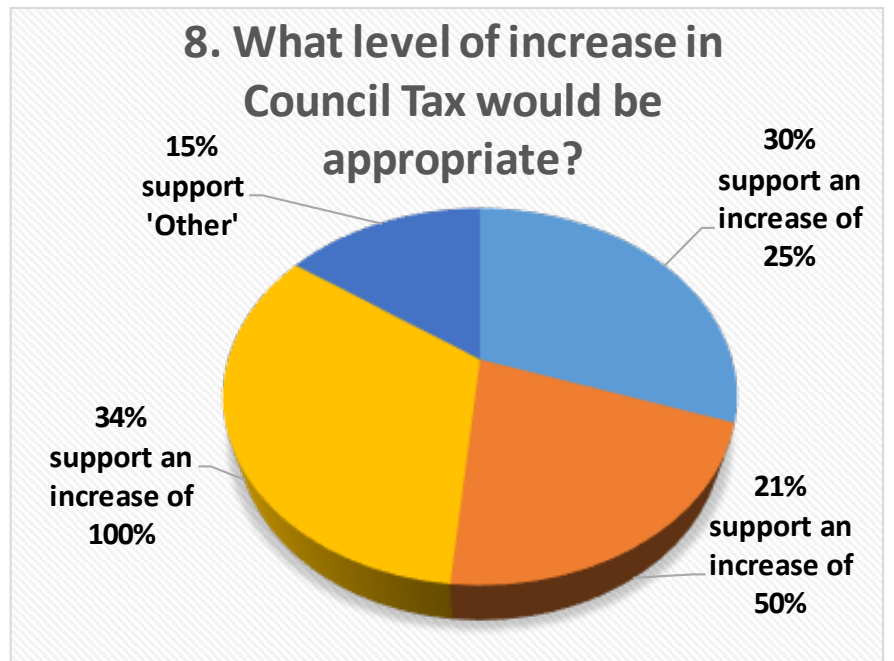
7. Are you supportive of an increase in Council Tax for LTEs?

Total No. of Responses – 71



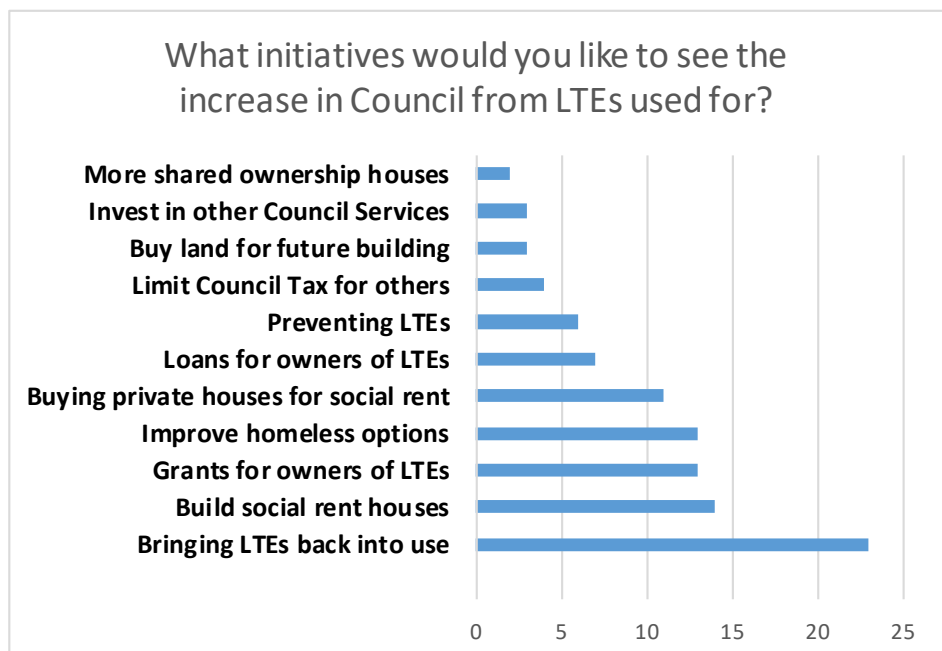
8. What level of increase in Council Tax would be appropriate? (please select one option)

Total No. of Responses – 33



9. What initiatives would you like to see the increase in Council Tax from long term empty homes used for? (please select up to 3 options)

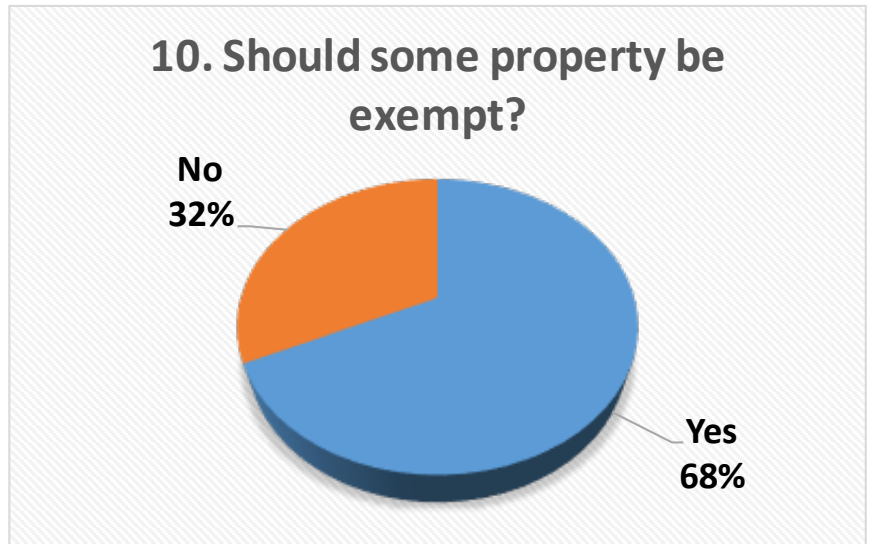
Total No. of Options Selected - 146





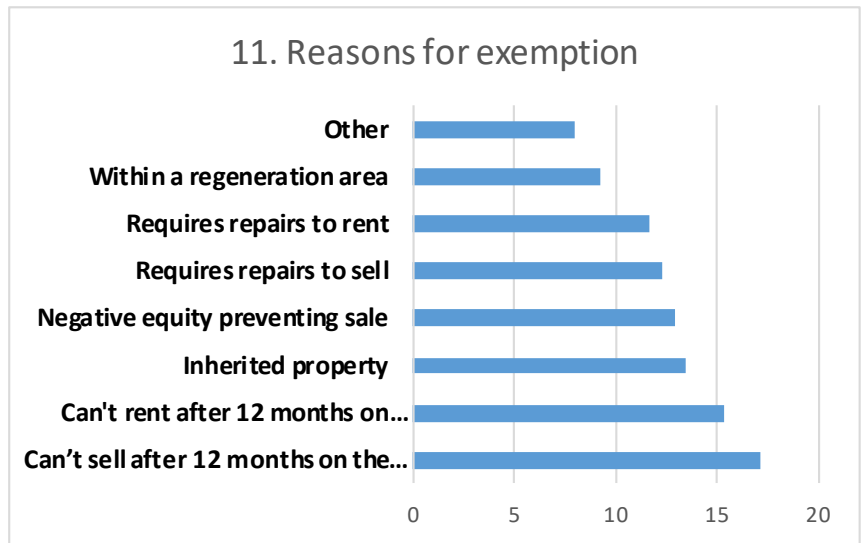
10. Should some properties be exempt?

Total No. of Responses – 71



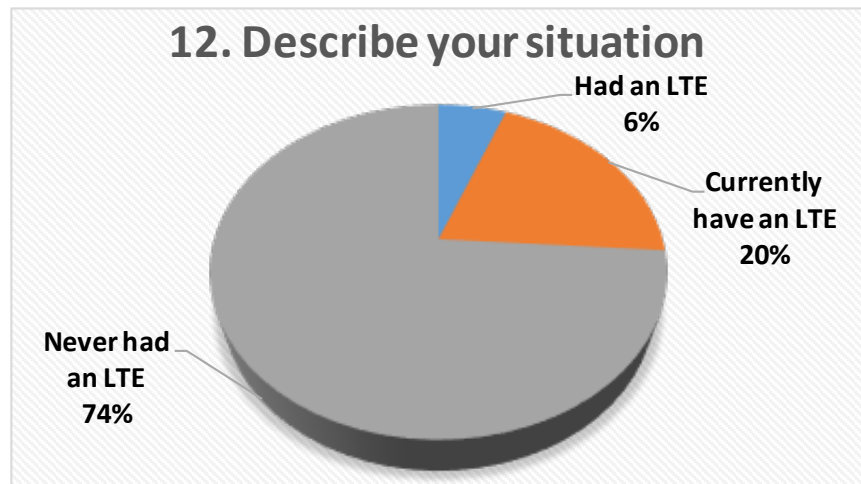
11. If yes, for which reasons should properties/owners be exempt from the increase. (please select all that apply)

Total No. of Options Selected - 163



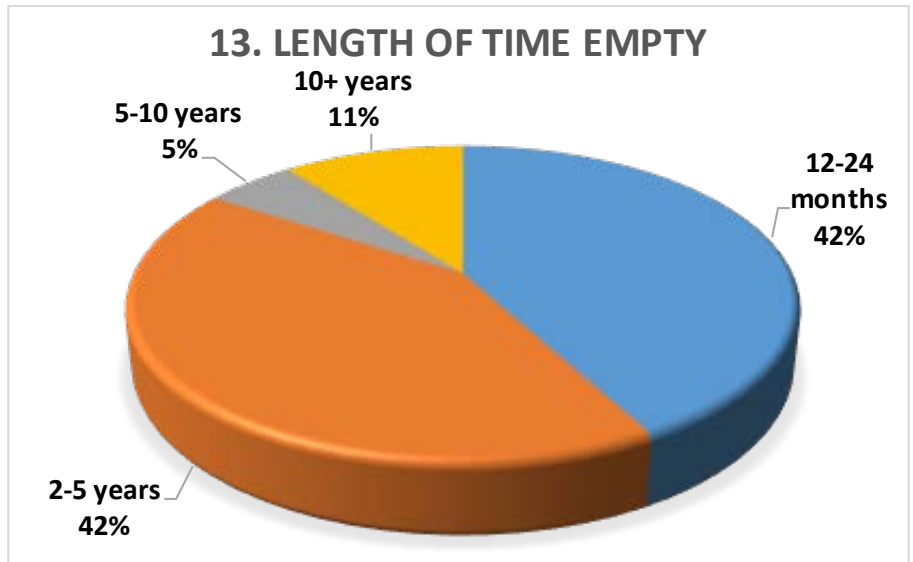
12. If you have or had an LTE please select the options which best describe your situation.

Total No. of Responses – 69



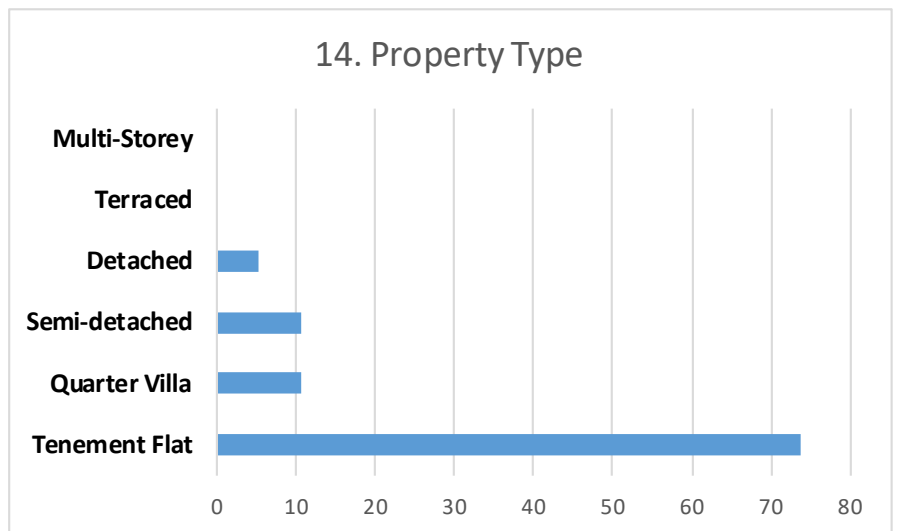
13. If you previously had or currently have an LTE please state the length of time the property was empty.

Total No. of Responses – 19



14. If you previously had or currently have an LTE please state the property type.

Total No. of Responses – 19

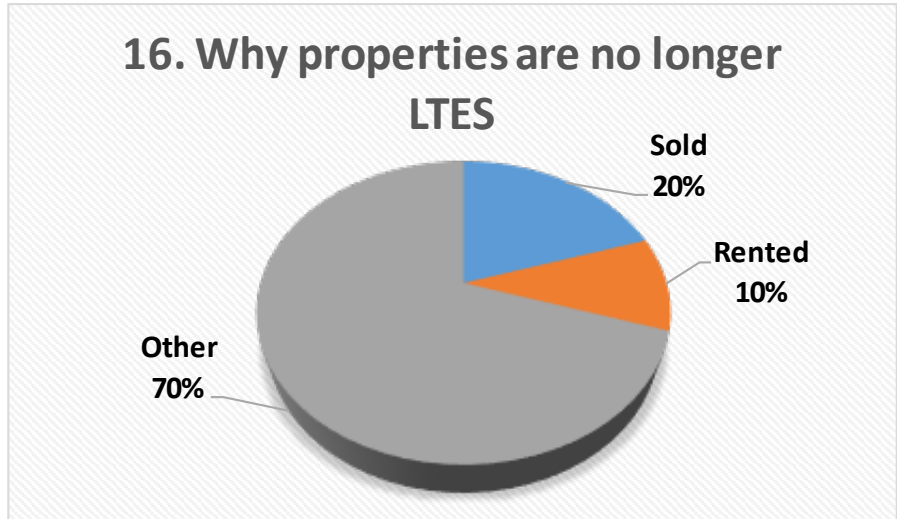


15. If you previously had or currently have an LTE, please state the reasons why.

Total No. of Responses – 10

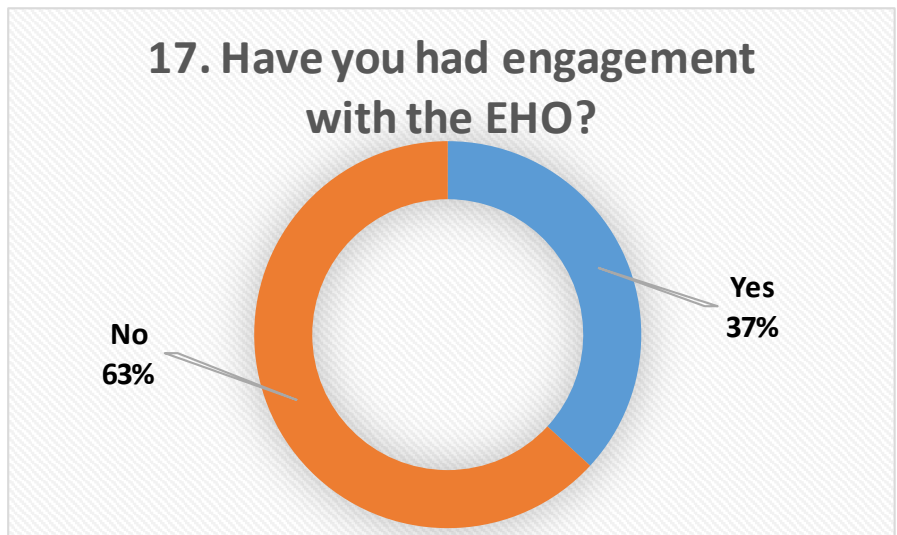
16. If your property is no longer empty, please state the reason.

Total No. of Responses – 10



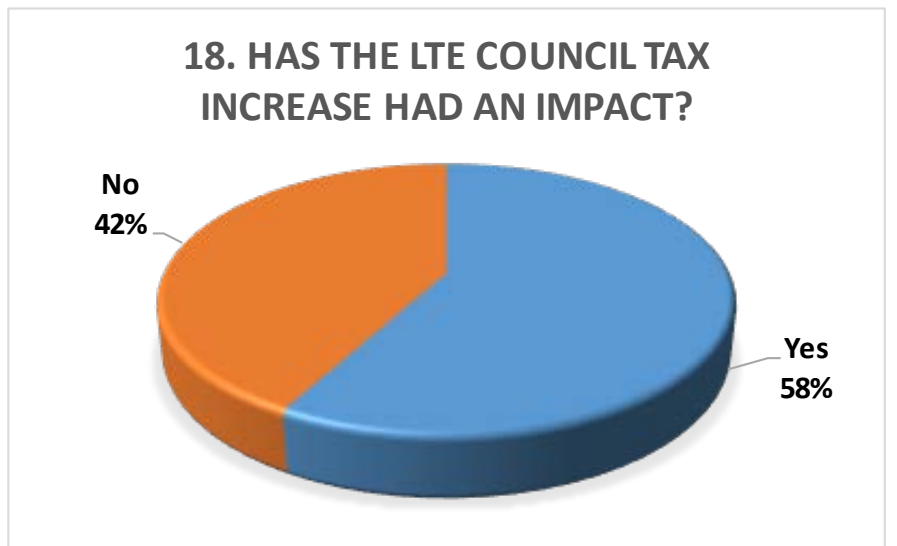
17. If you previously had or currently have an LTE, have you had engagement with the EHO?

Total No. of Responses – 19



18. If you previously had an LTE has the increase in Council Tax had an impact on your decision to have an LTE?

Total No. of Responses – 19



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<b>Report To:</b>	<b>Policy &amp; Resources Committee</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>14 September 2021</b>
<b>Report By:</b>	<b>Interim Head of Legal Services</b>	<b>Report No:</b>	<b>PR/15/21/AS</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Anne Sinclair</b>	<b>Contact No:</b>	<b>01475 712710</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Members' Services Review</b>		

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## 1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise the Committee of feedback received following the extended review of Members' support and to note that the staffing complement and resources meet the current scheme of expected tasks.

## 2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 The former Head of Legal & Property Services submitted a report to the meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee on 17 September 2019 regarding a review of Members' support. Following discussion the Committee requested that a review involving all Members be undertaken over the course of the following year with a further report to the September 2020 meeting of the Committee.
- 2.2 The subsequent report by the former Head of Legal & Property Services to the September 2020 Committee outlined the responses received from the all Members' consultation exercise, to which all Elected Members were invited to participate, concluded that the staffing complement and resources met the scheme of expected tasks detailed in the report of 17 September 2019. A copy of the Scheme of Tasks is set out in Appendix 1.
- 2.3 The decision of the Policy & Resources Committee on 17 September 2020 was that the feedback received from the all Members' consultation be noted and that approval be given to an extension of the review for one year to enable future planning of Members' resources as a consequence of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the ways of working affecting all staff and Members.
- 2.4 This report outlines the up-to-date responses received following the most recent all Members' consultation exercise.
- 2.5 It is recognised that with the continuation of the Covid-19 pandemic, and recovery from the pandemic there will be a significant impact on the resources required to manage and run the Local Government Election in May 2022. However, the existing staffing complement with current resources successfully managed to run the Scottish Government Election in May 2021 notwithstanding the additional challenges due to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 2.6 It is the conclusion of the Interim Head of Legal Services that the existing staffing complement and resources meet the current scheme of expected tasks and that Members' Services will be in a position to liaise with the Council's ICT Services in relation to seeking IT support.

## 3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Committee:
- (i) Notes the feedback from the recent all Members consultation as set out in the body of this report; and
  - (ii) Agrees that the review of Members' Services is now concluded.

**Anne Sinclair**  
**Interim Head of Legal Services**

## **4.0 BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 At the meeting on 15 September 2020, the Committee approved an extension of the Members' Services review for a period of one year to enable future planning of Member resources as a consequence of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the ways of working affecting all staff and Members.
- 4.2 The consultation exercise prior to the September 2020 report received a 50% response rate (11 confidential returns). A copy of the questionnaire issued to Members in September 2020 is set out in Appendix 2. The response from those Elected Members who participated in the consultation exercise in 2020 was positive, although in relation to question 5 on any causes of concern and challenges during the Covid-19 pandemic, issues were raised relating to internet access, connectivity, robustness of Members home IT, home printing/copying facilities and difficulties in communicating while working from home. The majority of responders considered that the review should be extended for a period of one year to enable future planning of Members' resources.

## **5.0 RECENT ELECTED MEMBER FEEDBACK**

- 5.1 The most recent consultation exercise received a 27% response rate (6 confidential returns). All Members were asked as part of the most recent consultation exercise for their up-to-date views. Members were provided with a list of the core tasks of Members' Services and provided with a copy of the original questionnaire form should they wish to provide an updated response.
- 5.2 Two Members chose to complete the original questionnaire form. All questions received a positive response from both of those Members. In relation to question 7 regarding tasks that were not part of the core tasks, one Member made a suggestion in relation to assistance with Agenda management.
- 5.3 Of the six Members who responded three Members made a request for support from Members' Services in liaising with colleagues in ICT with a view to obtaining equipment or making other arrangements to assist with home working. The Members' Services team will assist in this connection.
- 5.4 Two responders stated that they considered it would be appropriate for the review to be extended for a further period of one year in light of the current Covid-19 recovery and to enable future planning of Members' Services to take account of the "new normal" and potential for the Council's overall consideration of the new ways of working affecting all staff. However, all six responders were satisfied with the standard of support provided in relation to the core tasks and feel the current staffing complement and resources meet the requirements to cover the specified core tasks.

## **6.0 CONCLUSIONS**

- 6.1 Once again the feedback received from the consultation exercise has been positive and it is considered that no additional resources to undertake the current range of tasks are required at this time.
- 6.2 Whilst there was considerable pressure on resources in the lead up to and during the Scottish Parliament Electoral event, which was particularly challenging during the Covid-19 pandemic, the experience of the May 2021 Scottish Government Elections was positive. As always in times of additional pressure, such as an election, admin assistance is available from the remaining complement of Legal Services support staff.
- 6.3 A working group of Officers continues to review future practices in light of guidance from the Scottish Government in terms of future ways of working for staff and Members.
- 6.4 Resilience and cross skilling are evident within the Members' Services team and continues to be developed in order to ensure there is adequate and sufficient provision for planned and

unplanned absence.

- 6.5 Two Elected Members have made a request that this review is extended for a further period of one year. However all Members who responded to this review were satisfied with the current provision and resources. The Council is in the final year of its administration prior to the Local Government Elections in May 2022. In the circumstances it is not considered necessary to extend this review further. It will be open to Members to request a fresh review following the new administration in May 2022.

## 7.0 IMPLICATIONS

### Finance

- 7.1 There are no direct financial implications.

#### Financial Implications:

##### One off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Years	Proposed Spend this Report	Virement From	Other Comments
N/A					

##### Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact		
N/A					

### Legal

- 7.2 There are no direct implications within this report.

### Human Resources

- 7.3 There are no direct implications within this report.

### Equalities

- 7.4 Equalities

- (a) Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out?

	YES
X	NO – This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a substantive change to an existing policy, function or strategy. Therefore, no Equality Impact Assessment is required.

- (b) Fairer Scotland Duty

If this report affects or proposes any major strategic decision:-

Has there been active consideration of how this report's recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome?

	YES – A written statement showing how this report’s recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage has been completed.
X	NO

(c) Data Protection

Has a Data Protection Impact Assessment been carried out?

	YES – This report involves data processing which may result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals.
X	NO

**Repopulation**

7.5 None.

**8.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

8.1 None.



## EXTRACT OF MINUTE

**Policy & Resources Committee: 17 September 2019**

**Agenda Item: 20**

**Subject: Review of Members' Support**

5.2 The following administrative and secretarial services are provided by the Members' Services team to support all Elected Members and their individual roles as Councillors, Provost and Leader:

- PA support to Provost and Leader
- Arranging Civic events/hospitality/visits
- Arranging Surgeries
- Room booking service
- Support arrangements for Councillors' ICT
- Mail sorted, logged and mail posted
- Photocopying
- Word processing of Constituency and Council business (letters, e-mails, etc.)
- Telephone messages taken
- Travel and accommodation arrangements
- Meetings arranged
- Enquiries relayed to Council staff
- General information gathering including background research related to constituency matters
- Diary management if requested
- Training/Briefings organised
- Expenses claims processed

5.3 These duties are considered core and are consonant with the services and support provided by other Councils to their Elected Members.



## REVIEW OF MEMBERS' SUPPORT

### QUESTIONNAIRE

**Completed by:**

**Date:**

1. With reference to the core tasks listed in paragraph 5.2 of the Policy & Resources report 'Review of Members' Support', please provide comment on how satisfied you are with the standard of the support service provided in relation to the tasks?

**Response:**

2. Do you feel the current staff complement and resources meet the support provided to cover the specified core tasks?

**Response:**

3. Are individual tasks that you request carried out timeously and within your requested timescales?

**Response:**

4. Is the quality of work of a standard that you would expect?

**Response:**

5. Given the significant challenges experienced in maintaining continuity of service provision due to the current Covid-19 pandemic, are there any areas of your support that give you cause for concern?

**Response:**

6. During periods of pressure, for example scheduled/unscheduled electoral events, staff absences (holidays/sickness), has there been a significant impact on the direct support you receive?

**Response:**

7. To ensure that you receive the support you need to fulfil your role as a Councillor, are there any aspects of your workload that you feel would benefit with the assistance of the support team but are not part of the core tasks?

**Response:**

8. In the current Covid-19 recovery do you consider that the review be extended for one year to enable future planning of Member resources to take account of the 'New Normal' and the potential for the Council's overall consideration of the new ways of working affecting all staff?

**Response:**

9. **Any other comments:**

**THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THIS QUESTIONNAIRE**

**Please return to:**

**Karen.Macvey@inverclyde.gov.uk**



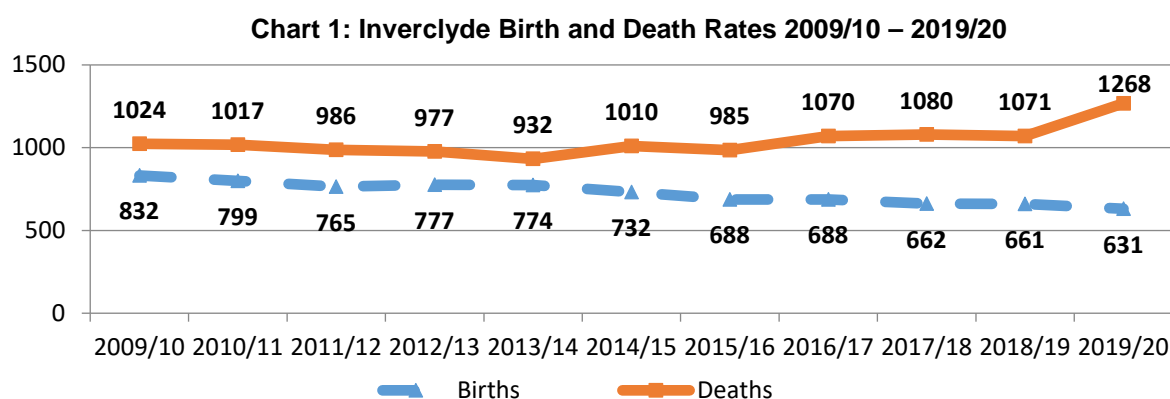
<b>Report To:</b>	<b>Policy &amp; Resources Committee</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>14 September 2021</b>
<b>Report By:</b>	<b>Ruth Binks, Corporate Director, Education, Communities &amp; Organisational Development</b>	<b>Report No:</b>	<b>PR/10/21/RB</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Andrina Hunter, Corporate Policy, Performance and Partnership Manager</b>	<b>Contact No:</b>	<b>01475 712042</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>NRS Mid-2020 Population Estimates, Scotland</b>		

## 1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with details of the latest mid-2020 population estimates, published by the National Records of Scotland (NRS) on 25 June 2021 and to highlight potential issues arising from this new data.

## 2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 Inverclyde's estimated population as at 30 June 2020 was 77,060. This is a 740 (-1%) decrease compared to the 2019 mid-year population estimate (77,800) and the largest percentage population decrease in Scotland. In contrast, Scotland had a small population growth, increasing by 2,700 to 5,466,000, however growth was slower than in any of the previous 17 years.
- 2.2 Inverclyde is one of 20 Council areas in Scotland estimated to have had a population decrease between mid-2019 and mid-2020. Appendix 1 shows the population change in all Council areas.
- 2.3 By far, the biggest driver of population decline in Inverclyde between mid-2019 and mid-2020 was negative natural change, accounting for 86% of the population decrease. There were twice as many deaths as births in Inverclyde; 1,268 deaths compared in 631 births over the period, resulting in natural change of -637. Chart 1 shows the sharp increase (18%) in deaths between 2018/19 and 2019/20 and the further fall in the birth rate (4.5%). Additional trend information on natural change in Inverclyde over the past 10 years is provided in Appendix 2



- 2.4 It should be noted that the new data relates to the year ending 30 June 2020 and so takes into account the first wave of the Covid-19 pandemic which affected Inverclyde particularly badly. Between March 2020 and June 2020, there were 534 death registrations in Inverclyde compared to 346 in 2019 and 333 in 2018 over the same period. In the period to 30 June 2020, 116 deaths were attributed to Covid-19. For the remainder of 2020, death registrations in Inverclyde returned to levels similar to that in previous years.

- 2.5 Scotland also suffered from negative natural change over the same period with 14,472 more deaths than births, the largest natural decrease on record. More deaths, fewer births and lower levels of overseas net migration have contributed to Scotland's slowed population growth.
- 2.6 During 2020, travel restrictions were in place and the pandemic itself may have affected people's choices about where they wanted to live. Following encouraging positive net migration in two out of the past three years, the latest estimates show that between mid-2019 and mid-2020, 1,250 people moved into the area and 1,350 left, resulting in estimated net migration of -100.
- 2.7 This new data, which indicates that Inverclyde has experienced the largest population decline in Scotland is disappointing and has potential implications for our future general revenue grant. The next Census, which will take place on 20 March 2022, will provide a more robust population count, however population data by Council area may not be available until March 2023. Also, for the first time, Scotland's Census will be conducted primarily online, which has implications for areas of higher deprivation, where traditionally there are lower levels of digital engagement. Inverclyde Council has been assured by NRS that where digital returns cannot be made, every effort will be made to ensure that all households are provided with an appropriate means to complete their Census survey to ensure as high a response rate as possible.
- 2.8 The Inverclyde Alliance Population Partnership leads on the work associated with growing the population of Inverclyde through improving the employment, housing and infrastructure offer. An Inverclyde Re-population Strategy and Action Plan was agreed in March 2019 and whilst Covid-19 has disrupted the delivery of the Action Plan, there has been a number of key achievements, more detail on which is provided in paragraph 7.2.
- 2.9 In addition, the Committee will be aware that Inverclyde, West Dunbartonshire and Argyll and Bute Councils have jointly commissioned the Fraser of Allander Institute to prepare an economic case to present to the Scottish and UK Governments for special support post Covid-19. All three Councils face significant challenges associated with economic decline and along with Western Isles Council, had the largest estimated population decline in Scotland between mid-2019 and mid-2020. The final report will be presented to Members in due course.

### **3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Committee notes:
- a) The latest mid-year population estimates for Inverclyde and Scotland which show a further decrease in the population of Inverclyde, predominantly as a result of natural change.
  - b) The ongoing impact the continued depopulation and poor relative performance against other parts of Scotland will have on future Scottish Government Grant settlements for Inverclyde
  - c) That the Fraser of Allander Institute is carrying out a study into Supporting Economic Recovery for Inverclyde, West Dunbartonshire and Argyll & Bute Councils which are the 3 bottom ranked mainland Councils for population growth based on these latest statistics.
- 3.2 It is recommended that the Committee agrees that, in conjunction with Community Planning Partners and local MSPs and the local MP, the Council strenuously makes the case for radical economic stimuli to be implemented to reverse the continued depopulation within the area.

**Ruth Binks,  
Corporate Director,  
Education, Communities &  
Organisational Development**

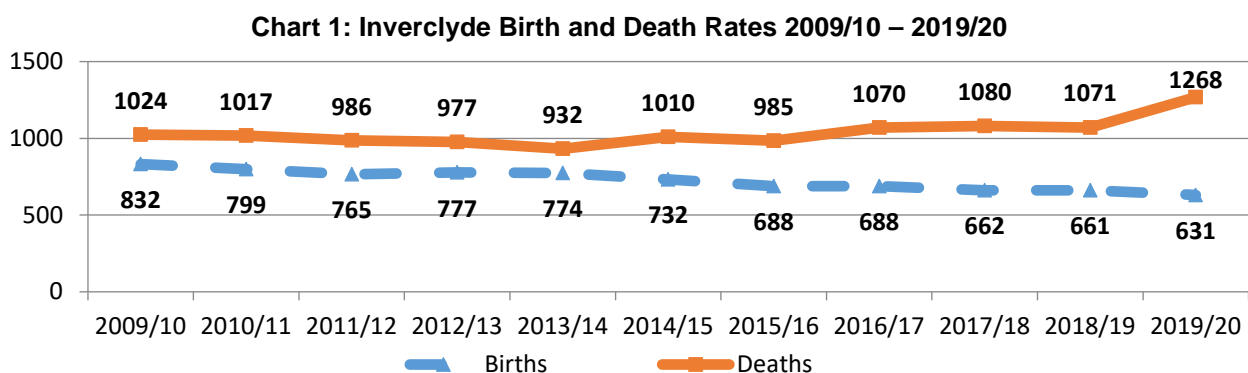


## 4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The National Registers of Scotland (NRS) is the responsible agency of the Scottish Government that handles all matters relating to population and household statistics, including the Census and mid-year estimates. On 25 June 2021 the National Records for Scotland (NRS) published 'Mid-2020 Population Estimates, Scotland', providing population estimates for Scotland, its Council areas and NHS boards by sex and age.
- 4.2 Population estimates are based on the census (2011) and are updated annually to account for the population change in the period 1 July - 30 June. The two main contributors to population change are natural change (births minus deaths) and net migration (the difference between long term moves into and out of the UK or local areas).
- 4.3 The census and associated population measures have a significant bearing on a number of strategic issues most notably Government Funding.

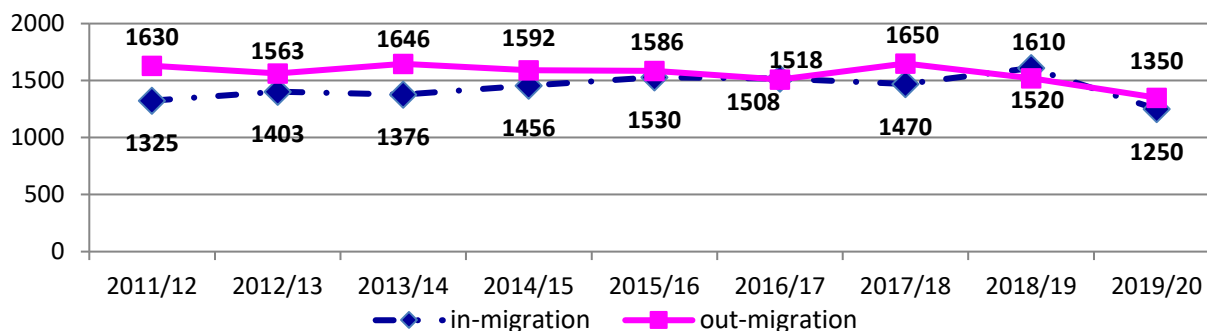
## 5.0 INVERCLYDE MID YEAR POPULATION ESTIMATE (30 JUNE 2020)

- 5.1 As at 30 June 2020, the population of Inverclyde was estimated to be 77,060, this is a 740 (-1%) decrease compared to the 2019 mid-year population estimate, 77,800.
- 5.2 Inverclyde is one of 20 Council areas in Scotland to have had an estimated decrease in population between mid-2019 and mid-2020. Inverclyde (-1%), Na h-Eileanan Siar (-0.8%) and West Dunbartonshire (-0.7%) experienced the greatest population decline in percentage terms whilst East Lothian (+0.8%) and Midlothian (+0.7%) had the highest population growth. Appendix 1 shows the population change in Council areas across Scotland between mid-2019 and mid-2020.
- 5.3 By far, the biggest driver of population decline in Inverclyde between mid-2019 and mid-2020 was negative natural change, accounting for 86% of the population decrease. There were more than twice as many deaths as births in Inverclyde; 1,268 deaths compared in 631 births over the period, resulting in natural change of -637. Chart 1 shows the sharp increase (18%) in deaths between 2018/19 and 2019/20 and the further fall in the birth rate (4.5%). Additional information on natural change in Inverclyde over the past 10 years is provided in Appendix 2.



- 5.4 It should be noted that the new data relates to the year ending 30 June 2020 and so takes into account the first wave of the Covid-19 pandemic which affected Inverclyde particularly badly. Between March 2020 and June 2020, there were 534 death registrations in Inverclyde compared to 346 in 2019 and 333 in 2018 over the same period. In the period to 30 June 2020 116 deaths were attributed to Covid-19. For the remainder of 2020, death registrations in Inverclyde returned to levels similar to that in previous years.
- 5.5 During 2020, travel restrictions were put in place and the pandemic itself may have affected people's choices about where they wanted to live. Following encouraging positive net migration estimates in mid-2017 and mid-2019 the latest estimates once again show out-migration in Inverclyde higher than in-migration, with an estimated 1,250 people moving into the area and 1,350 leaving, resulting in net migration of -100. Estimated out and in-migration are both lower than in the previous 9 years.

Chart 2: Inverclyde migration pattern mid 2011 - mid 2020



5.6 It is estimated that Inverclyde had positive net migration from the rest of the UK (+70) but lost more residents than it gained to the rest of Scotland (-100) and overseas (-70).

5.7 Of those moving into Inverclyde it is estimated that 73% of people came from within Scotland, 22% of in-migrants came from the rest of the UK and 5% from overseas. Of those leaving Inverclyde, 75% went elsewhere in Scotland, 15% went to the rest of the UK and 10% went overseas.

5.8 The age structure of Inverclyde's population remains very similar to previous years and broadly reflects the national picture:

- 16% of the population is aged under 16 years (Scotland, 17%)
- 64% of the population is aged 16-64 years (Scotland, 65%)
- 20% of the population is aged 65 years and over (Scotland, 18%)

The median age of Inverclyde's population is 46.3 years, compared to 42.1 years in Scotland, reflecting a slightly older population than the national average.

5.9 This latest data, which indicates that Inverclyde has experienced the largest population decline in Scotland is disappointing and potentially has implications for our future general revenue grant, which factors population into its calculation. The Census 2022, which is due to take place on 20 March 2022, will provide a more robust population count, however population data by Council area may not be available until March 2023. Additionally, for the first time, Scotland's Census will be conducted primarily online, which has implications for areas of higher deprivation, where traditionally there are lower levels of digital engagement. Inverclyde Council has been assured by NRS that where digital returns cannot be made, every effort will be made to ensure that all households are provided with an appropriate means to complete their Census survey to ensure as high a response rate as possible.

## 6.0 NATIONAL POPULATION CHANGES

### *Mid-2020 estimates*

6.1 Scotland's estimated mid-2020 population was 5,466,000. The population increased by 2,700 people (0.05%) in the year to mid-2020, the slowest rate of growth since the year to mid-2003. This was mainly due to higher numbers of deaths and lower levels of net migration.

6.2 The change in the population nationally has therefore been driven by positive net migration, which has been adding to the population for the last two decades. The latest estimates show that 16,900 more people moved to Scotland than left. This however is the lowest level of net migration since 2012-13.

6.3 Scotland has also recorded its largest natural population decrease on record, with 14,500 more deaths than births. In total, there were 63,100 deaths and 48,700 births in the year ending mid-2020. Deaths over the latest year were 6,900 higher than those in the year to mid-2019 (56,200).

6.4 At a Council level, between mid-2019 and mid-2020, 20 areas experienced a decrease in population whilst 12 experienced an increase. The number of Council areas thought to have

had a population decrease has grown from 8 to 20 since the mid-2019 population estimates were published.

- 6.5 Of the 20 areas which experienced population decline over the last year, negative natural change (more deaths than births) was the main driver in almost all areas and 7 areas also experienced negative net migration. The areas facing the greatest population decline are mainly in the west of Scotland.
- 6.6 For the remaining 12 areas which experienced an estimated increase in population, net migration was the main driver of growth and with the exception of Midlothian, all areas had more deaths than births. Midlothian is the only area in Scotland to have had more births than deaths in the year.
- 6.7 The most common moves within Scotland are thought to be from the largest cities (Glasgow, Edinburgh and Aberdeen) to their neighbouring Council areas. More people left the largest cities for other areas in Scotland than moved to them from other areas in Scotland.
- 6.8 The largest percentage increases due to migration from overseas were in the four largest cities (Glasgow, Edinburgh, Aberdeen and Dundee) whilst migration from the rest of the UK added to the population in all but three Council areas (Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire, West Dunbartonshire).

## **7.0 INVERCLYDE'S RESPONSE**

- 7.1 Stemming and ultimately reversing population decline is a key priority for the Council and its partners involved in the regeneration of Inverclyde. The Inverclyde Alliance Population Partnership leads on the work associated with repopulation, with a focus on growing the population of Inverclyde through improving the employment, housing and infrastructure offer. An Inverclyde Re-population Strategy and Action Plan was approved by the Alliance Board on 18 March 2019.
- 7.2 Although Covid-19 has disrupted the delivery of the Action Plan, particularly in relation to the Inverclyde marketing strategy, there has been a number of key achievements, some examples of which are provided below:
  - The 'Discover Inverclyde' website was launched in July 2020 and has been well received. The website brings together in one place all promotional materials and provides a platform for marketing Inverclyde. The website continues to grow and develop;
  - The Eastern Gateway study, focusing on housing condition, need and land use in the area between Newark and Parklea in Port Glasgow, has been completed and the findings considered by the Environment & Regeneration Committee on 4 May 2021;
  - A Community Wealth Building Policy has been approved to create further jobs and opportunities within the third sector economy. Community Wealth Building seeks to redirect wealth back into the local economy and give local people more control;
  - The Partnership has successfully acquired additional support for Covid-19 recovery, including from Scotland's Town Partnership to promote towns and villages through the brand extension of 'Discover Inverclyde'. Additional funding was also received from Scotland's food and drink to support the hospitality sector;
  - The number of new business start-ups has increased and has exceeded the target of 150;
  - A Housebuilder Forum event was held prior to lockdown in March 2020, to support growth in the local housing market;
  - A Business Gateway Inverclyde Facebook page, providing a range of local information, has been set up to supplement existing national Business Gateway promotional activity.
  - Consortium partners, Inverclyde Council, CVS Inverclyde, Beacon Arts Centre, RIG Arts and Kayos Theatre Group were awarded £275,000 from the Creative Scotland's new Culture Collective funding stream to deliver an 18 month programme of activity (March 2021 – September 2022).
- 7.3 Improving public health in Inverclyde is key to reducing the number of deaths and improving life expectancy and the increased focus on early intervention and prevention, and better

management of long term health conditions, will hopefully have a positive impact. In addition, the 1140 hours childcare provision alongside the excellent school estate, and our family friendly approaches locally, aim to encourage future parents and families to settle in Inverclyde.

- 7.4 In addition to the work of the Population Partnership, the Committee will be aware that Inverclyde, West Dunbartonshire and Argyll and Bute Councils have agreed to a joint commissioning of consultants to prepare an economic case to present to the Scottish and UK Governments for special support post Covid-19, in view of the fact that all three areas face significant challenges associate with depopulation and economic decline.
- 7.5 To assist with the research required, the City Region’s Intelligence Hub has undertaken a socio-economic challenges review facing the three Council areas and the Fraser of Allander Institute has been commissioned to carry out this work. This final report will be presented to Members in due course.

## 8.0 IMPLICATIONS

### 8.1 Finance

#### Financial Implications:

Financial Implications: Population is a determining factor in GAE calculations which drive the Council’s Scottish Government Grant allocation and therefore these latest population estimates, which show that Inverclyde has the highest population decrease of all Council areas in Scotland will result in a reduction in the level of grant funding made to Inverclyde Council in the future.

#### One off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Years	Proposed Spend this Report	Virement From	Other Comments
N/A					

#### Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact	Virement From (if Applicable)	Other Comments
N/A					

### 8.2 Legal

There are no legal issues associated with this report.

### 8.3 Human Resources

There are no HR issues associated with this report.

### 8.4 Equalities

#### Equalities

- (a) Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out?

YES	
X	NO – This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a substantive change to an existing policy, function or strategy. Therefore, no Equality Impact Assessment is required

(b) Fairer Scotland Duty

If this report affects or proposes any major strategic decision:-

Has there been active consideration of how this report's recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome?

	YES – A written statement showing how this report's recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage has been completed.
X	NO

(c) Data Protection

Has a Data Protection Impact Assessment been carried out?

	YES – This report involves data processing which may result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals.
X	NO

## 8.5 Repopulation

Inverclyde's continued depopulation has long been recognised within the Council's and key strategic documents but it is clear that without radical interventions from Government's in both Westminster and Holyrood in order to stimulate economic activity and stop the drift of working age populations east or to the major cities, then it is likely that the Council will continue to depopulate with the resultant impact on funding and levels of deprivation.

At a local level it is hoped that the work on delivering positive outcomes for the people of Inverclyde, coupled with the work being led by the Population Partnership to raise the profile of Inverclyde will have a positive impact on future migration and encourage more people to come and live in the area. The Covid-19 pandemic will however have undoubtedly increased the challenges facing all partners.

## 9.0 CONSULTATIONS

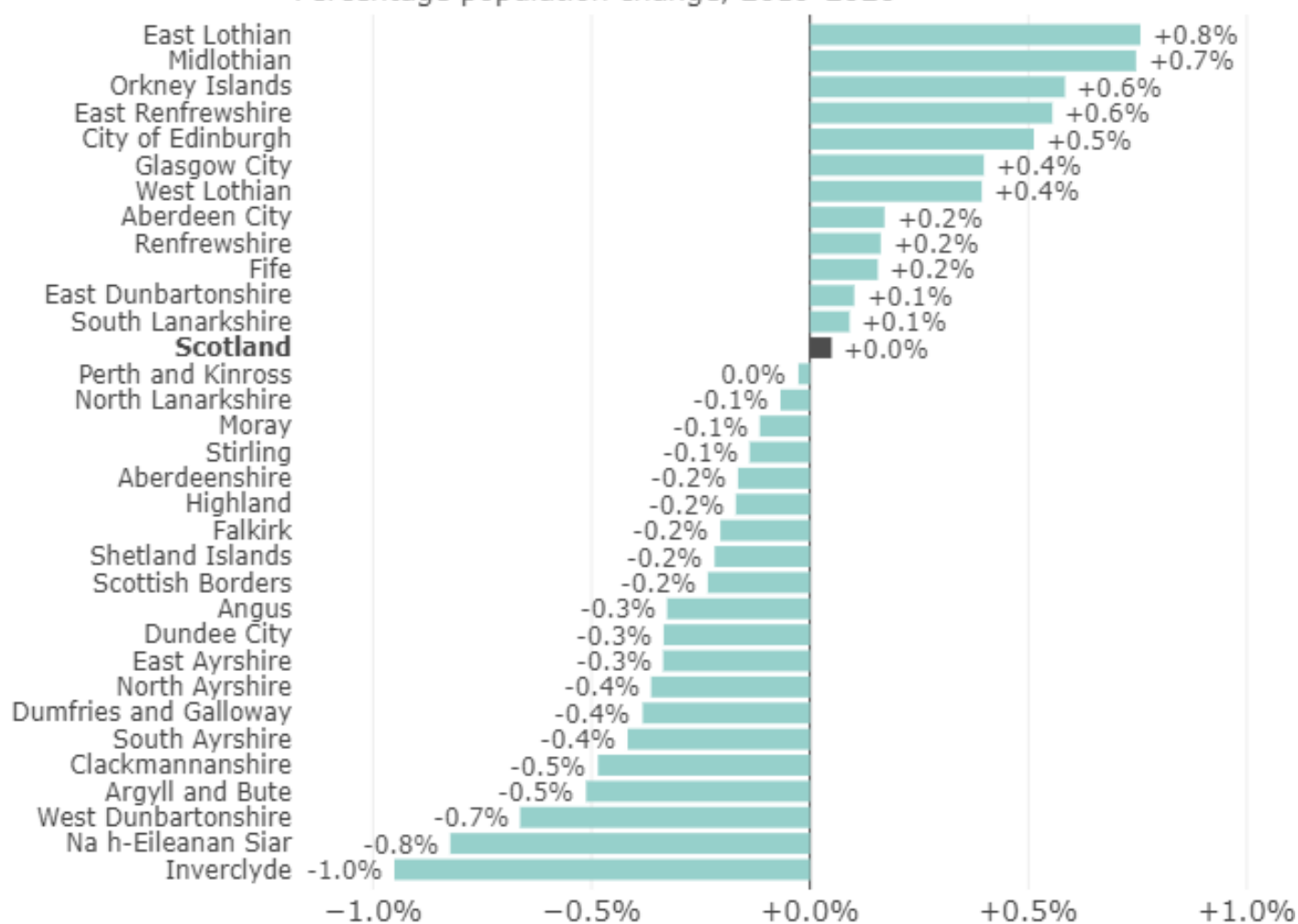
9.1 None

## 10.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 None

## Scotland

Percentage population change, 2019-2020



### Natural Change in Inverclyde (number of deaths minus births)

