

4.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

- 4.1 On 25 May 2021 The Policy and Resources Committee approved spending on a range of activity aimed at supporting community recovery from the covid pandemic.
- 4.2 Two of the proposals focussed on delivering a range of high profile outdoor events and supporting community groups to hold smaller scale community events to encourage people to meet together following the various lockdowns to combat the pandemic and recognising the impact on physical health and mental welfare.
- 4.3 The events were branded as summer long 'Meliora Festival' incorporating new events and others that had been in the calendar before the pandemic but had been cancelled over the past two years due to Scottish Government health restrictions on large scale gatherings.
- 4.4 The Meliora Festival, held in May and June 2022 incorporated local and national celebrations commemorating the Platinum Jubilee marking 70 years on the Throne for HM The Queen, the first time any UK Monarch has achieved this milestone.
- 4.5 A full breakdown of all of the Meliora Festival events is contained at appendix 1, the Community Fund allocations at appendix 2 (it should be noted that some events are planned four outside of the festival/platinum jubilee period by the community) and below are updates on the main anchor events delivered over May and June.

Meliora Festival events

- 4.6 The opening weekend of the Meliora Festival included the delivery of two occasions which are important parts of the Inverclyde events calendar and in the Scottish events calendar.

The season opening of the Gourock outdoor pool, one of Scotland's unique visitor attractions started the Meliora Festival on Friday 6 May with the traditional 'big jump in'.

The same weekend, on Sunday 8 May 2022, the Gourock Highland Games returned after a two years absence due to covid restrictions. The event is traditionally the first Highland Games in the Scottish season and the first outdoor piping event in the country.

The Games are event-managed by Inverclyde Council and attracted an estimated 10,000 visitors. It hosted traditional Highland Games in partnership with the Royal Scottish Highland Games Association (RSHGA), piping competitions in partnership with the Royal Scottish Pipe Band Association (RSPBA) and the West of Scotland Highland Dancing Championships in partnership with May Hughes Dancing.

- 4.7 The second weekend of the Meliora Festival saw the return of the Kip Regatta, considered one of Scotland's sailing 'Major' competitions, and held at Kip Marina, Inverkip.

The event was held on the weekend of 14 and 15 May 2022.

The weekend also saw Inverclyde Council host, in partnership with the national team youth football associations of England and Scotland a special match at Ravenscraig Stadium to mark 50 years since the first women's international between the two countries.

The match was attended by, according to senior representatives of the youth football associations, one of their largest crowds and allowed the community to celebrate the achievements of the 'Ravenscraig pioneers' who 50 years before had held the first women's international match.

The match was filmed by BBC Alba and BBC Scotland as part of programmes about the Ravenscraig Pioneers from the match in 1972 some of whom attended the match in May to lend their support to the youth players of both countries.

In addition, following the match, International caps were presented at a ceremony in Greenock Town Hall to Scottish youth players.

4.8 On Saturday 21 May 2022 Battery Park hosted the British Pipe Band Championships.

It was the first time this particular championships had been held in Inverclyde and it was the first Major championships held in Scotland since the start of the pandemic.

The event attracted 100 bands from across the country which brought 4,000 pipers and drummers to the location and attendance is estimated at 5,000 spectators.

The response from the Royal Scottish Pipe Band Association (RSPBA) noted the plus points of the venue lending itself to holding a Major pipe band championships, the collaboration between the council and RSPBA, the event being free to visitors, the foresight of laying a 'rolling road' to ensure coach parking was accommodated on site and the choice of Chieftain – former councillor and Provost of Inverclyde Ciano Rebecchi.

They noted issues with the weather on the day estimating that in better weather the attendance would have expected to have trebled, and opportunities for additional retail space and merchandising on site could be maximised for future events.

4.9 At the start of June the United Kingdom, Commonwealth and Overseas territories celebrated the 70th anniversary of HM The Queens accession to the throne – the first time a British Monarch has achieved the milestone.

Inverclyde joined the four day celebrations with the lighting of the Beacon at Lyle Hill hosted by The Provost and the Depute Lord Lieutenant, Her Majesty's representative.

Schools and council buildings were closed to support the four day weekend and through the Meliora Community Fund a range of events were held in the community supporting the occasion in particular the 'big lunch' celebration which encouraged street parties over the weekend.

Among the events supported by the fund were a celebratory afternoon hosted by Crown Care Centre; The 1st Gourock Scouts held a community day event and Gourock primary held a platinum jubilee 'street party'. A list of the Meliora Community Fund allocations across Inverclyde's localities is included at appendix 2. It should be noted that some events supported by the community are held outside of the two month 'festival' dates due to a range of factors including the capacity of community groups and timings with other activity.

4.10 The second weekend in June focussed on the Inverclyde Warrior event hosted by Inverclyde Leisure at Battery Park.

The 5k outdoor obstacle course events took place on 10 and 11 June 2022.

Over 1,000 athletes were put through their paces in a gruelling competition of obstacles for the course that included monkey bars, cold skips, 6ft walls, balance beams, a cargo net crawl and the traveller similar to the one seen on hit 1990s TV show Gladiators.

The Friday was dedicated to a special secondary schools' event integrating the six main Inverclyde Council high schools along with Cedars School, Craigmarnoch, Lomond View and St Columba's in Kilmacolm.

The main event on Saturday 11 June 2022 despite less favourable weather conditions brought just over 1,000 competitors and 300 spectators to Battery Park to battle it out to cross the finish line with double Olympians Lauren Gray & recent Gold medallist Jen Dodds MBE also taking part on the day.

- 4.11 The weekend of 17 – 19 June the Meliora Festival focus was around Greenock's Beacon Arts with a large scale arts festival.

Beacon Arts Centre hosted a multi-arts festival weekend with more than 50 performances and events taking place over three days.

Performances took place both in the Beacon Arts Centre and outdoors at Custom House Quay and East India Harbour. These included comedy from Elaine C Smith, Ed Byrne and Darren Connell, as well as aerial dance, Scottish Opera's Pop-Up Opera, live music, street theatre, drumming, magic, circus workshops and storytelling sessions.

A huge Luminarium sculpture installed outside the Beacon as the centrepiece to the event, allowing visitors to journey through winding tunnels and domes of light and colour. The new Arboria II structure, designed by Architects of Air founder Alan Parkinson, had never been on public display before and it was the first time it had been built anywhere in the world.

The Beacon's festival ran from 17-19 June and coincided with the 75th anniversary of the maiden voyage of the Waverley paddle steamer, allowing special excursions to be planned for people to sail 'doon the watter' from Glasgow to Custom House Quay outside the venue.

6,947 tickets were issued for performances and events over the three days.

- 4.12 The final weekend of the two month Meliora Festival saw the return of two popular Port Glasgow events for the first time since pandemic restrictions were put in place.

On Saturday 25 June the Comet Festival returned to Coronation Park with large crowds enjoying great weather and supported by a range of community stalls and entertainment throughout the day.

The event started in the town centre with a parade through the town supported by the Meliora Community Fund leading to the event location at Coronation Park.

The next day on Sunday 26 June 2022 the park was the start and finish line for the Port Glasgow 10k, returning after a two year absence.

4.13 **Platinum Jubilee**

As the occasion of the Platinum Jubilee for HM The Queen took place in early June 2022, the local celebrations were incorporated into the Meliora Festival theme.

The Meliora Community Fund supported a number of events in the local community taking place celebrating the Platinum Jubilee.

In addition the Council made arrangements to close schools and offices on Thursday 2 and Friday 3 June 2022 to join the national four days of celebration.

The Council also joined the international celebrations by entering a bid for the town of Greenock to be awarded city status as part of the Platinum Jubilee Civic Honours Competition.

38 places across the United Kingdom and Overseas Territories applied for the honour and on 20 May 2022 it was announced that eight places were awarded city status with Dunfermline the only Scottish location.

The other places were: Bangor, Northern Ireland, Colchester, Doncaster and Milton Keynes in England, Wrexham in Wales, Douglas in the Isle of Man and Stanley in the Falkland Islands.

Inverclyde also joined the Commonwealth and the Nations of the UK in lighting a Beacon to mark the Platinum Jubilee on the evening of 2 June 2022 at Lyle Hill as part of the commemorations marking 70 years on the Throne.

- 4.14 The two month Meliora Festival aimed to bring people together and to encourage communities to come together to celebrate being together after the two years where the community had been subject to a range of health-related restrictions limiting activity and interactions.

After hosting two months of mostly outdoor events very few were adversely affected by the weather and provided an opportunity to bring the community together but also to encourage people from outside of Inverclyde to visit the area, particularly for large scale events such as the British Pipe Band Championships, the Gourock Highland Games, Kip Regatta, The Luminarium and the Warrior 10K as a key objective in showcasing Inverclyde to people as part of the areas repopulation ambitions.

Throughout the summer from May to August 30 local community organisations of Inverclyde delivered a range of events and community activities with £120,000 Meliora Community Fund. The aim of the fund was to celebrate communities coming together after almost 2 years of various Covid- 19 lockdowns. This has had a positive impact on engaging with local people and improving local grass root partnership working. A full break down on the events is outlined in Appendix 2.

- 4.15 Following the successful delivery of the British Pipe Band Championships the council has been approached with an invitation to submit a bid to host a Major championships in future years.

Following a review by the Corporate Management Team (CMT) and Members Budget Working Group (MBWG), while keen to host events to showcase Inverclyde to a wider audience, an assessment has been made that the covid recovery funding to support the Meliora Festival events was a one-off to aid recovery. Given the financial situation the council is facing, the council will not be bidding to host future events at this time.

5.0 PROPOSALS

- 5.1 It is proposed that the committee members note the content of this report and the success of the Meliora Festival and the community fund events delivered by local community groups and organisations and the activity to commemorate the Platinum Jubilee.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

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

SUBJECT	YES	NO	N/A
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	

6.2 Finance

One off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Years	Proposed Spend this Report	Virement From	Other Comments
Earmarked Reserve	Covid recovery (outdoor festival May/June 2022)	2022/23	£350K	N/A	One-off funding to support large outdoor festival – Meliora Festival.
Earmarked Reserve	Community Fund	2022/23	£120K	N/A	Allocation of money to localities for recovery events.

Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

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

6.3 Legal/Risk

None.

6.4 Human Resources

None.

6.5 Strategic

None.

6.6 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 EqlA is required. Provide any other relevant reasons why an EqlA 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?

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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.

6.7 Children and Young People

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

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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.

6.8 Environmental/Sustainability

Has a Strategic Environmental Assessment been carried out?

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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.

6.9 Data Protection

Has a Data Protection Impact Assessment been carried out?

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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.

7.0 CONSULTATION

7.1 None.

8.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

8.1 PR/08/21/MM - 05 Recovery Action Plans – Inverclyde Council Policy and Resources Committee 25 May 2021.

APPENDIX 1: MELIORA EVENTS (MAY AND JUNE 2022)

<p>Friday 6 May 2022 Gourock Outdoor Pool – Open for the season</p>	<p>Sunday 8 May 2022 Gourock Highland Games, Battery Park</p>	<p>Saturday 14 & Sunday 15 May 2022 Kip Regatta, Kip Marina, Inverkip</p>	<p>Sunday 15 May 2022 50th anniversary of the first Scotland v England women's international match, Ravenscraig Stadium, Greenock</p>
<p>Saturday 21 May 2022 British Pipe Band Championships, Battery Park</p>	<p>Thursday 2 June 2022 Queen's Platinum Jubilee – lighting of the Beacon at Lyle Hill</p>	<p>Sunday 5 June 2022 Queen's Platinum Jubilee – The big lunch (various locations across Inverclyde)</p>	<p>Friday 10 June 2022 Inverclyde Warrior – special event for school pupils</p>
<p>Saturday 11 June 2022 Inverclyde Warrior – 5K obstacle course event, Battery Park</p>	<p>Friday 17 – Sunday 19 June 2022 Luminarium, Beacon Arts Centre</p>	<p>Saturday 18 June 2022 Elaine C Smith, Beacon Arts Centre</p>	<p>Sunday 19 June 2022 Ed Byrne and friends, Beacon Arts Centre</p>
<p>Saturday 25 June 2022 The Comet Festival, Coronation Park, Port Glasgow</p>	<p>Sunday 26 June 2022 Port Glasgow 10K.</p>		

APPENDIX 2: MELIORA COMMUNITY FUND

East and Central	Gibshill Family Fun Day in Partnership with Gibshill Family Centre	£10,000	30 June 2022
	Crown Care Centre: celebratory afternoon for the Queens platinum Jubilee	£2,000	3 June 2022
	Man on and Morton in the community	£4,950.00	2 May 2022
	Auchmountain Halls Fun day	£3,500	29 July 2022
Greenock West & Gourock	1st Gourock Scouts Jubilee event	£4,377	3 June 2022
	Gourock Primary Jubilee event	£4,000	3 June 2022
	Lyle Gateway and Your Voice: Community Event	£10,000	25 June 2022
	Inverclyde Cricket Club Family Cricket Fun Day	£1,100	11 June 2022
	St Columbas : Garden Workshops	£1,100	21 May 2022
	Greenock Medical aid: Community events	£1,800	3 and 4 June 2022
Greenock South and South West	Branchthon Community Centre and Kerr's Journey Community Fun Day	£10,000	27 August 2022
	Community Cultural Festival, Youth Connections	£3,370	12 August 2022
	Ravenscraig Sport Hub Family Sports Day	£4,150	14 August 2022
	Cowdenknowes Residents Association: Fund day	£5,000	August 2022
Port Glasgow	Clune park committee and Toddles group: Community events @ Clune Park	£5,000	16 June 11 July and 9 August 2022
	Charm Group and Upper Port Family Group: Port Glasgow Fun Day	£6,000	27 August 2022
	Parklea Branching Out: Spring/Summer Events	£5,000	11 August 2022
	Comet Festival Parade	£5,000	25 June 2022
Inverkip and Wemyss Bay	Inverkip Community Initiative and Inverkip Church The Kip Fest 2022	£10,000	10-12 June 2022
	Wemyss bay Community Association Gala Day	£5,000	4 June 2022
Kilmacolm and Quarriers Village	Kilmacolm Community Council: Jubilee Village Fete	£5,000	5 June 2022
	Kilmacolm & Port Glasgow Agricultural Society Ltd and The	£10,000	14 May 2022

	Ark on the Clyde CIC: Educational/Heritage Area at our Annual Show at the Knapps		
	Abbeyfield Strathgryffe Society Ltd: Garden Party Events	£3,000	June 2022