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<b>Report To:</b>	<b>Education &amp; Communities Committee</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>30 August 2022</b>
<b>Report By:</b>	<b>Corporate Director, Education, Communities and Organisational Development</b>	<b>Report No:</b>	<b>EDUCOM/45/22/TM</b>
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<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Communities Update Report</b>		

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## **1.0 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY**

1.1  For Decision  For Information/Noting

1.2 The purpose of this report is to update members of the Education and Communities Committee on Communities related issues.

1.3 Updates are provided on the following areas:

- Cultural Services Annual Report;
- Culture Collective;
- Piping;
- The response to the outstanding remit on grass pitches;
- Budget pressure in relation to free swimming for under 16s; and
- Projected deficit due to utility costs – Inverclyde Leisure (IL)

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 It is recommended that the Education and Communities Committee:

- notes the updates provided in this report;
- agrees to a report on under 16s swimming being brought to the next meeting of the committee; and
- agrees that the Education and Communities Committee remit to Policy and Resources to fund the net increase in Inverclyde Leisure utility costs in 2022/23 totalling £278,000 .

**Ruth Binks**

**Corporate Director, Education, Communities and Organisational Development**

### 3.0 Updates

#### 3.1 Cultural Services Annual Report

The Cultural Services Annual Report 2021-22 provides information on the range and impact of the work of the service, and celebrates the achievements of the service. It summarises work which has taken place in order to achieve the actions identified in the Inverclyde Libraries Service Improvement Plan 2021-22 and the Watt Institution Service Improvement Plan 2021-22.

The full report can be viewed at: <https://bit.ly/3bqigBx>

In 2021-22, services were beginning to re-open after the Covid-19 related lockdown of Jan-Apr 2021; some restrictions, particularly library opening hours, remained in place until later in the year.

Despite this, the service continued to develop and improve. Achievements include:

- Inverclyde Libraries being Highly Commended in the inaugural Scottish Library and Information Council (SLIC) Library Service of the Year Awards. Judges were very impressed by the high standard of service delivery, creativity and innovation displayed by the service;
- Port Glasgow Library reopening to the public in August 2021 after a short closure for refurbishment. The new layout resulted in a library which looks clean, fresh and new and allows flexibility to create space for various library events and activities;
- Inverclyde Libraries, with other partners in Inverclyde, becoming one of seven hubs around Scotland to become Climate Beacons in the lead up to COP26 in Nov 2021. The service used library programming to focus on climate change mitigation and adaptation as part of its recovery from Covid-19;
- funding being granted by SLIC via the Public Library Improvement Fund for the Inverclyde Libraries' Play Together project. The project brings toys, play, and outdoor learning opportunities to families who may not otherwise have access to them. A free to use play library will provide access to toys, games, gardening equipment and outdoor learning to educate and enjoy;
- the Watt Institution successfully bidding for Museums Galleries Scotland (MGS) funding for the *Our Watt* project which enabled the employment of a Digital Learning & Engagement Officer to work with communities to develop the service offer and shape and improve digital capacity going forward. Work included digitisation, digital reminiscence and digital ancestry projects; and
- the Music Service Spring Concert taking place, enabling the band, choirs and orchestra to perform to a full house at Greenock Town Hall for the first time in over two years.

#### 3.2 Culture Collective

In March 2020, Creative Scotland commenced a pilot programme to establish a network of creative practitioners, organisations, and communities, working together to create a positive difference locally and nationally in response to Covid-19. A consortium of Inverclyde partners including Inverclyde Council, Beacon Arts Centre, RIG Arts, CVS Inverclyde and Kayos Theatre Group successfully bid to be one of the 26 projects across Scotland who shared £6m in funding. Inverclyde's project received £275,000 for 18 months' of arts activity across the area (March 2021 – September 2022). An additional £198,000 of funding was confirmed in March 2022 to extend the Inverclyde programme until September 2023.

The aim of the project is to investigate key areas identified by the Arts Sub-Group of the Inverclyde Cultural Partnership and specific to the needs of Inverclyde – health and social care (and in particular, adult mental health); young people; community regeneration; environmental/outdoor/site-specific work; and engaging with under-represented audiences with low arts engagement and/or barriers to access. The project will support over 40 artists and creative practitioners.

Activities carried out in this reporting period include:

- the final events in relation to the year-long Writer’s Residency – writer Katharine Macfarlane held a “Story Feast” at the Drying Green at South West Library which included participants from the weekly WORD spoken word events, and also members from creative writing group The Writers Well. The event also launched an anthology of poems curated from local submissions entitled “From Acorns”. The event saw 35 individuals in attendance who shared and performed their work;
- artist in Residence Martin O’Connor has been developing new pieces of writing for performance, working closely with the Watt Institution and their archives looking at themes of exchange, arrivals and departures within and across Inverclyde; and
- 7 artist residencies working with staff and service users at Barnardo’s, Coronation Park, the Grieve Road Pantry, Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park, Inverclyde Faith in Throughcare, and Your Voice over the summer months.

### **3.3 Inverclyde Pipes and Drums**

The project to introduce pipes and drums tuition in Inverclyde is progressing well. The service has now, in partnership with the Scottish Schools Pipes and Drums Trust SSPDT, begun to introduce pipes and drums into seven of our schools from August 2022. All equipment has been purchased and received, and tutors appointed to their posts. Once the service has been fully established, the intention is to introduce evening workshops and also to include pipes and drums into concerts and performances.

### **3.4 Outstanding remits – Grass Playing Pitches**

There is an outstanding remit from 31 October 2017 that a report be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee on the position in respect of the various grass playing pitches within Inverclyde and the estimated cost of bringing all of the pitches up to the standard of Birkmyre Park and the other refurbished pitches. To date, because of competing priorities, no comprehensive work has been undertaken to review grass pitches although officer knowledge suggests that the grass pitches are of sufficient quality and quantity to meet the needs for community use.

### **3.5 Free Swimming for Under 16s – budget pressure**

A report was submitted to the Education and Communities Committee in January 2021 setting out options for subsidised swimming, following the Council’s decision to reduce the budget from £180,000 to £80,000 as part of the budget process for 2021/22.

The Committee agreed at this time that further information on usage was required and the Council agreed to defer the saving until 2022/23, until this was available. An additional one-off £40,000 was allocated to the policy from the Community Fund while this data became available. Data from 2021/22 has shown that the current uptake of free swimming has increased significantly following several years of reduced usage. As a result, continuation of the policy in its current form will now

exceed the £80,000 budget allocated to the delivery of the policy, resulting in a budget pressure which the service cannot contain.

The Education and Communities Committee is asked to agree that a further report is brought to the next meeting of the Committee, setting out options to reduce the projected overspend for Under 16s swimming.

### 3.6 **Projected deficit due to utility costs – Inverclyde Leisure (IL)**

In June 2022 IL advised Council officers of a projected budget deficit of around £426k due to increased energy costs across its estate.

IL provided officers detail of the projected deficit and where it can reduce costs without the closure of facilities. By revising its property costs, delaying some of its projects and a slight reduction in staffing, it is able to reduce the overall budget deficit to £278,000 in 2022/23. Inverclyde Leisure Board agreed to ask the Council whether it was able to fund the remaining £278,000 in 2022/23 pending decisions on the IL Review which will be reported to the Education & Communities Committee later in 2022/23.

The matter has been considered by the Members Budget Working Group which proposed that the Education & Communities Committee should remit the request for funding to the Policy and Resources Committee.

## 4.0 IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendation(s) is(are) agreed:

<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>N/A</b>
Financial		X	
Legal/Risk		X	
Human Resources		X	
Strategic (LOIP/Corporate Plan)		X	
Equalities & Fairer Scotland Duty		X	
Children & Young People's Rights & Wellbeing		X	
Environmental & Sustainability		X	
Data Protection		X	

### 5.2 Finance

One off Costs

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

Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

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

N/A					
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**5.3 Legal/Risk**

None.

**5.4 Human Resources**

None.

**5.5 Strategic**

None.

**5.6 Equalities and Fairer Scotland Duty**

(a) Equalities

This report has been considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) process with the following outcome:

	YES – Assessed as relevant and an EqIA is required.
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, assessed as not relevant and no EqIA is required. Provide any other relevant reasons why an EqIA is not necessary/screening statement.

(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 – Assessed as not relevant under the Fairer Scotland Duty for the following reasons: Provide reasons why the report has been assessed as not relevant.

**5.7 Children and Young People**

Has a Children’s Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment been carried out?

	YES – Assessed as relevant and a CRWIA is required.
X	NO – Assessed as not relevant as this report does not involve a new policy, function or strategy or recommends a substantive change to an existing policy, function or strategy which will have an impact on children’s rights.

**5.8 Environmental/Sustainability**

Has a Strategic Environmental Assessment been carried out?

	YES – assessed as relevant and a Strategic Environmental Assessment is required.
X	NO – This report does not propose or seek approval for a plan, policy, programme, strategy or document which is like to have significant environmental effects, if implemented.

**5.9 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 – Assessed as not relevant as this report does not involve data processing which may result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals.

**6.0 CONSULTATION**

6.1 N/A

**7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

7.1 None.