

**A meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee will be held on Tuesday 21 November 2023 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 20 November 2023 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 and as noted above.**

**Please note that this meeting will be live-streamed via YouTube with the exception of any business which is treated as exempt in terms of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 as amended.**

**Further information relating to the recording and live-streaming of meetings can be found at the end of this notice.**

IAIN STRACHAN  
Head of Legal, Democratic, Digital & Customer Services

## **BUSINESS**

**\*\* Copy to follow**

1. <b>Apologies, Substitutions and Declarations of Interest</b>	<b>Page</b>
<b>PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT</b>	
2. <b>2023/24 Policy &amp; Resources Committee and General Fund Revenue Budget Update as at 30 September 2023</b> Report by Chief Financial Officer, Chief Executive and Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development	<b>p</b>
3. <b>Policy &amp; Resources Capital Budget and Council 2023/26 Capital Programme</b> Report by Chief Financial Officer	<b>p</b>
4. <b>Finance Update</b> Report by Chief Financial Officer	<b>p</b>
5. <b>Corporate Policy and Performance Update: September-November 2023</b> Report by Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development	<b>p</b>
6. <b>Policy &amp; Resources Committee Delivery and Improvement Plan 2023/26 Performance Report</b> Report by Chief Executive	<b>p</b>
7. <b>Treasury Management – Mid-Year Report 2023/24</b> Report by Report by Chief Financial Officer	<b>p</b>

8.	<b>Inverclyde Council Plan 2023/28 – Six Monthly Progress Report</b> Report by Interim Head of Organisational Development, Policy & Communications	p
9.	<b>Inverclyde Council Annual Performance Report 2022/23</b> Report by Interim Head of Organisational Development, Policy & Communications	p
10.	<b>Data Protection Officer Annual Report 2023</b> Report by Head of Legal, Democratic, Digital & Customer Services	p
11.	<b>Updated Policy and Annual Update on the use of surveillance powers - The Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Act 2000 (RIPSA)</b> Report by Head of Legal, Democratic, Digital & Customer Services	p
12.	<b>Governance of External Organisations - Annual Update and Review</b> Report by Chief Financial Officer	p
<b>NEW BUSINESS</b>		
13.	<b>2024/26 Budget Update</b> Report by Chief Financial Officer	p
14.	<b>Update on Inverclyde Anti-Poverty Initiatives</b> Report by Corporate Director Education, Communities & Organisational Development	p
15.	<b>Update on the Digital Modernisation Programme and Delivery of the ICT and Digital Strategies</b> Report by Head of Legal, Democratic, Digital & Customer Services	p
16. **	<b>Vehicle Replacement Programme</b> Report by Director, Environment & Regeneration	p
17.	<b>Tender for the Provision of a Children’s Advocacy Service</b> Report by Chief Officer, Inverclyde Health & Social Care Partnership	p
18.	<b>Business Continuity Policy</b> Report by Director, Environment & Regeneration	p
<b>REMITTS FROM COMMITTEES</b>		
19.	<b>Revised Risk Management Strategy – Remit from Audit Committee</b> Report by Head of Legal, Democratic, Digital & Customer Services	p
<b>ROUTINE DECISIONS AND ITEMS FOR NOTING</b>		
20.	<b>Use of Powers Delegated to the Chief Executive to vote on Members for the Executive Oversight Committee of the Cooperative Councils Innovation Network</b> Report by Head of Legal, Democratic, Digital & Customer Services	p
<b>The documentation relative to the following item has been treated as exempt information in terms of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 as amended, the nature of the exempt information being that set out in paragraphs 6 &amp; 8 of Part I of Schedule 7(A) of the Act.</b>		
<b>NEW BUSINESS</b>		
21.	<b>Public Space CCTV Contract</b> Report by Director, Environment & Regeneration seeking approval for officers to enter into a contract for a solution for Public Space CCTV.	p

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.

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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>21 November 2023</b>
<b>Report By:</b>	<b>Chief Financial Officer and Corporate Director Education, Communities &amp; Organisational Development and Chief Executive</b>	<b>Report No:</b>	<b>FIN/72/23/AP/AB</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Alan Puckrin</b>	<b>Contact No:</b>	<b>01475 712090</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>2023/24 Policy &amp; Resources Committee and General Fund Revenue Budget Update as at 30 September 2023</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 advise Committee of the 2023/24 Revenue Budget position at 30 September 2023 and to highlight a projected underspend of £198,000. The report also notes the overall General Fund Revenue Budget projection and the position of the General Fund Reserve at the same date.

1.3 The revised 2023/24 Revenue Budget for the Policy and Resources Committee is £23,910,000, which excludes Earmarked Reserves. The latest projection is an underspend of £198,000 (0.80%), a decrease in costs of £322,000 since last Committee. This is mainly due to a projected underspend within the Non Pay Inflation Contingency. More details are provided in section 3.3 and the appendices.

1.4 The latest projection for the General Fund Budget is an overspend of £500,000. Based on these figures the Council's unallocated Reserves are currently projected to be £3.20million more than the minimum recommended level of £4.0million by 31 March 2024.

1.5 The report seeks approval from Committee to create a future Smoothing Earmarked Reserve for NDR Empty Property Relief, Council policy on Empty Property Relief is currently under review and calls on this can vary significantly each year hence the need for a Smoothing Reserve.

## 2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Committee:

2.1 Note the current projected Committee underspend for 2023/24 of £198,000 as at 30 September 2023.

2.2 Note the projected overspend of £500,000 for the General Fund and the projected surplus reserves of £3.200million.

2.3 Note the projected 2023/24 surplus of £770 for the Common Good Budget set out in Appendix 6.



2.4 Approve the virements in Appendix 5.

2.5 Approve the creation of the Smoothing Reserve for NDR Empty Property Relief from April 2023

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

**Ruth Binks**  
**Corporate Director**  
**Education, Communities & ODHR**

**Louise Long**  
**Chief Executive**

### 3.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

3.1 The purpose of this report is to advise Committee of the current position of the 2023/24 Revenue Budget and to highlight the main variances contributing to the projected underspend of £198,000 for 2023/24.

3.2 The revised 2023/24 Revenue Budget for the Policy & Resources Committee is £23,910,000 excluding Earmarked Reserves. This is an increase of £781,000 from the approved budget largely due to allocations from the inflation contingency and additional SNCT 2023/24 pay award funding from the Scottish Government yet to be fully allocated. Appendix 1 gives more details of this budget movement.

3.3 The major variances contributing to the net underspend of £198,000 are as follows -

(a) Overall committee Employee Costs are projected to overspend by £126,000 due to an under achievement of turnover savings to date. Decrease in costs of £23,000 since last Committee.

(b) £25,000 underspend projected for bad debt provision reduction within Housing Benefits.

(c) Statutory Additions £40,000 under-recovery in line with last year.

(d) One-off £20,000 overspend for unfunded associated benefit costs. This has been identified as a 2024/25 Budget pressure.

(e) Projected over-recovery of £32,000 within Income for ICT service recharges for internal maintenance recharges for computer equipment purchased outside of the refresh programme.

(f) External Licences are currently projecting at an over recovery of £5,000. This consists of a £25,000 over-recovery on the introduction of fees on short term lets and a £20,000 under recovery for taxi operators. Short Term Lets was not projected at last Committee due to the uncertainty of this income.

(g) £400,000 underspend within the non-pay inflation contingency budget due to a projected reduced call on this budget as at P6.

(h) Projected overspend of £50,000 within the pensions budgets due to increased rates.

#### 3.4 Earmarked Reserves

Appendix 4 gives an update on the operational Earmarked Reserves, i.e. excluding strategic funding models. Spend to 30 September 2023 on these operational Earmarked Reserves is £366,000 (5.29% of projected spend). Appendix 8 gives the overall earmarked reserve position which shows 11.48% advancement against phased budget largely within the Environment & Regeneration Committee.

#### 3.5 General Fund Budget & Reserves Position

Appendix 7 shows that as at 30 September 2023 the General Fund is projecting a £500,000 overspend (excluding Health & Social Care) which represents 0.2% of the net Revenue Budget. Policy & Resources Committee are projecting £198,000 underspend which is offset by £203,000 overspend within Environment & Regeneration and an overspend within the Education & Communities Directorate of £495,000. Both Committees have been advised that officers are looking at ways to bring their budgets back on track.

Appendix 9 shows the latest position in respect of the General Fund Reserves and shows that the projected balance at 31 March, 2024 is £7.200 million which is £3.20 million above the minimum recommended balance of £4 million. The General Fund Reserve position includes additions to the Reserve beyond 2023/24 that were agreed as part of the 2023/24 Budget approved by the Council on March 2023 and the final audited 2022/23 accounts position.

### 3.6 Common Good Fund

The Common Good Fund is projecting a surplus fund balance of £770 as shown in Appendix 6 and which results in projected surplus fund balance of £122,798 at 31 March 2024. This position reflects the virement approved at the last meeting.

## 4.0 PROPOSALS

- 4.1 Committee are requested to approve the creation of a smoothing Earmarked Reserve for NDR Empty Property Relief. Council policy on Empty Property Relief is currently being consulted on and expenditure on NDR Empty Property Relief can vary significantly each year and as such it is requested that a smoothing reserve is created.
- 4.2 There are two virement requests in appendix 5 which Committee are asked to approve.

## 5.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendations are agreed:

SUBJECT	YES	NO
Financial	X	
Legal/Risk		X
Human Resources		X
Strategic (Partnership Plan/Council Plan)		X
Equalities, Fairer Scotland Duty & Children/Young People's Rights & Wellbeing		X
Environmental & Sustainability		X
Data Protection		X

### 5.2 Finance

The Committee Budget and General Fund Budget are both projecting overspends. Whilst overspends tend to reduce as the year progresses, the uncertainty around the pay award and other inflation pressures make this assumption less certain and officers need to continue to reduce costs wherever possible.

One off Costs

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

### 5.3 Legal/Risk

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

### 5.4 Human Resources

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

### 5.5 Strategic

There are no specific strategic implications arising from this report.

## 6.0 CONSULTATION

6.1 The paper has been jointly prepared by the Chief Financial Officer and the Corporate Director Education, Communities, and Organisational Development and the Chief Executive.

## 7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 There are no background papers for this report.

**Policy & Resources Budget Movement - 2023/24****Period 6: 1 April 2023 - 30 September 2023**

Service	Approved Budget	Movements			Revised Budget	
	2023/24 £000	Inflation £000	Virement £000	Supplementary Budgets £000	Transferred to EMR £000	2023/24 £000
Finance	5,630	9	(15)			5,624
Legal, Democratic Digital & Customer Services	5,389		(3)			5,386
Organisational Development, Policy & Communications	2,219	33				2,252
Chief Exec	377		(28)			349
Miscellaneous	9,514	(1,371)		2,238	(82)	10,299
<b>Totals</b>	<b>23,129</b>	<b>(1,329)</b>	<b>(46)</b>	<b>2,238</b>	<b>(82)</b>	<b>23,910</b>

**Supplementary Budget Detail**

£000

Inflation

Revenue & Benefits - various non pay inflationary uplifts  
 HR - Occupational Health contract increase  
 Miscellaneous - Pay Inflation Adjustments  
 Miscellaneous - Various Non Pay Inflation Adjustments

9  
 33  
 2  
 (1,373)  
 (1,329)

Virements

Legal - Budget transfer to Property Services for Energy Team  
 ICT - Budget Transfer from Physical Assets for New Ways of Working Project  
 Registrars - Budget Transfer from Revenue & Benefits  
 Revenue & Benefits - Budget Transfer to Registrars  
 Revenue & Benefits - Budget transfer to Property Services for Energy Team  
 Chief Executive - Management restructure within E&R Directorate

(50)  
 40  
 7  
 (7)  
 (8)  
 (28)  
 (46)

Supplementary Budgets

SNCT 2023/24 Pay Award 2023/24

2,238  
 2,238

**Total Inflation & Virements****863**

## REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT

## CURRENT POSITION

Period 6: 1 April 2023 - 30 September 2023

2022/23 Actual £000	SUBJECTIVE ANALYSIS	Approved Budget 2023/24 £000	Revised Budget 2023/24 £000	Projected Out-turn 2023/24 £000	Projected Over/(Under) Spend £000	Percentage Over/(Under)
9,459	Employee Costs	8,864	8,834	8,960	126	1.4%
623	Property Costs	734	734	734	0	-
892	Supplies & Services	900	911	921	10	1.1%
2	Transport & Plant	5	5	5	0	-
1,248	Administration Costs	1,306	1,316	1,198	(118)	(9.0%)
37,596	Payments to Other Bodies	41,530	42,470	42,137	(333)	(0.8%)
(26,954)	Income	(30,210)	(30,278)	(30,161)	117	(0.4%)
<b>22,866</b>	<b>TOTAL NET EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>23,129</b>	<b>23,992</b>	<b>23,794</b>	<b>(198)</b>	<b>(0.8%)</b>
	Earmarked reserves		(82)	(82)	0	
<b>22,866</b>	<b>Total Net Expenditure excluding Earmarked Reserves</b>	<b>23,129</b>	<b>23,910</b>	<b>23,712</b>	<b>(198)</b>	

2022/23 Actual £000	OBJECTIVE ANALYSIS	Approved Budget 2023/24 £000	Revised Budget 2023/24 £000	Projected Out-turn 2023/24 £000	Projected Over/(Under) Spend £000	Percentage Over/(Under)
12,759	Finance	5,630	5,624	5,664	40	0.7%
5,234	Legal, Democratic Digital & Customer Serv	5,389	5,386	5,363	(23)	(0.4%)
<b>17,993</b>	<b>Total Net Expenditure Environment, Regeneration &amp; Resources</b>	<b>11,019</b>	<b>11,010</b>	<b>11,027</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>0.2%</b>
2,279	Organisational Development, Policy & Communications	2,219	2,252	2,366	114	5.1%
<b>2,279</b>	<b>Total Net Expenditure Education, Communities &amp; Organisational Development</b>	<b>2,219</b>	<b>2,252</b>	<b>2,366</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>5.1%</b>
360	Chief Executive	377	349	361	12	3.4%
2,234	Miscellaneous	9,514	10,381	10,040	(341)	(3.3%)
<b>22,866</b>	<b>TOTAL NET EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>23,129</b>	<b>23,992</b>	<b>23,794</b>	<b>(198)</b>	<b>(0.8%)</b>
	Earmarked reserves		(82)	(82)		
<b>22,866</b>	<b>Total Net Expenditure excluding Earmarked Reserves</b>	<b>23,129</b>	<b>23,910</b>	<b>23,712</b>	<b>(198)</b>	

**POLICY RESOURCES**

**REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT**

**MATERIAL VARIANCES (EXCLUDING EARMARKED RESERVES)**

Appendix 3

**Period 6: 1 April 2023 - 30 September 2023**

Outturn 2022/23 £000	Budget Heading	Budget 2023/24 £000	Proportion of Budget £000	Actual to 30/09/23 £000	Projection 2023/24 £000	Over/(Under) Budget £000	Percentage Variance %
	<b><u>Finance</u></b>						
2,804	Finance and R&B Employee Cost	2,850	1,289	1,277	2,871	21	0.7%
26	R&B Bad Debt Provison	0	0	(11)	(25)	(25)	
(270)	R&B Stat Adds	(294)	(123)	(104)	(254)	40	(13.6%)
23,709	R&B Benefits & Allowances	28,058	13,796	12,837	28,078	20	0.1%
	<b><u>Organisational Development, Policy &amp; Communications</u></b>						
1,903	Employee Costs	1,880	865	883	1,958	78	4.1%
	<b><u>Legal, Democratic Digital &amp; Customer Services</u></b>						
(55)	ICT Income Recharges (5 Year Computer Refresh)	0	0	(15)	(32)	(32)	
298	ICT - Admin - Mobile Phone Recharges	333	167	174	299	(34)	(10.2%)
(298)	ICT - Income - Mobile Phone Recharges	(333)	(167)	(124)	(299)	34	(10.2%)
(14)	Legal - Income Licences - Other - Short Term Lets	(16)	(8)	(26)	(41)	(25)	156.3%
(103)	Legal - Income Licences - Operators	(130)	(65)	(59)	(110)	20	(15.4%)
	<b><u>Miscellaneous Services</u></b>						
1,750	Non Pay Inflation Contingency	3,562	1,471	1,471	3,162	(400)	(11.2%)
2,220	Pensions	2,375	1,188	1,205	2,425	50	2.1%
<b>31,970</b>	<b>TOTAL MATERIAL VARIANCES</b>	<b>38,285</b>	<b>18,413</b>	<b>17,508</b>	<b>38,032</b>	<b>(253)</b>	

EARMARKED RESERVES POSITION STATEMENT

COMMITTEE: Policy & Resources

C a t e g o r y	Project	Lead Officer/ Responsible Manager	Total Funding	Phased Budget P6	P6 Spend	Projected Spend	Amount to be Earmarked for 2024/25 & Beyond	Lead Officer Update
			2023/24	2023/24	2023/24	2023/24		
			£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	
B	Early Retiral/Voluntary Severance Reserve	Alan Puckrin	1,995	0	0	1,750	245	Projection for 23/24 is an initial allowance which will be reviewed as decisions are taken on the 2024/26 Budget.
C	Equal Pay	Morna Rae	100	0	0	0	100	Balance for equal pay which is under review on an annual basis.
C	Digital Modernisation	Iain Strachan	1,268	80	1	208	1,060	Schools Cashless Catering System replacement, CRM Replacement systems indicative timeline and WorkPro. Talentlink (HR Contracts) and a Grade 7, two year temporary post estimated start date January 2024
C	Welfare Reform - Operational	Alan Puckrin	52	0	0	0	52	No spend projected in 2023/24 however expected to be required in future years due to on going employee savings in 2024/25
C	Anti-Poverty Fund	Ruth Binks	2,084	147	116	1,200	884	Detailed report to be included at November Policy & Resources Committee.
B	Loan Charge Funding Model	Alan Puckrin	1,645	0	0	101	1,544	Projection per June 2023 Finance Strategy. To be reviewed in December Finance Strategy.
C	GDPR	Iain Strachan	19	1	1	19	0	Information governance system contract (Workpro) awarded (2yr+1yr+1yr). Spend committed -now £12k per year. Continued corporate training programme being organised.
B	2023/26 Budget Funding Reserve	Alan Puckrin	6,000	0	0	3,000	3,000	Projection per March 2023 Budget decision. £2million in 24/25 and £1 million 25/26.
CFCR	Capital funded from Current Revenue	Alan Puckrin	5,406	0	0	2,000	3,406	To support new and existing pressures within the 2023/26 Capital programme.
C	ICT Technicians To Support Digital School Inclusion/Covid Recovery	Iain Starchan	70	32	35	54	16	Ongoing Monthly Employee Costs. 1 x Service Desk Operator (until 01/09/24) and 1 x Technical Project Officer (until 01/10/23).
C	Extension of Corporate Policy Post	Morna Rae	44	22	13	35	9	To fund Grade 6 Corp Policy Post until 31st March 2024. Post was vacant from 18 July 2023 but has now been filled and start date confirmed as 26 September 2023, £35k now required. £9k to be written back
C	New Ways of Working	Stuart Jamieson	267	15	15	267	0	Project moving to asset based phase and use of EMR being reviewed.
C	HR Resources	Morna Rae	92	46	41	68	25	This is Monies to fund the 2 HR employees for 2023/24 Grade 5 & Grade 7/8. Grade 7/8 employee no longer in EMR post from 18th September, to fund J Kelly additional hours costing £5.5k to March 2024. Remainder £24k to be written back.



EARMARKED RESERVES POSITION STATEMENT

COMMITTEE: Policy & Resources

C a t e g o r y	Project	Lead Officer/ Responsible Manager	Total Funding	Phased Budget P6	P6 Spend	Projected Spend	Amount to be Earmarked for 2024/25 & Beyond	Lead Officer Update
			2023/24	2023/24	2023/24	2023/24		
			£000	£000	£000	£000		
C	Project Resource	Louise Long	135	0	25	40	95	Projects approved to date. HR review (£25k), Co-operative Councils membership, Task Force support and Solace support for difficulty to fill senior Regen posts.
C	Covid Recovery - Marketing Post & Support for Discover Inverclyde	Morna Rae	67	13	14	67	0	£27K Employee Grade 6 Communications Officer (tourism) post until November 2023. £40K Historic Links to Slavery; heritage trail, blue plaques and possibly reinterpreting of key signage.
C	Scottish Welfare Fund	Alan Puckrin	77	77	77	77	0	All spent in 23/24. Any underspend in 2023/24 will be added to this reserve at 31.3.24
C	Discretionary Housing Payments - Scottish Govt Grant	Alan Puckrin	28	28	28	28	0	Fully Spent in 23/24
C	Smoothing Reserve (Service Concession)	Alan Puckrin	602	0	0	254	348	Sum to smooth difference between approved £1.65m saving and actual saving per the funding model over 2023/28.
B	Inflation Smoothing Reserve	Alan Puckrin	3,000	0	0	1,500	1,500	Allowance to address inflation volatility over the 2023/25 period. Proposed to broaden and manage time limited pressures, 2024/26 Budget.
C	Student Training Fees	Morna Rae	100	0	0	38	62	Payment of training fees to aid staff recruitment and retention. Services have submitted bids and are now compiling a spending profile for 29/09/23.
<b>Total Category B</b>			<b>12,640</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6,351</b>	<b>6,289</b>	
<b>Total Category C to E</b>			<b>5,005</b>	<b>461</b>	<b>366</b>	<b>2,355</b>	<b>2,651</b>	

**POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE****VIREMENT REQUESTS**

<b>Budget Heading</b>		<b>Increase Budget</b>	<b>(Decrease) Budget</b>
R&B - Budget transfer from Council Tax Prior Years to R&B Employee Costs		30	
R&B - Budget transfer from Council Tax Prior Years to R&B Employee Costs			(30)
R&B - Budget transfer from R&B Miscellaneous to R&B Employee Costs		29	
R&B - Budget transfer from R&B Miscellaneous to R&B Employee Costs			(29)
<b>Total</b>		<b>59</b>	<b>(59)</b>

**Note****Reason for virement:**

1. £30,000 virement from Council Tax Prior Years budget to Revenues and Benefits Employee Cost budget to fund new Grade 3 Masterfile post.
2. £28,900 virement from R&B Miscellaneous budget (H Benefit) to Revenues and Benefits Employee Cost budget to fund previously temp post.

**COMMON GOOD FUND****REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT 2023/24****PERIOD 6 : 1st April 2023 to 30th September 2023**

	Final Outturn 2022/23	Approved Budget 2023/24	Budget to Date 2023/24	Actual to Date 2023/24	Projected Outturn 2023/24
	£	£	£	£	£
<b><u>PROPERTY COSTS</u></b>	<b>42,400</b>	<b>35,700</b>	<b>26,700</b>	<b>31,310</b>	<b>45,270</b>
Repairs & Maintenance	17,200	11,000	5,500	8,140	18,600
Rates	21,160	21,200	21,200	23,170	23,170
Property Insurance	4,040	3,500	0	0	3,500
Property Costs	0	21,000	10,500	0	21,000
<b><u>ADMINISTRATION COSTS</u></b>	<b>7,930</b>	<b>7,700</b>	<b>800</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>7,700</b>
Sundries	1,730	1,500	800	270	1,500
Commercial Rent Management Recharge	2,200	2,200	0	0	2,200
Recharge for Accountancy	4,000	4,000	0	0	4,000
<b><u>OTHER EXPENDITURE</u></b>	<b>59,300</b>	<b>109,500</b>	<b>42,700</b>	<b>42,700</b>	<b>109,500</b>
Christmas Lights Switch On	10,500	10,500	0	0	10,500
Christmas Decorations	0	44,000	0	0	44,000
Gourock Highland Games	29,400	29,400	29,400	29,400	29,400
Armistice Service	8,850	8,300	0	0	8,300
Comet Festival	13,300	13,300	13,300	13,300	13,300
Events	0	4,000	0	0	4,000
Bad Debt Provision	(2,750)	0	0	0	0
<b><u>INCOME</u></b>	<b>(127,520)</b>	<b>(177,900)</b>	<b>(88,700)</b>	<b>(97,760)</b>	<b>(182,700)</b>
Property Rental	(159,000)	(228,200)	(114,100)	(114,100)	(228,200)
Void Rents	34,980	50,800	25,400	16,340	49,000
Internal Resources Interest	(3,500)	(500)	0	0	(3,500)
<b><u>NET ANNUAL EXPENDITURE</u></b>	<b>(17,890)</b>	<b>(4,000)</b>	<b>(8,000)</b>	<b>(23,480)</b>	<b>770</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>(17,890)</b>	<b>(4,000)</b>	<b>(8,000)</b>	<b>(23,480)</b>	<b>770</b>

Fund Balance as at 31st March 2023 123,568

Projected Fund Balance as at 31st March 2024

122,798

## 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:**

	<u>Vacant since:</u>
12 Bay St	April 2015, currently being marketed
6 John Wood Street	January 2019, currently being marketed
10 John Wood Street	August 2018
15 John Wood Street	June 2017
17 John Wood Street	June 2023

Policy & Resources CommitteeRevenue Budget Monitoring ReportPosition as at 30th September 2023

Committee	Approved Budget 2023/2024	Revised Budget 2023/2024	Projected Out-turn 2023/2024	Projected Over/(Under) Spend	Percentage Variance
	£,000's	£,000's	£,000's	£,000's	
Policy & Resources	23,129	23,910	23,712	(198)	(0.83%)
Environment & Regeneration	22,505	22,793	22,996	203	0.89%
Education & Communities	100,759	102,173	102,668	495	0.48%
Health & Social Care	68,156	68,156	68,179	23	0.03%
<b>Committee Sub-Total</b>	<b>214,549</b>	<b>217,032</b>	<b>217,555</b>	<b>523</b>	<b>0.24%</b>
Loan Charges	16,902	16,902	16,902	0	0.00%
Saving Approved yet to be Allocated ( <b>Note 1</b> )	(100)	(100)	(100)	0	0.00%
Additional Turnover Savings yet to be identified ( <b>Note 2</b> )	0	(133)	(133)	0	0.00%
Service Concession Flexibility	(1,650)	(1,650)	(1,650)	0	0.00%
Transfer to Earmarked Reserves	0	482	482	0	0.00%
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>229,701</b>	<b>232,533</b>	<b>233,056</b>	<b>523</b>	<b>0.22%</b>
<b>Financed By:</b>					
General Revenue Grant/Non Domestic Rates	(190,719)	(191,551)	(191,551)	0	0.00%
General Revenue Grant - Teachers Hold Back ( <b>Note 3</b> )	(655)	(655)	(655)	0	0.00%
Contribution from General Reserves ( <b>Note 4</b> )	(3,000)	(5,000)	(5,000)	0	100.00%
Council Tax	(35,327)	(35,327)	(35,327)	0	0.00%
Integration Joint Board - Contribution to Reserves	0	0	(23)	(23)	100.00%
<b>Net Expenditure</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>500</b>	

**Note 1 - Approved savings yet to be allocated**

**Note 2 - Additional Turnover Savings yet to be identified**

**Note 3 - General Revenue Grant - Teachers Hold Back funding to be received after criteria met**

**Note 4 - General Revenue Grant - £2m funded from Capital Grant**

Earmarked Reserves

DMR	300
Anti-Poverty	82
Turnover Savings	100
<b>Contribution to General Earmarked Reserves</b>	<b>482</b>

Redeterminations

Probationer Teachers	(594) ECOD
Teachers Pay	(2,238) Misc
Transfer to Capital	2,000
	<b>(832)</b>

**Earmarked Reserves Position Statement**

**Summary**

<u>Committee</u>	<u>Total Funding 2023/24</u>	<u>Phased Budget to P6</u>	<u>Actual Spend To 30 September 2023</u>	<u>Variance Actual to Phased Budget</u>	<u>Projected Spend 2023/24</u>	<u>Earmarked 2024/25 &amp; Beyond</u>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
Education & Communities	1,495	416	429	13	1,094	401
Health & Social Care	6,463	580	340	(240)	3,204	3,259
Regeneration & Environment	9,242	190	675	485	4,444	4,798
Policy & Resources	17,645	461	391	(70)	8,706	8,940
	34,845	1,646	1,835	189	17,447	17,398

<u>2023/24 %age Spend Against Projected</u>	<u>2023/24 %age Over/(Under) Spend Against Phased Budget</u>
39.21%	3.13%
10.61%	(41.33%)
15.19%	255.31%
4.49%	(15.11%)
10.52%	11.48%

**Actual Spend v Phased Budget Ahead of Phasing = £189k 11.48%**

**Last Update (Period4) Behind Phasing = (£377k)**

**Movement in slippage v Phasing = £566k**

Appendix 9

**GENERAL FUND RESERVE POSITION**  
**Position as at 30/09/23**

	<u>£000</u>	<u>£000</u>
Usable Balance 31/3/23 - Post Audit of Accounts		7700
<u>Available Funding:</u>		
Service Concession	14,748	
IRI 2023/26	3,500	
Use of Earmarked Reserve 2022/23	452	
	<hr/>	18700
Projected Surplus/(Deficit) 2023/24	<hr/> (500)	(500)
<u>Use of Balances:</u>		
Support to 2023/26 Budgets	(4,000)	
Net Zero Action Plan	(3,300)	
Anti Poverty Initiatives	(800)	
Employability Smoothing Reserve	(400)	
Digital Modernisation	(1,000)	
Inflation Smoothing Reserve	(3,000)	
2023/26 Capital Programme Funding	(4,000)	
Clune Park Regeneration	(500)	
Voluntary Severance Reserve	<hr/> (1,700)	(18700)
Projected Reserve Balance		<hr/> <b>7200</b> <hr/>

**Minimum Reserve required is £4 million**

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<b>Report To:</b>	<b>Policy &amp; Resources Committee</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>21 November 2023</b>
<b>Report By:</b>	<b>Chief Financial Officer</b>	<b>Report No:</b>	<b>FIN/74/23/MT/GS</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 Council 2023/26 Capital Programme</b>		

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## 1.0 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1  For Decision  For Information/Noting
- 1.2 The purpose of the report is to provide Committee with the latest position of the Policy & Resources Capital Programme and the 2023/26 Capital Programme.
- 1.3 The report advises the Committee of the progress of the projects within the Policy & Resources Capital Programme which has a capital budget over 2023/26 of £4.607m with total projected spend on budget. The Committee is projecting to spend £0.735m in 2023/24 after advancement of £0.131m (21.69%).
- 1.4 The report advises the Committee of an agreement reached with the Scottish Government via COSLA to swap £2.0m of Revenue grant for £2.0m of Capital grant in 2023/24 and of proposals elsewhere in the agenda to reduce two recurring Capital allocations by £74,000 per year from 2024/25.
- 1.5 The overall 2023/26 Capital Programme budget is £66.897m with projects totalling £70.156m. This represents a £3.259m (4.87%) over allocation which is within the approved 5% tolerance. In the current year net slippage of £1.506m, 7.90% is being reported, a movement of £1.89 million since the last report largely arising from delays in the Learning Disability Community Hub procurement process. Expenditure at 30 September was £4.301m (22.39% of projected spend).

## 2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Committee note the current position of the 2023/26 Policy & Resources Capital Budget and the current position of the 2023/26 Capital Programme.
- 2.2 It is recommended that the Committee note that officers agreed via COSLA to swap £2.0 million of revenue grant for £2.0 million capital grant to free up revenue resources within the Scottish Government and this report and the Revenue Budget report reflect this action.
- 2.3 It is recommended that the Committee note that there is a proposal elsewhere in the agenda to reduce two recurring capital allocations by £74,000 per year from 2024/25 as part of the alignment of projects and resources in the medium term.

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

### **3.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT**

- 3.1 On 2 March 2023 the Council approved the 2023/26 Capital Programme as part of the overall Budget approval factoring in additional funding to fund the shortfall in annual capital grant compared to the annual capital allocations. This report shows the current position of the approved Policy & Resources Capital Programme.
- 3.2 The Committee have been advised on a regular basis of the real term reductions in the capital resources received by the Council, increased contract cost and increasing maintenance demands on the asset base. This requires to be addressed over the medium term as part of the 2024/27 Capital Programme and there are proposals in the Budget Update report later on in the agenda to begin to address this matter.

#### **2023/26 Policy & Resources Capital Position**

- 3.3 The Policy & Resources capital budget is £4.607m. The current projection is £4.607m which means total projected spend is on budget.
- 3.4 The budget for 2023/24 is £0.604m and the Committee is projecting to spend £0.735m in 2023/24, advancement of £0.131m (21.69%) relating mainly to the 2023/26 Capital Programme Contingency. The spend as at 30 September is £0.105m (14.29%) of current projection.
- 3.5 PC Refresh Programme –The final tranche of the 2023/24 refresh, 118 PCs in School Management and Offices is now underway will be completed between now and the end of the year. It has been agreed with Education that this will be scheduled during term time, appointments have been scheduled with the teams to ensure minimal disruption within the schools and provide the fastest timeline for completion.
- 3.6 Server and Switch Replacement – The implementation programme to replace and expand the Corporate Network Storage system is complete. A server and system upgrade to the Council's telephony system was completed successfully in September 2023. This will allow refresh of all current systems to the latest version and will provide the foundation of any migrations to cloud based services in the future. Upgrade of core servers for a range of Council applications will utilise remaining resources from the ICT Capital Budget.
- 3.7 As part of the 2023/26 budget setting process £4m was allocated to a small existing contingency to meet potential cost increases, fund unforeseen projects and to protect core service delivery from unexpected fluctuations in costs. This budget will be allocated by this Committee following the receipt of relevant reports. To date £2,050,000 has been allocated by Committee leaving an unallocated balance of £2.081million.

#### **Overall 2023/26 Capital Programme**

- 3.8 The overall 2023/26 Capital Programme reflects the 2023/24 capital grant. The total grant for 2023/24 of £10.228m is significantly higher than previously estimated £6.0m. This includes the second year of the additional funding package for the Local Authority pay award (£1.872m), an increase in the grant for Coastal Protection (£0.150m), an increase in funding for Play Parks (£0.126m) as well as the £2.0m Revenue/Capital Grant swap, leaving a core grant of £6.079m. The estimated capital grant allocation for 2024/25 and 2025/26 remains £6.0m.
- 3.9 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 £3.259m which represents 4.87% of the 2023/26 resources.
- 3.10 In terms of the overall Capital Programme, it can be seen from Appendix 2 that as at 30 September 2023 expenditure in 2023/24 was 22.39% of projected spend. Phasing and projected 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 in paragraph 3.12 of this report. Overall Committees are projecting to outturn on budget.



3.11 In the current year net slippage of £1.506m, (7.90%) is currently being reported, a movement of £1.889m in comparison to the previous reporting period which showed an advancement of £0.383m. This is due to slippage within Health and Social Care (£1.641m) offset with advancement within the Environment & Regeneration Committee (£0.004m) and Policy & Resources Committee (£0.131m).

3.12 The position in respect of individual Committees for 2023/24 is as follows:

Policy & Resources

Expenditure as at 30 September 2023 is £0.105m against an approved budget of £0.604m. Advancement of £0.131m (21.69%) is being reported at this stage within the Medium Term Capital Program Support (£0.131m).

Environment & Regeneration

Expenditure as at 30 September 2023 is £2.240m against an approved budget of £13.091m. Net advancement of £0.004m (0.03%) and is mainly due to slippage in Coastal Change Adaptions (£0.070m) and Place Based Funding (£0.400m) offset with advancements within Town & Village Centre projects (£0.051m) and the RAMP (£0.224m) and play Area Strategy (£0.126m) as well as other minor movements across the program.

Education & Communities

Expenditure as at 30 September 2023 is £1.820m against an approved budget of £2.713m. There is no net slippage to report within the Education & Communities budget to date this year.

Health & Social Care

Expenditure as at 30 September 2023 is £0.136m against an approved budget of £2.601m. Net slippage of £1.641m (63.09%), due to slippage within the Learning Disability Community Hub project (1.641m) caused by delays in receiving the full market testing information from contractors which has required a further period of due diligence.

3.13 2023/24 continues to be another challenging year for delivery of the capital program, officers will endeavour to advance projects when possible to mitigate slippage in an attempt to keep slippage within the 10% threshold.

**4.0 PROPOSALS**

4.1 The Committee is asked to note the progress on the Policy & Resources Capital Programme and the position of the 2023/26 Capital Programme.

4.2 The Committee is asked to note that there are proposals elsewhere in the agenda to reduce two recurring capital allocations by £74,000 per year to help address the growing and unsustainable pressures on the medium-term capital programme.

**5.0 IMPLICATIONS**

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

SUBJECT	YES	NO
Financial		X
Legal/Risk	X	
Human Resources		X
Strategic (Partnership Plan/Council Plan)		X
Equalities, Fairer Scotland Duty & Children/Young People's Rights & Wellbeing		X
Environmental & Sustainability		X

Data Protection		X
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## 5.2 Finance

Overall, the capital programme remains within parameters, but considerable pressures continue to exist and require to be considered as part of the forthcoming budget.

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					

## 5.3 Legal/Risk

The approved Governance documents set out the roles and responsibilities of Committees and officers in ensuring budgets are not overspent and the process to be followed in the event an overspend is unavoidable.

## 5.4 Human Resources

There are no HR matters arising from this report.

## 5.5 Strategic

The overall Capital programme contains many projects which contribute to the strategic priorities of the Council. As a result, timeous delivery of projects remains a focus for officers.

## 6.0 CONSULTATION

6.1 This report has been prepared based on updates to the relevant Strategic Committees.

## 7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 None.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Project Name	Est Total Cost	Actual to 31/3/23	Approved Budget 2023/24	Revised Est 2023/24	Actual to 30/09/2023	Est 2024/25	Est 2025/26	Future Years
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
<b><u>Environment, Regeneration &amp; Resources</u></b>								
<b><u>ICT</u></b>								
Storage/Backup Devices/Minor Works and Projects	25	23	2	2	5	0	0	0
Rolling Replacement of PC's	493	418	24	75	73	0	0	0
Meeting Room, Videoconferencing & Hybrid Working Equipment	9	9	51	0	3	0	0	0
Server & Switch Replacement Programme	195	178	17	17	24	0	0	0
Home Working Allocation	25	15	10	10	0	0	0	0
Annual Allocation	1,779	-	500	500	0	635	644	0
<b><u>ICT Total</u></b>	<b>2,526</b>	<b>643</b>	<b>604</b>	<b>604</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>635</b>	<b>644</b>	<b>0</b>
<b><u>Finance</u></b>								
Medium Term Capital Program Support	2,081	-	0	131	0	0	1,950	0
Cost Pressure Contingency (added to Med Term Cap Prog Support)	0	-	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b><u>Finance Total</u></b>	<b>2,081</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,950</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4,607</b>	<b>643</b>	<b>604</b>	<b>735</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>635</b>	<b>2,594</b>	<b>0</b>

Capital Programme - 2023/24 - 2025/26

Available Resources

	A	B	C	D	F
	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Future	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Government Capital Support	10,228	6,000	6,000	-	22,228
Capital Receipts (Note 1)	514	315	315	-	1,144
Capital Grants (Note 2)	4,558	-	-	-	4,558
Prudential Funded Projects (Note 3)	4,063	10,589	2,638	-	17,290
Balance B/F From 21/22	12,454	-	-	-	12,454
Capital Funded from Current Revenue	64	6,065	3,094	-	9,223
	<u>31,881</u>	<u>22,969</u>	<u>12,047</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>66,897</u>

Overall Position 2023/26

Available Resources (Appendix 2a, Column A-C)	<u>£000</u>
Projection (Appendix 2b, Column B-D)	66,897
(Shortfall)/Under Utilisation of Resources	<u>70,156</u>
(Shortfall)/Under Utilisation of Resources %	<u>(3,259)</u>
	<u>(4.87)%</u>

Notes to Appendix 2aNote 1 (Capital Receipts)

	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Sales	214	315	315	-	844
Contributions/Recoveries	300	-	-	-	300
	514	315	315	-	1,144

Note 2 (Capital Grants)

	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Government Grant - Place Based Funding	407	-	-	-	407
Renewal of Play Parks	126	-	-	-	126
Cycling, Walking & Safer Streets	520	-	-	-	520
SPT	790	-	-	-	790
Road Safety Improvement Fund	114	-	-	-	114
Nature Restoration Fund	306	-	-	-	306
Sustrans	2,295	-	-	-	2,295
	4,558	-	-	-	4,558

Note 3 (Prudentially Funded Projects)

	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Vehicle Replacement Programme	481	1,314	964	-	2,759
Borrowing in lieu of VRP Reduction	-	636	-	-	636
Asset Management Plan - Depots	36	249	-	-	285
Capital Works on Former Tied Houses	524	6	-	-	530
Clune Park Regeneration	(638)	750	-	-	112
New Learning Disability Facility	760	6,134	174	-	7,068
Additional Prudential Borrowing to Fund Capital Programme	1,500	1,500	1,500	-	4,500
Additional Prudential Borrowing to meet anticipated Cost Pressures	1,400	-	-	-	1,400
	4,063	10,589	2,638	-	17,290

Capital Programme - 2022/23 - 2025/26Agreed Projects

Committee	A Prior Years £000	B 2023/24 £000	C 2024/25 £000	D 2025/26 £000	E Future £000	F Total £000	G Approved Budget £000	H (Under)/ Over £000	I 2023/24 Spend To 30/09/2023 £000
Policy & Resources	643	735	635	2,594	-	4,607	4,607	-	105
Environment & Regeneration	10,219	13,160	21,780	9,461	125	54,745	54,745	-	2,240
School Estate	300	1,337	4,082	5,001	-	10,720	10,720	-	1,150
Education & Communities (Exc School Estate)	509	1,376	570	50	501	3,006	3,006	-	670
HSCP	332	960	8,241	174	-	9,707	9,707	-	136
<b>Total</b>	<b>12,003</b>	<b>17,568</b>	<b>35,308</b>	<b>17,280</b>	<b>626</b>	<b>82,785</b>	<b>82,785</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>4,301</b>

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<b>Report To:</b>	<b>Policy &amp; Resources Committee</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>21 November 2023</b>
<b>Report By:</b>	<b>Chief Financial Officer</b>	<b>Report No:</b>	<b>FIN/70/23/AP/LA</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Alan Puckrin</b>	<b>Contact No:</b>	<b>01475 712090</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Finance Update</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 provide updates to Committee on several matters progressing within the Finance Service. The matters covered in more detail in the report are:

- Non-Domestic Rates Empty Property Relief
- Council tax Collection
- Discretionary Housing Payments
- Scottish Welfare Fund Payments
- Delivering Differently Annual Update
- Insurance Fund position 30 September 2023
- Extension to the FMS contract

1.3 An amendment to the DHP Policy is proposed and attached at Appendix 1 whilst a request for extra resources for the Scottish Welfare Fund over 2024/26 is included elsewhere on the agenda.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 It is recommended that the Committee note the various Finance Service updates contained in this report.

2.2 It is recommended that the Committee approves the temporary amendment to the DHP Policy set out in Appendix 1.

2.3 It is recommended that the Committee note the annual Insurance Fund update, the overall insurance premium increase from October 2023 and the increase in insurance recharges relating to the creation of a Risk Management resource both of which will be funded from the non-pay inflation contingency.

2.4 It is recommended that the Committee note the annual update on the Delivering Differently programme and that reports will be presented to the relevant Committee at the appropriate time.

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

### **3.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT**

3.1 The Finance Service delivers a wide range of services, both back office and front line. There are separate reports on the agenda providing updates on the 2024/26 Budget, Treasury Management and Governance of External Organisations. This report provides updates on other matters being progressed within the service.

#### **3.2 Non-Domestic Rates Empty Property Relief – Consultation**

The public consultation on proposals to review the Non-Domestic Rates Empty Property Relief policy, agreed by the September Committee was launched and ran as planned until 31 October 2023. The questionnaire proposed a review of the indefinite award of 100% relief from non-domestic rates for empty listed buildings and a standardisation of the differing provision of relief for commercial and industrial premises. In addition, views regarding the type of support which could be offered to encourage occupation of empty properties were captured. Results are being analysed and proposed amendments to the policy will be reported to Committee in February 2024. The estimated financial implications of any proposed changes will be considered at that time.

#### **3.3 Council Tax Collection**

There are early signs that cost-of-living pressures are beginning to take effect with Council Tax collected 0.9% lower as at 30 September 2023 than the same point in 2019/20. While total receipts from Direct Debit are increasing, the amount collected by other payment methods such as by phone, online and at the Post Office are disproportionately declining. If this trend continues there may be the requirement to review the level of Council Tax collection to be assumed as part of the 2024/26 Budget. The service continues to focus on ensuring Council Taxpayers are billed correctly and on time and that debt follow-up is progressed timeously. In addition, the team continue to signpost those with debt to Advice Services.

#### **3.4 Discretionary Housing Payments/ Housing Benefits**

Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) mitigates the Social Sector Size Criteria and is fully funded by the Scottish Government. Since January 2023, the Benefit Cap is met in full in the same way. The projected 2023/24 expenditure on the Social Sector Size Criteria of £1.3million will help almost 1650 households, with £103,000 projected to support 39 households affected by the Benefit Cap. Expenditure on DHP for other purposes, based on the applications received up to September 2023 and expected to be paid until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 is projected to be £166,000 against an allocation of £193,000, including an earmarked reserve of £28,000.

#### **3.5 Scottish Welfare Fund**

The Scottish Welfare Fund has provided 434 Community Care Grants totalling £298,00 and 880 Crisis Grants totalling £101,000 during the first 6 months of 2023/24. A projected overspend of 5.5% against the Scottish Government core allocation will be contained within an earmarked reserve of £77,000 plus an allocation from the recurring Anti-Poverty fund of £40,000 which permits Crisis Grants to be topped up by 20% above the Scottish Government minimum grant level. Demand on the fund is forecast to continue to exceed core funding so a request has been made in the Anti-Poverty Evaluation Report found elsewhere on the agenda, to supplement Scottish Government funding in 2024/25 by £50,000 and £75,000 in 2025/26 from the Anti-Poverty fund.

#### **3.6 Delivering Differently- Annual Update**

The Committee receives an update on the overall Delivering Differently programme at least annually and Appendix 2 shows the latest update prepared by the CMT. This includes new projects added at the August meeting. A number of these projects link with the approved Savings Workstream programme with targets and delivery being reviewed by the CMT on a regular basis. Progress on the programme is also discussed with the Trades Unions at the Joint Budget Group.



### **3.7 Insurance Fund – Annual Update to 30 September 2023**

The Insurance Fund summary as at 30 September 2023 is attached as Appendix 3 and shows that the number of insurance claims received for 2022/23 as at 30 September 2023 was 12 lower than for 2021/22 at 127. At 30 September 2023 the Insurance Fund had a balance of £5.267 million which is an increase of £199,000 on 2021/22. After accounting for estimated liabilities of £1,038,000 and a provision of £374,000 for Municipal Mutual Insurance (MMI) clawback then the net Fund balance is £3.855 million.

3.8 There are however several known costs to be met by the Fund in coming years. These include the Council contribution to the £100 million Local Authority element of the Child Abuse redress scheme. This will require the Council to contribute around £1.5 million by 2031/32. In addition, there are two “Premium Holidays” totalling £200,000 / year approved by Members as part of prior year budgets. The second “holiday” runs until 2029/30.

3.9 In addition, there are several unquantified potential costs against the Fund, the largest of these being historic Child Abuse claims. The administration of these claims which can date back to the 1960s is very complex and is being co-ordinated by Glasgow City Council. How settlements and associated legal costs are shared is being discussed by the 12 former Strathclyde Councils but indications are that costs could exceed £1million for the Council. It can therefore be seen that there is no realistic scope to reduce the Fund balance at this point in time.

3.10 The Council’s insurance and claims handling contracts ended on 30 September 2023 and so a tendering exercise was undertaken with delegated authority being granted by the Policy & Resources Committee on 23 May 2023 to accept tenders. The result of the exercise is an increase in annual costs of £18,300 which will be funded from the Inflation Contingency.

3.11 The Corporate Management Team have approved the creation of a Risk Management post within Legal Services to help support and improve the Council’s approach to risk management. This ties in with the revised Risk Management Strategy which is remitted to this meeting from the Audit Committee and appears elsewhere on the agenda. The cost of the post is to be shared equally with the HSCP and the Council contribution will be funded from Insurance Fund via the non-pay inflation contingency.

### **3.12 Finance Management System (FMS) – Contract Extension**

Committee were previously advised that it was intended that the existing contract for the FMS be extended for a further 3 years to March, 2028. A draft contract has been received by the Council and is being reviewed by officers from Finance, Legal and Procurement.

## **4.0 PROPOSALS**

4.1 In respect of the projected underspend in DHP, Officers have reviewed expenditure against each priority category and recommend increasing the excess weekly income threshold to £60 in all circumstances for a temporary period until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024, reverting to the current thresholds from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024. The proposed change to the threshold would involve returning to applications refused since April 2023 to pay backdated awards. The position will be reviewed again when the 2024/25 DHP allocation is known. The DHP categories including the proposed changes to the policy are attached at Appendix 1

## **5.0 IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendations are agreed:

<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
Financial	x	
Legal/Risk	x	
Human Resources		x
Strategic (Partnership Plan/Council Plan)	x	
Equalities, Fairer Scotland Duty & 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>
Insurance	Premium Payments	1.10.23	£18,300		Funded from the Non-pay Inflation Contingency
	Risk Mangement	1.1.24	£30,000		

## 5.3 Legal/Risk

Legal Services are assisting in the finalising of the FMS extension and discussions with Glasgow City Council regarding sharing of costs in relation to Historic Child Abuse claims.

## 5.4 Human Resources

There are no HR implications arising from this report.

## 5.5 Strategic

The proposed changes to the DHP (Other) criteria will positively impact upon the priority to address poverty within Inverclyde.

## 5.6 Equalities, Fairer Scotland Duty & Children/Young People

### (a) Equalities

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

X	YES – Assessed as relevant and an EqlA is required in relation to the proposed temporary change to the DHP (Other) criteria. The EqlA is available to view here: <a href="#">Equality Impact Assessments 2023 - Inverclyde Council</a> .
	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.

## 6.0 CONSULTATION

6.1 No specific consultation was required in relation to this report.

## 7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 Equality Impact Assessments - Inverclyde Council:  
<https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/council-and-government/equality-impact-assessments>

**DHP Policy – November 2023**

**Appendix 1**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Circumstances</b>	<b>Maximum Duration of Award/ Award to be reviewed</b>	<b>Amount of DHP</b> (up to the stated % of the shortfall between HB and the rent charge – or otherwise stated)	<b>Examples of Supporting Evidence</b>	<b>Changes from Previous Policy</b>
1a.	Claimants affected by the Social Sector Size Criteria (Working Age Housing Benefit claimants living in Housing Association tenancies)	For the full financial year	100% of the SSSC reduction	HB records	
1b.	Benefit Cap	Until end of financial year	100%	HB and CTR records	
2a.	Claimants supported by the Homelessness Service in the Private Rented Sector	12 months	100%	Homelessness records	
2b.	Claimants supported by the Homelessness Service or from Temporary Accommodation into Social Sector housing	One- off payment	Up to the equivalent of 1 week's rent charge for the new tenancy	Housing Association notification Lease agreement	
3a.	Financial Hardship – Less than £60 income over expenditure each week	Until end of financial year	75%	Claimant statement/HB Assessment	Increased from £20 to £60 from 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2023 until 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2024
3b.	Financial Hardship – Less than £60 income over expenditure each week – aged less than 35years and housed private rented sector	Until end of financial year	100%	Claimant statement/HB Assessment	Increased from £20 to £60 from 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2023 until 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2024
3c.	Financial Hardship – Less than £60 income over expenditure each week – housed in the private rented sector and in exceptional circumstances	Until end of financial year	100%	Claimant statement/HB Assessment	Increased from £50 to £60 from 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2023 until 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2024

**Notes**

DHP is awarded in order of priority with applications meeting the criteria for Category 1 being the first priority to Category 3 being the lowest priority

**Category 1**

- Applicants in category 1 are not subject to a financial assessment
- Those affected by the Benefit Cap– the lower of either the capped amount or the applicant’s housing costs as permitted by regulations.

**Category 2**

- Applicants in category 2 are subject to a financial assessment. Applicants are approved where income is less than £20 more than essential expenditure. Disability Living Allowance, Personal Independence Payment, Attendance Allowance and Scottish Disability Payments are disregarded as income although all other income is taken into consideration.
- Awards for claimants supported by the Homelessness Service in the Private Rented Sector are limited to the equivalent of the difference between the HB award and one rate above the LHA rate for the household’s requirements or the LHA 2 room rate, whichever is higher. Affordability of those supported by the Homelessness service or from temporary accommodation will be monitored closely subject to an upper annual budget of £10k.

**Category 3**

- Applicants are approved where income is less than £20 more than essential expenditure. Disability Living Allowance, Personal Independence Payment, Attendance Allowance and Scottish Disability Payments are disregarded as income although all other income is taken into consideration. This category will also be monitored closely and could be subject to review depending on the level of spend.
- In the private rented sector DHP is awarded based on the difference between HB or UC Housing costs and the LHA rate applicable to the household’s requirements or the 1 room rate for those aged under 35 years
- In the social sector DHP is awarded based on the difference between HB entitlement or UC Housing costs and the rent charge
- Private rented sector claimants subject to Local Housing Allowance restrictions who are in “exceptional circumstances”. Award DHP to meet the difference between HB or UC housing costs and one LHA rate above the rate applicable to the household’s requirements with a limit of the 2 room rate for those aged less than 35 years. Exceptional circumstances being situations that are particularly challenging and for an identifiable and specific reason, normally beyond the applicant’s control and more than the financial pressure experienced by most people who rely on welfare benefits. Exceptional circumstances may be when support is provided by Macmillan Cancer Support or similar organisation; those with terminal medical conditions; unexpected personal or family problems or illness.

Date: November 2023

	Area to be reviewed	Objective	Saving/Cost Avoidance/ Pressure/ Service Improvement	Lead Officer(s)	Employee Impacts?	Timeline	Position - October 2023
1	<b>Shared Services with West Dunbartonshire</b>	To review the appetite for /benefit of continuing with current arrangements and/or investigating future arrangements.	Cost Avoidance/ Service Improvement	L Long	Yes	Audit Options Report -Autumn 2023  Council December 2023	Report due the Joint Committee in autumn 2023 regarding the Internal Audit shared arrangement.  Council internal assessment of options completed and preferred option identified by CMT and communicated to employees.  Liaison with West Dunbartonshire Council on going to report to Joint Committee and thereafter the December Council
2	<b>Roads Technical Services Restructure</b>	As the RAMP reduces then the level of fee income will reduce and there needs to be a review of the level of technical support	Cost Avoidance	S Jamieson	Yes	E&R Committee February 2024	Review being progressed informed by the decisions taken as part of the March 2023 Budget. Likely to be no change in structure in the medium term due to chargeable income.
3	<b>Trade Waste</b>	To determine whether the Council provision is cost effective or whether an alternative model is needed.	Cost Avoidance	S Jamieson	Not expected	E&R January, 2024	Report approved March 2023 E&R Committee. An in-house service will remain. Charges increased by 10% whilst a further review of costs/ charges takes place as part of the 2024/25 Budget.
4	<b>IL Delivery Model</b>	Due to the significant increases in property costs within the IL estate and reductions in income , a review of the estate and services delivered is required.	Cost Avoidance/ Saving	S Jamieson/ R Binks	Yes (IL)	Refresh previous report – February 2024  All Members Briefing – Spring 2024	Initial review overtaken by 2023/24 Budget savings proposals but post Budget the need to review the sustainability of the IL estate remains. Plan is to refresh the previous report and then provide an All Member Briefing in Spring 2024.
5	<b>New Ways of Working- Office Estate Reduction</b>	To reduce the office footprint and generate savings in light of the implementation of hybrid working	Saving	S Jamieson	Yes	Hybrid Working Policy – Sept 2023  Office impact proposals - P&R February 2024	Agreed to continue with hybrid working and a Policy approved by the Policy & Resources Committee in September 2023. Following the Levelling Up Fund award and the impact on the campus, the project focus has moved to making best use of the office space and will be led by the Director, Environment & Regeneration, with meetings being scheduled.
6	<b>Attainment Challenge Funding Reduction</b>	Funding for SAC will reduce by 80% by 2025. This will require a reduction of several dozen posts which will require close working with HR and TUs	Cost Avoidance	R Binks	Yes	Fully Implement August, 2024  Annual update to E&C Cttee	On 23/11/21 the SG announced their plans for the SAC refresh from April 22. This will see funding reduce from approx £3.4M in 21/22 down to approx £563K in 25/26.  Year 2 – Update to September E&C Committee  Process will continue the following years in similar fashion.  Year 2 SAC plans are in place for 23/24 and work is under way to create the SAC plan for 24/25 from April 2024.

	Area to be reviewed	Objective	Saving/Cost Avoidance/ Pressure/ Service Improvement	Lead Officer(s)	Employee Impacts?	Timeline	Position - October 2023
							The process of the requisite staffing structure is now well established and the resultant budget reduction will be less in 2024/25 that it has been.
7	<b>Homelessness</b>	Longer term approach to the delivery of the Homelessness Service to be developed and agreed	Pressure (for the IJB as well as Council)/ Service Improvement	K Rocks	Yes	CMT report – November 2023  Work plan to be implemented by July 2024	<p>Paper approved at ADP, IJB and HSCC for investment in Homeless Service. The proposal seeks to create a Rapid Rehousing Support Service to specifically target intensive support to those who present as repeatedly homeless or entrenched in temporary accommodation for significantly lengthy periods of time.</p> <p>This transitional work will determine future accommodation requirements as replacement for Inverclyde Centre. Funding agreed from IJB and ADP for Programme/Change Manager, Wellbeing Co-ordinator, 8 x Rapid Rehousing Support Officers for fixed term 23 months. Workforce Subgroup up and running to identify future staffing implications on new model.</p> <p>Next Steps - Options appraisal underway to determine future accommodation needs. Housing options hub -desktop exercise to find suitable premises, Temp Furnished Flats - increase numbers to depopulate centre; Housing First Model - Collaboration with Oaktree to secure properties and Property Services to upgrade shopfront to deliver housing first for 9 tenants. Collaborate with Glasgow City mission to find pre rehab premises. Progress update to IJB November 23 Staffing model, Rent Management and Rates finalised for CMT and paper in draft - on track for submission</p>
8	<b>Digital Modernisation</b>	To maximise the opportunities of digital modernisation, improve business processes and information governance whilst improving on line access for citizens to council services	Cost Avoidance/ Service Improvement	L Long/ I Strachan	May arise in specific proposals	Updates to P&R Committee every 2 <sup>nd</sup> cycle	<p>Council allocated a further £1 million to Digital Modernisation in March 2023 and approved the delivery structure through a Programme Board chaired by the Chief Executive. EMR now £1.25 million, through consolidation with other EMR. Digital Modernisation Workshop, facilitated by Improvement Service been held. Number of inflight projects progressing, and upgrade of Customer Service System approved at August P&amp;R Committee. Programme Board has also established Microsoft 365 Development Sub-Group. Will support delivery of Digital &amp; Customer Service 24/26 Budget Workstream.</p> <p>Update to November P&amp;R Committee and every 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting thereafter.</p>
9	<b>Energy Management</b>	Review how to reduce the Council/IL energy use via the implementation of efficiency measures and appropriate technical solutions	Saving	E Montgomery	No	Report to E&R Committee March 2024	One post in Energy team remains unfilled. A series of interventions are in progress including seeking to maximise external funding sources. Progress will be reported to Committee.

	Area to be reviewed	Objective	Saving/Cost Avoidance/ Pressure/ Service Improvement	Lead Officer(s)	Employee Impacts?	Timeline	Position - October 2023
10	<b>Recruitment &amp; Retention Initiatives</b>	Improve employee retention and make the Council a more attractive employer	Cost avoidance/ Service Improvement	M Rae	Yes	Initial report to P&R Committee May 2023.  Update report September 2023  Follow up November 2023	Various initiatives being progressed/ investigated including a new Flexible Working Policy, reduction in the standard working week, development of trainees and payment of university fees, employee benefits and a review of professional fees.  The updated Flexible Working Policy and new approach to performance appraisals (Positive Conversations) approved at Policy and Resources Committee in September.  A Working Group has been considering the potential implications of a reduction in the standard working week from 37 to 35 hours.  Employees have been nominated to undertake further professional qualifications to help with "difficult to fill" posts funded from a central earmarked reserve.  2023 Leadership course underway to help with retention and potential promotion.
11	<b>HR &amp; OD Review</b>	Undertake a high-level health check of the service and thereafter review recommendations and take actions as appropriate	Pressure reduction/ Service Improvement	M Rae	Yes	Initial report to P&R Committee August 2023  Future reporting to Committee via CDIP	Review focussed on resources/capacity, use of technology, efficiency of processes and user needs/demands. Executive summary reported to August P&R Committee.  SMART action plan developed. Actions progressed in relation to efficiencies in the appointment process for new employees, issuing of contracts and upgrading IT systems. Additional permanent Service Manager post in HR+OD part of the Service agreed. A Budget pressure identified and to be progressed via MBWG in October 2023 for additional employee resource.
12	<b>Review of CLD</b>	Due to various incremental savings over the last few years the review will ensure demands and resources are appropriately spread to meet the needs of the Council and communities.	Saving/ Service Improvement	R Binks	Yes	Conclude prior to March 2024 Budget	Audit of workforce completed. High level aims and direction being developed during October/November 2023.
13	<b>Lomond View Academy</b>	To reduce out of authority education placements and provide better enhanced support to pupils within mainstream education and reduce exclusions	Pressure reduction	R Binks	Yes	Report to March 2024 E&C Committee.	A revised staffing structure has been put in place from Aug 2023 with the Headteacher of the Virtual school now leading LVA as well. To protect capacity, an acting DHT post has been created for the coming year. This, alongside the appointment of a new permanent PT post at LVA and maintaining the additional staffing from the recovery teacher allocation, as well as the creation of a primary enhanced nurture provision based at St Michael's PS and overseen by the Head of LVA, has created a more enhanced offer. This offer is now better meeting the needs of existing pupils at LVA, as well as more pupils who attend



	Area to be reviewed	Objective	Saving/Cost Avoidance/ Pressure/ Service Improvement	Lead Officer(s)	Employee Impacts?	Timeline	Position - October 2023
							either on a full time or split placement / part time basis allowing them to remain within a mainstream setting longer term. The models developed are ensuring that there is more ability to meet a wider range of need within the authority and less likelihood to have to then seek external placements out of authority, thus in time reducing this spend.
14	ASN Transport	To reduce the current overspend in ASN transport.	Pressure Reduction	R Binks	Yes	Report to E&C Committee late 2024.	Budget pressure reported to MBWG and now, Committee. Review of options to reduce demand/spend commenced. Project team set up and desktop exercise of provision underway.

**Insurance Fund Financial Summary - Insurance Years 2021/22 - 2022/23**

	Insurance Years		
	2021/2022 (1 Oct 2021 - 30 Sept 2022) £	2022/2023 (1 Oct 2022 - 30 Sept 2023) £	
<b>Fund Income in Year</b>			
Total Contributed to the Fund	450,000.00	400,000.00	
Internal Resources Interest	14,592.61	127,090.05	
	<u>464,592.61</u>	<u>527,090.05</u>	A
<b>Fund Expenditure in Year</b>			
Risk Management	5,000.00	5,000.00	
Actuarial/Property Revaluation Costs	0.00	12,600.00	
Scottish Government Child Abuse Redress Scheme	0.00	77,000.00	
	<u>5,000.00</u>	<u>94,600.00</u>	
Incurred Charges to the Fund in Year	98,766.92	232,958.81	
	<u>103,766.92</u>	<u>327,558.81</u>	B
Net Surplus/(Deficit) on Fund in Year	<u>360,825.69</u>	<u>199,531.24</u>	C=A-B
<b>Fund Balance</b>			
Balance As At Start of Year	4,707,088.55	5,067,914.24	D
Add:			
Net Surplus/(Deficit) on Fund in Year	360,825.69	199,531.24	C
Actual Fund Balance At End of Year	<u>5,067,914.24</u>	<u>5,267,445.48</u>	E=D+C
Less:			
Estimated Outstanding Charges on Fund	676,020.14	1,038,010.62	F
Provision for Abuse Claims and Clawback for MMI Claims	271,041.00	374,243.00	G
Balance for Future Years Claims At End of Year	<u>4,120,853.10</u>	<u>3,855,191.86</u>	H=E-F-G

**Claims Information For Last 5 Insurance Years**

(This information is for the number of claims received analysed by the year to which the claim relates)

	No. of Claims Received For Year	No. of Claims Settled/Resolved	No. of Claims Outstanding	Estimated Outstanding Charges On Insurance Fund £
2018/19	152	151	1	6,685.90
2019/20	140	132	8	177,894.00
2020/21	108	99	9	106,588.75
2021/22	149	123	26	157,671.50
2022/23	127	61	66	529,893.10
	<u>676</u>	<u>566</u>	110	<u>978,733.25</u>
Claims Pre-2018/19			10	59,277.37
TOTALS			<u>120</u>	<u>1,038,010.62</u>

Of the claims outstanding:

- 36 are Motor Vehicle claims, none of which are payable by the Insurance Fund.
- 5 are Employer's Liability claims relating to Pleural Plaques and are included net of amounts payable by Municipal Mutual Insurance (MMI).

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<b>Report To:</b>	<b>Policy &amp; Resources Committee</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>21 November 2023</b>
<b>Report By:</b>	<b>Corporate Director Education, Communities &amp; Organisational Development</b>	<b>Report No:</b>	<b>PR/22/23/KM</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Morna Rae</b>	<b>Contact No:</b>	<b>01475 712042</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Corporate Policy and Performance Update: September-November 2023</b>		

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## **1.0 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY**

1.1  For Decision  For Information/Noting

1.2 This report provides the Committee with an update on Corporate Policy and Performance matters relating to:

- Publication of the first Census 2022 outputs;
- An update on national developments relating to Best Value;
- NRS Life Expectancy Statistics 2020/22;
- Success at national awards; and
- The results from the Citizens' Panel Summer 2023 Survey.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 It is recommended that the Committee notes the latest updates in relation to Corporate Policy and Performance.

2.2 The Committee is asked to note that officer discussions have taken place with National Records of Scotland and representations made regarding local population estimates, in response to the publication of the first Census outputs.

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

### **3.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT**

3.1 A Corporate Policy and Performance update report is considered at every meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee; the last such report was submitted to the meeting of the Committee on 19 September 2023.

#### **3.2 Census 2022 – First release of data**

3.3 The first Census outputs were published by National Records of Scotland (NRS) on 14<sup>th</sup> September 2023. A Briefing containing the headline Census results was circulated to all Elected Members on the day of publication. At present, the level of detail released is restricted to:

- Population estimates (rounded) by 5-year age group and sex at Scotland and Council level
- Number of households estimates (rounded) at Scotland and local authority level

3.4 Scotland's Census 2022 estimates the population of Inverclyde to be 78,400. This is:

- A decrease of 3,100 (3.8%) from the Census 2011 population figure of 81,500 and the second largest population decrease in Scotland.
- An increase of 1,700 (2.2%) from the NRS mid-2021 population estimate for Inverclyde, 76,700.

3.5 Whilst Scotland's population is now at its highest ever level, 5,436,600, population change varies significantly across the country. 17 Council areas saw a population increase between 2011 and 2022, with 10 Council areas having a population decrease. 5 areas saw minimal change (1% or less). The majority of the population increase has occurred in the central belt and has been driven by migration. Areas experiencing a population decrease are mostly situated in the west / southwest of Scotland, with the decrease attributable to a lower number of births than deaths.

3.6 There are more females than males living in Inverclyde. There are 40,700 females (52%) compared to 37,700 males (48%). This is similar to the gender split for Scotland, 51% female and 49% male and reflects that on average, females live longer.

3.7 Almost all age groups in Inverclyde under the age of 55, have seen a population decrease between Censuses, whilst the trend reverses for those aged over 55. Of particular note is:

- Number of children aged 0-4 years has decreased by 1,000 from 4,200 to 3,200.
- Number of young people aged 15-25 years has decreased by 2,100, from 10,100 to 8,000.
- Number of people aged 40-49 years has decreased by more than 4,000, from 13,050 to 9,000.
- Number of people aged 55-64 years has increased by 2,500 from 10,700 to 13,200.
- Number of people aged 70 and older has increased by 2,000 from 10,500 to 12,500.

The shift towards an ageing population will place greater demand and increased pressure on health and social care services.

3.8 The next Census 2022 release will be in Spring 2024 and will include more detailed population data which will help to identify key changes at small area level, including ethnic group; demography and migration; armed forces veterans; health, disability and unpaid care and education, labour market and travel to work.

### 3.9 Response to the Census first release

- 3.10 Tackling depopulation has been a long-standing strategic priority for both Inverclyde Council and the Inverclyde Alliance, with Inverclyde being one of the first authorities to adopt a concerted approach in support of repopulation. What the new data clearly shows however is that there is a marked, national population shift from the west to the east of the country, particularly around Edinburgh. These increases were driven by migration from within Scotland and from elsewhere. This means that the effectiveness of any local measures to tackle depopulation are likely to be extremely limited. The Council area that saw the largest increase was Midlothian, with a population increase of 16.1% between the 2011 Census and the 2022 Census, followed by East Lothian, 12.7%. The estimated population change across all Scottish Council areas between Census 2011 and Census 2022, is provided in the appendix. A greater understanding of the drivers of migration between Council areas will be obtained next year, following the publication of more detailed data.
- 3.11 Population change is driven by births, deaths and migration. Births and deaths data is accurate, however migration is more difficult to estimate. According to NRS mid-year population estimates, over the period mid-2011/12 to mid-2020/21 the number of deaths compared to births resulted in population natural change of -3443 in Inverclyde. With natural change being greater than estimated change (-3,100), this would suggest that Inverclyde has been successful in achieving positive in-migration between Census 2011 and Census 2022, however not to the extent required to counteract the falling birth rate.
- 3.12 It is worth noting that Scotland also experienced negative population change between the two Census periods. Without migration, Scotland's population would have decreased by around 49,800.
- 3.13 Some members of the Committee will be aware that following the release of 2011 Census results, the Council Leader raised concerns directly with NRS regarding the under-estimation of the local population at that time. As the Census 2022 population estimate for Inverclyde is once again higher than the previous mid-year estimates, a meeting was held on 10<sup>th</sup> October 2023 between the Council's Chief Executive, the Chief Financial Officer and National Records of Scotland's Interim Director of Statistical Services and other NRS colleagues. The focus of the meeting was to discuss what improvements could be made to ensure that Inverclyde's population is not understated in forthcoming years, emphasising the importance of these statistics on local funding and wider policy decision making.
- 3.14 NRS has advised that discussions are ongoing, both internally and with partners, regarding strengthening and improving the quality of population estimates. A national 'reconciliation exercise' is planned to understand the reasons for the differences between the mid-year and Census population estimates, however the timeline for this is not yet confirmed. A wider conversation is also taking place at present between NRS and the Scottish Government on the wider reform of statistics. One area that is being considered is changing the methodology going forward, including the possible use of administrative data to improve the mid-year population estimates. A recommendation is due to be presented on statistical reform, including the future of the Census, to Ministers some time in 2024. The Committee will be kept fully apprised of developments in relation to national statistics as these are known.
- 3.15 **National Developments in relation to Best Value**
- 3.16 In September 2023, the Accounts Commission published two reports relating to Best Value audit in Councils, namely:
- Best Value in Scotland: Twenty years of auditing Best Value and next steps for Best Value reporting in Scottish Councils; and

- Best Value Thematic Work 2022/23 South Ayrshire Council: Leadership in the development of the council's strategic priorities.

### **A) Best Value in Scotland: Twenty years of auditing Best Value and next steps for Best Value reporting in Scottish councils**

- 3.17 The Accounts Commission report "Best Value in Scotland" provides a synopsis of how the Best Value audit approach has evolved since 2003 and its impact in driving improvements in performance, better governance and better use of public money and resources. The full report is available here: <https://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/publications/best-value-in-scotland>
- 3.18 The Commission concludes that Best Value audit has helped to improve local government. Progress is noted in performance management, partnership working and community engagement. More progress is required in relation to public performance reporting, workforce planning, medium-to long-term financial planning, scrutiny and the pace and depth of improvement.
- 3.19 In setting out the next steps for Best Value, the Commission states that radical change is needed in how Councils operate and collaborate with partners. The following areas have been identified:

#### **Leadership**

- Difficult decisions will be required on future priorities and how to deliver services, to achieve the best possible outcomes.
- Effective leadership by councillors and senior officers will be crucial to setting clear priorities and robust planning to deliver them.
- Governance arrangements need to ensure that Councillors have sufficient information to support effective scrutiny and decision-making to deliver BV.

#### **Use of Resources**

- Strengthening the use of data and consulting and involving communities will be critical to informing difficult decisions.
- Improve performance monitoring and reporting on outcomes.
- Seek innovative ways to deliver services to maintain or improve service performance.
- Set out medium-to long-term financial plans that detail how recurring savings will be made and reduce reliance on reserves.
- Building capacity, skills, strategic thinking, and comprehensive workforce data is needed for effective workforce planning and updating workforce plans to reflect new models of service delivery and ways of working.
- Good strategic medium to long term asset management planning is essential.
- Clear plans for strengthening the use of data to understand needs and inform decisions and resources.

#### **Partnership Working**

- Councils need to maximise the potential of collaboration by working with other Councils, the wider public sector and the third sector to redesign and provide services.
- Councils must rethink how they work together and with local partners and communities, to provide financially sustainable services whilst tackling national issues such as climate change, child poverty and inequalities.
- Service users and local communities should be involved in the redesign of services and communities supported to improve local outcomes.

#### **Continuous Improvement**

- Councils need to challenge old ways of doing things and take urgent action to reform.

### 3.20 **B) Best Value Thematic Inspection Work 2022/23**

- 3.21 As part of the new approach to auditing Best Value, the Commission has published the first of the new thematic inspection reports, focusing on the “Leadership of the development of new local strategic priorities’ within South Ayrshire Council. The full report is available here: <https://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/publications/best-value-thematic-work-202223-south-ayrshire-council>
- 3.22 Over the period October 2023 to August 2027, the Commission will consider the BV thematic report alongside each Council’s Annual Audit Report. This will be done on a phased basis with the first tranche of Councils considered being Moray; Falkirk; Dundee City; Orkney Islands; South Ayrshire; Dumfries and Galloway, Clackmannanshire, and West Dunbartonshire. All Councils will be considered at least once over the five-year audit appointment. No details of the reporting schedule beyond the first year are known as yet.
- 3.23 The Accounts Commission has advised that the focus of the annual thematic work for 2023/24 will be Workforce Innovation, specifically: *How are Councils responding to the current challenging context for local government through innovating and improving how they use their workforce?*

Earlier this year, the Extended Corporate Management Team participated in a corporate self-assessment on the theme of workforce, using the Best Value statements as the assessment framework. A range of strengths and areas for improvement were identified and progress in the delivery of the improvement actions is monitored by the CMT. This improvement activity will be kept under review to ensure that the Council is well prepared for this forthcoming inspection.

- 3.24 Once the thematic inspection reports for all 32 Scottish Councils are published, the key messages and recommendations will be reviewed and common areas for improvement identified, with particular attention paid to those Councils with a similar socio-economic profile to Inverclyde. The result of this review will be presented to a future meeting of this Committee. Any areas for improvement will be incorporated into the Council’s Best Value planning activity.

### 3.25 **Life Expectancy in Scotland 2020/22**

- 3.26 Life expectancy in Scotland 2020/22 data was published by NRS on 26 September 2023. These figures are marked as provisional as they will be recalculated next year using the new census data. The last ten years will also be recalculated using rebased population estimates. As such, revisions in the data can be expected in the next publication.
- 3.27 Life expectancy in 2020/22 in Inverclyde was 74.6 years for males, compared to 76.5 years in Scotland and 78.7 years for females in 2020-2022, compared to 80.7 years in Scotland. Female life expectancy in Inverclyde is the fourth lowest in Scotland whilst male life expectancy is the sixth lowest in Scotland.
- 3.28 Inverclyde is referred to in the NRS report as one of a number of areas within Scotland where the annual rate of life expectancy growth has fallen dramatically since 2012/14. Other Councils in this position include Dundee and South Ayrshire.
- 3.29 At a national level, twenty-five Council areas have had a decrease in male life expectancy since 2012-2014 and for females, 22 Councils have experienced a decrease.
- 3.30 The decrease in life expectancy for both males and females in Inverclyde over the period 2017/19 – 2020/22 (covering the pandemic) is less than it was in the period 2012/14-2017/19. For Inverclyde males, life expectancy decreased by 4.3 weeks per year between 2017/19-2022/22,

compared to a decrease of 6.3 weeks per year between 2012/14-2017/19. For females, life expectancy over the period 2017/19–2020/22 is estimated to have decreased by 5.3 weeks per year, compared to a decrease of 18 weeks per year in the period 2012/14 - 2017/19.

### 3.31 **Corporate Awards**

3.32 Key national awards for local government include those co-ordinated by the Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE), the Local Government Chronicle (LGC) and the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA). Gaining external recognition can increase the profile of the Council, benchmark best practice and boost morale.

3.33 At the APSE Awards 2023, Inverclyde Council won the *Best Workforce Initiative* category for its submission on the Workforce Refresh Programme. The initiative tackled the dual issue of an ageing workforce and low youth employment. The initiative saw positive internal progression and an increase in the number of young people employed by the Council. Inverclyde Council was also a finalist in the APSE Council of the Year category.

3.34 At the COSLA Excellence Awards 2023, held on 28 September 2023, Inverclyde Council was announced as the winner of the *Strengthening communities and local democracy* category for work carried out in examining historic links to slavery.

### 3.35 **Results from the Citizens' Panel Summer 2023 Survey**

The Citizens' Panel was established in 2007 to enable the Council to regularly consult with Inverclyde residents on a wide range of issues and to obtain feedback to improve and develop services to meet the needs of local people. The Panel comprises 1,007 residents, with membership refreshed annually by one third. The Summer 2023 Survey is the first one completed by the newly-refreshed Panel membership.

3.36 Overall, 647 people, approximately 64% of Panel members, responded to the Summer 2023 Survey.

3.37 All sample Surveys are subject to a degree of random error. Based on the return rate for the Summer 2023 questionnaire, the margin of error is +/- 3%. It is important to bear this in mind when considering the results.

### 3.38 Legislative setting

The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 aims to empower communities by strengthening their voices in decisions about public services. The Citizens' Panel is one of the key tools we use to deliver on this.

3.39 A Briefing for Elected Members on the results of the Citizens' Panel Summer 2023 was arranged prior to the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee on 21 November 2023.

### 3.40 Survey topics, findings and commentaries

- Recycling

3.41 We introduced the recycling section of the survey by advising respondents that the Council provides a number of options to allow local residents to recycle a wide variety of materials.

3.42 Where available, comparable results from a Citizens' Panel questionnaire issued in 2015 are included in this section of the report.



3.43 • Food waste recycling

The Council's food waste recycling service allows residents to recycle all types of leftover or unwanted food. Out of date food still in its packaging can also be deposited in the outdoor food waste containers.

3.44 Just under half (48%) of Panel members said they use the kerbside food waste recycling service, down from 67% in 2015. Slightly more than a third (36%) said that they were aware that additional outdoor containers are available free of charge to residents who produce a lot of food waste.

3.45 • Glass recycling

When respondents were asked where they recycle their glass, the responses were:

	<b>2015</b> <b>%</b>	<b>2023</b> <b>%</b>
Neighbourhood Recycling Point	50	32
Recycling Centre, Pottery Street, Greenock	18 <sup>1</sup>	26
Supermarket	19	23
Recycling Centre, Craigmuschat Quarry, Gourrock	-	13
I do not recycle my glass	20	28

3.46 • Textiles recycling

When Panel members were asked where they recycle their textiles, the responses were:

	<b>2015</b> <b>%</b>	<b>2023</b> <b>%</b>
Charity shop	67	52
Neighbourhood Recycling Point	28	26
Recycling Centre, Pottery Street, Greenock	19 <sup>2</sup>	20
Supermarket	14	12
Recycling Centre, Craigmuschat Quarry, Gourrock	-	9
I do not recycle my textiles	5	14

3.47 • Recycling centres

The next part of the survey asked about the use of, and satisfaction levels with, the Council's Recycling Centres at Pottery Street, Greenock, and Craigmuschat Quarry, Gourrock.

3.48 Three quarters (75%) of Panel members said they use the Recycling Centre at Pottery Street, up from 64% in 2015, while 39% of respondents said they use the facility at Craigmuschat Quarry.

3.49 Satisfaction levels with both Recycling Centres were very high, with 98% of Panel members who used the facilities indicating that they were satisfied with the site at Pottery Street, while 81% expressed satisfaction with the Craigmuschat Quarry Recycling Centre.

3.50 The responses in terms of ease of use were also very high: 95% of respondents said they found the Pottery Street facility easy to use, complemented by an 85% satisfaction level regarding ease of use at the Craigmuschat Quarry Recycling Centre.

<sup>1</sup> Figure includes the Kirn Drive Recycling Centre

<sup>2</sup> Figure includes the Kirn Drive Recycling Centre

3.51 When asked about satisfaction with the variety of materials that can be recycled at the Centres, the figures were again very high, at 97% for Pottery Street and 81% for the Gourrock site.

3.52 In terms of the materials that Panel members recycle at the Centres, the most popular responses were small electrical items (69%), mixed recyclates (63%), wood (48%), scrap metal (36%) and garden waste (30%).

3.53 • Bulk Uplift Service

The Council can uplift bulky household items such as furniture, mattresses, carpets and white goods.

3.54 Awareness of the Council's Bulk Uplift Service among Panel members was generally high, with slightly less than three quarters (74%) of respondents indicating that they had heard of it.

• Blue bins

3.55 The penultimate question in the recycling section of the Survey focussed on blue bins. Noting that blue bins are a convenient way to recycle from the kerbside, Panel members were asked if they were aware that the items listed can be recycled in their blue bins; the responses were:

	%
Plastic food containers (rinsed)	96
Plastic cosmetic bottles	91
Plastic detergent bottles	92
Glossy magazines and junk mail	93
Cardboard tubes and packaging	97
Biscuit and sweet tins	81
Envelopes	89

3.56 The final question in this section of the Survey asked if respondents were aware that additional blue bins are available free of charge to residents who produce a lot of recyclates. Just over a third (34%) said they were aware of this option, down from 46% when the question was asked in 2015.

3.57 **Recycling – service commentary**

We are encouraged by the positive responses to questions about recycling, in particular the 95% satisfaction level regarding the Pottery Street Recycling Centre and the 97% satisfaction level for the variety of recycling options available at the site.

It is also encouraging to note that 86% of respondents recycle their textiles and 72% continue to recycle their glass.

Feedback from respondents will help inform the devising of forthcoming advertising material. We have plans to focus on getting the message across about the wide range of facilities available at our Recycling Centres and highlight the availability of additional blue bins and food waste containers to householders who generate a lot of dry mixed recyclable materials and food waste.

To ensure we reach as wide a range of people as possible when promoting and encouraging recycling in Inverclyde, we will continue to use a variety of communication methods including information on the Council's website and refuse collection vehicles, advertising in the local press and, as in recent years, a stronger emphasis on social media and technology.

3.58 • **The Advice 1st service**

The Inverclyde Health and Social Care Partnership's Advice 1st service provides money, debt and welfare benefits advice and support. Skilled Advice Workers offer free, confidential, impartial, expert money advice and information services to local residents facing debt, housing and Benefit problems. Where people are at serious financial risk, emergency appointments can be arranged.

3.59 The first question in this part of the survey asked about awareness and use of the Advice 1st service. Just over a quarter (27%) of Panel members indicated that they had heard of the service, while 14% said they had used it.

3.60 The reasons why respondents had contacted the Advice 1st service were:

	%
Benefits	38
Personal Independence Payments	28
Housing and Council Tax Benefit	24
Help to appeal	19
Consumer debts	10
Employment rights advice	10
Help and advice about money, debt or budgeting	10
Legal advice relating to housing	10
Eviction	5

3.61 No respondents said they contacted the service regarding the following issues: Employment Support Allowance; help with immediate costs, for example, food or heating; Job Seekers' Allowance sanctions; Mandatory Reconsiderations; or Under occupancy (*bedroom tax*).

6.62 Of the Panel members who had used the Advice 1st service, everyone (100%) said they found the support they received helpful. When asked about the outcome of their contact with Advice 1st, more than half (58%) of Panel members said they are now aware of Benefits they are entitled to, while 42% said that they received help and advice about money, debt or budgeting.

3.63 **Advice 1st – service commentary**

The feedback from the Citizens' Panel is extremely positive and will be useful in supporting future priorities and service development. It is especially pleasing to learn that, without exception, everyone who used the Advice 1st service found the support they received helpful. It is always welcome to receive such positive feedback and to evidence the value of the services offered. The type of support recipients have received reflects the range of skills and the breadth of provision which citizens can expect to receive from a referral to Advice 1st as a single point of access. This may be from the different elements of the Team or by close joint working and referral to other Teams and locally or nationally commissioned services.

We note that some of the reasons for contacting the Advice 1st service include consumer debts (10%) and employment rights advice (10%) and we would expect that these have been provided by other services such as Citizens' Advice Scotland or The Inverclyde Advice and Employment Rights Centre. Again, this highlights the excellent range of support and services delivered in different ways in Inverclyde.

3.64 • **Inverclyde Council's performance**

The final part of the survey asked questions on areas that the Council measures its performance against. Where comparator information is available, it is provided below. Additional information

provided by Citizens' Panel members on the Council's performance is incorporated into the Annual Performance Report which is included elsewhere on the agenda for today's meeting of the Committee.

### 3.65 Council services

Respondents were asked how satisfied they were with seven Council services. Panel members were asked to respond to this question only if they had used the service(s) in the last year. The responses are outlined in the Appendix, together with comparable information, as appropriate, from the SOLACE Improving Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) 2022/23.

Appendix

### 3.66 How safe do you feel in your neighbourhood?

	<b>2018</b> %	<b>2020/21</b> %	<b>2023</b> %
Outside during the day	90	94	87

### 3.67 Customer feedback

The reputation of the Council is good

	<b>2018</b> %	<b>2020/21</b> %	<b>2023</b> %
Agree	41	26	23

### 3.68 **Inverclyde Council's performance – service commentary**

The Council is acutely aware of the importance of providing high quality services to local residents and visitors to the area, particularly with the aim of retaining and enhancing Inverclyde's population.

- Council services

In terms of the Council services asked about at paragraph 3.65, Panel members' satisfaction with six of those services either improved or was maintained between 2020/21 and 2023. The exception was leisure services which saw a very small drop in the satisfaction level, falling from 60% in 2020/21 to 58% in 2023.

Although rising slightly between 2020/21 and 2023, social care or social work services traditionally attracts the lowest satisfaction rating with Panel members; this may reflect the fact that respondents had not used this particular service in the last year and therefore responded to the question accordingly.

- Community safety

Panel members were also asked about their feelings of safety. There was a small decrease in the proportion of people who feel safe in their neighbourhood outside at during the day, falling from 94% in 2020/21 to 87% in 2023.

- Customer feedback

Just under a quarter (23%) of Panel members agreed that the Council's reputation is good, down from 26% in 2020/21 and from 41% in 2018.

While it is challenging to say with any certainty why Panel members are less satisfied with aspects of Inverclyde Council service delivery than they were in previous reporting periods, contributory factors may include budgetary cuts and strike action affecting local schools and nurseries.

Further, it is noted that the Scottish Government's consultation on potential changes to the Council Tax charges for the highest Banded properties may have influenced Panel members' responses to the satisfaction questions, albeit the outcome of that consultation is not one over which Inverclyde Council has any direct control.

More widely, a reduction in satisfaction with Council services is not unique to Inverclyde Council and is a situation being faced by a number of other Scottish local authorities. East Renfrewshire Council, for example, saw a drop in the satisfaction rate with Council services, falling from 67% in 2021 to 63% in 2023. Glasgow City Council saw an increase in the dissatisfaction rate with Council services, rising from 27% in 2022 to 32% in 2023. Meanwhile, the percentage of West Dunbartonshire Council citizens satisfied with how the Council runs services reduced from 84% in 2020/21 to 80% in 2021/22.

The Citizens' Panel's responses to questions in this section of the survey will be used in the long-term measurement of the Council's reputation. The Council's reputation rests on a vast range of factors from how individuals interact with services on a day-to-day basis, its media reputation, to how local government in Scotland and across the United Kingdom is viewed collectively. The reputation information and responses to the Citizens' Panel questions will help to shape how the Council promotes and markets its services locally and outside Inverclyde.

The promotion of Inverclyde and of the Council's services is important in helping to promote the area as a place to do business, visit and live – key factors in supporting the delivery of the Inverclyde Alliance Partnership Plan (IAPP) 2023/33 and of the Council Plan 2023/28 (specifically *Theme 5: A thriving place* and *Theme 2: Place* respectively).

## 4.0 PROPOSALS

- 4.1 It is proposed that the Committee notes the latest updates relating to the area of Corporate Policy and Performance.

## 5.0 IMPLICATIONS

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

SUBJECT	YES	NO
Financial		X
Legal/Risk	X	
Human Resources		X
Strategic (IAPP 2023/33/Council Plan 2023/28)	X	
Equalities, Fairer Scotland Duty and Children/Young People's Rights and Wellbeing		X
Environmental and Sustainability		X
Data Protection		X

### 5.2 Finance

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

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					

**5.3 Legal/Risk**

Inverclyde Council has a statutory duty to deliver Best Value. Where a Council is perceived not be delivering Best Value there is a risk of remedial action being taken by the Accounts Commission.

**5.4 Human Resources**

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

**5.5 Strategic**

The content of this report is of relevance to the following IAPP 2023/33 Theme:

**Theme 5: A thriving place**

- Development of strong community-based services that respond to local need.

The matters referred to in this report are of relevance to the following Council Plan 2023/28 Theme:

**Theme 3: Performance**

- High quality and innovative services are provided, giving value for money.

**6.0 CONSULTATION**

6.1 None.

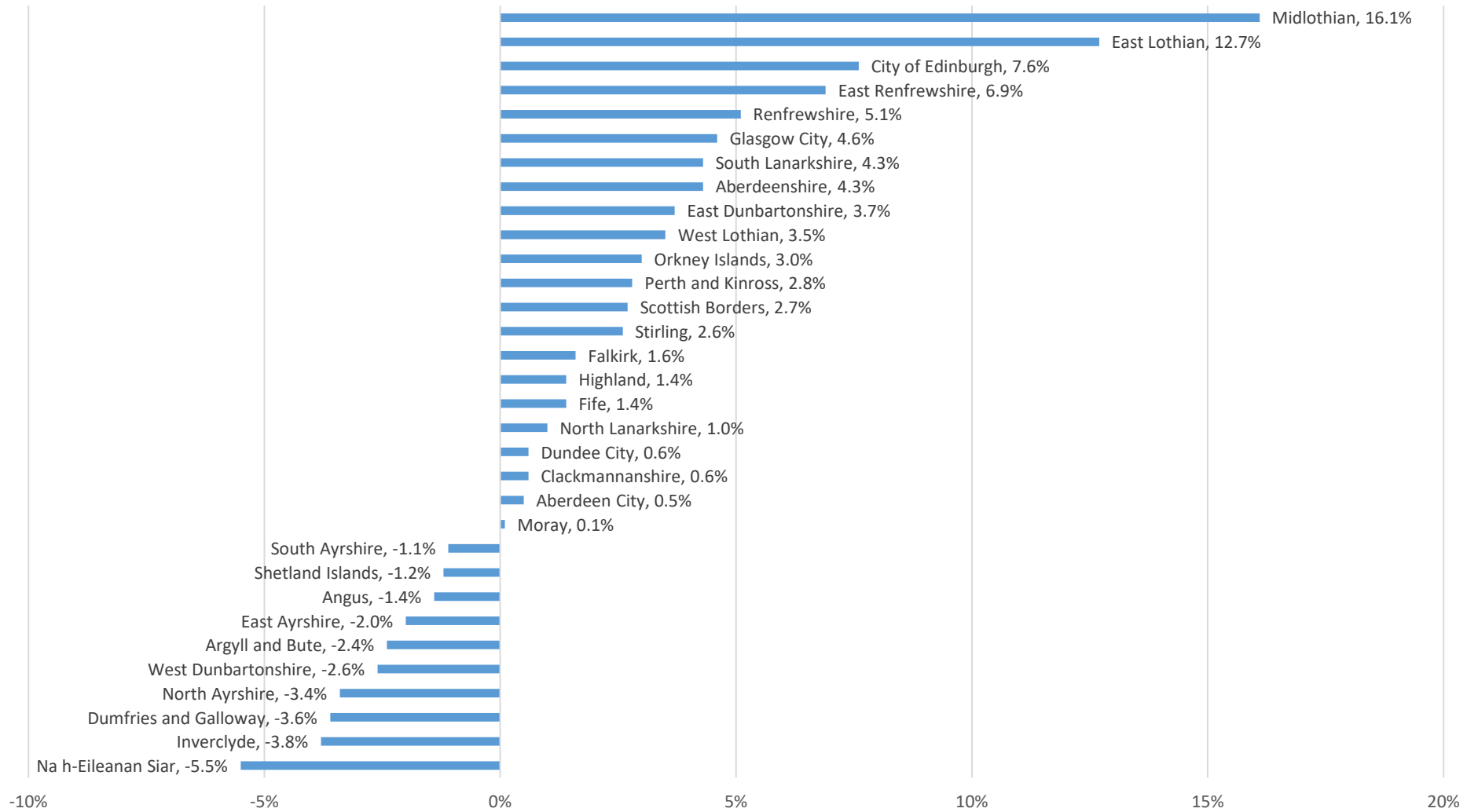
**7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

7.1 None.

	Citizens' Panel Summer 2023 Survey			SOLACE Improving Local Government Benchmarking Framework 2022/23			
	% who were satisfied			% adults satisfied			
	2019	2021/22	2023				Scottish average
Leisure services	77	60	58	2017/20 80	2018/21 78.7	2019/22 77	2019/22 72.3
Libraries	77	73	74	2017/20 75.2	2018/21 76.5	2019/22 74.3	2019/22 74
Local schools	77	67	71	2017/20 78	2018/21 78.7	2019/22 76.7	2019/22 75
Parks and open spaces	81	69	69	2017/20 87.7	2018/21 86	2019/22 87	2019/22 87.3
Refuse collection	76	75	80	2017/20 86.1	2018/21 88.4	2019/22 92.3	2019/22 76
Social care or social work	56	41	42	-	-	-	-
The McLean Museum and Art Gallery <sup>3</sup>	58	65	76	2017/20 54.9	2018/21 59.6	2019/22 59.7	2019/22 73

<sup>3</sup> The LGBF measure is entitled *% adults satisfied with museums and galleries*

## Council area estimated population change 2011-2022





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<b>Report To:</b>	<b>Policy &amp; Resources Committee</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>21 November 2023</b>
<b>Report By:</b>	<b>Chief Executive</b>	<b>Report No:</b>	<b>PR/19/23/KM</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Louise Long</b>	<b>Contact No:</b>	<b>01475 712055</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Policy &amp; Resources Committee Delivery and Improvement Plan 2023/26 Performance 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 provide the Committee with an update on the progress made in the delivery of the Policy and Resources Committee Delivery and Improvement Plan 2023/26.
- 1.3 This is the first progress report on the new Plan to be considered by the Committee. It includes details of the progress that has been made in the delivery of the Action Plan, performance data for KPIs, including new measures that have been added following the KPI workshop for Elected Members, and an update on the areas of highest Risk.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Committee consider the progress made in the delivery of the Policy and Resources Committee Delivery and Improvement Plan 2023/26.

**Louise Long**  
**Chief Executive**

### **3.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT**

3.1 Committee Delivery and Improvement Plans 2023/26 are a key component of the Council's refreshed strategic planning and performance management framework. The Committee Plan enables scrutiny of:

- Strategic activity within the Committee remit; and
- How the Committee is helping to deliver the Council Plan outcomes.

3.2 The Policy and Resources Committee Delivery and Improvement Plan 2023/26 was approved on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2023. A dedicated briefing session for all Elected Members was held in advance of the Committee meeting to provide the Committee with an opportunity to discuss the Plan in more detail. Committee Delivery and Improvement Plan has also been approved by the Environment and Regeneration Committee and the Education and Communities Committee.

3.3 The Committee Plans will be refreshed annually to remove completed actions and capture new strategic activity and risk.

### **PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW**

3.4 This is the first performance report on the new Committee Plan and covers the reporting period April to September 2023. It includes an update on the status of the action plan, KPIs and the management of key Risks. A summary of performance is provided below with the full performance report provided in the Appendix.

#### Delivery and Improvement Action Plan 2023/26

3.5 The following actions / sub-actions are now complete:

- The Council Plan and Committee Delivery and Improvement Plans are in place.
- The refresh of the performance appraisal process is finished and a new initiative 'Positive Conversations' has been implemented.
- The revaluation of Heritage Assets has been completed, in line with the Audit Action.
- Embedded cyclical revaluations and indexations of Property, Plant & Equipment (PPE) in line with audit requirement was completed as part of the 2022/23 accounts and is now embedded in operational practice.
- The Alcohol Licencing Policy Statement was approved and adopted by the Inverclyde Licencing Board on 26<sup>th</sup> October 2023.

3.6 There has been slippage in the following actions/ sub-action:

- Development of Actions Plans and Key Performance Indicators to support the delivery of the Partnership Plan.
- Development of Service Plans for each Head of Service to support the Committee Delivery and Improvement Plans.
- Implementation of Victoria Forms within HR and explore other potential processes within HR for review and automation.

3.7 The following actions / sub-actions have not yet started:

- Further development of the locality planning model for Inverclyde, linked to the Community Council review.
- Carry out a review of the new performance management arrangements by the Corporate Management Team.

- Implementation of new Non-Domestic Rate Empty Relief Policy.
- Elections for Community Councils, which will follow adoption of the updated Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils.
- Refresh of the Council's Digital and ICT Strategies, to be adopted by P&R during 2024.

The Committee is asked to note that with regard to the development of a 2<sup>nd</sup> Homes Council Tax Levy Policy, the result of the Government consultation was received in early October 2023 and it has emerged that legislative amendments will be considered with a view to proposing amendments to the policy. Primary legislation is required, delaying policy development and consequently the original due date within the Committee Plan, will require to be changed to align with the national position.

3.8 All remaining actions within the action plan are on track.

3.9 Following the review of Human Resources and Organisational Development a number of new actions have been added to the Delivery and Improvement Plan. The inclusion of these actions within the Committee Plan was approved by the Policy and Resources Committee at its meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> August 2023.

### 3.10 KPI Performance

A KPI workshop for Elected Members was held on 27<sup>th</sup> June 2023 to support the scrutiny of the new Committee Delivery and Improvement Plans. The feedback from the workshop has been reviewed by the CMT and the following measures have been added to the Committee Plan KPI scorecard:

- Number of properties in receipt of Empty Property Relief.
- Value (£) of Empty Property Relief.

In addition, the following measure has been removed from the Committee Plan:

- Percentage of completed appraisals - this is due to the introduction of 'Positive Conversations' to replace performance appraisal.

### 3.11 Managing Key Risks

The effective management of risk is key in helping the Council successfully deliver its objectives. The Committee Plan contains a Risk Register which records the strategic risks. An assessment of these Risks has recently been carried out and the Risk Register is provided in Appendix 3. The Register now includes a new risk relating to the review of Human Resources & Organisational Development.

## 4.0 PROPOSALS

4.1 The Committee is asked to note the progress that has been achieved in delivering the actions within the Policy and Resources Committee Delivery and Improvement Plan 2023/26.

4.2 The Committee is also asked to note (i) the addition of new KPIs within the Committee Plan following the feedback received at the Elected Member KPI Workshop, held on 27<sup>th</sup> June 2023 (ii) the addition of new strategic actions relating to the review of Human Resources and Organisational Development and (iii) the addition of a new strategic risk developed in response to the review of Human Resources & Organisational Development.

## 5.0 IMPLICATIONS

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

SUBJECT	YES	NO
Financial		X
Legal/Risk	X	
Human Resources		X
Strategic (Partnership Plan/Council Plan)	X	
Equalities, Fairer Scotland Duty & Children/Young People's Rights & Wellbeing		X
Environmental & Sustainability		X
Data Protection		X

## 5.2 Finance

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					

## 5.3 Legal/Risk

There are no legal implications associated with this report, whilst the key Committee risks are highlighted within the full Committee Plan 2023/26.

## 5.4 Human Resources

There are no human resources implications associated with this report.

## 5.5 Strategic

The Policy and Resources Committee Delivery and Improvement Plan 2023/26 directly supports the new Council Plan 2023/28 and is closely aligned to the delivery of the Council Plan outcomes.







## 6.0 CONSULTATION

6.1 None.








## **7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

7.1 None.



## Appendix 1: Committee Delivery and Improvement Plan Action Plan

Strategic Theme: People 2023/24					
Code & Title	Action	Sub-action	Due Date	Current Status	Progress Commentary
<b>CMTE/ PR001</b>  <b>Partnership Plan 2023/33</b>	Implementation of a new Partnership Plan 2023/33 for Inverclyde Alliance, underpinned by an effective governance, delivery and reporting framework.	Development of Actions Plans and Key Performance Indicators to support the delivery of the Partnership Plan.	31-Oct-2023	 Slippage	Work to map existing action plans to the new Partnership Plan outcomes has started. The development of new actions will align to the establishment of Alliance Delivery Groups. At the last Alliance Board meeting in October approval was given to the draft Alliance governance structure and related Terms of Reference will be consulted upon from quarter 3 onwards.
		Further development of the locality planning model for Inverclyde, linked to the Community Council review.	31-Mar-2024	 Not yet started	It is intended to review Inverclyde's locality planning model, including the Locality Plans, following the conclusion of the Community Council review (anticipated that the CC elections will be held in first quarter of 2024). The locality groups, continue to meet and discussions include the refresh of the locality plans.
<b>CMTE/ PR002</b>  <b>Council Plan 2023/28</b>	Implementation of a new Council Plan 2023/28, supported by new Committee Delivery and Improvement Plans.	Inverclyde Council Plan 2023/28 given formal approval by The Inverclyde Council.	20-Apr-2023	 Complete	The Council Plan was approved by full Council on 20th April 2023.
		The Committee Delivery and Improvement Plans are approved by their respective Committee.	31-May-2023	 Complete	The Environment & Regeneration Committee Plan was approved on 4 May 2023, the Education & Communities Committee Plan was approved on 9th May 2023 and the Policy and Resources Committee Plan approved on 23rd May 2023.
		Development of Service Plans for each Head of Service to support the Committee Delivery and Improvement Plans.	31-Oct-2023	 Slippage	Guidance has been developed to ensure a consistent look and feel to the Service Plans. Service Plans are at various stages of development. Resource pressures has resulted in some slippage and new deadline is mid-November.
		Carry out a review of the new performance management arrangements by the Corporate Management Team.	31-Mar-2024	 Not yet started	This is due to be carried out in early 2024.

## Appendix 1: Committee Delivery and Improvement Plan Action Plan

Strategic Theme: Place 2023/24					
Code & Title	Action	Sub-action	Due Date	Current Status	Progress Commentary
<b>CMTE/ PR003</b>  <b>Development of new local policies</b>	Development of new local policies in relation to both non-domestic rates empty property relief scheme and 2nd Homes Council Tax levy.	Development of a local Non-Domestic Rate Empty Relief Policy.	30-Sep-2023	 On track	A public consultation launched in late September, closing on 31/10/23. The results will be analysed and reported to CMT on 08/12/2023. The overall timescale for implementation is 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2024.  Policy to be reviewed during 2023-24 with amendments agreed for implementation in 2024-25.  The results of the Government consultation were received in early October 2023. Legislative amendments will be considered with a view to proposing amendments to the policy. Primary legislation is required, delaying policy development. The original due date will be changed to align with the national position.  Results of the government consultation were received in October 2023. The original Due Date will be changed to align with the introduction of Primary legislation.
		Implementation of new Non-Domestic Rate Empty Relief Policy.	01-Apr-2024	 Not yet started	
		Development of a 2nd Homes Council Tax Levy Policy.	31-Jan-2024	 On track	
		Implementation of the new 2nd Homes Council Tax Levy Policy	01-Apr-2024	 Not yet started	
<b>CMTE/ PR004</b>  <b>Scheme of Establishment for Community Councils</b>	Update and adoption of the Scheme of Establishment for Community Councils, with those Community Councils formed following elections.	Drafting of, and engagement on, new Scheme of Establishment for Community Councils, including with residents, Community Councils and Elected Members.	14-Nov-2023	 On track	The third consultation in three stage process is underway and due to close mid-November. It is anticipated that the Scheme will now go to a special meeting of Inverclyde Council for adoption on 7 December 2023.  As above. It is anticipated that the Scheme will now go to a special meeting of Inverclyde Council for adoption on 7 December 2023.  This process will commence on adoption of new scheme. At present, it is anticipated that the elections will be held in the first quarter of 2024.
		Adoption of new Scheme of Establishment for Community Councils.	14-Nov-2023	 On track	
		Elections held for Community Councils.	14-Dec-2023	 Not yet started	







## Appendix 1: Committee Delivery and Improvement Plan Action Plan

Code & Title	Action	Sub-action	Due Date	Current Status	Progress Commentary
<b>CMTE/ PR005</b>  <b>Alcohol Licensing Policy Statement</b>	The adoption of a new Alcohol Licensing Policy Statement by Inverclyde Licensing Board.	Drafting of, and engagement on, new Alcohol Licensing Policy Statement, including with residents, Inverclyde Licensing Forum, Inverclyde Licensing Board, Police Scotland and NHS/ADP.	30-Nov-2023	 Complete	The public consultation closed on 24th October 2023, and approved and adopted by Inverclyde Licensing Board on 26th October.
		Adoption of new Alcohol Licensing Policy Statement by Inverclyde Licensing Board.	30-Nov-2023	 Complete	As per above update. Adopted on 26 <sup>th</sup> October 2023.









## Appendix 1: Committee Delivery and Improvement Plan Action Plan








### Strategic Theme: Performance 2023/24

Code & Title	Action	Sub-action	Due Date	Current Status	Progress Commentary
<b>CMTE/ PR006 People and OD Strategy</b>	Implementation of the final year of the People and Organisational Development (POD) Strategy 2020/23 and development of a new Strategy for 2024/26.	Implementation of the Coaching and Mentoring Scheme, as set out in the POD 2020/23.	31-Dec-2023	 On track	The scheme has been developed and following approval by CMT in November 2023 will be rolled out.
		Achievement of Equally Safe Accreditation.	31-Jul-2023	 On track	All information was submitted for accreditation in advance of the deadline of 31 July 2023, currently awaiting outcome of application. Due date relates to application submission date.
		Refresh and update of Performance Appraisal processes.	30-Sep-2023	 Complete	Refresh now complete and the next stage is to roll out. The Performance Appraisal policy has been replaced by 'Let's Talk – A Positive Conversation'. Three information training sessions ran throughout October.
		In consultation with key stakeholders, identify and develop new initiatives for the POD 2024/26	31-Mar-2024	 On track	Work on this has started, there is a draft POD report will be distributed for consultation shortly.
<b>CMTE/ PR007 Multi-year budget</b>	Development of a multi-year budget for Inverclyde Council, which receives Committee approval.	Approval of the Revenue Budget for the period 2024/26.	31-Mar-2024	 On track	Members Budget Working Group (MBWG) and Joint Budget Group meetings are ongoing. Budget Strategy approved. First savings/adjustments agreed and detailed savings sheets being reviewed by CMT. Scottish Government draft budget not due until week before Christmas therefore delaying Council decision on Budget package
		Approval of the Capital Budget for the period 2024/27.	31-Mar-2024	 On track	Report considered by MBWG outlining pressures, August 2023. Medium Term programme covering 2024/29 reported to MBWG and funding requires to be addressed as part of the Budget.








## Appendix 1: Committee Delivery and Improvement Plan Action Plan

Code & Title	Action	Sub-action	Due Date	Current Status	Progress Commentary
<b>CMTE/ PR008</b>  <b>Asset Accounting and Reporting</b>	Strengthen the approach to asset accounting and reporting.	Embedded cyclical revaluations and indexations in line with audit requirements.	30-Sep-2023	 Complete	Completed as part of the 2022/23 accounts and is now an operational task.
		Revaluation of Heritage assets in line with Audit Action.	30-Jun-2023	 Complete	1st stage 100% complete. Valuations completed and reported to Audit Committee. Phase 2 due 2 June 2024
		Compliance with IFRS 16.	30-Jun-2024	 On track	This is ongoing. Implementation is due April 2024 with preparatory works underway.
<b>CMTE/ PR009</b>  <b>Modern- isation of the Council</b>	Delivery of projects associated with modernisation of the Council.	Have 4 Digital Modernisation projects approved by the DMPB/P&R and implemented.	31-Mar-2024	 On track	<p>The Policy and Resources Committee approved new projects at its meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> August 2023. Four projects have been agreed and procurement action has begun:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Freshdesk Service Desk Renewal</li> <li>• Verint CMS Upgrade</li> <li>• WorkPro Complaints Handling System</li> <li>• Schools Catering Contract Refresh</li> </ul>
		Continue delivery of the Council's Digital Strategy to deliver better services for customers and citizens, including through Channel Shift.	31-Mar-2024	 On track	The Modernisation Programme Board was established in May 2023. A development session with the Improvement Service was held on 29 August 2023 with front-line managers to identify areas for digital improvement. Several project proposals were submitted following the session that are now with the DMPB for further consideration and development of business cases where appropriate.
		Continue delivery of the Council's ICT Strategy to support the changing face of the Council, including through progression of migration towards a cloud-based service including a hybrid telephony solution.	31-Mar-2024	 On track	<p>The ICT Strategy identified 4 key action areas: 1. Asset Management Programme &amp; Cloud Migration Strategy; 2. Service Provision; 3. Information Security 4. Procurement Strategy</p> <p>Good progress is being made across all 4 Action Areas, with regular reports progress to this Committee.</p>






## Appendix 1: Committee Delivery and Improvement Plan Action Plan

Code & Title	Action	Sub-action	Due Date	Current Status	Progress Commentary
		Refresh the Council's Digital and ICT Strategies, to be adopted by P&R during 2024.	31-Oct-2024	 Not yet started	This action has not yet started, but will (in part) be informed by the above-mentioned Improvement Service workshop.
<b>CMTE/ PR010 (new action)</b>  <b>Review of HR &amp;OD systems and processes</b>	Conduct a review of the Human Resources, Organisational Development and Payroll IT systems and transactional processes.	Monitor implementation of Victoria Forms and explore other potential processes for review and automation.	31-Dec-2023	 Slippage	Development of forms further progressed with testing by services. Change of circumstances form to be rolled out in October 2023.
		Maximise functionality of current CHRIS 21 system and consider further options to support service delivery.	30-Jun-2024	 On track	Internal and external discussions have taken place, alongside research on other local authorities use of CHRIS21. A Business Case will be developed for the consideration of the Digital Modernisation Board. Discussions are ongoing with COSLA regarding potential use of Talentlink to support contract service delivery.
		Address contract backlog and implement improved processes and monitoring.	31_Dec-2023	 On track	The contract backlog has been addressed. A process for reducing the backlog was developed and has been revised, in response to learning. An improved monitoring process was implemented in July 2023 with progress monitored twice weekly. A session to review learning is due to take place in October 2023.
<b>CMTE/ PR011 (new action)</b>  <b>Recruitment Processes</b>	Improve the recruitment and appointment processes.	Streamline the approach to obtaining references for new employees.	31-Jan-2024	 On track	A new process has been developed, including move to verbal references in first instance. New approach will be monitored and evaluated.
		Review the approval process.	30-Jun-2024	 On track	This process has been mapped as part of the external review. The development of a process plan is underway.
		Develop onboarding protocols/process.	31-Mar-2024	 On track	A change of approach for following up references has been implemented. Improved monitoring for contract issue implementation have been put in place. Face to face corporate inductions now resumed. The corporate e-learning induction content has also been reviewed.

## Appendix 1: Committee Delivery and Improvement Plan Action Plan

Code & Title	Action	Sub-action	Due Date	Current Status	Progress Commentary
<b>CMTE/ PR012 (new action)</b>  <b>Policy Review Framework</b>	Develop a framework for policy review, update of policies as required and improvement in employee communications on policies.	Develop a policy review schedule.	31-Dec-2023	 On track	List of existing policies and their review timescales have been compiled. Prioritisation is underway.
		Engage with Services and develop a programme to promote key policies.	31-Mar-2024	 On track	Promotion of 'Positive Conversations' and the Flexible Working Policy is underway. Further promotion of key policies will take place in coming months.
<b>CMTE/ PR013 (new action)</b>  <b>Learning and Development</b>	Review of the provision of learning and development activity.	Further invest in corporate knowledge and skills development.	30-Jun-2024	 On track	Employee engagement on undertaking relevant qualifications has been carried out and arrangements with providers are being progressed.
		Review current learning and development arrangements and update corporate e-learning induction.	30-Jun-2024	 On track	Corporate e-learning induction content has been reviewed and updated. First face to face corporate induction session has been delivered with positive feedback, with second session scheduled for November. A review of the face-to-face induction is due to be carried out by 31 March 2024.
<b>CMTE/ PR014 (new action)</b>  <b>HR&amp;OD Capacity and Resilience</b>	Review the capacity and resilience within the HR&OD Service.	Review the management capacity within the HR+OD Team	30-Nov-23	 On track	Analysis of remits and capacity undertaken. Approval received from September P&R Committee to make changes to Service Manager posts, including the establishment of a second permanent Service Manager within HR+OD. Role profiles created and undergoing job evaluation.
		Establishment of key posts / development roles to support service delivery	31-Dec-2024	 On track	Overview of employee structure devised, with discussion on remits to best align to service delivery requirements. Temporary staffing arrangements within the HR+OD Team reviewed. Proposals presented to CMT. Budget pressure agreed to increase employee resource, and to be considered by Policy and Resources Committee in November.
		Review roles, remits and designations within HR+OD Service	30-Jun-2024	 On track	Following the appointment of new postholders, including Service Manager and Team Leader roles, remits and designations will be further developed to minimise single person dependencies, support succession planning and ensure that there is roles are up to date. HR Support Team terminology incorporated in establishment of new roles.

## Appendix 1: Committee Delivery and Improvement Plan Action Plan

Action Status	
	Cancelled / not delivered
	Not started
	Slippage
	On track
	Complete

## Appendix 2: Policy and Resources Committee Plan KPI Scorecard

Following a refresh in September 2023, Local Government Benchmarking data 2022/23 has been published for the following indicator. A target was not set for 2022/23, therefore a performance status is not available however performance trends are shown:

### Local Government Benchmarking Framework

Title	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Long Trend	Short Trend	Latest Note
	Value	Value	Value	Target			
The gender pay gap	7.4%	6.6%	4.4%	6%			National ranking 2022/23 – 23 <sup>rd</sup> Family Group: 2% Scotland: 2.5%

The measures below have been added to the KPI scorecard following the Elected Member KPI workshop and the latest data provided.

Title	Q3 2022/23	Q4 2022/23	Q1 2023/24	Q2 2023/24	2023/24	Latest Note
New Indicators	Value	Value	Value	Value	Target	
<b>NEW:</b> Number of properties in receipt of Empty Property Relief	-	-	-	129		2022/23 figure was 187. This is a 'data only' PI as performance is influenced by wider economic conditions outwith the control of the Council.
<b>NEW:</b> Value (£) of Empty Property Relief	-	-	-	£ 263,367		2023/23 figure was £303,665. This is a 'data only' PI as performance is influenced by wider economic conditions outwith the control of the Council.

Quarterly service performance data is provided for the following indicators.

Title	Q3 2022/23	Q4 2022/23	Q1 2023/24	Q2 2023/24	Q2 2023/24				Latest Note
	Value	Value	Value	Value	Target	Status	Long Trend	Short Trend	
Council tax in year collection level	83.3%	95.9%	27.6%	53.3%	53.9%				The end of year target is 95%. Performance at the end of quarter 2 in the previous year was 58.8%.
Invoices paid within 30 days (%)	95.88%	95.82%	97.79%	96.4%	95.5%				
Total days lost due to sickness absence	-	-	2.85d	2.18d	9 days		-		Days lost per FTE. Quarterly performance long trend will appear following the addition of more data.

## Appendix 2: Policy and Resources Committee Plan KPI Scorecard

Title	Q3 2022/23	Q4 2022/23	Q1 2023/24	Q2 2023/24	Q2 2023/24				Latest Note
	Value	Value	Value	Value	Target	Status	Long Trend	Short Trend	
Employee Turnover	-	-	3.04%	5.55%	10%		-		Quarterly performance long trend will appear following the addition of more data. Methodology has changed recently changed to capture all leavers, including multi-posts. Q1 and Q2 data has been calculated in same way.
Corporate Training Courses Attended	-	-	149	196	125		-		Q2 data is still being finalised.
SOCITM Accessibility Score (website overall accessibility score)	92	94	94	95	95				Website accessibility score falls into the 'Excellent' category.
No. of complaints received (per 1,000 population)	-	-	0.66	1.186	1		-		The overall target for the year is no more than 4 per 100,000 population. Performance for quarter 2 is below
The number of Data Breaches notified to the Information Commissioners Office	-	-	0	0	0.5		-		Quarterly performance long trend will appear following the addition of more data.
RIDDOR Incidents (number of incidents per 100,000 employees)	-	5	8	3	60		-		Quarterly performance long trend will appear following the addition of more data.
% of FOIs and EIRs responded to on time	-	91.52%	92.27%	95.45%	92%		-		There were 17 late responses in the quarter.
Digital transactions via the CSC Portal	-	-	75%	81%	75%				Digital transactions have been increasing since 2018, when annual performance was 6.5%.

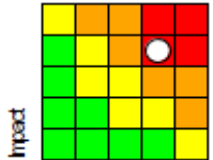
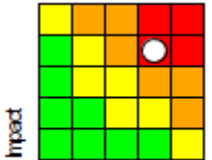

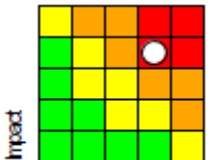
PI Status	
	Alert
	Warning
	OK
	Unknown
	Data Only

Long Term Trends	
	Improving
	No Change
	Getting Worse

Short Term Trends	
	Improving
	No Change
	Getting Worse

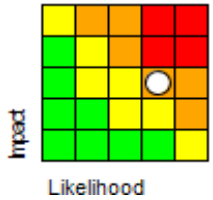
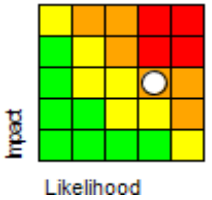
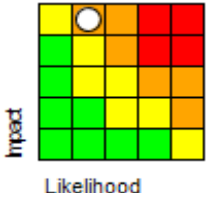
## Appendix 3: Policy and Resources Committee Plan Risk Register

### Policy and Resources Risk Assessment 01/10/23

Title	Description	Risk assessment 01/04/23	New Risk Assessment 01/10/23	Current Controls	Additional Controls
<b>Financial Risk: Budget Cuts</b>	<p>There is a financial risk that capacity to provide services to the community and to other Council services in the face of current and ongoing cuts to budgets is reduced.</p> <p>Further reductions in staff in service delivery areas will result in an impact to length of time for work completion to increase. There is an increased likelihood that deadlines will be missed with resultant reputational damage and potential regulatory sanctions.</p>	 <p>Likelihood</p> <p>16</p>	 <p>Likelihood</p> <p>16</p>	<p><b>Current Controls</b></p> <p>Identifying extra income taking out unnecessary work and ensuring operational continuity;</p> <p>Increased cross training and reliance on technology;</p> <p>Review working process and look at what we need to do against what is expected;</p> <p>Regular workload/ performance monitoring;</p> <p>Implement Workforce Development Planning;</p> <p>Prioritisation of modernisation projects; and Use of Graduate Training and employment schemes.</p>	<p><b>Additional controls</b></p> <p>Budget Strategy for 2 year budget agreed at Policy &amp; Resources Committee.</p> <p>Additional funding from pension actuarial providing support to the budget strategy.</p> <p>MBWG meeting regularly and savings have been developed. Workstreams have been agreed.</p> <p>Early warning system operated within the services to flag to relevant senior officers where deadlines may be missed and focus is required;</p> <p>Cross Directorate working to improve capacity;</p> <p>Prioritisation of the strategic priorities as outlined in the Committee Plan; and</p> <p>Flag to CMT if unable to meet timescales or requests due to capacity.</p>
<b>People Risk: Recruitment and Retention</b>	<p>Recruitment and retention of suitably qualified and experienced staff.</p>	 <p>Likelihood</p> <p>16</p>	 <p>Likelihood</p> <p>16</p>	<p><b>Current Controls</b></p> <p>Developing a programme of Grow our Own whilst making Inverclyde an attractive place to work.</p> <p>Use of graduate training schemes.</p> <p>Use of modern apprenticeship training schemes.</p>	<p><b>Additional controls</b></p> <p>Refreshed recruitment process;</p> <p>High quality support to staff through HR policies and line management support outlined in the People and Organisational Development Strategy;</p> <p>Reductions in the use of temporary posts; and</p> <p>Incentives to support commitment to employee development.</p>



### Appendix 3: Policy and Resources Committee Plan Risk Register

Title	Description	Risk assessment 01/04/23	New Risk Assessment 01/10/23	Current Controls	Additional Controls
Partnership Risk	The risk that we do not get the assurance from our partners that is required or that a major partner "fails" (Partnership/Access)	 <p style="text-align: center;">Likelihood</p> <p style="text-align: center;">12</p>	 <p style="text-align: center;">Likelihood</p> <p style="text-align: center;">12</p>	<p><b>Current controls</b></p> <p>Regular Financial governance reviews and report on its effectiveness.</p> <p>Major partnership board presence.</p> <p>Regular meetings formal and informal; Papers; Briefings.</p> <p>Annual reports to relevant Strategic Committee Annual Review reported to Committee.</p> <p>Financial checks reviewed as part of review of Governance review.</p>	<p><b>Additional controls</b></p> <p>Highlight concerns at an early stage to CMT and relevant Directors.</p> <p>Support Directors at Governance meeting.</p>
Operational / Legal Risk  (new risk)	<p>There are risks in not being able to deliver against recommendations of the HR &amp; OD review and managing stakeholder expectations arising from it. Delivery will require research and options appraisals, identification and allocation of resource plus employee buy-in to deliver. The CMT, Elected Members and team have areas that they would like to be addressed as a priority. Some of these can be quickly addressed but others require time and resource.</p> <p>Allocating dedicated employee time to develop updated policies/implement new systems is challenging due to current demands of service delivery.</p> <p>There is a risk that we do not meet our legal requirements e.g. in terms of employment legislation, health and safety, equalities. This could arise from a lack of capacity within the</p>	N/A	 <p style="text-align: center;">Likelihood</p> <p style="text-align: center;">10</p>	<p><b>Current Controls</b></p> <p>HR&amp; OD Action Plan update reports to CMT. Action plan developed and managed via Pentana; performance measures being developed.</p> <p>Progress updates via Committee Plan for Committee reporting. Ongoing updates to HR+OD team as recommendations are progressed.</p> <p>Involvement of employees in developing systems upgrade approaches. Agreement of increase in Service staffing and potential for Digital Modernisation Fund resource.</p> <p>Existing suite of policies and procedures which cover our legal requirements. A Policy Register has been created to better manage the communication of these and their update schedule.</p>	<p><b>Additional controls</b></p> <p>External review has been undertaken of HR highlighting lack of capacity and the HR systems need to be updated.</p>

### Appendix 3: Policy and Resources Committee Plan Risk Register

Title	Description	Risk assessment 01/04/23	New Risk Assessment 01/10/23	Current Controls	Additional Controls
	<p>service, a single point of dependency or policies and procedures not being kept up to date.</p>			<p>Horizon scanning takes place through national networks and the work of the Corporate Policy Team to anticipate future require changes. Reviews of remits and systems access are assisting in reducing single points of dependency.</p> <p>Corporate H&amp;S Plan has been developed. Moving and handling training carried out. The Violence to Staff Policy has been reviewed. Service plans for Education have Manual Handling as a priority item. Two H&amp;S Advisors trained as Moving and Handling trainer assessors. Two H&amp;S advisor trained as Noise assessors. Health surveillance programme in place. Review of fire procedure undertaken and briefings rolled out.</p>	

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<b>Report To:</b>	<b>Policy &amp; Resources Committee</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>21 November 2023</b>
<b>Report By:</b>	<b>Chief Financial Officer</b>	<b>Report No:</b>	<b>FIN/71/23/AP/KJ</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Alan Puckrin</b>	<b>Contact No:</b>	<b>01475 712223</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Treasury Management – Mid-Year Report 2023/24</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 advise the Committee of the operation of the treasury function and its activities for the first six months of 2023/24 as required under the terms of Treasury Management Practice 6 (“TMP6”) on “Reporting Requirements and Management Information Arrangements”.
  - To request that the Committee remits the report to the Full Council for their approval.
- 1.3 As at 30 September 2023 the Council had gross external debt (including PPP) of £227,214,873 and investments (cash balances managed in house) of £27,734,104. This compares to gross external debt (including PPP) of £239,408,384 and investments of £26,127,010 at 31 March 2023.
- 1.3 Since August 2023, the Council has repaid 3 long-term Market Loans totalling £29,900,000 and funded those repayments from new PWLB borrowing of £20,000,000 and from Deposit Account balances. The loan repayments were made following contractual requests from a lender for the interest rate to be increased on 2 loans (or the Council could instead repay the loans) and an offer from another lender for the Council to repay the loan that the Council had from them. No premiums were paid on repaying these 3 loans.
- 1.4 The Council operated within the required treasury limits and Prudential Indicators for the year set out in the Council’s Treasury Policy Statement, annual Treasury Strategy Statement, and the Treasury Management Practices.

## 2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Committee notes the contents of the Mid-Year Report on Treasury Management for 2023/24 and the ongoing work to seek to ensure the delivery of financial benefits for the Council during the current uncertainty and beyond.
- 2.2 It is recommended that the Committee notes the early repayment of three Market Loans totalling £29.9m and that Officers believe this will generate savings for the Council in the medium to long term.
- 2.3 It is requested that the Committee remits the report to the Full Council for approval.

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

### 3.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

- 3.1 The Council is required by the revised CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management and the CIPFA Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities to produce a mid-year treasury management review of activities and prudential and treasury indicators for 2023/24.
- 3.2 Treasury Management in this context is defined as: “The management of the local authority’s investments and cash flows, its banking, money market and capital market transactions; the effective control of the risks associated with those activities; and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks.”
- 3.3 The treasury management issues arising since the start of 2023/24 were:
- a. The Council’s debt (including PPP) has reduced during the period by £12,193,511 due largely to the early repayment of a £10,000,000 Market Loan plus regular monthly repayments on the PPP contract.
  - b. The Council’s investments have increased by £1,607,094 due to net cash flows into the Council.
  - c. As at 31 March 2023 the Council had under borrowed against its capital financing requirement by £62,030,000. The latest projection is for the under borrowing to increase to £65,649,000 as at 31 March 2024. Under borrowing means that the Council is using funds it currently has to cash flow capital expenditure rather than bringing in funds from borrowing. The projected level of under borrowing is considered manageable but the position is kept under review in light of Council capital financing and other funding requirements.
  - d. There remains considerable financial market volatility and economic uncertainty in the UK and around the world largely caused by the impact of inflation, increased interest rates, commodity prices and supplies, and the conflict in Ukraine.
  - e. The forecast in February 2023 was for the Bank Rate to rise to 4.50% by June 2023 and then start falling to reach 4.00% by the end of March 2024, 2.75% by the end of March 2025 and 2.50% by the end of March 2026. The forecast in September 2023 is for rates to remain at 5.25% until September 2024 then fall to 4.00% by the end of March 2025 and to 2.75% by the end of March 2026.
  - f. PWLB rates for new borrowing had been expected to fall slightly through to March 2024 but rates have instead increased by between 0.90% and 1.03%. The volatility during the 6-month period resulted in spreads between the high and low rates for some loan periods of up to 1.87% (e.g. borrowing rates for 3 years of 4.35% in April were 6.22% in July and at 5.43% in late September).
  - g. The Council’s treasury advisers expect PWLB rates to fall with most rates below 4.50% by the fourth quarter of 2024 but the extent and speed of any changes to rates will depend on the economic and other factors affecting the UK and global markets.
  - h. The Market Loans that the Council has includes some LOBO loans. The term “LOBO” relates to “Lender Option Borrower Option” loans in which the interest rate is fixed but the lender can seek to increase the interest rate on the loan at fixed dates during the loan period. Where this happens, the borrower (the Council) can either accept the new interest rate or, if not, repay the loan without any premium costs. In August 2023, Commerzbank proposed to increase the interest rate on a £10,000,000 LOBO loan from 4.88% to 6.35%. The Council did not accept the new rate and has instead repaid the loan from Deposit Account balances.
  - i. In October 2023, Commerzbank proposed an increase on their other LOBO loan for £4,900,000 from 4.99% to 5.89% and Bayerische Landesbank, with whom the Council had a £15,000,000 LOBO loan at 4.99%, offered the Council the opportunity to repay the loan. The Council did not accept the new Commerzbank loan rate and accepted Bayerische’s offer and so has repaid both loans without paying any premiums. The loan repayments have been funded from £20,000,000 of new PWLB borrowing (£12,500,000 for 1 year and £7,500,000 for 1½ years, both loans at 5.65%). The PWLB borrowing has been done for short periods to allow the Council to repay the LOBO loans now and refinance at a time when PWLB borrowing rates are forecast to have fallen well below current levels.
  - j. The Council did not undertake any other debt restructuring during the first six months of 2023/24 and remained within its Prudential Indicator and Treasury Management limits.

- k. The Bank Rate increased during the period from 4.25% to 5.25% and many interest rates available for new investments are above the current Bank Rate.
- l. The Council's investments earned a rate of return of 4.46% during the period. This was 0.02% higher than the SONIA benchmark.
- m. All investments were in accordance with the Council's investment policy and no institutions with which investments were made had any difficulty in repaying those investments and interest in full during the period.
- n. The Council's investments were with counterparties that have high creditworthiness (the Bank of Scotland, Santander UK, and NatWest Bank PLC and in accordance with the Council's investment strategy).

3.4 The Council's debt position was as follows:

	At 31 March 2023	At 30 September 2023
	£	£
Total Excluding PPP	184,132,384	174,146,873
PPP Debt	55,276,000	53,068,000
Total Including PPP	239,408,384	227,214,873

Further detail is given in the following table:

	At 31 March 2023		At 30 September 2023		Movement In Period
	Principal	Rate	Principal	Rate	Principal
	£000		£000		£000
Fixed Rate Funding:					
- PWLB	79,414		79,414		0
- Market *	40,000		56,000		16,000
- Temporary	5,000		5,000		0
	124,414	3.67%	140,414	3.84%	16,000
Variable Rate Funding:					
- PWLB	0		0		0
- Market *	59,400		33,400		(26,000)
- Temporary #	318		333		15
	59,718	4.90%	33,733	4.96%	(25,985)
Total Debt (Excl PPP)	184,132	4.07%	174,147	4.06%	(9,985)
PPP Debt	55,276		53,068		(2,208)
Total Debt (Incl PPP)	239,408		227,215		(12,193)

\* - Market Loans are shown as variable when they have less than 1 year to go until their next call date. The total value of Market Loans has not changed during the period, just the split between fixed and variable.

# - Temporary Loans are funds held by the Council on behalf of the Common Good and Trust Funds that are treated as borrowing for Treasury Management purposes.

3.5 The Council's investment position was as follows:

	At 31 March 2023		At 30 September 2023		Movement In Period
	Principal	Return	Principal	Return	Principal
	£		£000		£000
Investments:					
- Fixed Term Deposits	22,000,000	3.21%	10,000,000	5.39%	(12,000,000)
- Notice Accounts	50,399	3.74%	51,486	4.74%	1,087
- Deposit Accounts	4,076,611	4.15%	17,682,618	5.15%	13,606,007
Totals	26,127,010	3.36%	27,734,104	5.24%	1,607,094

Maximum level of investments in period: £44,239,097 on 15 August 2023

Minimum level of investments in period: £18,058,871 on 27 April 2023

Daily average for the period: £30,491,948

An analysis of the above investments is shown in Appendix 1.

In addition to the above cash balances managed in-house, the Council has other transactions/balances required to be treated as investments under Investment Regulation 31. Appendix 2 includes these transactions/balances along with estimates for 2023/24.

3.6 2023/24 Latest Projection Compared to Estimates in 2023/24 Strategy

The latest 2023/24 projection compared to the estimates in the 2023/24 strategy:

	2023/24 Estimate	2023/24 Latest Projection
<u>Borrowing Requirement</u>	£000	£000
New borrowing	0	0
Alternative financing requirements	0	0
Replacement borrowing	5,000	30,000
TOTAL	5,000	30,000
<u>Prudential/Treasury Management Indicators</u>		
Capital financing requirement (As at 31 March 2023)	£000 286,890	£000 292,907
Gross external debt including PPP (As at 31 March 2023)	224,860	227,258
(Under)/over borrowing against CFR	(62,030)	(65,649)
Gross Capital Expenditure (Excl. Levelling Up)	£000 21,569	£000 19,457
Ratio of financing costs (including PPP) to net revenue stream	9.54%	9.81%
Ratio of net debt (debt and PPP less investments) to net revenue stream	88.5%	92.5%

### 3.7 2023/24 Mid-Year Position Compared to Limits in 2023/24 Strategy

The 2023/24 mid-year position compared to limits in the 2023/24 strategy:

#### Prudential/Treasury Management Indicators

Authorised limit for external debt

- Borrowing
- Other long-term liabilities

Operational boundary for external debt

- Borrowing
- Other long-term liabilities

Upper limit on sums invested for periods longer than 365 days (Actual is maximum in period)

Upper limits on Fixed/Variable borrowing maturing in each period (LOBOs included based on call dates and not maturity dates) at end of period

- Under 12 months
- 12 months and within 24 months
- 24 months and within 5 years
- 5 years and within 10 years
- 10 years and within 30 years
- 30 years and within 50 years
- 50 years and within 70 years

#### Council Policy Limits

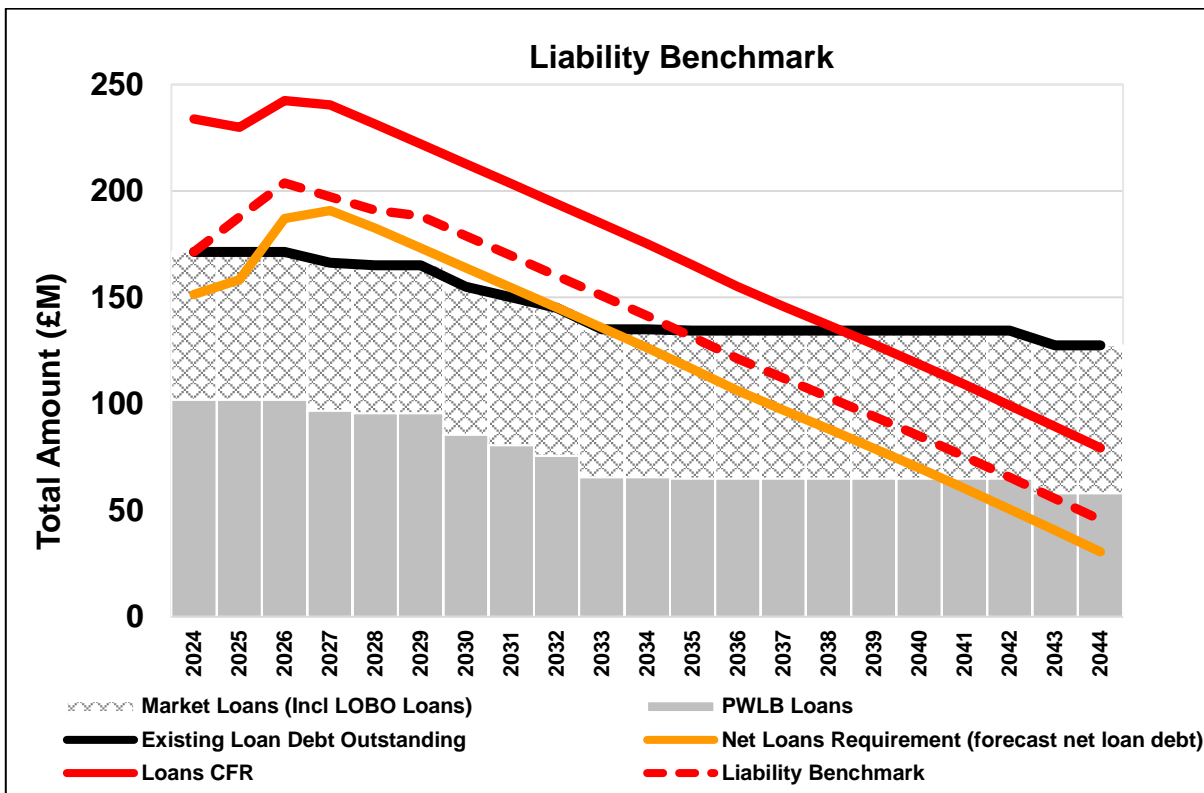
Maximum Percentage of Debt Repayable in Year

Maximum Proportion of Debt at Variable Rates

Maximum Percentage of Debt Restructured in Year

2023/24 Limits		2023/24 Mid-Year Actual Position	
£000		£000	
222,000		174,147	
56,000		53,068	
278,000		227,215	
£000		£000	
207,000		174,147	
56,000		53,068	
263,000		227,215	
£000		£000	
10,000		0	
Fixed	Var.	Fixed	Var.
45%	35%	7.2%	19.4%
45%	35%	0.0%	-
45%	35%	9.9%	-
45%	35%	14.3%	-
45%	35%	4.4%	-
45%	35%	21.8%	-
45%	35%	23.0%	-
25%		23.0%	
45%		19.4%	
30%		5.4%	

3.8 The Liability Benchmark is a requirement in the Treasury Management Code. It is calculated from the Council's treasury management debt less investments plus an amount for cash flow/liquidity requirements and is shown in the graph below (the dashed line) with the existing loan debt (PWLB and Market Loans), the Loans CFR (Capital Financing Requirement excluding PPP), and the forecast net loan debt position.



The following points should be noted:

- The graph shows the current Liability Benchmark for 2023/24 plus 20 years (longer than the minimum recommended by CIPFA) but the Council's treasury management debt runs beyond that period.
- The graph includes the impact of the current position plus the approved capital programme (including prudential borrowing) which covers the years up to 2026/27. It does not include any projected additional borrowing or requirement beyond that (albeit that borrowing may well be required depending on plans at the time).
- Where loans outstanding are currently projected to be less than the Liability Benchmark above, this indicates a borrowing requirement (where the Council is underborrowed and exposed to interest rate, liquidity and refinancing risks). Where loans outstanding are projected to be greater than the Liability Benchmark, this indicates that the Council would be overborrowed and exposed to credit and reinvestment risks and a possible cost of carry due to different debt and investment interest rates.

3.9 The forecasts from the Treasury Advisors for the Bank Rate as at 31 March each year are:

	Forecast Per 2023/24 Strategy (February 2023)	Latest Forecast (September 2023)
2023/24	4.00%	5.25%
2024/25	2.75%	4.00%
2025/26	2.50%	2.75%

3.10 The Council's investment policy for the year is governed by Scottish Government Investment Regulations and was included in the annual investment strategy approved by the Council. This policy sets out the approach for choosing investment categories and counterparties, and is based on credit ratings provided by the three main credit rating agencies supplemented by additional market data such as rating outlooks, credit default swaps, bank share prices etc.

3.11 All investments were in accordance with the policy and no institutions with which investments were made had any difficulty in repaying investments and interest in full during the period.

The result of the investment strategy undertaken by the Council in the first six months of 2023/24 is as follows:



Average Investment	Rate of Return (gross of fees)	Benchmark Return (3-month SONIA compounded)
£30,491,948	4.46%	4.44%

The Council's return was higher than the benchmark by 0.02%.

#### 4.0 PROPOSALS

4.1 It is proposed that the Committee consider the contents of Section 3 of the report, seek any assurances from Officers, and thereafter remit the Mid-Year Report to the Council for approval.

#### 5.0 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendations are agreed:

SUBJECT	YES	NO
Financial		X
Legal/Risk		X
Human Resources		X
Strategic (Partnership Plan/Council Plan)		X
Equalities, Fairer Scotland Duty & Children/Young People's Rights & Wellbeing		X
Environmental & Sustainability		X
Data Protection		X

#### 5.2 Finance

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					

The Council utilises Treasury Management as part of the overall Financial Strategy. Officers will continue to investigate borrowing and investment opportunities to bring financial benefits to the Council, all within the Treasury Management Policy.

#### 5.3 Legal/Risk

None. Any borrowing or lending is done under the Council's legal powers.

#### 5.4 Human Resources

None.

## 5.5 **Strategic**

None.

## 6.0 **CONSULTATION**

6.1 This report includes the latest advice from the Council's treasury consultants (Link Treasury Services Limited).

## 7.0 **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

7.1 CIPFA - Treasury Management in the Public Services – Code of Practice and Cross-Sectoral Guidance Notes – 2021 Edition  
Inverclyde Council – Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy 2023/24-2026/27.

**CASH BALANCES MANAGED IN-HOUSE  
ACTUAL AS AT 31 MARCH 2023 AND 30 SEPTEMBER 2023**

The following is an analysis of cash balances managed in-house as at 31 March 2023 and at 30 September 2023:

	<b>As At 31 March 2023</b>	<b>As At 30 September 2023</b>
	£	£
<u>Fixed Term Deposits</u>		
Bank of Scotland	12,000,000	0
NatWest Bank PLC	10,000,000	10,000,000
	22,000,000	10,000,000
Average Interest Rate	3.21%	5.39%
<u>Notice Accounts</u>		
Bank of Scotland	0	0
Santander UK	50,399	51,486
	50,399	51,486
Average Interest Rate	3.74%	4.74%
<u>Deposit Accounts</u>		
Bank of Scotland	4,076,100	17,682,100
Santander UK	511	518
	4,076,611	17,682,618
Average Interest Rate	4.15%	5.15%
TOTAL	26,127,010	27,734,104
Average Interest Rate	3.36%	5.24%

Since 30 September 2023, the Council has repaid £19.9m of LOBO debt (£4.9m Commerzbank at 4.99% and £15m Bayerische Landesbank at 4.99%), all with no premium for the early repayment. The Council has borrowed from the PWLB to fund the repayments, £12.5m for 1 year and £7.5m for 1½ years, both loans at 5.65% and to be refinanced later at borrowing rates forecast to be below 5%.

**FORECAST OF INVESTMENT BALANCES  
ESTIMATE FOR 2023/24 AND ACTUAL AT 30 SEPTEMBER 2023**

Investment Regulation 31 requires the Council to provide forecasts for the level of investments. The estimate for 2023/24 and the actual as at 30 September 2023 are:

	<b>2023/24</b>	<b>2023/24</b>
	<b>Estimate For</b>	<b>Actual For</b>
	<b>Year</b>	<b>1 April 2023 To</b>
		<b>30 September</b>
		<b>2023</b>
	£000	£000
Cash balances managed in-house		
- At Start of Year	30,000	26,127
- At End of Year/Period	15,355	15,355
- Change in Year/Period	(14,645)	(10,772)
- Average daily cash balances	22,678	30,492
Holdings of shares, bonds, units (includes local authority owned company)		
- At Start of Year	2	2
- Purchases	0	0
- Sales	0	0
- At End of Year/Period	2	2
Loans to local authority company or other entity to deliver services		
- At Start of Year	297	252
- Advances	0	0
- Repayments	47	24
- At End of Year/Period	250	228
Loans made to third parties		
- At Start of Year	100	109
- Advances	0	0
- Repayments	23	10
- At End of Year/Period	77	99
Total of all investments		
- At Start of Year	30,399	26,490
- At End of Year/Period	15,684	15,684
- Change in Year/Period	(14,715)	(10,806)

The loans made to third parties includes a £50,000 loan to Shared Interest Society Limited ("Shared Interest") as approved by the Policy & Resources Committee in August 2017. Shared Interest is a company that uses funds invested by individuals and organisations to allow it to provide loans to fair trade businesses around the world.

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<b>Report To:</b>	<b>Policy &amp; Resources Committee</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>21 November 2022</b>
<b>Report By:</b>	<b>Interim Head of Organisational Development, Policy &amp; Communications</b>	<b>Report No:</b>	<b>PR/23/23/KM</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Morna Rae</b>	<b>Contact No:</b>	<b>01475 2146</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Inverclyde Council Plan 2023/28 – Six Monthly Progress 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 present the Committee with the first six monthly progress report on the Council Plan 2023/28 and seek approval for its publication. The report covers the period 1<sup>st</sup> April – 30<sup>th</sup> September 2023.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 It is recommended that the Committee:

- Consider the first progress report on the new Council Plan 2023/28 and;
- Approve its publication on the Inverclyde Council website.

**Morna Rae**  
**Interim Head,**  
**Organisational Development, Policy & Communications**

### 3.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

- 3.1 At its meeting on 20 April 2023, The Inverclyde Council approved the adoption and implementation of a new five-year Council Plan 2023/28. The new Council Plan also detailed the range of high-level Plans and Strategies being progressed across the Council, the successful delivery of which will support the achievement of the Council Plan outcomes.
- 3.2 The Plan sets out the Council's vision: The Inverclyde Commitment: Success for All – Getting it Right for Every Child, Citizen and Community. It also established a number of high-level outcomes under the three strategic themes of People, Place and Performance.

#### Theme 1: **PEOPLE**

Outcomes we will achieve:

- Our young people have the best start in life through high quality support and education;
- Gaps in outcomes linked to poverty are reduced;
- People are supported to improve their health and wellbeing;
- More people will be in employment, with fair pay and conditions; and
- Our most vulnerable families and residents are safeguarded and supported

#### Theme 2: **PLACE**

Outcomes we will achieve:

- Communities are thriving, growing and sustainable;
- Our strategic housing function is robust;
- Our economy and skills base are developed;
- We have a sufficient supply of business premises; and
- Our natural environment is protected.

#### Theme 3: **PERFORMANCE**

Outcomes we will achieve:

- High quality and innovative services are provided, giving value for money; and
- Our employees are supported and developed.

- 3.3 The Inverclyde Council also approved the governance arrangements for the Council Plan, namely the submission of a progress report to the Policy and Resources Committee every six-months. This first report, covering the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 – 30<sup>th</sup> September 2023, is provided in Appendix 1 for the consideration of the Committee. The report includes information on:
- The delivery of the Council's key strategic plans;
  - The delivery of key projects and initiatives within the Committee Delivery and Improvement Plans 2023/26; and
  - Partnership projects and initiatives that are being led by Inverclyde Council and delivered under the umbrella of the Inverclyde Alliance.
- 3.4 As this first progress report on the Council Plan coincides with the publication of the last Annual Performance Report (including new LGBF data), on the former Corporate Plan, some overlap is unavoidable due to the cross-cutting nature of the outcomes within each Plan. To reduce duplicating of reporting the same KPI data at the same time, the full KPI dashboard, featuring trends and status, has not been included within this Council Plan progress report, however it will feature in future reports.

#### 4.0 PROPOSALS

- 4.1 The Committee is asked to consider the progress made in delivering the Council Plan in the first six months of implementation and approve its publication on the Inverclyde Council website.
- 4.2 As the implementation of the Council Plan is at an early stage, future progress reports will evolve to reflect the dynamic nature of the Plan and ensure that performance reporting is as engaging and accessible as possible.

#### 5.0 IMPLICATIONS

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

SUBJECT	YES	NO
Financial		X
Legal/Risk	X	
Human Resources		X
Strategic (Partnership Plan/Council Plan)	X	
Equalities, Fairer Scotland Duty & Children/Young People's Rights & Wellbeing		X
Environmental & Sustainability		X
Data Protection		X

#### 5.2 Finance

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					

#### 5.3 Legal/Risk

The Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 places a duty on Councils to publish a range of information as set out by the Accounts Commission's SPI Direction, the latest version of which is the "Publication of Information (Standards of Performance) Direction 2021 Statutory Performance Indicators". The publication of this progress report helps fulfil the Council's obligations under the Direction.

#### 5.4 Human Resources

There are no direct human resources implications associated with this report.

## 5.5 **Strategic**

This report provides information on progress in delivering the new Council Plan in the first six months of implementation and as such, is relevant to the delivery of all Council Plan outcomes.

## 6.0 **CONSULTATION**

6.1 None.

## 7.0 **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

7.1 Council Plan 2023/28 - Inverclyde Council - <https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/council-and-government/strategies-policies-and-plans/council-plan>





# **Council Plan 2023/28**

Bi-annual report 2023/24

**Success for All - Getting it Right for every Child, Citizen  
and Community**

## INTRODUCTION

In April 2023, Inverclyde Council approved a new Council Plan for Inverclyde which set the strategic direction and vision for the organisation for the period 2023/28. The new Council Plan was developed alongside a new 10-year Partnership Plan 2023/33. The same vision has been adopted in the Council and Partnership Plan: **“The Inverclyde Commitment: Success for All – Getting it Right for Every Child, Citizen and Community”**.

The Council Plan 2023/28 builds on the progress that was made in the delivery of the Council’s previous Corporate Plan 2018/23. As this is the first biannual progress report on the new Council Plan 2023/28, there is some inevitable overlap between this performance report and the final Corporate Plan Annual Performance Report 2022/23, due to the cross-cutting nature of the outcomes within the Plans. To gain a fully rounded view of performance, both reports should therefore be considered together.

The Council Plan 2023/28 introduced a range of high-level outcomes for the Council, across the strategic themes of People, Place and Performance. The delivery of these outcomes is via the actions plans that have been developed for the Council’s Strategic Plans and the new Committee Delivery and Improvement Plans, with a golden thread bringing together the collective vision, purpose and aspirations. This Progress Report brings together a range of information on the delivery of these Strategic Plans and the projects and initiatives that are being delivered via the Committee Plans.

Public performance reporting is a core element of the Council’s Best Value activity. The publication of regular progress reports for key stakeholders helps to demonstrate how well the Council is delivering its strategic objectives, highlights achievements and where further progress is required.

This report is structured around the Council Plan themes:



**THEME 1: PEOPLE**

Page 3



**THEME 2: PLACE**

Page 14



**THEME 3: PERFORMANCE**

Page 23

# Theme 1 PEOPLE



The people of Inverclyde and the people employed by the Council to deliver our services are the lifeblood of the area.

Making sure everyone has an equal opportunity to benefit from successes and to move forward in every area of their work and life is at the heart of how we develop individuals to reach their true potential, and ensure our community and Council are resilient to challenge.



**Outcome: Our young people have the best start in life through high quality support and education**

## How are we delivering the best start in life for our young people?

### *Children's Services Plan 2023/26*

A new **Inverclyde Children's Services Plan 2023/26** has been developed by the Children's Services Partnership (CSP) and approved by the Inverclyde Alliance. The CSP comprises of representatives from the main partner agencies, including Health and Social Care Partnership, Education and Community Services, Police Scotland, Voluntary Organisations, Scottish Children's Reporter Administration and Skills Development Scotland.

The Children's Services Plan contains four outcomes to improve the lives of children and young people in Inverclyde:

1. Children, young people and families are listened to and their views are instrumental in designing and delivering services.
2. Children and young people's health and wellbeing is promoted and improved.
3. Children and young people feel safe and loved, and are supported to stay in their families.
4. Children, young people and families and services work together to reduce inequalities.

The Promise and the Whole Family Wellbeing model are fully embedded within the new Plan and every opportunity for joined-up children's services and collaborative improvement is being explored.

The next step for the Partnership is to identify trends and measures of success, which has been hampered with the interruption to available data from the Health and Wellbeing survey. Progress, timescales and actions are being monitored by the lead officers, reporting to the strategic group with scrutiny provided by the Alliance Board.

### ***Inverclyde Education Services Improvement Plan 2023/24***

Education Services has implemented a new **Education Services Improvement Plan 2023/24** ([Education Services in Inverclyde - Inverclyde Council](#)). The priorities for the Service in the current year support the delivery of the new Children's Services Plan 2023/26 and the Council Plan 2023/28. These are:

- Improvement in attainment, particularly literacy and numeracy;
- Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people;
- Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing;
- Improvement in employability skills and sustained positive school leaver destinations for all young people;
- Getting it right for every child; and
- Improving outcomes for care experienced children, young people and their families.

Progress in the delivery of the Improvement Plan is reported to the Education and Communities Committee.

#### ***Raising Attainment***

Data on the attainment of Inverclyde pupils in 2023 was published in August. It showed an overall pass rate of 85% at National 5 level, 88% at Higher, and 93% at Advanced Higher. Success at Advanced Higher represents an increase of seven per cent on the previous year. Whilst there was a slight drop in the overall Higher pass rate compared with 2022, nearly two-thirds of candidates (63 per cent) achieved one or more passes, an increase of 3%.

There is a slight decrease in those who attained three or more passes – down one per cent – with the number of pupils gaining five or more Highers remaining the same at nearly one in five (18 per cent). At National 5s, nearly half of all students (48 per cent) achieved five Level 5 passes by the end of S4, the same as the previous year.

#### ***Improving pathways for senior phase pupils***

Delivering enhanced pathways for Senior Phase Pupils is a strategic priority for Education Services within its Committee Delivery and Improvement Plan, building on the work of the Senior Phase Action Plan. Education Services works in partnership with colleagues in the More Choices More Chances team to develop services in this area. A longer-term Training Strategy has also been developed and is now in place.

The Senior Phase Governance Group continues to monitor pathways for pupils with Additional Support Needs. A revised Transition Policy has been produced in conjunction with adult and children's services and a soft launch is planned for November 2023.

#### ***Play Pedagogy***

Playful Pedagogy, which is a way of integrating children's play experiences with curricular learning, is being used to support learning and development of Inverclyde children at an early level. Three Inverclyde Head Teachers have been appointed to the role of Play Associate and have started initial engagement to support leadership of play and enquiry using the West Partnership Principles. This is providing an opportunity for Head Teachers to plan the individualised Play Journey for their schools, quality assure their progress and embed this practice in their schools.



## **Outcome: Gaps in outcomes linked to poverty are reduced**

### **How are we reducing gaps in outcomes due to poverty?**

#### ***Inverclyde Child Poverty Action Report 2023/24***

The latest child poverty data shows the challenge faced in tackling local inequalities. It is estimated that the overall percentage of children living in relative poverty (after housing costs) in Inverclyde is 24.4% however, this varies across Inverclyde, ranging from 5.5% to 31.4%.

The Inverclyde Child Poverty Local Action Report 2023/24, which is an annual report that is jointly prepared with the Health Board, has recently been published. The report contains details of activities carried out by the Child Poverty Local Action Group in 2022/23, alongside a strategic action plan for delivery in 2023/24. The aspiration in year five of the strategy continues to be:

*“Working together, using all available evidence, to reduce inequalities and poverty and build a community where fewer families are living in relative or absolute poverty by 2025.”*

Activities in the current year are focusing on:

- Increasing income from employment by offering a range and choice of opportunities for priority parents to help them access and maintain employability and employability, learning and training.
- Increasing income from benefits to ensure systematic whole-family approach for families more likely to be living in poverty and facing financial insecurity.
- Mitigating the cost of living by providing accessible and affordable childcare activities and food for children in priority families.
- Developing our approach to communication and participation by working collaboratively with families with lived experience to ensure services respond effectively to meet their needs.

Supporting children to improve outcomes and changing the systems that can help local children and families also remains a priority goal.

Progress in the delivery of the Council’s anti-poverty measures is regularly reported to the Policy and Resources Committee.

#### ***Early Adopter Childcare***

As an Early Adopter Community for out of school affordable childcare, Inverclyde has been piloting and testing a range of local services and support for children and families living on a low income or living in poverty. This pilot service, which has been running since January 2023 offers after school care within Newark Primary School, supporting 22 families and 28 children. The families who access the service are also involved in the codesign of the pilot to ensure that the service meet their needs.

A holiday childcare service was also provided from 11<sup>th</sup> July 2023 to 4<sup>th</sup> August 2023 and received a visit from Natalie Don, Communities Minister in July 2023. An evaluation of the Summer Clubs has been conducted and will report to the Education and Communities Committee in November 2023.

### ***Literacy Framework***

A new Literacy Framework was launched by Education Services in early September, with Coaching and Modelling Officer support from the Attainment Challenge put in place to support its implementation. The Framework will help to ensure that there is a consistent and coherent approach to the teaching of core literacy skills across Inverclyde establishments.

### ***Expansion of Free School Meals***

Inverclyde is the first local authority in Scotland to provide free school meals to all primary school children, commencing in August 2023. This universal service supports families who are facing financial and food insecurity by providing food, which in turn helps to reduce stigma and promote dignity across our communities.

### ***Tackling Digital Exclusion***

In May 2023, the Libraries Service resumed its Digital Skills classes, which is a tailored Digital Inclusion outreach service provided to residents within Inverclyde's most deprived communities (Greenock East & Central and Port Glasgow). People who are most disadvantaged by their lack of access to services and are also more likely to experience a significant level of digital exclusion. On offer across five library branches were:

- Computer-based 'Bring I.T. On' sessions for those with basic skills but wanting to learn more. These classes were delivered by experienced, knowledgeable staff.
- 'Let's Start I.T.' classes for those with little or no experience with digital activities.
- 'Make I.T. Real' sessions led by library staff was for those with their own device who wished to build on existing skills for life.

From April to September 2023, 211 classes were delivered with 72 attendees, many of whom attended multiple classes.



**Outcome: People are supported to improve their health and wellbeing**

**How are we supporting improvements in health and wellbeing?**

***Inverclyde Integrated Joint Board Strategic Plan 2023/24***

The blueprint for services that will improve health and wellbeing in Inverclyde is set out in the Inverclyde Integrated Joint Board Strategic Plan 2023/24. A refreshed strategic plan was published in 2023/24, setting out the IJB’s priorities for the year. The original vision and priorities set out in the Six Big Actions for Inverclyde have been retained reflecting that these remain relevant and importantly, are well-known and understood by communities. The Big Actions are:

<p><b>Big Action 1:</b> Reducing Inequalities by Building Stronger Communities and Improving Physical and Mental Health</p>	<p><b>Big Action 2:</b> A Nurturing Inverclyde will give our Children &amp; Young People the Best Start in Life</p>	<p><b>Big Action 3:</b> Together we will Protect Our Population</p>
<p><b>Big Action 4:</b> We will Support more People to fulfil their right to live at home or within a homely setting and Promote Independent Living</p>	<p><b>Big Action 5:</b> Together we will reduce the use of, and harm from alcohol, tobacco and drugs</p>	<p><b>Big Action 6:</b> We will build on the strengths of our people and our community</p>

Each action has a more detailed implementation plan, with measures that will be monitored and reported to the Strategic Planning Group, with regular progress reports to the IJB. The first progress report is available here: [Strategic Plan Quarterly Report 2023/24](#) whilst the refreshed Plan can be downloaded here: [Strategic Plan refresh 2023-24 March 2023 Approved \(1\).pdf](#)

***Inverclyde Active Living Strategy 2021/24***

In June 2023, the Inverclyde Alliance Board approved an Active Inverclyde Action Plan that sets out how the aspirations of the Active Inverclyde Strategy will be delivered. The Action Plan was developed by a cross partnership implementation group, comprising of local clubs and Community Sports Hubs, young people, Inverclyde Leisure, Inverclyde HSCP, SportScotland, and other local services and is structured around the four Active Inverclyde themes identified by partners to achieve a reduction in health inequalities and an increase in levels of physical activity:

- Active People
- Active Communities
- Active Partnerships
- Active Environment

Actions taken forward during the year include a survey launched in May 2023 to understand participation levels in physical activity in Inverclyde. The results of the survey are being used to inform the ongoing implementation of the Active Living Strategy.

The Active Inverclyde implementation group meets on a 4 weekly basis to ensure that momentum is maintained in the delivery of the action plan and the strategy.

### ***Active Travel***

The Inverclyde Active Travel Strategy, which was approved in August 2018, sets out the aim to create a network of safe and convenient routes to key destinations to enable more every-day journeys to be walked or cycled.

The walking network is largely in place and there is an extensive Core Path network throughout Inverclyde. Improvements to the walking network will mostly focus on upgrading the infrastructure already in place. Attention, therefore, currently focuses on maintaining and improving the National Cycle Network and further development of the Coastal Route for cycling.

A list of priority projects was approved by the Environment and Regeneration Committee in August 2023 to improve cycling infrastructure locally. This includes enhancing and completing the broken coastal route from Gourock to Port Glasgow and creating a tourist route that is safe for families, with an off-road segregated route that can be safe for an unaccompanied 12-year-old to use. The next routes on the priority list will be linking the town centres and linking to the existing NCN network, then linking to our neighbouring authorities in Renfrewshire and North Ayrshire.

Schemes for the implementation of the highest priority projects are current being developed, in accordance with current guidelines and regulations. External funding for projects is also being pursued where available.

### ***Young People Wellbeing Service***

Inverclyde Council and HSCP previously committed to improve Children and Young People's Tier 2 Mental Health in Inverclyde, based on a collaborative model. The Wellbeing Service focuses on direct counselling support as well as group work and drop-in sessions. The use of the service, and its levels of impact, are reported to the Scottish Government on a six-monthly basis. In relation to the counselling input, this was accessed by 71 pupils in total from July 2022 until June 2023, with significant outcomes being identified.

Tier two work through the Children and Young People's Community Mental Health and Wellbeing (CYPCMHW) fund has also commenced through the commissioning of an online self-referral support service titled 'Kooth' with a specific target audience of young people aged 16 to 26. 'Kooth' has been piloted in other local authority areas to good effect and commenced in Inverclyde in April 2023 with impact information currently being collated.

### ***School Nutrition***

Inverclyde Council's catering team achieved the Food for Life Served Here Bronze award for the fifth year in a row. The Council is now serving around 5,000 nutritious, sustainable and locally-sourced Food for Life meals every day. The Bronze award recognises that a minimum of 75 percent of dishes are freshly prepared from unprocessed ingredients. Meals are also free from undesirable trans fats, sweeteners, additives, and all genetically modified ingredients.





**Outcome: More people will be in employment, with fair pay and conditions**

**How are we helping more people into employment with better conditions?**

***Local Employability Partnership***

The Inverclyde Local Employability Partnership is the strategic employability partnership in Inverclyde. It supports the implementation of local and national employability policy, making best use of resources available at any given time, to enable the delivery of a range of employability services to an all-age client group, with a focus on those who have particular barriers to employment.

The three-year Employability Delivery Plan 2022/25 has been implemented with the core purpose of supporting those at risk of being left behind to move closer to and into fair, sustainable jobs. The Plan is being delivered by the Local Employability Partnership which comprises of key partners to shape and influence employability services.

***Economic Regeneration Strategy 2021/25***

The Inverclyde Economic Regeneration Strategy 2021/25 and Action Plan were developed in consultation with the business community. The ambition of the strategy is to create, attract and safeguard more and better jobs in Inverclyde. Since its initial development a number of new themes have been incorporated within it, including community benefits, community wealth building, and a reduction in carbon / net zero whilst at the same time addressing the impact of Brexit, and COVID-19.

A review of the Economic Strategy is planned to take place in the first quarter of 2024 and will be carried out alongside the development of a new Strategy Development Plan 2025/28, this will involve a review of the existing economic climate, engagement with key stakeholders such as local businesses and groups and the identification of priority themes going forward.

***Inverclyde Task Force***

The Inverclyde Task Force was set up to address the socio-economic imbalance which Inverclyde currently faces. Since its inception in 2022, the focus of the group has been on four topic areas namely business, business premises, housing and skills. Eight key projects have been identified by the Task Force as priorities aligned to these areas to support the regeneration of Inverclyde, with formal representation made to the Minister for Small Business, Innovation and Tourism in August 2023.

***Community Benefits***

The Council's Procurement Policy stipulates that community benefits must be considered for inclusion in all works contracts with an estimated value greater than £1,000,000, and give consideration to include in all goods and service contracts above £50,000. Community benefits are requirements which deliver wider benefits in addition to the core purpose of a contract and can relate to social, economic and or environmental benefits.

When initiating procurement activity, client departments are required to consider and highlight potential community benefits considerations. Engagement with key stakeholders and market research and benchmarking activity is then undertaken to further explore potential opportunities and identify appropriate requirements for inclusion in the contract. To ensure that all

Community Benefits secured are delivered, a review will be carried out to focus on co-ordinating delivery and ensuring the process is embedded throughout the Council.

***Supporting Young People into Employment***

As an employer the Council is seeking to provide opportunities in the workplace wherever possible. 20 new apprenticeships were created in summer 2023, in addition to the 67 existing modern apprenticeships already in post. The recruitment programme was open only to Inverclyde residents.



**Outcome: Our most vulnerable families and residents are safeguarded and supported**

**How are we safeguarding and supporting vulnerable residents and families?**

*Looked after children*

The new Inverclyde Children's Services Plan 2023/26 sets out a commitment to fully involve our care experienced children and young people in decision making, and that there will be nothing decided about them, without them.

Delivery of the national initiative 'The Promise' locally consists of a number of strands, including the I-Promise Team, which includes a Programme Manager, Engagement/Development worker, a Coaching & Modelling practitioner and a Modern Apprentice with care experience and the Proud2Care group, which includes care experienced children and young people. All care experienced children and young people in Inverclyde have been invited to share their views about their experiences of being looked after in Inverclyde, to enhance learning; parents and carers were also consulted.

Oversight of I-Promise is co-chaired by two care experienced young people and the Chief Executive. The group meets quarterly and representation includes Corporate Directors, HSCP Chief Officer and service managers for health, Community Learning and Development, Scottish Fire and Rescue, Police Scotland, Barnardo's, Your Voice, CVS, Action for Children, Children 1st, the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration and Children's Hearings Scotland.

An I-Promise Practitioner Forum supports operational development and delivery against actions under the five local priority areas within our 'Stop/Go pledge'. A number of improvements have been, or are being taken forward, including:

- updated HSCP Wellbeing Assessment templates, co-designed by children and young people to make them more accessible.
- the 'Mind of My Own' app to gather the views of children and young people who are looked after, with training for 99 staff.
- 'hug kits', developed by young people, for children moving to live in our children's houses or with foster carers.

Further strategic and practice priorities include:

- Supporting the development of the Whole Family Wellbeing Hub.
- Contribute to strategic developments including Children's Services Planning Partnership, Whole Family Support Hub, GIRFEC sub-group and Child Poverty Action Group.
- Review of the corporate parenting plan with young people and corporate parents.
- Develop policies in partnership to improve local practice including brothers and sisters staying together where it is safe to do so, moving on support for young people and a participation strategy including the Youth Collective.
- Develop the family time improvement plan.
- Workforce resilience programme.
- Further develop methods, including digital platforms, to hear the views of children and young people including those with additional support or communication needs.

### ***Community Safety Strategy and Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy***

A new Community Safety Strategy and separate Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy and draft actions plans have been developed and approved by the Inverclyde Alliance Board. It was a conscious decision to develop the strategies and action plans as separate documents as it was considered that their merging could weaken their individual focus and objectives. Furthermore, there were concerns that gender-based violence, might not receive the required priority attention if it were to be subsumed within the wider Community Safety Strategy.

The first progress reports on both strategies will be presented to the Alliance Board in June 2024.

### ***Community Hub***

Plans for the development of an ambitious new Community Hub, which will be an inclusive community space for people with complex neurodiversity and learning disabilities progressed during the first half of the year.

The Community Hub will be an inclusive community space that ensures users can enjoy integrated experiences and are not stigmatised.

Consultation and engagement with service users, parents and carers, staff and other stakeholders has been integral throughout the process to ensure the design meets the brief.

### ***Pledge to make Inverclyde Council a Trauma Informed Organisation***

In June 2023, the Council gave its approval to adopt the National Trauma Training Programme Leadership Pledge of Support. This pledge was made to enable Inverclyde to continue its progress towards developing a trauma informed and responsive workforce and services. By adopting the Pledge, the Council is publicly declaring its intention to respond to needs and improve outcomes for people in Inverclyde who have experienced psychological trauma.

### ***Redesign of the Homelessness Service***

The Homelessness Service received an unannounced inspection in September 2023 and achieved the following very positive evaluation:

- 5 - Very good in both categories Leadership and Staffing
- 4 - Good in both categories Planning and Wellbeing Evidencing strengths that have a significant effect on people's experiences which outweigh the areas found for improvement.

The service has also been nominated for Scotland Housing Awards and has made the shortlist to the finals in six out of the seven categories including Housing Team of the Year, Excellence in Learning and Development, and Working in Partnership.

## THEME 1: PEOPLE

**52.5%** of leavers from the most deprived quintile in 2021/22 achieved 1+ Award at SCQF at Level 6 or better, compared to **87%** in the least deprived quintile.

**75.6%** of primary pupils (P1, P4 and P7 combined) achieved expected levels or better in literacy, whilst **83.1%** of the same cohort achieved expected levels or better in numeracy in 2022/23.

Life expectancy for females in Inverclyde in 2020/22 was **78.7 years** and **74.6 years** for males compared to a Scottish average of **80.7 years** for females and **76.5 years** for males.

**203** days was the average number of days (Jan'23-Mar '23) people spent in hospital in Inverclyde when ready to be discharged. The LGBF Family Group average was 303 days.

**51%** of the Inverclyde school roll participated in Active Schools delivery in 2022/23

**77.7%** of Inverclyde population (16-64 years) were classed as economically active compared to 77.4% in Scotland (April 2022- March 2023)

The Claimant Count as a percentage of the 16-19 year old population (Jan – March 2023) was **5.2%**, compared to LGBF Family Group **4.7%** and Scottish average, **3.7%**.

The Claimant Count as a percentage of the working age population (Jan – March 2023) was **3.9%**, compared to a LGBF Family Group **4%** and Scottish average, **3.2%**.

## Theme 2 PLACE



Inverclyde is a collection of places - its towns and villages – each with its own identity but with a keen sense that by being part of a wider group moving forward together helps make sure we are all benefitting from success and opportunities.



**Outcome: Communities are thriving, growing and sustainable**

### How are we supporting thriving, growing and sustainable communities?

#### *Locality Planning*

Oversight of locality planning in Inverclyde is provided by the Inverclyde Alliance and it is the ambition of the Alliance to further develop the locality planning model to support greater community engagement and empowerment.

Each of Inverclyde's six localities has an established Communication and Engagement Group and a Locality Plan, developed in 2020, setting out the priorities for the area. The Communication and Engagement groups have continued to meet during the reporting period to discuss the issues in their area, including the next iteration of the Locality Plans. The next phase in the development of locality planning will take place following the conclusion of the Community Council review to ensure that there is a consistent approach in terms of geographies where possible. The outcome of the review of Community Learning and Development will also feed into the development of proposals going forward.

#### *Culture and Heritage*

An evaluation of the Inverclyde Culture Collective was published in September 2023, highlighting the success of the project. The Collective was originally an 18-month project set up in early 2021, supported by £275,000 funding from Creative Scotland. Inverclyde was subsequently awarded an additional £198,000 to continue the project for a further 12 months.

The external evaluation report concluded that the various stakeholders involved were extremely positive about the Culture Collective and that sustained and consistent progress has been made in building and expanding local arts infrastructure, and in developing and supporting an impactful creative approach. Across the span of the Culture Collective period:

- 32 projects were funded; 791 sessions were held, engaging with an estimated 2,456 participants.
- An estimated 56 community partners were involved.
- In addition to the co-ordinating team, 116 freelance opportunities were created undertaking 2,625 hours of paid work.

Lead partners are now looking at how activity can continue following the end of the Culture Collective funding stream. The full evaluation report is available on the Council's website, [Culture and Heritage - Inverclyde Council](#)

### ***Community Learning and Development Strategic Plan 2021/24***

The Community Learning and Development 3-year strategy and action plan was developed as a result of a collaborative approach between the organisations that make up the CLD partnership. As the Strategy is now entering its final year, a self-evaluation is being carried out on the action plan to assess progress, areas for improvement and achievements. This work will inform the development of the new Strategy for 2024/27 which will take effect from 30 September 2024.

### ***Review of Community Councils***

Following the Council's decision to review the Scheme of Establishment of Community Councils, the results of the first round of consultations were reported to a Special Meeting of the Inverclyde Council on 18<sup>th</sup> May 2023.

A draft Scheme, including plans of proposed community council areas, was approved for a second round of public consultation which ran for 8 weeks and ended on 15<sup>th</sup> August 2023. The third stage in the consultation is now underway and due to close in mid-November. It is anticipated that the outcome of the final stage in the consultation process and a new Scheme will be presented to a special meeting of Inverclyde Council for adoption on 7 December 2023, with the Community Council elections following in the first quarter of 2024.

### ***Community Grants***

The Inverclyde Community Grants Fund provides one-off financial support to community, sports and voluntary organisations within Inverclyde.

In September 2023, 102 local organisations were awarded a share of over £280,000 to support community work. Organisations applying for funding had to specify how it would be used to contribute to and benefit the wider community in line with the local priorities. The money will help to support costs such as hall hire, running costs, staff and volunteer training, community events and sports kit for groups reaching all ages across the area.

### ***Community Food Growing***

Following the approval of the Alliance Board for an Inverclyde Community Food Growing Strategy in March 2023, a local Food Growing Strategic Group was established to provide governance and accountability in the implementation of the strategy.

Inverclyde Council also received an allocation of UK Shared Prosperity Funding to implement the 'Invergrow Project' which supports the development of area wide community gardening and food growing in public spaces, to impact on climate change and help alleviate food insecurity and food waste, whilst improving mental wellbeing.

### ***Delivering New Community Facilities***

In June 2023, work started on a new multi-purpose community hub for Parklea Branching Out, which is part-funded by Inverclyde Council and the Scottish Government, with the Council also providing support to deliver the new Hub. Once completed, the Hub will offer a space that will provide a range of opportunities for local people, including vulnerable members of the community and those with learning disabilities. It will also provide important access to greenspace and facilitate valuable training and employment opportunities. The Hub is expected to be completed by winter 2024.





## **Outcome: Our strategic housing function is robust**

### **How are we ensuring we fulfil our strategic housing function?**

#### ***Local Housing Strategy***

A draft Local Housing Strategy (LHS) 2023/28 has been developed for Inverclyde, setting out the plan for addressing the housing challenges facing local communities, including:

- Increasing the range of housing options to meet need;
- Developing successful places which are connected to transport, services and jobs;
- Tackling and reducing homelessness;
- Improving housing affordability;
- Supporting people with particular needs to live independently and well;
- Improving the energy efficiency of homes and tackling climate change;
- Improving the quality and condition of existing homes.

The LHS was submitted to the Scottish Government for peer review in July 2023. A delay in the return of Scottish Government comments has delayed the submission of the LHS for formal Committee approval. It is now anticipated that the LHS will be considered by the Environment and Regeneration Committee early in the new year.

#### ***Housing led regeneration***

The development of the Local Housing Strategy highlighted the view of partners that housing led regeneration can play a major role in improving the quality and supply of housing and supporting wider regeneration. Similarly, the Fraser of Allander report and the Inverclyde Task Force also highlighted a role for housing led regeneration in reversing the economic decline and population loss in Greenock.

A central Greenock Regeneration Strategy has been developed and approved by the Environment and Regeneration Committee. The study identifies five potential sites for housing led regeneration which can be considered with partners going forward, each with its own level of challenge and achievability. The detailed proposals from the study will be considered further as potential regeneration projects following on from the Levelling Up project already underway in Greenock Town Centre.

#### ***Clune Park Masterplan***

A revised Masterplan for Clune Park, setting out proposals for the regeneration of the area has been finalised. The Masterplan has been prepared with a view to harnessing the potential of the site and acting as a guide for future development. It will also be used as the basis for the appointment of a Registered Social Landlord as a partner to the Council to take the Clune Park development through to its conclusion. The Masterplan will be considered by the Environment and Regeneration Committee on 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2023.

#### ***Local Development Plan***

Preparations for a new Inverclyde Local Development Plan commenced in September 2023. A significant part of the preparation of the Plan will involve the appointment of third-party consultants to aid its delivery. A survey has been issued to over 30 Planning consultancies,



with participants asked to answer relevant questions on the Local Development Plan key stages to determine their suitability for appointment.

Responses to the market research questionnaire will be evaluated and then followed with an open tender process to achieve Best Value. Following on from this, the first stage of the Local Development Plan (i.e. Development Plan Scheme), setting out the full approach and associated timescales, will be presented to the Environment and Regeneration Committee.



## **Outcome: Our economy and skills base are developed**

### **How are we developing our economy and skills base?**

#### ***Investment in skills, employment and infrastructure***

A series of investment plans have been approved for delivery over the next two years, funded from Inverclyde's allocation of the £3.5 million Shared Prosperity Fund. In total, 23 initiatives have been approved by the Environment and Regeneration Committee, including:

- over £1 million for employability schemes to help residents, particularly those in hard-to-reach areas and who are currently out of work, to help equip them with skills for employment, training or further or higher education.
- Just under £750,000 for a range of schemes supporting local businesses covering everything from budgeting and growth to developing net zero plans and networking.
- Six projects amounting to more than £600,000 aimed at developing numeracy skills for people aged 19 and over, supported specifically through the Shared Prosperity Fund's Multiply grants scheme.

Some of the projects will be delivered wholly or alongside partner organisations, including CVS Inverclyde, Parklea Branching Out and West College Scotland.

#### ***Other investment***

The Council has also been successful in securing significant additional investment in the previous six months, including:

- ***City Region Investment***

As part of the Glasgow City Region (GCR), Inverclyde will benefit from the region being selected as one of two Scottish locations to become an Investment Zone, with investment of £80million. This provides the opportunity to build on the work already delivered as part of the Inverclyde City Deal projects. The premise at the heart of the zones will be innovation and fair work, which aim to boost the economy, stimulate business growth, and create high-quality, well-paid jobs.

- ***Long Term Plans for Towns***

At the end of September 2023, it was announced that Greenock town centre was chosen as the recipient of £20 million investment from the UK Government to improve the town centre and boost regeneration. Under the new approach, local people will be put in charge, and given the tools to change their town's long-term future. The aim of the investment is to generate more jobs, more opportunities, and a positive future for towns and the people who live and work in them.

#### ***City Deal Projects***

**Ocean Terminal** - Following the terminal and restaurant elements of Greenock Ocean Terminal becoming fully operational in July 2023, the new cruise ship visitor centre was officially launched in August 2023.

The project is expected to deliver a £26 million boost to the Scottish economy and over 70 new jobs have been created. It is also expected that the new facility will play a role in attracting and growing tourist numbers to the terminal in the future years.

**Inverkip** - The Outline Business Case (OBC) for the Inverkip City Deal Project has been submitted to the City Deal Infrastructure Programme. Once approval has been received, the Full Business Case will be progressed. It is anticipated that the Inverkip City Deal project will provide many benefits which support the strategic needs of Inverclyde and the wider city region, including on-site jobs in new commercial and industrial space, outdoor community activity space, residential units and commercial and industrial floorspace.

**Inchgreen** - Work packages are underway at Inchgreen, including quay wall repairs and structural improvements. The overall project remains on course for delivery in December 2023.

### ***Greenock Town Centre Levelling Up***

Following a successful bid for Levelling Up funding, the project has continued to progress with regular meetings between the Council, partners and stakeholders. The appointment for project management has been made as discussions with the contractor are well advanced. Monitoring returns and engagement with UK Government officials are also taking place on a cyclical basis.

### ***Procurement***

The Council also uses its procurement activity to stimulate local economic activity. Local and SME suppliers are supported in a variety of ways including paying local suppliers early where this is requested; selecting at least 50% of suppliers from the local area to bid for quotations; local and national Meet the Buyer events and taking local suppliers and SMEs into account when creating tender strategies.

An Annual Procurement Report 2022/23 has been published providing an update in respect of local spend, small to medium enterprise spend, commitment to Fair Work First and community benefits secured. Further engagement is planned with the Supplier Development Programme to provide training and support for tendering in 2023/24 to support further increases in local spend.

### ***Multiply Project***

As part of the UK Government's Shared Prosperity Initiative, Inverclyde Council has received funding for a 'Multiply' project which seeks to improve the numeracy skills of adults through the delivery of bespoke adult numeracy programmes. The programme runs until March 2025 and targets adults 19+ who have not previously attained a Level 2/SCQF Level 5 or higher maths qualification.

Three members of staff have been recruited to develop, deliver and encourage meaningful participation in a range of community-based learning programmes that will boost people's ability to use maths in their daily life, at home and work.



## **Outcome: We have a sufficient supply of business premises**

### **How are we ensuring a sufficient supply of businesses?**

#### **Inverclyde Task Force Business 'Asks'**

Improving business opportunities is a key area of focus of the Inverclyde Task Force and projects that would support both business premises and businesses were amongst the key asks made to the Scottish Government in August. The projects were as follows:

#### **Business Premises**

Project 1 - Kelburn Industrial Estate is an industrial/commercial development in the east of the Local Authority area which is adjacent to the A8. Originally developed by urban regeneration company Riverside Inverclyde, we are seeking to expand these facilities as the current provision is full. RI can borrow £5 million, however require a further £3 million additional funding to deliver a 55,000ft<sup>2</sup> solution.

Project 2 - Port Glasgow Industrial Estate suffers from legacy buildings from the 1960–70s era. Their redundant nature makes them attractive for anti-social uses. We are seeking to demolish the central core of the area and provide alternative modern purpose facilities to make Port Glasgow an attractive proposition. We are seeking investment to the value of £22 million.

#### **Business**

Project 1 - To ensure that the east/west displacement is not further exacerbated. Providing fiscal policy to afford Inverclyde business rate tax reduction in line with the GCR Investment Zone applicable to our industrial estates.

Project 2 - To expedite efficient traffic movement within the Inverclyde area we would seek to support Transport Scotland in the installation of a MOVA type traffic light solution for the main A8 trunk road, the cost of this is estimated at £500,000-£750,000.

#### **Non-Domestic Rates Empty Property Relief Policy**

With effect from 1 April 2023 local authorities will be required to set their own policy for the rating and reliefs of unoccupied properties. As a result, Councils are required to set their own policy for the rating and reliefs available for unoccupied or empty properties.

Inverclyde Council's own Non-Domestic Rates Empty Property Relief (NDR EPR) Policy was agreed on the basis that relief mirrors the legislation it replaced, but with a commitment to develop a local scheme during 2023/24, with any financial implications considered as part of the 2024/25 Budget. As at August 2023, 17 premises across Inverclyde were eligible for 100% Empty Listed Property Relief.

To inform this, the NDR EPR Policy Consultation 2023 was launched on 21 September 2023 running until 31 October 2023. The results of the consultation will be analysed and a report incorporating the proposed EPR Policy and financial implications will be submitted to the 6 February 2024 meeting of the Committee.



## **Outcome: Our natural environment is protected**

### **How are we protecting our natural environment?**

#### ***Net Zero Strategy and Action Plan***

Inverclyde Council's Net Zero Strategy sets out a route map to achieving net zero direct greenhouse gas emissions by 2045, including an interim 2031 target. The primary focus is reducing emissions from the Council's buildings, transport, street lighting, water, and waste, before considering options for offsetting emissions that cannot be eliminated. The Net Zero Action Plan 2022/27 sets out the carbon reduction actions that will be targeted over the five years of the plan. A full Annual Report on the progress of the Net Zero Action Plan 2022/23 was produced in June 2023.

In support of the action plan, approval has been given to continue the phasing out of petrol and diesel light commercial vehicles within the Council fleet as part of ULEV strategy and in line with Scottish Government targets.

#### ***Biodiversity and Carbon Sequestration***

In April 2023, Inverclyde Council became a signatory to the Clyde Climate Forest Concordat. Specific objectives for the Clyde Climate Forest are based on three 'C's':

- Canopy: to increase average urban tree canopy cover to 20%;
- Connectivity: to increase the average woodland habitat network area by 20%;
- Carbon: to increase forest and woodland land cover in the Region to 20%.

In Inverclyde, 854 trees have been planted since the beginning of the year, 131 of which have been planted since April 2023.

Projects to maximise carbon storage potential of land through peatland restoration and conservation have been progressed with approval given to deliver Peatland projects at Hardridge and Dowries farms. The Council has been awarded £768,705 to carry out peatland restoration at Hardridge Farm from the NatureScots Peatland Action Fund, which will be delivered over 3 seasons/years. A grant offer for Dowries, which is a one season /year project, is awaited.

#### ***Inverclyde Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy***

Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategies (LHEES) are at the heart of a place based, tailored approach to support the transition to climate-friendly, more energy efficient homes and non-domestic buildings. These local Strategies will set out the long-term plan for decarbonising heat in buildings and improving their energy efficiency across an entire local authority area.

The Council appointed Turner and Townsend in August 2023 to complete the LHEES strategy and delivery plan with the first draft due by the end of December 2023. Following this, and subject to the approval of the Environment and Regeneration Committee, it is planned to progress the draft to public consultation before the final strategy and action plan is completed.

## THEME 2: PLACE

The number of business gateway start-ups per 10,000 population in Inverclyde between January - March 2023 was **8.0** compared to a Family Group average of 4.8.

**23** Community Benefits were secured for delivery in 2022/23.

The three-year business survival rate (2018 to 2021) in Inverclyde was **59%** compared to a Glasgow City Region average of 57%.

**242** clients gained a full or partial qualification, supported by the Employability Service between April – September 2023.

CO<sub>2</sub> emissions within the scope of influence of the local authority was **4 tonnes per capita** in 2021 compared to an LGBF Family Group average of 4.36 tonnes per capita.

**185** clients progressed into employment from Council funded / operated employability programmes between April – September 2023.

**131** trees were planted in Inverclyde between April - Sept '23.

**13,131** tonnes of waste were sent to landfill between April - Sept 2023.

## Theme 3 PERFORMANCE



We are an ambitious Council, always striving to improve and develop.



**Outcome: High quality and innovative services are provided giving value for money**

### How are we delivering high quality, innovative and value for money services?

#### *Awards*

National recognition of the high standard of service provided by Inverclyde Council was received during the year with Inverclyde Council reaching the finals in both the Local Government Chronicle Council of the Year 2023 and Association of Public Sector Excellence (APSE) Council of the Year 2023 Awards.

At the APSE Awards in September 2023, Inverclyde Council won the *Best Workforce Initiative* category for the delivery of the Workforce Refresh Programme. This was followed by success at the COSLA Awards 2023, also held in September, when Inverclyde Council was announced as the winner in the *Strengthening communities and local democracy* category for work carried out in examining historic links to slavery.

#### *Digital Modernisation and ICT*

As part of the March 2023 Budget, the Council allocated a further £1 million to support Digital Modernisation, creating a £1.25 million fund which is being managed by the Digital Modernisation Programme Board, chaired by the Chief Executive. Three projects have been approved by the Board: Verint CMS Upgrade; WorkPro Complaints Handling System and Schools Catering Contract Refresh. At its meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> August 2023, the Policy and Resources Committee approved the upgrade of the Verint customer service system, using funding from the Digital Modernisation Earmarked Reserve for the delivery of this. Procurement activity is now underway.

A development session, attended by front-line managers was held in partnership with the Improvement Service at the end of August 2023, with a view to identifying new areas for digital improvement. As a result, several proposals have been developed which will be considered by the Digital Modernisation Programme Board.

In a separate but related workstream, good progress continued to be made in delivering the 4 workstreams within the Council's ICT Strategy with progress reported to the Policy and Resources Committee in relation to Asset Management Programme & Cloud Migration Strategy; Service Provision; Information Security and Procurement Strategy.

A refresh of both the Council's ICT and Digital Strategy is planned, with an overall timescale for completion by the end of October 2024.

### ***Financial Strategy***

An updated Financial Strategy 2023/33 was approved by Inverclyde Council in June 2023. The Strategy is updated every six months to ensure that it reflects changes in the national and local financial landscape, as well as clearly setting out the considerable financial challenges facing the Council in the short, medium and longer term. The strategy also provides the platform for the development of the Revenue and Capital Budgets to be approved in March 2024.

### ***Procurement and Contract and Supplier Management***

Scotland Excel's Procurement & Commercial Improvement Programme (PCIP) is designed to support and encourage the continuous improvement of procurement and commercial practices. Inverclyde Council has signed up to the PCIP pilot working group and has agreed to participate in a pilot Procurement and Commercial Improvement Programme (PCIP) assessment, planned for 21st November 2023. This will support improvement in the Council's own procurement practice to ensure that value for money continues to be achieved.

### ***Review of Human Resources and Organisational Development***

An external review of the Human Resources and Organisational Development Service was carried out to provide a high level 'health check' of the service and to ensure that there is the required capacity and resilience to meet future demands.

The review highlighted a positive, collaborative culture within Inverclyde as well as areas for improvement to ensure that the service can meet the demands placed on it now and in the future. These areas for improvement have been developed into an improvement plan and incorporated into the Policy and Resources Committee Delivery and Improvement Plan where progress will be reported as part of the wider performance scrutiny that takes place at Committee.





## **Outcome: Our employees are supported and developed**

### **How are we supporting and developing our employees?**

#### ***Positive Conversations***

A new appraisal process, 'Positive Conversations' was introduced in September 2023 to replace the previous performance appraisal policy. Rather than the formal appraisal, which previously took place once a year, 'Positive Conversations' focuses on managers and their employees having regular discussions on work related goals, performance, feedback, wellbeing., and development needs. The purpose of the conversations is to enable meaningful conversations which support motivation, engagement, and value for employees, with an aim to build relationships and continuous improvement.

There are three defined stages of conversation, an individual mandatory conversation (mandatory); regular 1-2-1 check-in, and a team check in.

The ethos of the new programme is to facilitate relationship development, build motivation and engagement and create value for employees.

#### ***Equally Safe at Work Accreditation***

Equally Safe at Work is an innovative employer accreditation programme developed to support the local implementation of Scotland's Equally Safe Strategy. The aim of the programme is to support employers to understand how gender inequality and violence against women (VAW) affects women in the workforce, and to provide a framework to generate change.

In a bid to achieve accreditation, Inverclyde Council put significant effort into collecting and analysing data, reviewing and updating policies, practices and resources. All information relating to the accreditation bid was submitted in advance of the deadline of 31 July 2023, and the Council is currently awaiting the outcome of its application.

#### ***People and Organisational Development Strategy***

The People & Organisational Development (POD) Strategy 2020-2023 was formally approved by the Policy and Resources Committee on 4th February 2020. The Strategy was designed to support the range of planned transformation and change management projects and to ensure the required skills are in place to deliver these and any required savings.

As the Strategy is approaching the end of its lifespan, work on a new POD began over the summer and in consultation with key stakeholders, new initiatives for 2024/26 have been identified and developed. A consultation period is planned to take place towards the end of the year.

## THEME 3: PERFORMANCE

An average of **2.5 days** were lost due to sickness absence per employee (FTE) from April – September 2023.

**5.22%** was the employee turnover between July – September 2023.

**97.1%** of invoices were paid within the target of 30 days between April – September 2023.

**53.3%** of Council Tax owed to the Council was collected by the end of September 2023.

**96%** of street lighting repairs were carried out within 7 days between April – September 2023.

**100%** of category 1 potholes repairs were made safe within 24 hours of identification between April – September 2023.

Inverclyde Council's website accessibility score, as awarded by SOCITM, in September 2023 was **95 (excellent)**

**81%** of customer interactions with the Council were self-service, utilising the app for general enquiries or service requests.

**1.85 complaints** per 1,000 population were received between April - September 2023.

**2.8 days** was the average time taken to process changes in circumstances to Housing Benefit.

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<b>Report To:</b>	<b>Policy &amp; Resources Committee</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>21 November 2023</b>
<b>Report By:</b>	<b>Interim Head of Organisational Development, Policy &amp; Communications</b>	<b>Report No:</b>	<b>PR/23/23/KM</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Morna Rae</b>	<b>Contact No:</b>	<b>01475 712146</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Inverclyde Council Annual Performance Report 2022/23</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 seek the approval of the Committee for the publication of the Inverclyde Council Annual Performance Report (APR) 2022/23. The APR, which is the final report to be produced on the Inverclyde Council Corporate Plan 2018/23, is attached as Appendix 1.

1.3 For the first time, the APR also includes details of Inverclyde Council's benchmarking performance in 2022/23 for some LGBF measures.

1.4 An Elected Member Briefing has been arranged to provide all Members with the opportunity to consider the Annual Performance Report 2022/23.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 It is recommended that the Committee:

- Notes the progress made in the delivery of the organisational priorities within the Corporate Plan 2018/23; and
- Approves the publication of the Corporate Plan Annual Performance Report 2022/23.

**Morna Rae**  
**Interim Head of Organisational Development,**  
**Policy & Communications**

### **3.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT**

- 3.1 The Inverclyde Council Corporate Plan 2018/22 established 10 organisational priorities for the Council. At its meeting on 14 September 2022, the Policy and Resources Committee approved a one-year extension to the Corporate Plan to allow a wider review of strategic planning and performance management framework to take place alongside community engagement on the new Council Plan and Partnership Plan priorities.
- 3.2 As part of the Corporate Plan's governance and scrutiny arrangements an Annual Performance Report (APR) is presented to the Policy and Resources Committee. The APR 2022/23 is attached as Appendix 1 for the consideration and approval of the Committee. The report aims to provide a balanced range of qualitative and quantitative information to support an informed judgement on the Council's performance in the year. This forms part of the Council's public performance reporting duty, as set out in the SPI Direction 2021.
- 3.3 Each organisational priority contains an overview of what was achieved in the year, with more detail provided in the form of case studies highlighting good or innovative practice, achievements and the delivery of major national initiatives, linked to the delivery of the Council's organisational priorities. The inclusion of case studies is also aimed at strengthening the Council's reporting on outcomes.

### **PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW 2022/23**

- 3.4 A 'Performance Dashboard' containing three years of data for a range of KPIs is provided for each priority. The latest data for each measure is shown, along with a Red/ Amber / Green status where a target has been set. Where it is not appropriate to set a target e.g. school exclusions, the direction of travel is monitored instead. Such measures are indicated in the dashboard as 'data only'. All measures within the APR include trend information to show annual change and over the longer term (5-year).
- 3.5 The following areas of strong performance are highlighted to the Committee:
  - The percentage of young people participating in education, training or employment increased further to 94%;
  - The employment rate of 16-24 year olds in Inverclyde was higher than the Scottish average, 58.7% compared to 57.9%;
  - 100% of children issued with a new supervision requirement were seen by a supervising officer within target timescale;
  - 96% of clients waited no longer than 3 weeks from referral to receive an appropriate drug or alcohol treatment to support their recovery;
  - 95% of completion certificate requests were responded to within 10 working days, up from 68% in 2021/22; and
  - The Benefits processing team achieved 100% accuracy for the second consecutive year.

Of those measures with a red status, the following are highlighted to the Committee:

- The level of positive responses from members of the Citizen's Panel has fallen with all measures having an amber or red status;
- KPI performance relating to 'looked after children', although improving, remains below target;
- The percentage of service users who began their first work placement within 7 working days of imposition of court order has decreased from 85.4% in 2019/20 to 28.3% in 2022/23;

- The percentage of public health complaints responded to by the next working day has fallen by more than 30% since 2019/20, from 87% to 56%
- The number of days lost due to sickness absence has increased from 8.3 days to 10.4 days.

### **Local Government Benchmarking Framework 2022/23**

3.6 A new approach to reporting the LGBF was introduced by the Improvement Service in Spring 2023, with the introduction of an interactive LGBF dashboard which provides access to data and analysis at an indicator level, service level, family group and Council level. One significant advantage of the dashboard is that new data can be added throughout the year as it becomes available, providing Councils with benchmarking information in a timelier manner. The dashboard is available here:

<https://www.improvementservice.org.uk/benchmarking/explore-the-data>

3.7 A data update was carried out by the Improvement Service at the end of September 2023 and new 2022/23 benchmarking data has been published for 38 measures within the framework. A review of the data for Inverclyde shows that:

- 23 (61%) have a ranking that places performance in the top two quartiles.
- 10 (26%) have a ranking that places performance in the third quartile.
- 5 (13%) have a ranking that places performance in the fourth quartile.

Of the 15 indicators in quartiles three and four (red and amber), eight have improved in performance compared to the previous year. Of those that are ranked in the top two quartiles (green), 10 had a decrease in performance between 2021/22 and 2022/23.

3.8 A summary of key changes in Inverclyde's LGBF performance are noted below:

#### **A) Children's Services**

The participation rate of 16–19-year-olds in Inverclyde was 94%, which is slightly higher than the family group average but sitting just below the Scottish average. Despite an improvement in performance, Inverclyde's national ranking fell from 8 to 22, due to other Councils also improving at a greater rate.

The percentage of children living in poverty increase from 18% to 24% however an increase in child poverty levels was expected, following concerns that the previous figure of 18% was not an accurate reflection of child poverty levels in Inverclyde.

#### **B) Corporate Services and Corporate Assets**

Performance in relation to corporate services and corporate assets is strong, with three quarters of the indicators ranking in the top two quartiles. Inverclyde was the best performing Council in Scotland for the proportion of SWF Crisis Grant decisions within one day, with 100% performance achieved whilst the proportion of SWF Community Care Grant decisions within 15 days was the third highest in Scotland, at 99.5%.

A further three measures rank the first quartile (i) days lost due to sickness absence (non-teacher) (ii) the percentage of invoices sampled that were paid within 30 days and (iii) the percentage of operational buildings that are suitable for their current use.

Further progress was made in reducing Inverclyde's gender pay gap, which was 4.4% in 2022/23. This measure has improved year on year and is now almost half the 2018/19 level.

There was an increase in the cost per dwelling of collection council tax which resulted in a change in ranking from 27 to 29. Costs were higher than both the national and family group average.

### **C) Adult Social Work**

All four SW measures ranking in the top two quartiles, and three of the four rank in quartile one.

The rate of readmission to hospital within 20 days (per 1,000 discharges) improved from 90.6 to 78.4. Inverclyde's performance was significantly better than the national and family group average, 101.7 and 104.1 respectively.

There was a slight decrease in the percentage of people aged 65 or over with long term care needs receiving personal care at home, falling from 67.3% to 65%, however the national ranking remained unchanged at eight. The national ranking for the number of days spent in hospital when ready to be discharged also remained unchanged at seven, despite an increase in bed days from 291 to 460. Performance for both measures was better than the national and family group averages.

There was a drop in the percentage of adult care services graded good or better, falling from 85% to 80%, resulting in a national ranking change of five places, from six to 11.

### **D) Environment Services and Climate Change**

Seven of the nine Environmental Services and Climate Change measures rank in the top two quartiles. Satisfaction with refuse collection is the highest in Scotland, 92%, significantly outperforming the Scottish and family group average at 76% and 79.8% respectively.

Satisfaction with street cleaning also ranks highly, with Inverclyde in 9<sup>th</sup> position and satisfaction remaining steady between reporting years 2018/21 and 2019/22 at 67%. Relatively high levels of satisfaction with street cleaning does not correlate with the street cleanliness score however, which has dropped from 85.1% to 83.9% and is the second lowest in Scotland.

Three of the four road maintenance measures rank in the top two quartiles. The measure that lies outwith the top quartiles is the percentage of 'C' class roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment which, at 36.7%, is higher than the family group and Scottish averages.

There was an increase in Inverclyde's CO<sub>2</sub> emissions for both carbon measures, however national and family group emissions similarly increased. Inverclyde continues to rank in the top two performing quartiles for both carbon indicators.

### **E) Culture and Leisure**

On the whole, there has been little movement in culture and leisure satisfaction levels when compared with 2018/21 across all measures. There was a 1% increase in satisfaction with parks and open spaces, rising from 86% to 87% and satisfaction with museum has risen marginally from 59.6% to 59.7%. Satisfaction with the museum is lower than the national and family group averages, with Inverclyde ranking in 25<sup>th</sup> place. Satisfaction levels with libraries decreased slightly from 76.5% to 74.3% but remained higher than the family group average (68.8%) and just above the Scottish average (74%). Satisfaction with leisure facilities ranked in 7<sup>th</sup> place at 77%.

### **F) Economic Development**

Inverclyde continued to be one of the best performing Councils in Scotland for the number of business gateway start up per 10,000 population, ranking 4<sup>th</sup> overall. There was a drop in the rate of business gateway startups from 2021/22 levels, falling from 29.5 to 25.4, however performance was significantly better than the national and family group average - 14.3 and 16.7 respectively.

Inverclyde's claimant count as a percentage of the working age population and also the claimant count as a percentage of the 16–24-year-old population also improved. The claimant count as a percentage of the working age population fell to its lowest level since 2016/17 and was also lower than the family group average. Inverclyde's claimant count as a percentage of the 16–24-year population, whilst remaining higher than the national and family group average, is also at its lowest level since 2016/17. Performance for both indicators remained in the fourth quartile.

### **EVALUATING PERFORMANCE 2022/23**

3.9 When evaluating performance, it is important to consider the context in which services were delivered during the year. Also, where there is cross-over between LGBF measures and the Council's own KPIs, performance differences can arise due slight differences in methodology e.g. LGBF sickness absence data does not include Covid-19 absences to provide continuity with previous years, however Inverclyde Council's measure of sickness absence does. There are also key differences in the methodology used for measuring satisfaction, more detail on which is provided in paragraph 3.10.

#### **3.10 Budget pressures and reduced resident satisfaction**

Budget pressures over consecutive years has resulted in changes to service provision which will have had an impact on customer satisfaction. The Inverclyde Citizens' Panel is asked for its views across a range of areas every two years and action is taken in response to the feedback.

The impact of the savings currently being considered by the Council will result in difficult decisions which will likely impact upon satisfaction levels further.

Nationally, results from the most recent Scottish Household Survey (SHS, 2021), although carried out prior to the Inverclyde Citizens' Panel survey, shows a significant decrease in satisfaction relating to public services (including health and public transport) decreasing from 61% to 55%. Approximately one quarter of adults (24%) in Scotland felt that they could influence decisions in their local area, this is the same as the Inverclyde Citizens' Panel return for the same question. Across Scotland as a whole, the level of positive response to all SHS questions on views about the local Council decreased between 2020 and 2021.

The Committee is asked to note an important distinction between satisfaction data gathered via the Inverclyde Citizens' Panel and the LGBF satisfaction results, which are derived from the Scottish Household Survey. The LGBF presents Scottish Household Survey data as a 3-year rolled average to deliver more precision at a local level. Due to the pandemic, the survey moved to a telephone survey in 2020/21 which reduced the sample size by more than two thirds (approximately 3,000 for the whole of Scotland, typically 200 people for Inverclyde). Despite its limitations, the SHS is used by the Improvement Service because it is currently the only survey that provides a measure of satisfaction in a way that is comparable across all 32 Councils.

The Council will continue to benchmark results in relation to customer satisfaction where possible and act on the findings.

#### **3.11 Employee resources**

Employee resources continued to put pressure on services during the year. This includes a reduction in the number of staffing posts in some areas, whilst other contributing factors include high levels of vacancies in particular fields across the Council and the HSCP, alongside recruitment difficulties. Reduced resources due to budgetary pressures and employee turnover will inevitably impact on performance.

Some services, such as Criminal Justice continue to face challenges in returning to service delivery levels that were achieved pre-pandemic. This is exacerbated in Inverclyde by the number of vulnerable clients that require support to meet their needs.

**3.12 Other considerations**

Other factors can influence performance during the year that are outwith the control of the Council include:

- The demand for a service can vary due to the cohort that year, e.g. the number of employability clients that gained a full or partial qualification is dependent on the uptake of the service.
- The loss or withdrawal of external funding streams, such as the Attainment Challenge, will result in a reduced level of service. One such area is adult learner accreditation, supported by Community Learning and Development.
- Changes in external performance recording software e.g. changes in how statistics are gathered by Meta (Facebook) had an impact on library visitor numbers. Performance was also affected by statistics from an online resource no longer being available, following non-renewal of the Council's subscription.

**RESPONDING TO THE APR**

3.13 The APR describes many areas of best practice which services will look to continue and extend as resources allow, whilst the first outputs from the LGBF 2022/23 show that Inverclyde Council continues to perform well when benchmarked against those Councils within our Family Group and the national average. Where there have been challenges in service delivery or significant external pressures negatively impacting on performance remedial action will be explored. Overall, performance in 2022/23 provides a strong foundation on which to deliver the new Council Plan 2023/28.

3.14 An Elected Member Briefing on the Annual Performance Report 2022/23 will be arranged to take place in advance of the Committee meeting.

**4.0 PROPOSALS**

4.1 The Committee is asked to approve the publication of the Inverclyde Council Annual Performance Report 2022/23.

**5.0 IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 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>
Financial		X
Legal/Risk	X	



Human Resources		X
Strategic (Partnership Plan/Council Plan)	X	
Equalities, Fairer Scotland Duty & Children/Young People's Rights & Wellbeing		X
Environmental & Sustainability		X
Data Protection		X

## 5.2 Finance

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					

## 5.3 Legal/Risk

The Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 places a duty on Councils to publish a range of information as set out by the Accounts Commission's SPI Direction, the latest version of which is the "Publication of Information (Standards of Performance) Direction 2021 Statutory Performance Indicators". The publication of this Annual Performance Report helps fulfil the Council's obligations under the Direction.

## 5.4 Human Resources

There are no direct human resources implications associated with this report.

## 5.5 Strategic

The Annual Performance Report 2022/23 set out the Council's progress in delivering the organisational priorities within the former Corporate Plan 2018/23.

## 6.0 CONSULTATION

6.1 None.

## 7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 None.

# **Inverclyde Council**

## **Annual Performance Report**

**2022/23**

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2: To work collaboratively to enable strong, connected and empowered communities, particularly in areas of deprivation, so that residents have influence and control over the things that matter to them	<b>9</b>
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## FOREWORD

Welcome to Inverclyde Council's Annual Performance Report, which provides details of our performance in delivering the priorities within our Corporate Plan 2018/23, to realise our Vision of 'Getting it Right for Every Child, Citizen and Community'.

It has been another very challenging year for both the Council and our communities, continuing to respond to the issues arising from the Covid-19 pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis. Amongst the actions that we took to support residents and employees included earmarking £3.5million in additional support for low-income households by way of a grant payment to help tackle the increasing financial pressures. The Council also introduced the increased cost of living wage early for our employees.

This is our fifth and final Annual Report on our Corporate Plan 2018/23, which has been superseded by a new Council Plan 2023/28. The recovery from the pandemic made the re-assessment of local priorities even more important, however a commitment to protecting the vulnerable, reducing inequality and the delivery of high-quality Council services continues to be central to all our work.

We were delighted when this commitment was formally recognised and Inverclyde Council was named as a finalist in the Council of the Year 2023 category at the prestigious Local Government Chronicle (LGC) Awards 2023. The UK wide Award recognises excellence in local government and Inverclyde Council was the only Scottish authority to make it to the finals.

In particular, the Award was worthy recognition of the commitment of the Council's workforce to providing the best possible service for the residents and communities of Inverclyde.

As we move to delivering the new Council Plan 2023/28, we remain ambitious and will seek to develop new and innovative ways of working in these challenging times to build resilience and create a stronger Council. Opportunities to improve outcomes for the residents of Inverclyde will be seized wherever possible, including the delivery of new, major projects such as the £22million Levelling Up Fund and the Inverclyde Socio-Economic Taskforce, to identify ways in which partners can work together to bring added value to the Inverclyde economy.

Finally, the Council strives to be transparent in keeping residents informed about how well we are performing. This report is just one way in which we aim to do that, and you can find more information across a range of service areas on our Performance page, which you will find here: <https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/council-and-government/performance>

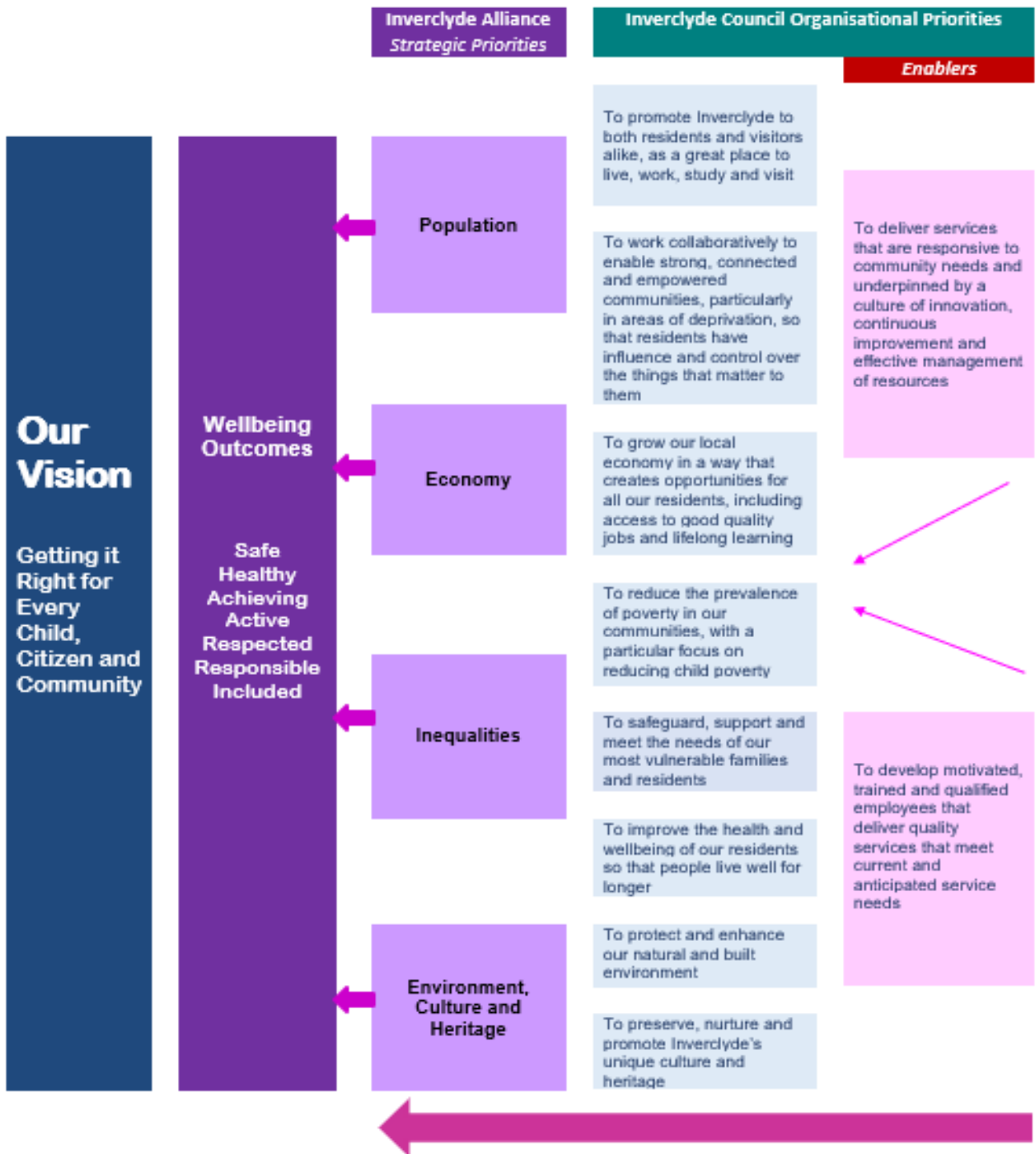
As always, your feedback is very important to us and contact details are provided at the back of this report if you would like to provide us with your views on any aspect of our performance.

**Louise Long**  
Chief Executive

**Stephen McCabe**  
Leader, Inverclyde Council

# Organisational priorities 2018/23

The Council's organisational priorities are underpinned by feedback from our communities about their priorities, as well as data on areas of particular need locally. They also support the delivery of the Inverclyde Alliance Outcomes Improvement Plan strategic priorities.





### Population

The estimated population of Inverclyde at the time of the Census 2022 was 78,400.



### Playgrounds

Inverclyde Council maintains 54 play areas including 44 inclusive play areas.



### Libraries

There were 503,432 visits (physical and virtual) to Inverclyde libraries in 2022/23.



### Environment

More than 300 trees were planted to replace ones lost to disease during the year.



### Cost-of-Living

A total of 9863 grant payments, totalling £3.45m, were made to Inverclyde residents to help with the cost-of-living in 2022/23.



### Community Learning & Development

190 adults improved their literacy skills with support from Community Learning and Development.



### Participation

More than 2,800 residents participated in the consultation on the new Council plan 2023/28.



### Maintenance

The Council is responsible for the maintenance of 373km of road network.



### Income

13% of the Council's total income in 2022/23 was generated from Council Tax.



### Care and Support Services

The Care and Support at Home Service provided over 330,000 hours of support to more than 1400 service users in 2022/23.



### Homelessness Support

The Homelessness service provided advice and assistance to 708 households in 2022/23.



### Education

More than 9600 children and young people were educated in Inverclyde schools.



### Employability

In 2022/23, 467 unemployed people moved in to employment following participation in a Council funded and operated employability programme.

## How we measure our performance

This Annual Performance Report 2022/23 provides an overview of performance in the delivery of the organisational priorities set out in our Corporate Plan 2018/23. It highlights a number of key achievements throughout the year, supplemented by a range of performance data which aims to provide a balanced view of the progress that has been achieved in both improving local outcomes and improving Council services. [Performance Dashboard](#)

Each organisational priority is underpinned by a key performance indicator dashboard. When considering the latest data, it is important to remember that some aspects of performance may look very different when compared to pre-pandemic data.








The latest data for each performance measure is provided along with a status where a target has been set. Targets are regularly reviewed to reflect trends and benchmarked information. Our focus on improvement is however wider than solely focusing on targets and where it is not appropriate to set a target e.g. school exclusions, trends in the direction of travel are monitored and where possible, performance benchmarked with comparator authorities. Such measures are described as 'data only'.

Data for a number of the Council's key performance indicators is derived from both national and local surveys, e.g. the Scottish Household Survey and the Inverclyde Citizens' Panel.

Whilst the Inverclyde Citizens' Panel is used to consult with local people twice a year on a range of issues, questions specifically relating to the Council are only asked every two years to avoid panel fatigue arising from members being asked for their views on the same topic every year.

Due to the pandemic, national survey work was postponed or carried out in a different way, creating a data lag in some instances, whilst in others, data is not available or comparable with previous years due to changes in methodology.

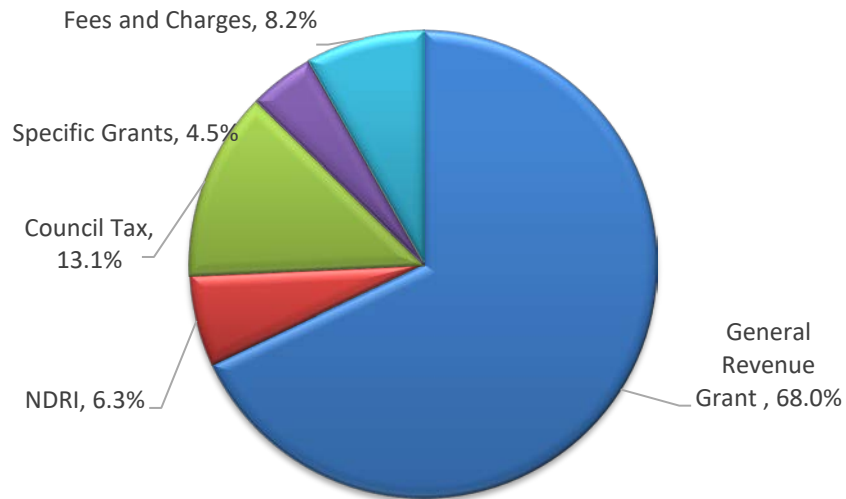
The performance dashboard uses the following status icons to help you assess performance:

PI Status	
	Performance has not met target and is below the set tolerance level (5%)
	Performance is below target level, but is within a set tolerance level (0-5%)
	Performance is at target level or higher
	Performance is being monitored but no target has been set (data only)
Short term and long-term trend status	
	Improving performance (short term = annual change, long term = 5 years)
	No statistical change in performance
	Performance has declined (short term = annual change, long term = 5 years)

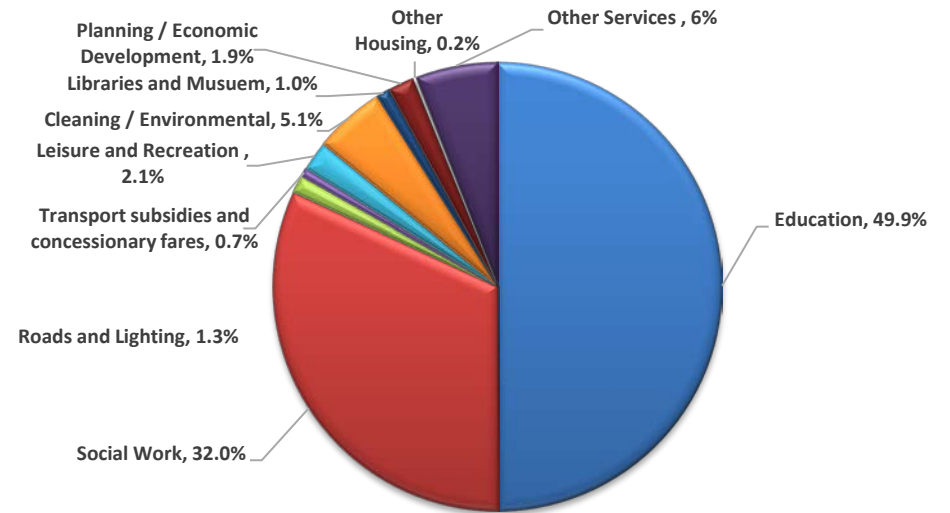
## MANAGING THE COUNCIL'S FINANCES

In 2022/23, the largest proportion of the Council's budget came from General Revenue Grant. In relation to where the money was spent during the year, almost half of the budget was directed to Education Services to help deliver the best start in life. The next largest proportion was allocated to Social Work Services to support our most vulnerable residents.

**Where our money came from 2022/23**



**What the money was spent on 2022/23**



### Budget 2023/24

In March 2023, the Council approved an overall budget of £227 million and a three-year capital budget to fund infrastructure costs of nearly £68 million. The full budget details are available on the Council's website at <https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/meetings/meeting/2535>



Priority

1

To promote Inverclyde to both residents and visitors alike, as a great place to live, work, study and visit

## Our aims

- Inverclyde is regarded as a great place to invest, live, work, study and visit by both those that live here and those outwith the area
- To stabilise the population of Inverclyde
- To enhance the image and reputation of the area
- To improve resident satisfaction with living in the area
- To reduce the number of young people leaving the area by providing more opportunities locally
- To increase a sense of civic pride

## How are we delivering this?

The marketing and promotion of Inverclyde as ‘a great place to live, work and visit’ was able to fully resume during the year and the ‘*Development of the Inverclyde brand: Position Inverclyde as a place to live, work and visit*’ was incorporated as a strategic action within the Inverclyde Alliance Population Partnership Delivery Plan, to provide partners with a more targeted focus.

Activities included the promotion of new dedicated ‘Discover Inverclyde’ themed social media, promotion of outdoor activities and cruise seminars. Plans are now in place to develop a new Inverclyde tourism

and place marketing strategy that will focus on the promotion of Inverclyde as a visitor destination.

Fewer births than deaths continued to be the major driver of population decline in 2022. Whilst Scotland also has more deaths than births in recent years, the gap between the two is more pronounced in Inverclyde. Attracting people to move to Inverclyde is therefore becoming more essential to ensure the sustainability of the area.

New opportunities to improve prospects for businesses and residents were identified during the year with the Fraser of Allander Institute Report, “Supporting Economic Recovery in Inverclyde, West Dunbartonshire and Argyll and Bute”. This Report highlighted the similar challenges facing all three Council areas, population decline, economic recovery in areas requiring regeneration and dealing with poverty and inequalities. This report provided the impetus for the establishment of a new multi-agency, Inverclyde Socio-Economic Task Force with representation from Inverclyde Council, key partners and the Scottish and UK Governments. The first meeting of the group took place in June 2022, with further meetings during the year and continuing into 2023. The Task Force is working together with the shared aim of stimulating the Inverclyde economy and creating opportunities for business and residents to ensure that Inverclyde is a place of choice for people to live, work and thrive.

## Boosting tourism investment

Harnessing opportunities from marine tourism to boost the local economy continued to be a priority for the Council, with the delivery of the new Greenock Ocean Terminal visitor centre nearing completion at the end of the year.

The project, led by Inverclyde Council is part of the £1 billion Glasgow City Region City Deal, funded by the Scottish and UK governments (£10.4m) with contributions from Peel Ports (£8m), operators of the existing Greenock Ocean Terminal and the George Wyllie Foundation via the Dunard Fund (1.7m).

The £20 million investment includes a new 200-metre floating pontoon, completed by Peel Ports in partnership with the Council as part of the overall project, providing a dedicated cruise ship berth linking to the state-of-the-art new visitor centre.

The centre will provide a welcoming environment for cruise ship passengers, with the aim of building on growing and attracting tourist numbers in future years. The number of cruise liners expected into the pontoon in 2023 is already on target to be 25% higher than in 2022.

As well as promoting tourism, the building will also be a new asset for the local community to enjoy and will support economic growth in the area. It is anticipated that the facility will provide a £26million boost to the Scottish economy and provide over 70 new jobs.

## Supporting our New Scots

Supporting New Scots to settle into their new community is crucial in helping people build sustainable lives here. Resettlement and asylum work has been ongoing in Inverclyde for a number of years and is well established. This includes working with the Home Office and other key partners to successfully deliver a range of resettlement schemes within Inverclyde, such as the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme, Ukrainian Resettlement and Asylum Seekers. At the end 2022/23, more than 80 families in Inverclyde were being supported.

A whole system approach, that helps people to resettle and integrate in Inverclyde has been put in place. This includes models of support, learning from practice that has worked locally and elsewhere in Scotland, to learn English and build social connections.

Events aimed at reducing isolation, building confidence, encouraging new friendships and providing support to those that have moved to Inverclyde, including a New Scots reception at the Beacon Arts Centre, were also hosted. Your Voice and a range of local and national third sector organisations are supporting both the refugees and people seeking asylum to ensure that they are linked locally into activities and the community.

Those arriving in Inverclyde bring with them a range of skills and their successful integration will enable Inverclyde to develop as a diverse multi-cultural community, with potential for long term population growth and sustainability.

# 01 PERFORMANCE SCORECARD

Classification : Official

MEASURES	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	Target 2022/23	Status	Annual change	5-year trend
In-migration - The number of people moving into Inverclyde in the year	1,780	Due 2024	-	Maintain			
Out migration - The number of people leaving Inverclyde in the year	1,690	Due 2024	-	Decrease			
Gross weekly pay for employees living in the area (median earnings)	£560.90	£568.00	<b>£633.90</b>	Increase			
The percentage of Citizen Panel respondents that have considered leaving Inverclyde	(2021) 45%	Biennial PI	(2023) <b>54%</b>	Decrease %			
The percentage of Citizens' Panel respondents that are satisfied with Inverclyde as a place to live	(2021) 75%	Biennial PI	(2023) <b>60%</b>	Maintain %			
The percentage of Citizens' Panel respondents that are satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live	(2021) 86%	Biennial PI	(2023) <b>79%</b>	Maintain %			
The percentage of school leavers achieving 1 or more awards SCQF level 6 or better	75.2%	<b>68.3%</b>	Due Feb 2024	2021/22 70%			
The percentage of school leavers achieving 5 or more awards SCQF level 6 or better	37.7%	<b>40%</b>	Due Feb 2024	2021/22 36%			
Percentage of school leavers achieving SCQF level 5 or better in literacy	89.2%	<b>86.2%</b>	Due Dec 2023	2021/22 86%			
Percentage of school leavers achieving SCQF level 5 or better in numeracy	75.6%	<b>74.8%</b>	Due Dec 2023	2021/22 76%			

**Status** On or above target   
 Below target, but within 5% tolerance   
 5% or more below target   
 Data only PI, no target set

**Trend** Improving performance / got better   
 Declining performance / got worse

## Priority

## 2

To work collaboratively to enable strong, connected and empowered communities, particularly in areas of deprivation, so that residents have influence and control over the things that matter to them

## Our aims

- With partners and communities, establish locality partnerships and action plans which focus on giving communities a voice, building capacity and reducing deprivation
- Residents feel supported to become involved in local decision making and in shaping local priorities and services
- To increase the number of residents, particularly in areas of greatest deprivation, who feel they have a sense of influence and control over their future
- To increase lifelong learning opportunities for residents, helping individuals to develop the knowledge, skills and attributes to achieve their potential
- To increase levels of community participation, engagement and volunteering
- To increase the number of residents who feel safe

## How are we delivering this?

Participatory budgeting as a means of supporting citizen participation remained a priority during the year with residents having a direct say in local financial decision making and service design for high profile events

such as the Inverclyde Meliora festival, and smaller scale local area improvements such as shaping the improvement works at Birkmyre Park, Kilmacolm. Community groups, schools and partner services, participated in the exercise with 278 community members engaged in the consultation. As a result, the funding was allocated to an extension to the children's play area, additional seating and picnic tables, a wildflower display and additional tree planting.

Despite increasing financial pressures, a Community Grants Fund was established, which combined the former Grants to Voluntary Organisations, Under-19s Sport and Community Hall Waiver schemes, with a funding pot of £365,000 to provide financial support to local community, sports and voluntary organisations to develop the work that they do for local residents. 83 local groups were supported to deliver a wide range of sporting, musical, cultural, religious and voluntary activities across Inverclyde.

A Social Value Policy was implemented during the year. Social Value is broader than community benefits, in that it considers initiatives which affect the long-term wellbeing and resilience of individuals and society, including economic and environmental matters as well as sustainability. Such a policy will ensure that the Council is maximising Social Value from its procurement activity, for the benefit of local communities.

## Empowering communities

Recognising the importance of bringing people together again, the delivery of a range of high-profile, community outdoor events throughout summer 2022 was prioritised. The Meliora Festival, which translates to 'for the pursuit of better', was a celebration of the resilience and compassion shown by local communities during the pandemic.

A community fund of £120,000 was allocated for local events, split across six localities. Each locality area was asked to help shape, decide and organise events using its allocation. 38 applications for funding were received which were put to a public vote via a new Community Choices Platform. More than 1,330 votes were cast and a total of 23 groups from across Inverclyde each received a £5,000 Meliora Fund grant.

The result was a summer programme where community events such as family fun days, fetes, Platinum Jubilee events and parades were complemented by bigger scale celebrations such as the 2022 Kip Regatta, the British Pipe Band Championships, Scotland v England girls' under-15s international football match, Inverclyde Warrior 5k obstacle course and an arts and culture weekend at the Beacon Arts Centre.

Additionally, local democracy was strengthened as a result of a partnership based on a shared responsibility towards wellbeing and mutual benefit with residents' equal partners in the planning, organisation and commissioning of events and the use of public money to address local need.

## Tackling digital exclusion

In June 2022, Inverclyde Libraries launched the 'Making IT Real' project, a free, ten-month, Digital Inclusion outreach project targeted towards residents living in Greenock East and Central and Port Glasgow, areas which have amongst the highest levels of multiple deprivation in Inverclyde.

The project sought to bridge the digital divide principally by delivering group sessions in sheltered housing and community centres throughout Inverclyde. Funding was secured from the Scottish Library Information Council and the Scottish Government Public Library Covid recovery fund. In all, there were 474 interactions with the service over 14 group sessions.

The 'Making IT Real' project was part of a wider 'Discover IT@ the Library' initiative that ran throughout the year, which offered a variety of IT skills training. Over the year, a total of 125 class sessions were delivered with 160 Inverclyde residents participating whilst 239 residents attended a drop in 'Device Advice' sessions.

The service has helped to reduce confidence barriers, develop skills and helped promote an understanding of the benefits that the internet and online services can offer, within a trusted, accessible, community location.

## 02 PERFORMANCE SCORECARD

Classification : Official

MEASURES	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	Target 2022/23	Status	Annual change	5-year trend
The percentage of Citizens' Panel respondents that feel that they can influence decisions affecting the local area	(2021) 24%	Biennial PI	(2023) <b>24%</b>	Increase %			
The percentage of Citizens' Panel respondents that agree that the Council works with them to solve their problems	(2021) 30%	Biennial PI	(2023) <b>24%</b>	Increase %			
The percentage of Citizens' Panel respondents that feel safe in their neighbourhood outside at night	(2021) 70%	Biennial PI	(2023) 68%	Increase %			
The percentage of Citizens' Panel respondents reporting a reduction in anti-social behaviour in the last 12 months	(2021) 19%	Biennial PI	(2023) <b>5%</b>	Increase %			
Number of adults improving their literacies	148	179	<b>190</b>	120			
School attendance rates (per 100 pupils):							
Primary	95%	90.8%	<b>92.14%</b>	90%			
Secondary	90%	88.1%	<b>87.76%</b>	85%			
ASN	91.4%	87.6%	<b>88.42%</b>	85%			

<b>Status</b>	On or above target	Below target, but within 5% tolerance	5% or more below target	Data only PI, no target set
<b>Trend</b>	Improving performance / got better	Declining performance / got worse	Performance unchanged	

## Priority 3

To grow our local economy in a way that creates opportunities for all our residents, including access to good quality jobs and lifelong learning

### Our aims

- Inverclyde's workforce has the required skills and knowledge to adapt to the demands of a changing economy and meet the needs of employers
- To increase the number of unemployed people who move into jobs, training or further education
- To increase the number of young people participating in education, training or employment
- To provide targeted support for those people who are furthest from the labour market
- To increase business density and survival rate
- To reduce the percentage of the population with no qualifications

### How are we delivering this?

Opportunities to lever in additional funding to boost the local economy were sought during the year, the most notable of which was the successful bid to the UK Government's Levelling Up Fund. Inverclyde was one of 10 successful projects to be awarded funding. The total value of the bid was £21.5million, comprising of almost £20 million from the Levelling Up Fund with the balance made up of match funding from the Council and partners.

The project will deliver a major infrastructure improvement to transform Greenock town centre, including the creation of new civic spaces, improved links between various parts of the town centre and the waterfront and opportunities for increased town centre housing and living opportunities.

Almost £3 million in core funding was also secured from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund in 2022. An Investment Plan is being developed which will include proposals to address local need, as well as maximising opportunities identified within the Fraser of Allander Institute report and the aims and objectives of the Inverclyde Taskforce, which was established to stimulate the Inverclyde economy creating opportunities for business and residents to ensure Inverclyde is a place of choice for people to live, work and thrive.

As one of the largest employers in the area, the Council continued to create, support and promote employment opportunities for the benefit of local residents and the economy. In 2022, 41 Modern Apprenticeship posts were advertised, compared to 21 in 2021.

Local businesses were also supported during the year through business employability and property support. Interventions are evolving, reacting to the challenging economic climate and needs of local businesses.



## Furthering employment prospects

'Inverclyde Works' is a multi-faceted employability programme being delivered by Inverclyde Council in partnership with local public and third sector organisations. The initiative aims to promote positive activity within the local labour market, available to all, with Fair Work at its core.

The suite of employment programmes made available includes Modern Apprenticeships, Paid Work Experience, Long Term Unemployed Job Creation and Parental Support to Employment. Support offered includes employment paid at the Real Living Wage for at least 12 months, vocational training /industry recognised accreditation, support to reduce barriers into employment and transition to work, financial and digital learning and the provision of devices and connectivity, mindfulness, support with driving lesson costs, health and well-being support and on-going aftercare for 6 months post programme.

Clients supported via 'Inverclyde Works' have achieved qualifications ranging from SCQF Level 5 to Level 8, with each person undertaking the qualification most relevant to their employment aspirations. 75% of participants have moved into an employment outcome and work continues with those that do not progress into employment to support a move closer to the labour market in the longer term.

The programme will continue for the next 2 years, providing at least 300 employment opportunities for an Inverclyde wide, all-age cohort, however there will be a specific focus on reducing child poverty by moving parents into work.

## Creating new job opportunities

The Inverclyde Council 'Workforce Refresh Programme' was developed in response to the Council reviewing how, as one of the largest employers in the area, it could create employment prospects for local people and young people in particular, as well as provide advancement opportunities for existing employees.

The Programme took the shape of a targeted voluntary severance trawl, aimed at employees in the pension scheme aged 55 and over but younger than 65. Employee releases under the Programme were phased over an eighteen-month period which allowed local employability groups to prepare local unemployed for the forthcoming job roles.

For those vacancies specifically created under the 'Workforce Refresh Programme' employment was provided to:

- 100% Inverclyde residents (15% were aged between 16 and 29);
- 20% of whom were unemployed; and
- 8% of whom were registered with a local employability partner.
- the number of 16-19 year olds employed by the Council increased from 15 in 2021 to 39 in 2022.

An 8% increase in the number of Modern Apprentices securing employment with the Council was also achieved and this increase is anticipated to continue year on year.



### 03 PERFORMANCE SCORECARD

Classification : Official

MEASURES	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	Target 2022/23	Status	Annual change	5-year trend
The employment rate (%) of 16-24 year olds (Inverclyde compared to Scotland) Inverclyde Scotland	52.4% 52.2%	54% 54%	<b>58.7%</b> <b>57.9%</b>	Reduce gap			
The percentage of unemployed people assisted into work from Council operated / funded employability programmes (Inverclyde compared to Scotland, LGBF) Inverclyde Scotland	12.9% 6%	<b>35.3%</b> <b>19.7%</b>	Due Feb 2024	Meet or exceed Scottish average			
The percentage of young people participating in education, training or employment (Inverclyde compared to Scotland) Inverclyde Scotland	93.3% 92.2%	93.8% 92.4%	<b>94%</b> <b>94%</b>	Meet or exceed Scottish average			
Number of adult learners achieving core skills qualifications (SCQF levels 2-4)	64	149	126	150			
Number of council funded business / property grant assists	14	16	<b>10</b>	16			
Number of employability clients who gain a partial / full vocational qualification	182	363	<b>326</b>	400			

Status On or above target

Below target, but within 5% tolerance

5% or more below target

Data only PI, no target set

Trend Improving performance / got better

Declining performance / got worse

## Priority 4

To reduce the prevalence of poverty in our communities, with a particular focus on child poverty

### Our aims

- To develop a targeted approach to tackling poverty and inequality, delivered with partners and communities, through the establishment of locality partnerships
- To reduce the percentage of children living in poverty
- To reduce overall levels of multiple deprivation
- To close the poverty related attainment gap for children and young people
- To support families to maximise their income
- To decrease the proportion of workless households

### How are we delivering this?

The increasing cost of living added extra pressure to many Inverclyde residents and a £360,000 package of anti-poverty measures to support vulnerable families and households was implemented during the year. This included funding for the Inverclyde 'Warm Hand of Friendship' scheme and the doubling of the Scottish Government's child payment for around 640 eligible young people who benefitted from the enhanced school meals offer not covered by government funding.

An extra £50,000 was allocated to the Scottish Welfare Fund for community care and crisis grants and a further £30,000 for additional fuel poverty payments to support older people with their heating costs.

Initiatives to address period poverty were expanded in the year, with an increase in availability and more sustainable options, reducing stigma and ensuring period dignity for all. Almost 130 local venues now hold stocks of local supplies to make it as easy as possible for residents to access period products as and when they need them, along with pop-up shops within Inverclyde libraries.

Funding was also allocated to support a second Zero Waste Food Pantry to mitigate against food poverty and reduce food waste. The Pantry, which opened in summer 2022, helps to reduce food waste while providing members with high-quality produce at low prices. Due to the continued support from the Council and other partners, the Pantry has evolved and now helps members access additional support service dealing with issues such as welfare and benefits and mental health.

In conjunction with the Food Network, a new Community Food Growing Strategy was developed during the year. The aim of the Strategy is to build capacity and increase opportunities for communities in Inverclyde to grow their own food, which in turn will contribute towards a reduction in food poverty.

## Helping with the cost of living

As part of the 2022/23 budget setting process, approval was given to provide £3.5million additional support to low-income households by way of a grant payment to help tackle the increased cost-of-living and ease the financial strain.

A one-off payment of £350 was made to all households in receipt of Council Tax Reduction (CTR) and most households exempt from paying Council Tax. The Council Tax exempt households were the same groups as those who qualified for the Scottish Government Cost of Living Award plus dwellings where all occupants were students.

An online form was created, and eligible householders were asked to apply, providing a copy of their bank statement for the payment to be made. Where details were held for other Covid related payments in the last year, a letter was sent advising the intention to credit the same bank account.

Awareness of the qualifying conditions for the Cost-of-Living Award prompted the uptake of new applications for CTR, resulting in retrospective entitlement to CTR and the £350 grant.

By October 2022, payments totalling £3.452m had been made with 8,456 grants paid into residents' bank accounts and 1,407 grants paid to Council Tax accounts. Both funds were delivered within existing resources, by a team seconded on a full time or part time basis from the Revenues and Benefits team.

## Supporting families with childcare needs

In summer 2022, to support families in work and living on a low income, Inverclyde Council introduced a programme of Affordable Childcare, utilising Scottish Government funding of £131,000.

A three-tier model was developed to support families facing the greatest inequalities: a universal playscheme service for all children in 6 hubs across Inverclyde; an extended playscheme service that offered longer sessions allowing parents and carers on low income more flexibility to work, train or study, with priority given to low-income families or those in receipt of free school clothing grants. The third aspect was an enhanced playscheme for children with additional social and emotional needs or autistic spectrum disorder who would benefit from a less busy environment. This service also included transport if required and lunch.

The Summer Holiday Programme provided more than 9000 out of school childcare places from priority families over a four-week period; 6,476 free mainstream playscheme places were accessed by children across 6 localities through the Inverclyde Leisure Playschemes, 1,753 children accessed the new extended playscheme in three localities with the greatest inequalities. Wellington Children's Centre provided 13 additional places for children who might not cope with playschemes and Play4All increased capacity to provide 66 places for young people with more complex additional support needs.

Following the success of the programme, Inverclyde was one of 4 authorities selected to take part in a £1million Scottish Government childcare pilot for low income families, which will inform the Government's plans for future out-of-school provision.

## 04 PERFORMANCE SCORECARD

Classification : Official

MEASURE	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	Target 2022/23	Status	Annual change	5-year trend
The percentage of children in Inverclyde living in poverty after housing costs	18.2%	<b>24.4%</b>	Due June 2024	Decrease %			
The percentage of workless households in Inverclyde compared to Scotland Inverclyde Scotland	(2020) 22.1% 18.1%	(2021) 15% 18.6%	(2022) <b>18.4%</b> <b>17.8%</b>	Reduce gap			
The average tariff score of pupils living in SIMD quintile 1	777	<b>849</b>	Due Feb 2024	Increase			
The percentage of primary pupils (P1,P4 and P7 combined) achieving expected levels or better in literacy	68%	76%	<b>75.7%</b>	75%			
The percentage of primary pupils (P1,P4 and P7 combined) achieving expected levels or better in numeracy	74.5%	80%	<b>83.1%</b>	82%			
The percentage of S3 pupils achieving fourth level or better in literacy	Not measured	40%	<b>52.3%</b>	45%			
The percentage of S3 pupils achieving fourth level or better in numeracy	Not measured	49.2%	<b>50.6%</b>	45%			

**Status** On or above target     
 Below target, but within 5% tolerance     
 5% or more below target     
 Data only PI, no target set

**Trend** Improving performance / got better     
 Declining performance / got worse

## Priority 5

To safeguard, support and meet the needs of our most vulnerable families and residents

### Our aims

- To prioritise and invest in early intervention and prevention approaches
- To continue to develop inter-agency approaches to improve safety and wellbeing
- To protect all our vulnerable children, young people and adults from all forms of abuse, harm and neglect
- To improve opportunities and outcomes for our looked after children and young people so that they achieve their full potential
- To assist our most vulnerable adults to live as safely and independently as possible in their community and have influence and control over their care and support
- To ensure that our carers feel that their needs are supported

### How are we delivering this?

The most important role of the Council is to keep its residents safe and to meet the needs of the most vulnerable. With Covid-19 restrictions in place until the second financial quarter of 2022, many residents continued to feel the strain, the impact of which has been more challenging for some than others.

The 'I Promise' (Inverclyde's Promise) team, which was established in January 2022 to embed the national initiative, *The Promise*, into local service planning continued to grow in strength. The team engages with children, young people, families and workforce across Inverclyde with a very clear focus on identifying need and ensuring that this shapes service provision. During the year, more than 200 people were engaged in discussion about delivering services to young people, identifying what is working well and what needs to be improved.

Proposals for a new £10million learning disability hub, which will accommodate up to 50 adults were also progressed. The project, which was delayed due to Covid, is being funded by Inverclyde Council and the Integration Joint Board (IJB). The aim is to provide an enhanced sensory experience for those users with complex needs, including those with co-existing conditions such as autism, visual and perceptual impairments, physical and sensory disabilities, dementia and life-limiting conditions.

A new, holistic, Community Safety Strategy 2023/26 was developed with a focus on feeling safe and secure, whether at home, work or in public spaces. Additionally, a conscious decision was taken to develop a separate Violence against Women and Girls Strategy 2023/26 to keep the focus of both strategies distinct, to ensure that each retained its individual focus and that the critical issue of gender-based violence receives priority attention.

## Tackling homelessness

Tackling homelessness in Inverclyde is linked to a need to address its underlying causes, exasperated by strains on local housing stock. The Inverclyde Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan focuses on the prevention of homelessness through full implementation of Housing Options; mainstreaming low level support for those who need it to sustain tenancies and delivery of a Housing First approach, which enables excluded service users to achieve housing sustainment.

Now in its fourth year, a number of achievements were delivered in 2022/23 including significant growth in the Housing First model, with 41 individuals currently being supported in a variety of ways.

Homeless applications decreased by 10% whilst the number of people presenting as homeless on leaving an institution reduced by 30%. Repeat homelessness decreased by more than a quarter whilst long-term homelessness decreased by more than one fifth.

Moreover, there was a 36% reduction in the use of unsuitable accommodation with no requirement to use hotel or B&B facilities over the past year. The implementation of a team of Rapid Rehousing Support Workers in November 2022 resulted in the number of individuals receiving Housing First from nine in October 2022 to 50 in March 2023, an increase of over 500%.

Plans to develop the service further are in place, one of which is to become more data driven to support short, medium and long term forecasting of service delivery.

## Supporting the vulnerable

Initially driven by concern about the impact of winter costs facing vulnerable residents, Inverclyde Council launched a new initiative under the banner of the 'Warm Hand of Friendship', designed to ensure that resources, advice and support were available as winter set in.

£100,000 funding was earmarked to support communities and to encourage communities to work together to help each other during the winter months. This project was administered through Inverclyde CVS and with the support of a range of local community and voluntary organisations, a network was established to provide assistance to those worrying about money; staying warm through the provision of hundreds of 'warm boxes' and the creation of 'warm spaces' across Inverclyde where residents could spend some time in somewhere warm and meet new people, helping to reduce social isolation.

Some examples of what was delivered include:

- 17 Warm Hand of Friendship sessions attended by 170 participants utilising Inverclyde Leisure's warm space;
- 334 attendees at St. Patrick's Primary School Parent Council 'Broth and Blether' sessions;
- Parklea Branching Out held 110 sessions with 135 participants, including their existing service users and 95 people accessing their warm space.

The most notable outcome however is the social impact of the Warm Hand of Friendship activity, enabling local communities to socialise with those attending highlighting the value of the connections made and kindness shown.

MEASURE	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	Target 2022/23	Status	Annual change	5-year trend
The percentage of looked after children that are cared for in a community setting	83.8%	86.5%	Due May 2024	Increase %			
The percentage of children with 1 or more placement in the past year	15.3%	9.8%	Due May 2024	Decrease %			
The percentage of adults supported at home that agree that it has helped to maintain or improve their quality of life	(2020) 82.8%	(2022) 79.6%	Due May 2024	Increase %			
The percentage of carers that feel supported to continue in their caring role	(2020) 39%	(2022) 29%	Due May 2024	85%			
Percentage of looked after children with a permanence plan within 6 months of being accommodated	25%	18%	32%	60%			
Percentage of Child Protection review case conferences taking place within 110 days of registration	40%	24%	50%	80%			
Percentage of children issued with a new supervision requirement seen by a supervising officer within timescale	100%	100%	100%	95%			
Percentage of service users who had a criminal justice interview and induction / first meeting with a supervising officer took place within 5 working days	65.9%	51.6%	60.1%	85%			
Percentage of Criminal Justice work placements within 7 working days of imposition of court order	43.1%	39.4%	28.3%	85%			
Percentage of homelessness cases (Housing Options) that progressed to a full homelessness assessment	38.5%	46.9%	40.7%		-		
Average time (weeks) between presentation and completion of duty by the council for cases assessed as unintentionally homeless or unintentionally threatened by homelessness	27.6 weeks	21.9 weeks	24.9 weeks		-		
Exclusion rate (per 1,000 pupils)	Primary School Exclusion Rate Secondary School Exclusion Rate ASN Exclusion Rate	1.1 27.5 15.5	0.86 25.4 39.4	1.4 27.1 22.8		-   	  

**Status** On or above target

Below target, but within 5% tolerance

5% or more below target

Data only PI, no target set

**Trend** Improving performance / got better

Declining performance / got worse



## Priority

## 6

To improve the health and wellbeing of our residents so that people live well for longer

## Our aims

- Our residents have improved health outcomes
- Health inequalities between our most and least deprived communities are reduced
- Our residents are supported to lead active, independent and healthier lives and be more self-reliant for their own health and wellbeing
- Our residents have access to the right treatment, care and support services when they need them, in ways that are effective and personalised
- To further embed our Dementia Friendly Inverclyde approach
- To reduce the percentage of older residents who feel that they are socially isolated
- To ensure that our carers feel that their needs are supported

## How are we delivering this?

The overall health profile of the population of Inverclyde continues to be poorer than that of Scotland with life expectancy for both males and females falling below the national average. Moreover, gains in life expectancy achieved in previous years have now been lost, with Covid-19 accounting

for the majority of the drop in life expectancy in both Inverclyde and Scotland.

The need to reduce health inequalities is greater than ever and will require sustained, positive change across the broad range of issues that impact on an individual's health and wellbeing. Early intervention is essential in minimising the impact of economic and social disadvantage and delivering better outcomes. In 2023, the Inverclyde Alcohol and Drugs Partnership earmarked funding for a one-year project focusing on early intervention and prevention around alcohol and drugs in and around schools and their communities. The aim of the project is to delay the onset of consumption of alcohol and drugs, reduce substance use and harms related to substance use within young people and prevent the development of problematic use in adulthood. This is part of a wider preventative approach to help develop or maintain protective factors and increase resilience.

Inverclyde also became the first council area in Scotland to join up with a national charity to introduce lifesaving equipment for first responders. The 'control the bleed kits' were purchased via The Daniel Baird Foundation and deliver early intervention for controlling mass or catastrophic bleeds. The kits are carried by the Community Wardens Service, but are also available for emergency services to access if required while they are also out on duty.



## Supporting good mental health

Good mental health is crucial to general wellness and as such, investment in services continued to be a priority. In 2022/23 the Inverclyde Communities Mental Health and Wellbeing fund distributed £215,431 to community organisations and third sector services in Inverclyde. The money has been used to fund projects that support mental health and wellbeing and help tackle the impact of social isolation, loneliness and the mental health inequalities made worse by the pandemic.

Concerns around the mental health of children and young people are growing both nationally and locally. The Action for Children Inverclyde Wellbeing Service was commissioned by Inverclyde HSCP and Inverclyde Council to create a wellbeing service for children and young people aged 5 to 18. Staff provide a range of services which, amongst other things, are designed to increase understanding of emotional health needs; establish a platform for children and young people to support themselves and maintain good emotional health and wellbeing; build positive emotional health and resilience in coping skills and reduce referrals.

During academic year 2022/23, 216 young people from P6 to S6 accessed school counselling support for reasons such as anxiety; emotional /behavioural issues and low mood.

Throughout the last year the overall picture on improving children and young people's engagement with services is positive; there has been an increase in people accessing both counselling and support and wellbeing services.

## Encouraging active lifestyles

Active travel refers to modes of travel that involve a level of activity and supports good physical and mental health as well as delivering environmental benefits.

A new project, focusing on a section of coastal path has delivered walking, wheeling and cycling improvements for those travelling from the Beacon Arts Centre to Cartsburn.

The project, which was managed by Inverclyde Council with Scottish Government funding administered by Sustrans Scotland, has delivered two segregated, two-metre-wide paths, improving connectivity by linking the west and east sides of Inverclyde and joining up with the National Cycle Network Route 75.

The new route is designed to encourage alternative forms of travel for the benefit of the environment and the health of residents and visitors, making it easier to choose healthier and more sustainable choices for everyday journeys, in a safe, traffic free environment.

The project is part of the Council's wider Active Travel strategy that seeks to capitalise on opportunities to develop a more coherent active travel network for active travel in Inverclyde, including the longer term plan to upgrade the active travel route between Wemyss Bay and Port Glasgow.

MEASURE	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	Target 2022/23	Status	Annual change	5 year trend
Reduce the gap in life expectancy for Inverclyde males and females to be closer to the Scottish average	(2018/20)	(2019/21)	<b>(2020/22)</b>	Reduce gap		 	 
Females	2.4 yrs	1.9 yrs	<b>2 yrs</b>				
Males	2.5 yrs	2.5 yrs	<b>1.9 yrs</b>				
Alcohol specific deaths in Inverclyde (rate per 100,000 population, 5 year rolling average)	(2016/20)	(2017/21)	<b>(2018/22)</b>	Reduce rate / gap			
Inverclyde	31.6	31.7	<b>32.8</b>				
Scotland	20.5	20.8	<b>21.2</b>				
Drug related hospital admissions (rate per 100,000 population, 3 year aggregate) Inverclyde	(2017/20)	(2018/21)	<b>(2019/22)</b>	Reduce rate / gap			
Scotland	282.6 221.0	276.2 233.0	<b>275.4 228.3</b>				
Number of clients with a self-directed support package					-	 	 
One option	2702	3103	2995				
Combination of options	37	64	12				
Number of adults aged 65+ in long term care	485	526	<b>510</b>		-		
Delayed discharge from hospital: bed days occupied by delayed discharge (patients aged 75+ per 1,000 population)	151	291	<b>460</b>		-		
Percentage of clients waiting no longer than 3 weeks from referral to receive an appropriate drug or alcohol treatment that supports their recovery	97.1%	82%	<b>96%</b>	90%			
The percentage of high priority public health complaints attended by the next day	46.5%	53.6%	<b>56.5%</b>	95%			

**Status** On or above target    
 Below target, but within 5% tolerance    
 5% or more below target    
 Data only PI, no target set

**Trend** Improving performance / got better    
 Declining performance / got worse

## Priority 7

### To protect and enhance our natural and built environment

#### Our aims

- With partners, continue the transformation of Inverclyde's physical environment through ongoing regeneration
- To support sustainable residential and commercial development of the local area through our Local Development Plan
- Our public spaces are high quality, attractive and well maintained and meet the needs of our community
- Inverclyde's transport and roads network supports the needs of residents
- The housing needs and aspirations of our current and future residents are met in a planned manner
- To reduce our carbon footprint, maximise recycling and minimise waste
- To protect our environment through a range of regulatory and enforcement activities that ensure the health, wellbeing and safety of residents of Inverclyde

#### How are we delivering this?

Tackling climate change is a global priority and Inverclyde Council has an obligation to reduce its own carbon footprint and to lead the way in encouraging communities, businesses and other organisations to do the same. To support the delivery of the Inverclyde Council Net Zero Strategy,

a Net Zero Action Plan 2022/27 was developed and implemented. The five-year Plan contains a range of actions aimed at achieving the Net Zero Strategy ambitions, with annual reports published on the Council's website. The Council's greenhouse gas emissions have reduced from 19,104 tonnes in 2012/13 to 11,705 tonnes in 2021/22, a reduction of 39%.

Investment in public spaces continued to be a priority, including the delivery of a new outdoor gym and play park extension in Coronation Park, Port Glasgow. The park is one of five facilities being upgraded as part of a suite of area wide improvements. The physical regeneration of our town centres and surrounding areas was boosted by £584,000 Place Based Funding, which has been earmarked for improvements in Greenock, Gourock and Port Glasgow town centres as well as Kilmacolm Village Centre and coastal footpath improvements.

Sustainability continued to be embedded into the school curriculum during the year, covering global citizenship, climate education, rights education and outdoor learning with some schools having gardens, allotments and beehives. A number of national awards have been won demonstrating the good practice in place. In addition, all Inverclyde schools, nurseries and Early Learning Centres are registered with the Eco Schools programme, with some having already attained green flag status.

## Restoring the natural environment

Protecting and restoring the natural environment is a crucial element of tackling the climate emergency. The Council was awarded £248,000 from the Nature Restoration Fund to deliver three projects with the potential to deliver significant environmental improvements and reduce carbon emissions:

- **Peatland restoration project:** Inverclyde Council has two land holdings in Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park, both with large areas of peatland. Healthy peatland has the ability to lock up and store huge amounts of carbon for long periods of time, however around 80% of Scotland's peat is degraded and is emitting carbon rather than storing it. A Peatland Restoration Feasibility Study in Inverclyde identified significant areas that would benefit from restoration work, thereby contributing to Net Zero ambitions.
- **Tree growing and reforestation:** The Net Zero Action Plan contains a target to increase the tree canopy in Inverclyde from 17% to 20%. The community have been involved in this work, including schools growing from seed. By April 2023 over 300 new trees had been planted locally to replace those lost to disease, with the project having the potential to deliver 20,000 new or replacement trees over the next few years.
- **Increased biodiversity and naturalised planting:** the third project is the expansion of biodiversity and naturalised planting in low amenity/low use areas. A number of small trial planting schemes were introduced resulting in a significant increase in pollinator insects adding to the increase in biodiversity.

## Land recycling

Having identified a need for outside space during the pandemic, Inverclyde Southwest library developed an idea to form a reading garden, utilising a piece of unused, derelict land directly outside the library building. This built on the idea of introducing biodiversity to the area, which had previously been identified as part of the Climate Beacon activities delivered by Inverclyde Libraries, in partnership with socially engaged Arts Charity RIG arts and other partners.

Named 'The Drying Green', it is one of twelve 'Unexpected Gardens', that were created across Scotland in 2022 as part as part of nationwide growing project 'Dandelion', which aims to bring people together to 'sow, grow and share'. RIG Arts transformed the disused, outside library space, into a shared space for nurturing plants and stories, with local groups and neighbours of the site encouraged to shape the plans on what the site should look like.

As well as accommodating a transformed Reading Garden for community and library users alike, 'The Drying Green' played host to a range of community focused activities bringing together heritage, arts and food and culminating in a Harvest Festival in Autumn 2022.

Events resumed in 2023, including 'Sow and Grow' Family Cooking Workshops, providing a community space where people grow their own produce and swap ideas, hosting special events and community activities that are open to everyone.

## 07 PERFORMANCE 2022/23

Classification : Official

MEASURE	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	Target 2022/23	Status	Annual change	5-year trend
Total CO <sub>2</sub> emissions within the scope of influence of the Council (per capita emissions tonnes)*	(2020) 3.8t	(2021) 4t	Due June 2024	Decrease			
The percentage of residents that are satisfied with parks and open spaces	(2017/20) 87.7%	(2018/21) 86%	(2019/22) 87%	Maintain %			
The percentage of Inverclyde's overall roads network that requires maintenance treatment	(2019/21) 35.3%	(2020/22) 32.7%	(2021/23) 31.2%	Decrease %			
Street Cleanliness Score	89.9%	85.1%	83.9%	Increase %			
The percentage of household waste that is recycled	37.1%	48.5%	Due Feb 2024	50%			
The percentage of category 1 potholes made safe within 24 hours of notification	100%	100%	91.7%	90%			
The percentage of building warrants assessed within 20 working days of registration	93.7%	92.2%	92.9%	95%			
The percentage of completion certificate responded to within 10 working days of registration	78.4%	68.1%	94.8%	85%			

<b>Status</b>	On or above target	Below target, but within 5% tolerance	5% or more below target	Data only PI, no target set
<b>Trend</b>	Improving performance / got better	Declining performance / got worse		

## Priority 8

To preserve, nurture and promote Inverclyde's unique culture and heritage

### Our aims

- Celebrate and promote Inverclyde's unique cultural and creative identity, past, present and future
- Develop a strong sense of place and increase civic pride through cultural and heritage activity
- Increase the number, and diversity of, local residents engaging with culture and heritage
- Promote the positive impact cultural and heritage participation can have on health and wellbeing
- Support economic development and regeneration using local culture and heritage activity as a catalyst
- Continue to secure ongoing investment from national funders into our cultural and heritage assets
- Empower communities to establish sustainable cultural and heritage activities
- Contribute to the delivery of Inverclyde Cultural Partnership's Arts and Creativity Strategy and Heritage Strategy

### How are we delivering this?

The Inverclyde Culture Collective continued to grow in strength during the year, helping to shape cultural life locally and support positive wellbeing.

The Collective, which was originally established in March 2021 for an 18-month period, is one of 26 projects across Scotland delivering a range of community rooted arts activity. The Council was successful in its bid for additional funding of £198,000 in 2022 which enabled the extension of the Inverclyde project until September 2023. Amongst other things, this funding supported the continuation of a Creative Producer and Activities Co-ordinator; development bursaries for local artists; Galoshans Festival 2022 and a residency celebrating black history and culture at the Watt institution.

In total, over 40 artists and creative practitioners have been supported as well as delivering initiatives that use art to improve health and wellbeing tailored to the needs of Inverclyde, including a focus on adult mental health; young people; community regeneration; environmental work and importantly, engagement with under-represented audiences with low arts engagement and barriers to access. A national evaluation of the Culture Collective programme, which included the Inverclyde project, found that the Programme is performing significantly across the aims of the national Culture Strategy.

Opportunities to secure external funding to build capacity and enhance Inverclyde's heritage networks were also pursued during the year with work beginning on a proposal to the National Lottery Heritage Fund. This work will continue during 2023/24, with the final application due to be progressed before the end of 2023.



## Understanding our local heritage

Inverclyde Council's Reparatory Plan, which seeks to address the role that the transatlantic slave trade has played in Inverclyde's maritime, industrial and cultural heritage, acknowledges the need to use the past to reflect, educate and promote change for the better. As such, anti-racist education was, and continues to be, a priority.

A dedicated Inclusive Curriculum sub-group was established to review the school curriculum, including black history and culture, with a specific focus on how Inverclyde schools can better educate young people about the area's historic links to the slave trade. The views of practitioners and young people were central to this work. The group also explored how quality learning and teaching resources could be developed to take forward this work. Following a trial and evaluation of the new resources, plans are in place to roll it out in session 2023/24.

An Inclusive Curriculum Conference, to support leaders with approaches to anti-racist education in our establishments, took place in September 2022 whilst Inverclyde schools continue to be supported to participate in the Education Scotland's Building Racial Literacy Programme.

Several schools are leading the way in innovative practice, receiving recognition at a national level e.g. an Inverclyde primary school teacher was named joint winner of the prestigious GTCS Saroj Lal Award for Pioneering Spirit in Equality and Diversity. A film is also being created for the Scottish Government to support work at a national level in this area.

## Developing community arts

Following a successful bid to the National Lottery Heritage Fund, a new, three-year project called 'Watt Voices' got underway in Inverclyde with the launch of a *Creativity Space*, a vibrant community arts hub formed from unused office space within the Watt Institution.

This multi-purpose space, which opened in late 2022, is being used to deliver a range of creative activities, with a particular emphasis on digital creativity. It is the first element to be delivered in a wider project aimed at developing inclusive engagement and outreach heritage activities in Inverclyde, utilising the Watt Institution as a key asset. The other strands of the Project include:

- ◆ The reinterpretation of the Watt Institution collections; rethinking the collections in relation to their origins and addressing historic omissions through the decolonisation of the collections.
- ◆ Work with various partners to take a collaborative and co-design approach in developing project activities.
- ◆ Development of long-term and meaningful engagement with groups who have previously been under-represented at the Watt Institution and to reach local communities who do not currently access the museum and its collections.

Importantly, by opening up the space for community use, where group activities can be hosted in a warm, welcoming environment, new audiences are being reached.

MEASURE	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	Target 2022/23	Status	Annual change	5-year trend
The percentage of adults that are satisfied with libraries (LGBF)	(2017/20) 75%	(2018/21) 76.5%	<b>(2019/22) 74.3%</b>	Maintain %			
The percentage of adults that are satisfied with museums (LGBF)	(2017/20) 55%	(2018/21) 59.6%	<b>(2019/22) 59.7%</b>	Increase %			
The percentage of adults that attended cultural events / places of culture in last 12 months (Scottish Household Survey)	Not available	<b>(2021)* 39%</b>	<b>Due June 2024</b>	Increase %	-	Not available	Not available
The percentage of adults living in the 20% most deprived that attended cultural events / places of culture in the last 12 months (Scottish Household Survey)	Not available	<b>(2021)* 37%</b>	<b>Due June 2024</b>	Increase %	-	Not available	Not available
The percentage of adults that participated in any cultural activity (Scottish Household Survey)	Not available	<b>(2021)* 76%</b>	<b>Due June 2024</b>	Increase %	-	Not available	Not available
The percentage of adults living in the 20% most deprived that participated in any cultural activity (Scottish Household Survey)	Not available	<b>(2021)* 67%</b>	<b>Due June 2024</b>	Increase %	-	Not available	Not available
Total number of visits to / usages of the Museum (virtual and in person)	48,146	84,854	<b>95,218</b>	50,000			
Total number of visits to libraries (virtual and in person)	529,804	540,418	<b>503,432</b>	510,000			

*Note on Scottish Household Survey data* – 2021 data for local authorities was published on 20<sup>th</sup> June 2023. Due to the coronavirus pandemic, all face-to-face interviewing for the Scottish Household Survey was suspended and replaced with telephone/ video interviewing for both the 2020 survey and the 2021 survey. 2020 results were not published at an individual local authority level. 2021 data is therefore not comparable to previous SHS results.

**Status** On or above target     
 Below target, but within 5% tolerance     
 5% or more below target     
 Data only PI, no target set

**Trend** Improving performance / got better     
 Declining performance / got worse



To deliver services that are responsive to community needs and underpinned by a culture of innovation, continuous improvement and effective management of resources

## Our aims

- The principles of Best Value are applied to everything that we do
- Our residents and communities feel actively involved in how services are designed and delivered
- We have modernised the way in which we work via the implementation of our 'Delivering Differently' programme
- Our services are provided in a variety of ways that meet the needs of our service users and offers flexibility
- We use data more effectively for the benefit of residents and to plan for the future of services
- We maximise our income stream by working more efficiently and where it is appropriate collaboratively, in the delivery of services
- To modernise and rationalise our property estate
- To strengthen partnership working to deliver the best possible outcomes for our residents

## How are we delivering this?

Inverclyde Council's commitment to delivering high quality, innovative services received national recognition, with the Council being one of six UK authorities to make it to the finals of the Local Government Chronicle (LGC) Council of the Year. The Award recognises the delivery of strong outcomes, the quality of leadership and that the Council is doing its best for its area, in response to the specific challenges in all areas of its work.

As we entered recovery after the pandemic, it was recognised that it was an appropriate time to re-evaluate our strategic priorities to ensure that a focus on recovery; cost of living and climate change, is reflected across our work. Community consultation was integral to the process with a public consultation running over eight weeks involving 2,801 residents. The new Council Plan 2023/28 sets out the organisational vision, 'Success for All - Getting it Right for Every Child, Citizen and Community' and the ways in which the Council hopes to deliver better outcomes for residents. The Council Plan supports the delivery of the Inverclyde Alliance Partnership Plan 2023/33, ensuring that partners work together to promote success for all and address local inequalities.

As part of the 2023 budget, a further £1million was allocated to digital modernisation to build resilience; deliver new ways of working and 'futureproof' the organisation. An overall fund of £1.25million, which is managed by the Digital Modernisation Project Board, will deliver a range of projects that will deliver improvements in service delivery for the benefit of citizens and other service users.

The Council also became a member of the Co-operative Councils National Innovation Network, which is a new local government network that provides the opportunity to work collaboratively with communities and partners to deliver new and innovative ways of working.

## Delivering new ways of working

The pandemic necessitated a shift in the ways in which Councils operate, leading to a review taking place of how different ways of working could continue to deliver our priorities for communities, whilst at the same time meeting the changing needs of employees and residents.

More flexible and agile working cultures and practices can also provide a new way of managing funding gaps in increasingly complex and uncertain times, by exploring all options to mitigate the needs for service reductions.

The New Ways of Working Project, which evolved from the earlier Delivering Differently programme, was established with a dedicated Change Team for an initial 18-month period to progress the shared goal of increasing electronic document management, reducing the size of the Council's office estate and providing greater flexibility to some employees regarding the mix of office and home working, which provided the opportunity to progress a review of the Greenock Campus offices and the associated use of technology.

Phase 1 of the project got underway in 2022/23, focusing on the use of office space within the Greenock Campus, linked to the implementation of new ways of working, such as hybrid working and a greater use of ICT.

The New Ways of Working project continues to evolve, to reflect new developments, including the Levelling Up Fund, with the aim of delivering further savings and efficiencies.

## Pioneering services

In early 2022, the Scottish Library and Information Council's (SLIC) pioneering 'Lend and Mend Hubs' proposal was announced as one of just four UK projects selected to receive funding from the John Lewis Partnership's Circular Future Fund. Inverclyde Libraries was involved in the SLIC bid and along with libraries in Midlothian, Aberdeen, Perth and South Ayrshire, was selected to make up a 'network' of sustainable, circular hubs across Scotland to help the local community to repair, reuse, rent and upcycle everyday items, with free access for everyone to keep items in use for longer, rather than them being thrown away.

SouthWest Library, Greenock was chosen as the location for this new initiative. The project follows a co-design approach, with local knowledge and expertise being brought to ensure that the hub is tailored to community need. Amongst the many benefits that this project will deliver include helping with the cost-of-living crisis and tackling the climate emergency by cutting down on waste and providing access to resources that might not otherwise be available, support responsible consumption and learning, locally and free.

Each library hub will also introduce an education programme to support new skills development, helping to reduce inequality through equitable access to resources. It is hoped that this pilot will help develop a long term model for libraries to be a hub of circular economy activities.

The first of its kind Lend and Mend Hub is due to open in summer 2023.

MEASURE	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	Target 2022/23	Status	Annual change	5-year trend
The percentage of Citizens' Panel respondents that agree that the Council is responsive to customer needs	(2021) 26%	Biennial PI	<b>(2023) 23%</b>	Increase %			
The percentage of Citizens' Panel respondents that are satisfied with Council services	(2021) 58%	Biennial PI	<b>(2023) 48%</b>	Increase %			
The percentage of the Council's accommodation that is suitable for its current use	92.4%	92.4%	<b>94.1%</b>	92.5%			
Percentage of transactions dealt with through the Council's Customer Service Centre portal that are digital	65%	66%	<b>71%</b>	Increase %			
The gross cost of benefits administration per case	£36.62	£36.01	<b>£35.33</b>	£45.00			
The percentage of benefits processing that was accurate	*Not measured	100%	<b>100%</b>	99%			
The percentage of pest control service requests attended within 5 working days	99.6%	98.8%	<b>98.5%</b>	95%			
The percentage of consumer complaints completed within 14 days	92%	91.7%	<b>90%</b>	95%			

\* The work required for “Accuracy of Benefits Processing” was temporarily dropped while the team was processing Covid business support grants however quality assurance work continued throughout 2020/21 with no issues arising. Measurement was re-instated for 2021/22.

**Status** On or above target    
 Below target, but within 5% tolerance    
 5% or more below target    
 Data only PI, no target set

**Trend** Improving performance / got better    
 Declining performance / got worse

# Priority 10

To develop motivated, trained, and qualified employees who deliver quality services that meet current and anticipated service needs

## Our aims

- Our workforce size and the skill set of our employees meet the needs of the organisation
- We have an employee driven culture of high performance, improvement and innovation
- Our workforce feels valued and highly motivated
- Our employees understand how their role contributes to the Council's vision
- Inverclyde Council is viewed as an employer of choice
- The health and wellbeing of our employees is supported through a range of health, safety and wellbeing opportunities
- Employees are digitally skilled to deliver the best service to meet customer needs

## How are we delivering this?

The Council's workforce has shown an exceptional ability to meet the demands placed on it, adapting to new ways of working to continue to meet the needs of residents, as well as providing support to colleagues. Following a shift to home working during the pandemic, a 12-month hybrid working pilot was implemented which allowed employees to undertake some of their work at their contractual place of employment and some

remotely, normally at home, dependant on responsibilities. An evaluation of the pilot found it to be a success, with the result that it will be integrated within the Council's wider Flexible Working Policy going forward. A refreshed Leadership Programme has been put in place to support managers with the skills needed to manage a hybrid workforce and address any employee issues, such as social isolation.

Like all Scottish Councils, difficulties in the recruitment and retention of skilled employees placed an additional pressure on workforce resources. To address this, a range of new, forward-thinking approaches were put in place, including expansion of the Modern Apprenticeship Programme; employability skills training; flexible retirement options and the development of employee benefits. Inverclyde was also one of the first Scottish Councils to agree a financial support offer for up to 10 Masters students to complete their studies in return for them taking up a three-year post as a newly qualified social worker. A review of succession planning has also been carried out and a number of new initiatives will be rolled out in 2023/24, including opportunities for mentoring/ coaching; secondments and customised training.

Inverclyde Council also implemented an early increase in the Living Wage, to help with the cost-of-living crisis. As an accredited Living Wage employer, Inverclyde Council was due to implement the new rate by May 2023, but took the decision to increase the living wage six months earlier to help employees to cope during these challenging times.

## Supporting continuous improvement in the workplace

The feedback from the Employee Survey, carried out in 2022, provided a wealth of information on the feelings and opinions of the Council's employees. The survey response rate, 42%, was 10% higher than the previous survey in 2018 and the highest response rate ever achieved for the Employee Survey. The feedback helped to identify both strengths and areas for improvement across the organisation and provided the Council's leadership team with a robust 'evidence' base to carry out a self-evaluation to support continuous improvement, on the theme of workforce.

More than 30 members of the senior management team, from across all Council Services, participated in the assessment which used the Best Value Statutory Guidance and the national Public Sector Improvement Framework (PSIF) as the framework. The output was a Workforce Improvement Plan containing a range of actions aimed at delivering improved outcomes in key areas including, employee engagement; workplace efficiency and employee understanding and awareness of the Council's vision and priorities.

All the feedback received will inform the new People and Organisational Development Strategy 2024/26 as well as the direction of the Workforce Planning and Development Group and Service Workforce Plans, which are the mechanism for defining current and future workforce requirements across the Council.

## Supporting employee wellbeing

As an employer, the provision of care and support to support positive employee wellbeing is paramount. During the year, the Council worked towards the achievement of 'Equally Safe at Work' accreditation, which is designed to enable employers to better support employees who have experienced gender-based violence, and the creation of an inclusive workplace culture that prevents violence against women. In working towards accreditation, a range of activities, policies and practices have been progressed to meet the six standards aligned with women's workplace equality. The outcome of the Council's application will be known later in 2023.

The Council also committed to the the Miscarriage Association's Pregnancy Loss Pledge. Employers who make the pledge commit to a higher pregnancy loss standard to ensure that employees going through what is a very difficult, or traumatic time, get the support and time off they need.

Additionally, a dedicated Inverclyde Bereavement Charter Working Group was established to support the development of a Bereavement Charter for Inverclyde and attain the national Charter Mark, in line with the National Bereavement Charter for Scotland. This work will continue in 2023/24 and if successful, Inverclyde Council will be the first Council in Scotland to achieve the Charter, demonstrating the Council's strength of commitment to supporting bereaved employees.

Indicator	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	Target 2022/23	Status	Annual change	5-year trend
The percentage of employees that are satisfied in their job (Employee Survey)*	2018/19 82%	No survey	<b>2022/23 81%</b>	75%			
The percentage of employees that understand how their work contributes to the Council's aims (Employee Survey) *	2018/19 93%	*No survey	<b>2022/23 88%</b>	75%			
The percentage of employees that agree they feel motivated to do the best job that they can (Employee Survey) *	2018/19 78%	*No survey	<b>2022/23 78%</b>	75%			
The percentage of employees that agree that Inverclyde Council is a caring and supportive employer (Employee Survey)*	2018/19 74%	*No survey	<b>2022/23 72%</b>	75%			
The gender pay gap	7.4%	6.6%	<b>4.4%</b>	Reduce %			
The percentage of the highest paid 5% of employees who are women	62%	60%	<b>60%</b>	Maintain %			
The overall sickness absence rate	7 days	8.3 days	<b>10.4 days</b>	9 days			
The number of abandoned calls made to the Customer Service Centre							
(i) revenues and benefits	6%	13%	<b>20%</b>	26%			
(ii) other council services	3%	6%	<b>7%</b>	10%			
The percentage of employee appraisals completed in the year and individual development plans agreed	92%**		<b>94%</b>	90%			

\* Employee Survey long term trend is based on survey results from the previous 3 surveys.

\*\*extended over 18 months due to Covid.

**Status** On or above target    
 Below target, but within 5% tolerance    
 5% or more below target    
 Data only PI, no target set

**Trend** Improving performance / got better    
 Declining performance / got worse





## AWARDS 2022/23



INVERCLYDE Council was selected as a finalist in the Council of the Year category for the LGC Awards 2023. The Award recognise excellence in local government throughout the UK. Inverclyde Council was the only Scottish Council to reach the finals.

### **Scottish First Aid Awards, 2023**

Inverclyde Libraries was selected as a finalist in the Scottish First Aid Awards 2023 in the Community First Aid Champion category, in recognition of the community sessions and signposting the service does within its branches, as part of the service's Health and Wellbeing offer.

### **Scottish Library and Information Council (SLIC) Awards 2022**

Inverclyde Libraries Services was awarded the SLIC Project of the Year Award 2022 for its focus on sustainability linked to the COP26 Summit held in Glasgow in 2021. The project was described as “inspirational” in the way in which it grew the sense of community.

### **Food for Life Served Here Award 2022**

The *Food for Life Served Here* Bronze Award was maintained for the fourth time, ensuring that pupils in 20 primary schools continue to enjoy fresh, local and sustainable school meals. The Award recognises local authorities in Scotland that serve school meals that are freshly prepared, using free-range eggs and high-welfare meat and free from genetically modified ingredients and undesirable additives.



### **Education Awards**

A number of Inverclyde schools and school professionals continued to excel at a national level with a wide range of Awards being received, including:

#### **General Teaching Council Scotland Awards - Excellence in Professional Learning Award**

The Inverclyde Education Professional Learning Community received an Excellence in Professional Learning Award for Schools and Learning Communities by the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTC Scotland). The Award celebrates and recognises schools and learning communities that support and lead professional learning which has a significant and sustained impact on teachers, classroom practice and the learning of children and young people.



## AWARDS 2022/23



### **Standard for Career Long Professional Learning: Saroj Lal Award for a Pioneering Spirit in Equality and Diversity**

Catherine D'Souza, who works at Newark Primary in Port Glasgow, was named the joint winner of this year's General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTC Scotland) Saroj Lal Award for a Pioneering Spirit in Equality and Diversity. The Award celebrates the work of teachers who actively challenge discrimination, demonstrating a pioneering spirit and determination, in a bid to promote and facilitate a culture and ethos of equality and diversity.



Inverclyde was represented in three categories at the Scottish Education Awards 2023.

Hillend Children's Centre was shortlisted as a finalist in the Making a Difference Award at the Scottish Education Awards. The Centre was recognised for its collaborative working with children, families and partners to deliver a child-centred experience where everyone supports young people to reach their potential.

Within the Lifetime Achievement category, an Inverclyde Primary Head Teacher, Catriona Miller was shortlisted as a finalist, recognising 30 years' service in Inverclyde schools whilst Jaclyn Kinninmont, who works within the Community Learning and Development service, was a finalist for the Community Learning and Development Award, in recognition of her work in schools and in the wider community with young people for whom English is not their first language.

### **School of Sanctuary Award**

Whinhill Primary School became only the second school in Scotland to achieve the School of Sanctuary Award. A School of Sanctuary is a school that is committed to being a safe and welcoming place for those seeking sanctuary. Working towards the Award supports pupils in gaining a better understanding of issues of identity, diversity, equality and community.

### **UNICEF Rights Respecting School Award**

Aileymill Primary School and St. Ninian's Primary School successfully achieved the UNICEF Rights Respecting Gold Award whilst St. Columba's High School achieved the Silver Award. The Rights Respecting Schools Award puts children's rights at the heart of school life. The Award embeds these values in daily school life and gives children the best chance to lead happy, healthy lives and to be responsible, active citizens.

### **Scottish Book Trust**

St Ninian's Primary School was awarded Gold by the Scottish Book Trust for an outstanding commitment to reading and literacy. This acknowledgment highlights the school's exceptional efforts in cultivating a reading culture among its students.



## Local Government Benchmarking Framework 2022/23

The Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) brings together a wide range of information about how all Scottish Councils perform in delivering services to local communities. Data is published by the Improvement Service with data provided for all 32 Scottish Councils.

A new approach to reporting the LGBF was introduced by the Improvement Service in spring 2023, with a move to an interactive dashboard which provides access to data and analysis at an indicator level, service level, family group and Council level. One significant advantage of the dashboard is that new data is now added throughout the year, providing benchmarking information in a timelier manner.

The available data for 2022/23 is provided below, along with Family Group and Scotland performance information to allow you to benchmark Inverclyde's performance. The colours for each indicator represent the quartile it falls into - an indicator with a ranking of 1-16 is shown as green, rankings from 17-24 are shown as yellow and those indicators ranked 25-32 are shown as red.

The national LGBF dashboard can be found by clicking on this link: [Explore the data | Benchmarking \(improvementservice.org.uk\)](https://improvementservice.org.uk)

Rank 1-16 (Q1 & Q2)

Rank 17-24 (Q3)

Rank 25 – 32 (Q4)

		Performance			Scotland	Family Group	Rank		
		2020/21	2021/22	2022/23			2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
<b>CHILDREN'S SERVICES</b>									
Ref	Title								
CHN10	Percentage of adults satisfied with Schools	(2017/20) 78.0%	(2018/21) 78.7%	(2019/22) 76.7%	(2019/22) 75%	(2019/22) 74.7%	(2017/20) 7	(2018/21) 11	(2019/22) <b>16</b>
CHN21	% of Participation Rate 16–19-year-olds	93.3%	93.8%	94.0%	94.3%	93.6%	12	8	<b>22</b>
CHN24	% of Children Living in Poverty	18.2%	24.4%	dna	(2021/22) 22.6%	(2021/22) 26.7%	8	<b>21</b>	dna
<b>CORPORATE SERVICES</b>									
CORP06a	Sickness absence days (teacher)	3.5	4.4	6.8	6.8	6.3	8	3	<b>16</b>
CORP06a	Sickness absence days (non-teacher)	8.0	8.8	11.3	13.2	13.9	5	2	<b>6</b>

## Local Government Benchmarking Framework 2022/23

		Performance			Scotland	Family Group	Rank		
		2020/21	2021/22	2022/23			2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
<b>CORP03b</b>	% of highest paid 5% of employees who are women	62.4%	60%	60%	58.9%	59.6%	3	11	14
<b>CORP03c</b>	Gender pay gap	7.4%	6.6%	4.4%	2.5%	2.0%	30	29	23
<b>CORP04</b>	Cost per dwelling of collecting Council Tax	£9.43	£8.94	£11.62	£6.84	£8.47	26	27	29
<b>CORP07</b>	% of Income due from Council Tax Received by end of the year	94.4%	95.7%	95.9%	96.2%	95.2%	22	20	21
<b>CORP08</b>	% Invoices Sampled that were paid within 30 days	95.5%	94.2%	95.1%	90.6%	90.3%	7	10	4
<b>CORP 09</b>	Proportion of SWF crisis grant decisions within 1 day	100%	99.8%	100%	91.8%	94.6%	1	2	1
<b>CORP 10</b>	Proportion of SWF Community Care Grant decisions within 15 days	100%	99.5%	99.5%	87.3%	88%	1	4	3
<b>CORP 11</b>	Proportion of SWF budget spent	85.7%	112.9%	108.6%	130%	106%	13	13	21
<b>CORP 12</b>	Proportion of DHP funding spent	96.3%	89.2%	97.6%	94.4%	95%	14	16	10
<b>CORPORATE ASSET</b>									
<b>CORP ASSET1</b>	% of operational buildings suitable for current use	92.4%	92.4%	94.1%	86.1%	89.2%	7	7	7
<b>CORP ASSET2</b>	% of operational buildings in satisfactory condition	87.8%	92.6%	93.3%	89.7%	91.8%	21	14	10
<b>ADULT SOCIAL WORK</b>									
<b>SW03a</b>	% of people aged 65 or over with long-term care needs receiving personal care at home	66.1%	67.3%	65.0%	61.5%	64.4%	11	8	8
<b>SW06</b>	Rate of Readmission to hospital within 28 days per 1,000 discharges	96.7	90.6	78.4	101.7	104.1	5	8	5

## Local Government Benchmarking Framework 2022/23

		Performance			Scotland	Family Group	Rank		
		2020/21	2021/22	2022/23			2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
<b>SW07</b>	% of adult care services graded good or better	87%	85.1%	80%	75%	78.6%	13	6	11
<b>SW08</b>	Number of days people spend in hospital when they are ready to be discharged per 1,000 population	151	291	460	919	946	5	7	7
<b>TACKLING CLIMATE CHANGE</b>									
<b>CLIM01</b>	CO2 Emissions per Capita	3.67t	3.95t	dna	<b>(2021/22)</b> 5.1t	<b>(2021/22)</b> 5.5t	9	7	dna
<b>CLIM02</b>	CO2 Emissions per Capita (within scope of LA)	3.76t	4.04t	dna	<b>(2021/22)</b> 4.57t	<b>(2021/22)</b> 4.36t	11	11	dna

Ref	Title	Performance			Scotland	Family Group	Rank		
		2020/21	2021/22	2022/23			2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
<b>ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES</b>									
<b>ENV3C</b>	Street Cleanliness Score	89.9%	85.1%	83.9%	90.6%	86.4%	22	29	31
<b>ENV04b</b>	% A Class Roads which should be considered for treatment	(2019/21) 20.8%	(2020/22) 16.7%	<b>(2021/23)</b> 16.0%	<b>(2021/23)</b> 27.4%	<b>(2021/23)</b> 22.4%	(2019/21) 7	(2020/22) 2	<b>(2021/23)</b> 4
<b>ENV04c</b>	% B Class Roads which should be considered for treatment	(2019/21) 34.7%	(2020/22) 30.4%	<b>(2021/23)</b> 26.9%	<b>(2021/23)</b> 31.5%	<b>(2021/23)</b> 26.8%	(2019/21) 21	(2020/22) 20	<b>(2021/23)</b> 14
<b>ENV04d</b>	% C Class Roads which should be considered for treatment	(2019/21) 38.9%	(2020/22) 36.4%	<b>(2021/23)</b> 36.7%	<b>(2021/23)</b> 32.7%	<b>(2021/23)</b> 32.0%	(2019/21) 25	(2020/22) 24	<b>(2021/23)</b> 24
<b>ENV04e</b>	% U Class Roads which should be considered for treatment	(2017/21) 35.9%	(2018/22) 33.5%	<b>(2019/23)</b> 31.7%	<b>(2019/23)</b> 36.4%	<b>(2019/23)</b> 34.9%	(2017/21) 17	(2018/22) 14	<b>(2019/23)</b> 12
<b>ENV07a</b>	Satisfaction with Refuse Collection	(2017/20) 86.1%	(2018/21) 88.4%	<b>(2019/22)</b> 92.3%	<b>(2019/22)</b> 76%	<b>(2019/22)</b> 79.8%	(2017/20) 4	(2018/21) 3	<b>(2019/22)</b> 1

## Local Government Benchmarking Framework 2022/23

Ref	Title	Performance			Scotland	Family Group	Rank		
		2020/21	2021/22	2022/23			2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
ENV07b	Satisfaction with Street Cleaning	(2017/20) 67.6%	(2018/21) 66.9%	(2019/22) 67.0%	(2019/22) 58.7%	(2019/22) 57.4%	(2017/20) 11	(2018/21) 11	(2019/22) 9
<b>CULTURE AND LEISURE</b>									
C&L05a	Percentage of adults satisfied with Libraries	(2017/20) 75.2%	(2018/21) 76.5%	(2019/22) 74.3%	(2019/22) 74%	(2019/22) 68.8%	(2017/20) 14	(2018/21) 15	(2019/22) 17
C&L05b	Percentage of adults satisfied with Parks and Open Spaces	(2017/20) 87.7%	(2018/21) 86.0%	(2019/22) 87.0%	(2019/22) 87.3%	(2019/22) 87.5%	(2017/20) 9	(2018/21) 17	(2019/22) 19
C&L05c	Percentage of adults satisfied with Museums and Galleries	(2017/20) 54.9%	(2018/21) 59.6%	(2019/22) 59.7%	(2019/22) 73%	(2019/22) 61.1%	(2017/20) 25	(2018/21) 22	(2019/22) 25
C&L05d	Percentage of adults satisfied with Leisure Facilities	(2017/20) 80.0%	(2018/21) 78.7%	(2019/22) 77.0%	(2019/22) 72.3%	(2019/22) 69.0%	(2017/20) 3	(2018/21) 4	(2019/22) 7
<b>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT</b>									
ECON3	Time per business & industry planning application (weeks)	11	13.6	13.8	12	13.9	19	23	22
ECON5	Number of business gateway start ups	26.9	29.5	25.4	14.3	16.7	4	3	4
ECON8	Proportion of properties receiving Superfast Broadband	96.8%	97.1%	97.4%	95.5%	96.9%	9	11	17
ECON 12a	Claimant count as % of working age population	6.4%	5.3%	3.9%	3.2%	4%	22	26	27
ECON 12b	Claimant count as % of 16-24 year old population	8.2%	6.4%	4.8%	3.5%	4.5%	23	28	29

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<b>Report To:</b>	<b>Policy &amp; Resources Committee</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>21 November 2023</b>
<b>Report By:</b>	<b>Head of Legal, Democratic, Digital &amp; Customer Services</b>	<b>Report No:</b>	<b>LS/111/23</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Vicky Pollock</b>	<b>Contact No:</b>	<b>01475 712180</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Data Protection Officer Annual Report 2023</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 provide the Policy & Resources Committee with the Data Protection Officer's Annual Report which sets out a note of the Council's data protection performance over the past year, together with the Data Protection Officer's assessment of Inverclyde Council's compliance with data protection legislation.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 It is recommended that the Policy and Resources Committee notes the Data Protection Officer's Annual Report 2023 as set out at Appendix 1.

**Iain Strachan**  
**Head of Legal, Democratic, Digital and Customer Services**

### **3.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT**

- 3.1 Data protection legislation changed significantly with the introduction of the Data Protection Act 2018 on 23 May 2018 and the EU General Data Protection Regulation on 25 May 2018. The UK GDPR, which replicates the EU GDPR into UK law, came into force on 1st January 2021. The data protection legislation increased organisational data protection obligations and accountability, as well as enhancing individual's data protection rights. Processes and working practices across the Council have since been adapted to ensure compliance.
- 3.2 The Data Protection Officer's Annual Report – attached at Appendix 1 – summarises the analysis of the Council's data protection compliance since January 2021. The 2023 report covers the period from 1 January 2023 to 22 October 2023. It is appreciated that this report covers only part of 2023, however, officers undertook in May 2023 to provide a data protection performance report for consideration by the Policy and Resources Committee in 2023. The next annual report, covering the full 2024 period, and the balance of 2023, will be presented to Committee in early 2025.
- 3.3 In terms of the UK GDPR, there is a requirement that the Data Protection Officer shall report to the highest management level of their organisation. This report fulfils that obligation.
- 3.4 In 2022 57% of subject access requests (SARs) were responded to within the timescales set by legislation. Although this has improved to date in 2023, sitting at 64.13%, there is a need for further improvement. This level of late responses could result in regulatory action being taken by the regulator, the Information Commissioner (ICO). While there is currently no requirement to submit performance statistics to the ICO, the Council has on request, submitted its 2022 statistics to the ICO. The ICO has responded by stating that ideally, they would like to see a compliance rate of 90% at a minimum. The Council will work with the ICO to improve its SAR compliance rates throughout Council services. It has been noted that there has been a significant increase in the number and complexity of SARs being received by the Council, particularly by the HSCP.
- 3.5 The number of confirmed data breaches has steadily increased over the past 3 years. This may be due to increased awareness of reporting responsibilities in terms of the Council's established Data Breach Management Protocol. As highlighted in the report, most data breaches are of a minor nature as a result of human error and lack of due care and attention. Services should continue to remind staff of the need to take appropriate care when processing personal data.
- 3.6 It is critical that all Council staff understand the importance of dealing with the Council's information appropriately, safely and securely. Getting it right means the personal information the Council holds about customers and citizens, and the Council's own information, is protected. The Information Governance Team is currently developing a training programme for all relevant staff for deliver in late 2023/early 2024. All employees will also be asked to complete refresher training, being completion of the mandatory data protection specific e-learning module.
- 3.7 In addition to formal training, awareness-raising is also a valuable way of keeping staff appraised of information governance matters. There are various mechanisms available to facilitate this, including: publishing information governance advice and guidance on the Council's intranet, which is updated on a regular basis. The Council's cross-service Information Governance Steering Group meets monthly, and has a standing agenda item on data protection matters, which also helps the sharing of good practice on data protection matters and highlighting of emerging themes and issues.
- 3.8 It is anticipated that the Data Protection and Digital Information Bill will become law by Easter 2024 or later. This legislation will make a number of material changes to data protection law and updates will be provided to this Committee as required.

3.9 In summary, the Data Protection Officer is of the view that the Council is generally complying with data protection legislation, however there are some areas for improvement which are highlighted above and in the annual report.

#### 4.0 PROPOSALS

4.1 Policy and Resources Committee are asked to note the contents of the Data Protection Officer's Annual Report at Appendix 1.

#### 5.0 IMPLICATIONS

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

SUBJECT	YES	NO
Financial		x
Legal/Risk	x	
Human Resources		x
Strategic (Partnership Plan/Council Plan)	x	
Equalities, Fairer Scotland Duty & Children/Young People's Rights & Wellbeing		x
Environmental & Sustainability		x
Data Protection	x	

#### 5.2 Finance

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

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					

#### 5.3 Legal/Risk

Article 39 of the UK GDPR sets out the tasks of the DPO. The Council, not the DPO, is responsible for implementing appropriate technical and organisational measures to ensure that it is in compliance with the UK GDPR (Articles 24 and 28). The Council risks regulatory action from the Information Commissioner's Officer if it fails to comply with its obligations under data protection legislation



#### 5.4 Human Resources

There are no human resource implications arising from this report.

#### 5.5 Strategic

This report will help deliver the outcomes in the Council Plan Theme 3 – Performance - high quality and innovative services are provided giving value for money.

#### 5.8 Data Protection

The data protection implications are as highlighted throughout this report and its appendix.

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 The Corporate Management Team has been consulted on this report.

#### 7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 None.



**DATA PROTECTION OFFICER'S  
ANNUAL REPORT  
2023**

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## Foreword

Since January 2021, the provisions of the EU GDPR have been incorporated directly into UK law as the UK GDPR. In practice, there is little change to the core data protection principles, rights and obligations, which have now been fully embedded into working practices across the Council.

Whilst there has been some good evidence of data protection compliance in general, there are some areas for improvement which the Council should address in order to further improve the level of compliance.

It should be noted that this annual report deals with the Council's data protection performance from 1 January 2023 to 22 October 2023, with comparative full year data from 2021 and 2022.

There is ongoing room for improvement in responding to subject access requests (SARs) as a high number of responses were issued outside of the timescales set by legislation. This level of late responses could result in regulatory action being taken by the regulator, the Information Commissioner (ICO). While there is currently no requirement to submit performance statistics to the ICO, the Council has on request, submitted its 2022 statistics to the ICO. The ICO has responded by stating that ideally, they would like to see a compliance rate of 90% at a minimum. The Council will work with the ICO to improve its SAR compliance rates throughout Council services.

As of October 2023, there has been a decrease in the number of confirmed data breaches reported to the DPO. Most data breaches are of a minor nature resulting from lack of due care when sending emails or hard copies of correspondence. The number of serious data breaches requiring to be reported to the ICO continues to be low.

It is important for the Council to continue to pay sufficient regard to Data Protection not only to ensure individuals' rights are upheld but also due to the fact that the ICO has various enforcement powers, including the power to levy a fine of up to £17,500,000 or up to 4% of annual global turnover, whichever is larger. In June 2022, the ICO set out a revised approach to public sector enforcement which has resulted in an increased use of their wider powers, including warnings, reprimands and enforcement notices, with fines only issued in the most serious of cases. Additionally, the ICO will be working more closely with the public sector to encourage compliance with data protection law and prevent harms before they happen.

It is anticipated that the Data Protection and Digital Information Bill will become law by Easter 2024 or later. This legislation will make a number of material changes to data protection law and updates will be provided to the Council as required.

Vicky Pollock  
Data Protection Officer

## The Role of the DPO

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) requires all public authority data controllers to designate a Data Protection Officer (DPO). The DPO must be designated based on professional qualities and expert knowledge of data protection law and practices, and the ability to fulfil the statutory tasks set out in the GDPR.

The designated DPO must directly report to the highest management level, must not receive instructions regarding the exercising of statutory tasks, and shall not be penalised or dismissed for performing those tasks. The Council must support the DPO in performing their tasks by providing resources necessary to carry out those tasks and access to personal data and processing operations.

Since April 2021, Vicky Pollock has been appointed as the permanent designated DPO as required by Article 37 of the UK GDPR.

Please note that reference to the DPO in this report includes the Information Governance Team.

## Data Protection Queries and Advice

One of the key tasks of the DPO is to inform and advise the Council and its services about their obligations to comply with the UK GDPR and other data protection laws. This is a requirement under Article 39 of the UK GDPR.

The DPO receives a wide range of queries on data protection matters. This involves both providing advice, guidance and supporting various internal processes. Advice is provided on intricate aspects of the law supporting Council services in applying data protection in practice. The DPO also assists with various internal data protection practices such as the review of privacy documentation, monitoring of Data Protection Impact Assessments and the Information Asset Register.

Areas on which advice is being provided include:

- Data Sharing Agreements
- Data Processing Agreements
- Understanding the role of the Council as a Data Controller and its implications
- Understanding the role of external agencies as Data Processors and its implications
- Application of the data protection principles
- Understanding the lawful bases for processing personal data
- Data Protection Impact Assessments
- Data protection risks
- Disapplication of the data protection provisions (exemptions)
- Data protection breaches

There has been a good level of engagement from Council services on various data protection issues. Advice is sought from the DPO on data processing at different

stages. The DPO is also a member of the Council’s cross-service Information Governance Steering Group meets monthly, and has a standing agenda item on data protection matters, which also helps the sharing of good practice on data protection matters and highlighting of emerging themes and issues.

### Data Protection Policy

The Council’s Data Protection Policy was reviewed and updated to ensure that it remains relevant and accurate and was approved by the Policy and Resources Committee on 23 May 2023. The policy will be reviewed again in April 2026.

### Data Protection Awareness

Data Protection training and awareness has been incorporated into a data protection specific e-learning module which is mandatory for all employees who have access to a computer and process personal data. All employees are also required to undertake regular refresher training. Training continues to be monitored by the Information Governance Steering Group and further training is provided on a needs basis.

Targeted training was provided to those who process SARs on basic procedures and the application of exemptions and redactions in November 2022. A further training programme is being developed for delivery in early 2024.

### Information Rights

Under the UK GDPR, individuals have several rights including the right to be informed, the right to make an access request, the right to rectification, the right to erasure (the right to be forgotten), the right to restriction of processing, and the right of data portability. Individuals’ rights are covered within the Council’s Data Protection Policy.

Number of valid requests received during 1 January 2021 to 31 December 2021

<b>Right</b>	<b>Number Received</b>	<b>Number of responses issued on time</b>	<b>Percentage of responses issued on time</b>
Access Requests	55	n/a*	n/a*
Rectification Requests	1	1	100%
Erasure Requests	1	1	100%
Restriction of Processing Request	0	0	n/a
Data Portability Request	0	0	n/a

\*Information not recorded until 2022 once Workpro implemented.

Number of valid requests received during 1 January 2022 to 31 December 2022

<b>Right</b>	<b>Number Received</b>	<b>Number of responses issued on time</b>	<b>Percentage of responses issued on time</b>
Access Requests	82	47	57%
Rectification Requests	1	1	100%
Erasure Requests	1	1	100%
Restriction of Processing Request	0	0	n/a
Data Portability Request	0	0	n/a

Number of valid requests received during 1 January 2023 to 22 October 2023

<b>Right</b>	<b>Number Received</b>	<b>Number of responses issued on time</b>	<b>Percentage of responses issued on time</b>
Access Requests	92	59**	64.13%**
Rectification Requests	0	0	n/a
Erasure Requests	0	0	n/a
Restriction of Processing Request	5	0	n/a
Data Portability Request	0	0	n/a

\*\*As of 22 October 2023, 17 requests were still in progress with time left to respond to them on time. 20 requests have been responded to late, with 4 having been carried over from the previous reporting period.

Although the performance in 2023 to date has improved, the percentage of SAR responses issued on time is too low and there is room for improvement. Services must take action to address late SAR responses, which actions should include having appropriate resources in place to meet statutory timescales. Given the interest in the Council's SAR statistics from the ICO and their comments that they expect a 90% SAR compliance rate, an action plan will be put in place to address compliance levels.

There is a noticeable increase in the number of SARs being submitted to the Council. While most services are seeing the usual level of SARs, the HSCP has seen a large increase in the number, size and complexity of SARs being received. It is not possible to quantify how many requests received relate to the Financial Redress Scheme or the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry. The purpose of individual requests is not recorded as this is not always provided by requestors. However, evidence suggests that the nature of the SARs being received by the HSCP relate to historic social work involvement and complex children and families' cases, so it can be presumed that the requirements of the Financial Redress Scheme and the Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry are having an impact. This is an impact which is being felt by all Scottish Local Authorities who are seeing a large increase in the number of SARs being submitted.

As well as processing requests received from members of the public and staff, the Council also processes requests made under Schedule 2 of the Data Protection Act 2018. These requests are mainly from Police Scotland who are usually seeking information to assist with the prevention and detection of crime and the apprehension and prosecution of offenders. The number of valid Schedule 2 requests received has increased in the past year. This may be due to more accurate recording of requests received. Services are reminded that if they receive such a request, it should be passed to the DPO to be logged.

Number of valid Schedule 2 requests received by year

<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of requests received</b>
2021	3
2022	4
1 January to 22 October 2023	6

## Data Breaches

A personal data breach means a breach of security leading to the accidental or unlawful destruction, loss, alteration, unauthorised disclosure of, or access to, personal data. This includes breaches that are the result of both accidental and deliberate causes.

A personal data breach can be broadly defined as a security incident that has affected the confidentiality, integrity or availability of personal data. In short, there will be a personal data breach whenever any personal data is accidentally lost, destroyed, corrupted or disclosed; if someone accesses the data or passes it on without proper authorisation; or if the data is made unavailable and this unavailability has a significant negative effect on individuals.

The Council has in place a Data Breach Management Protocol which has been fully embedded into the Council's data protection processes and procedures.

The ICO will only be notified of a breach when it is deemed to be a 'risk' to the rights and freedoms of affected individuals. Breaches which need to be reported must be reported without undue delay, but not later than 72 hours after becoming aware of it. The obligation to notify the affected data subject only arises when the breach is deemed to be a 'high risk' to the rights and freedoms of affected individuals. The affected data subject(s) should be informed without undue delay.



## Number of confirmed data breaches reported by year

<b>Year</b>	<b>Number of confirmed data breaches</b>
2021	21
2022	36
1 January to 22 October 2023	28

Almost all data breaches are as a result of human error and lack of due care and attention. Employee error and disclosure in error account for 89% of confirmed data breaches so far in 2023.

## Data breaches by breach type

<b>Data Breach by Type</b>	<b>No. of confirmed breaches 2021</b>	<b>No. of confirmed breaches 2022</b>	<b>No. of confirmed breaches 2023</b>
Employee Error	17	18	11
Loss of Equipment	0	1	2
Confidentiality Breach/Deliberate Misuse	2	1	1
Theft of Data (Physical Equipment, Papers etc.)	0	0	0
Loss of Data	0	0	0
Technical Fault	0	0	0
Disclosure In Error	2	16	14

## Data breaches arising by service:

<b>Service Area</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>1 Jan to 22 Oct 2023</b>
Culture & Communities	1	0	0
Education	8	19	9
Environmental Services	0	0	0
Public Protection	2	3	1
Finance	4	3	2
Legal & Democratic Services	2	2	6
Organisational Development, Policy & Communications	0	0	3
Regeneration & Planning	0	0	0
HSCP - Health & Community Services	1	5	4
HSCP - Children's Services & Criminal Justice	1	2	2
HSCP - Strategy & Support Services	0	1	1
HSCP - Health Addictions and Homelessness	2	1	0
HSCP	0	0	0

While the number has decreased in 2023, approximately 32% of breaches have occurred within Education Services. While this figure is higher in comparison with other services, the figure is proportionate as the service processes personal data at a larger scale in comparison to other services and taking into account the number of education establishments. The DPO has noted that Education Services are pro-active in following the Data Breach Management Protocol and reporting breaches as soon as they become aware. It is also noted that Education Services are training their staff on a regular basis on how to recognise and report a data breach – for example annual training for teachers. This has resulted in a decrease in the number of data breaches being reported by Education Services in 2023.

Almost all data breaches fall below the threshold for reporting to the ICO. In 2022, only one data breach was deemed by the DPO to require reporting to the ICO. No further action was taken by the ICO. So far, in 2023, no breaches have met the threshold for ICO reporting.

Services should continue to remind staff, on an ongoing basis, of the need to take appropriate care when processing personal data – including sending emails and hard copy correspondence.

### Data Protection Complaints

The DPO deals with data protection complaints from individuals regarding the Council's data protection practices, which mostly relate to the Council's handling of SAR requests.

Number of formal complaints received by the DPO

Year	Number of complaints received
2021	2
2022	7
1 January to 22 October 2023	5

It should be noted that no complaints have been received from the ICO in any of the years specified in respect of the Council's data protection practices.

### Data Protection Impact Assessments

The GDPR introduced a requirement for Data Controllers to undertake a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) to help identify and minimise data protection risk where processing is likely to result in a high risk to individuals.

Number of DPIAs completed

	2021	2022	1 Jan-22 Oct 2023
DPIAs completed	20	24	11

All services must continue to ensure that DPIAs are undertaken as necessary in terms of the Council's established DPIA guidance.

## Privacy Notices

A privacy notice is a document which must be provided to individuals to explain how their personal data is processed.

It has two aims:

- to promote transparency; and
- to give individuals more control over the way their data is collected and used.

Transparency is a key principle of the UK GDPR, as it prevents organisations from processing personal data without data subjects' knowledge or approval.

When personal data is being collected directly from data subjects, it is a legal obligation to provide a privacy notice at the time of collection from the data subject.

The Council has a suite of privacy notices for all service areas which are regularly reviewed and updated, the last review having taken place in 2023.

## Information Asset Registers

The Council holds a corporate information asset register (IAR) that records assets, systems and applications used for processing or storing personal data across the organisation. The IAR holds details of all information assets, including asset owners, asset location, retention periods and security measures deployed.

The Council is required to review its IAR periodically to ensure that it is kept up to date and accurate at all times.

An annual review is progressed each year, with each service area asked to review and update the assets they hold.

## Working Groups

The DPO continues to be an active participant in several working groups.

SOLAR Data Protection/FOI Working Group – a working group consisting of Data Protection and Freedom of Information representatives from the 32 Scottish Local Authorities. This is a very useful group which discusses matters of shared concern and which is also used to share knowledge and experience so that all 32 Scottish Local Authorities are consistent in their approach to data protection matters.

Information Governance Steering Group – the Head of Legal, Democratic, Digital and Customer Services chairs this internal group which includes representatives from all Council services. The overall purpose of the group is:

- To support and drive the broader information governance agenda across the Council
- To ensure the effective management of all information governance risks
- To provide assurance to the Corporate Management Team (CMT) that appropriate frameworks, workstreams and initiatives are in place to support, co-ordinate, promote, monitor and assure the development and delivery of effective information governance

### Contact the DPO

If you would like to find out more about this annual report, or provide any feedback, please contact the Data Protection Officer.

Phone: 01475 712180

Email: [dataprotection@inverclyde.gov.uk](mailto:dataprotection@inverclyde.gov.uk)

In writing to:

Data Protection Officer

Municipal Buildings

Clyde Square

Greenock

PA15 1LX

Visit: [Data Protection and Freedom of Information - Inverclyde Council](#)

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**Report To:** Policy & Resources Committee      **Date:** 21 November 2023  
**Report By:** Head of Legal, Democratic, Digital & Customer Services      **Report No:** LS/112/23/IS  
**Contact Officer:** Iain Strachan      **Contact No:** 01475 712498  
**Subject:** Updated Policy and Annual Update on the use of surveillance powers -  
The Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Act 2000 (RIPSA)

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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 seek approval of an updated version of the Council's RIPSA Policy and to provide an overview and update on the use of directed surveillance powers by the Council.

1.3 The Council has also recently been the subject of a regular inspection by the Investigatory Powers Commissioner's Office, and an update on that is also included in this report.

## 2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that the Committee notes the contents of this report, including the recent inspection by the Investigatory Powers Commissioner's Office.

2.2 It is recommended that the Committee approves the updated Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Act 2000 Policy appended to this report in Appendix 3.

2.3 It is recommended that the Committee note a further annual update, including a review of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Act 2000 Policy, will be provided in a year's time.

**Iain Strachan**  
**Head of Legal, Democratic, Digital & Customer Services**

### **3.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT**

- 3.1 The use of surveillance to provide information is a valuable resource for the protection of the public and the maintenance of law and order. To ensure that local authorities and law enforcement agencies are able to discharge their responsibilities, use is made of unaided surveillance and surveillance devices.
- 3.2 Where this surveillance is covert i.e. the subject of the surveillance is unaware that it is taking place, then it must be authorised in accordance with the relevant regulations to ensure that it is lawful. CCTV systems in the main will not be subject to this procedure as they are “overt” forms of surveillance. However, where CCTV is used as part of a pre-planned operation of covert surveillance, then authorisation must be obtained.
- 3.3 The Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Act 2000 (RIPSA) provides a legal framework for the use, deployment, duration and effectiveness of covert surveillance and the use of covert human intelligence sources. The Council must comply with RIPSA and adhere to the authorisation procedures specified in the Council’s RIPSA Policy and related procedures. The Investigatory Powers Commissioner’s Office (IPCO) provides independent oversight of the use of the powers contained within RIPSA. This oversight includes inspection visits by IPCO inspectors on a 3-yearly basis.
- 3.4 Under the Council’s authorisation procedures, applications for directed surveillance are authorised by a restricted number of Authorising Officers at Appendix 4 of the Council’s RIPSA Policy. A central register of authorisations is maintained by the Head of Legal, Democratic, Digital and Customer Services who also carries out a gate-keeping role in connection with draft applications.

### **4.0 PROPOSALS**

#### **Overview of RIPSA**

- 4.1 The Council’s RIPSA Policy and its procedures applies where ‘Directed Surveillance’ is being planned or carried out. Directed Surveillance can only be conducted to achieve one of more of the permitted RIPSA purposes, namely (i) preventing or detecting crime or prevention of disorder, (ii) in the interests of public safety or (iii) protecting public health. Directed surveillance is covert and is undertaken for the purpose of a specific investigation to obtain private information.
- 4.2 All applications for authorisations or renewals of authorisations must be reviewed by one of the Council’s Authorising Officers, with an appropriate form having first been completed by a relevant Council officer. Authorisations should be made in writing but can be made verbally in cases of emergency. Authorising Officers must be satisfied that the authorisation is (i) necessary - where there is no reasonable and alternative way of achieving the objective, and (ii) proportionate - any use of the surveillance shall not be excessive i.e. it shall be in proportion to the significance of the matter being investigated.
- 4.3 Key points in relation to the Authorisation Process are outlined below:-

#### Time Periods

Written authorisations expire after three months in the case of directed surveillance. Oral applications expire after 72 hours.

#### Review

If required, authorisations can be renewed for a further period, three months in the case of directed surveillance and 12 months for use of a covert human intelligence source.

### Renewals

If at any time before an authorisation would expire the Authorising Officer considers it necessary for the authorisation to continue for the purpose for which it was given, it may be renewed for a further period beginning on the day on which the previous authorisation ceases to have effect.

### Cancellation

The Authorising Officer must cancel an authorisation if satisfied that the directed surveillance no longer satisfies the criteria for authorisation, the use or conduct of the source no longer satisfies the criteria for authorisation or procedures for the management of the source are no longer in place.

- 4.4 Appendix 2 of the RIPSAs Policy gives guidance on information that should be included by those that complete RIPSAs authorisations and is for the benefit of Authorising Officers in reviewing the application. Appendix 3 also gives guidance for officers to consider on the potential application of RIPSAs when using the internet or social media sites for Council purposes. Whilst this guidance is of a more operational nature it is felt appropriate to include in the Policy, given the developments in this area, and the need to ensure any such covert surveillance is appropriate. The Council also advised IPCO that this additional guidance would be included.
- 4.5 The Committee was last updated on the Council's RIPSAs activity in September 2022, and it is important that elected members receive regular updates on the Council's use of its surveillance powers, given their potentially intrusive nature. Since the last report to the Committee in September 2022, there has been no further use of surveillance which was authorised under RIPSAs. Training sessions have been held with Authorising Officers and those officers that are most likely to make use of RIPSAs. It should also be noted that the Council has not made any use of covert human intelligence sources in the period since the September 2022 report, and any such use is considered highly unlikely. A link to the report to the Committee in 2022 is included here <https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/meetings/meeting/2482>. An updated version of the Policy will assist with the Council's compliance.

### **IPCO Inspection**

- 4.6 As was anticipated, and reported to the Committee in September 2022, the Council has also recently been the subject of a regular inspection by IPCO. This inspection took the form of the Council providing a written update on its compliance with RIPSAs. A copy of IPCO's correspondence with the Council, which includes an explanation for the reason why IPCO is now carrying out an alternative approach to oversight of local authorities, is included in Appendix 1 to this report, comprising letters of 2 May, 15 June and 16 June 2023. It is to be noted that IPCO confirmed it is satisfied that the Council provided assurance that ongoing compliance with RIPSAs will be maintained and a further inspection this year will not be required. The next inspection will be 2026.

### **Review of the Council's RIPSAs Policy**

- 4.7 As is set out in the Council's correspondence with IPCO, going forward the Council will be conducting an annual review of its RIPSAs Policy, in order to meet IPCO's expectations and to also ensure the Policy and the Council's practices remain up to date with good awareness across the Council.

- 4.8 The proposed changes to the RIPSAs Policy are mainly minor in nature, with the only ones of note being the inclusion of additional guidance around the potential application of RIPSAs to Council activity being conducted on social media sites. The Policy has, however, had removed from it aspects that were much more operational in nature, for instance details of the forms to be used and the Standard Operating Procedure for the use of technical equipment for directed surveillance, which will be made available separately to staff and on ICON. Appendix 2 to this report does, however, include a table which summarises the proposed changes to the Policy, with the updated Policy being included in Appendix 3 to this report.
- 4.9 The Council's cross-service Information Governance Steering Group has been consulted on these changes to the RIPSAs Policy.

## 5.0 IMPLICATIONS

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

SUBJECT	YES	NO
Financial		X
Legal/Risk	X	
Human Resources		X
Strategic (Partnership Plan/Council Plan)		X
Equalities, Fairer Scotland Duty & Children/Young People's Rights & Wellbeing	X	
Environmental & Sustainability		X
Data Protection		X

### 5.2 Finance

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					

### 5.3 Legal/Risk

RIPSAs provides a legal framework for authorising covert surveillance by public authorities and an independent inspection regime to monitor these activities within the United Kingdom. If RIPSAs has been complied with, then any interference with an individual's privacy will be in accordance with the law. Failure to act in accordance with RIPSAs could result in a complaint being raised with the Investigatory Powers Tribunal. There are clear risks to the Council if unlawful surveillance



was to be undertaken, and keeping the RIPSA Policy under regular review, with appropriate support and training to staff, will mitigate against this,

**5.4 Human Resources**

There are no direct Human Resources implications arising from this report.

**5.5 Strategic**

There are no strategic implications directly arising from this report.

**5.6 Equalities, Fairer Scotland Duty & Children/Young People**

(a) Equalities

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

X	YES – Assessed as relevant, an EqIA is required and is available on the Council’s website.
	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.

(c) 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.

## **6.0 CONSULTATION**

6.1 The Information Governance Steering Group and the Corporate Management Team have been consulted on the updated RIPSA Policy.

## **7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

7.1 None

# IPCO

Investigatory Powers  
Commissioner's Office

PO Box 29105, London  
SW1V 1ZU

02 May 2023

Ms. Louise Long  
Chief Executive  
Inverclyde Council  
24 Clyde Square  
Greenock  
PA15 1LY



Dear Chief Executive,

During 2023, your Council is due its usual three-yearly inspection by IPCO, regarding its compliance with RIPSAs 2000 and the Investigatory Powers Act 2016. Your local authority was last inspected in June 2020.

Following a review of how IPCO conducts its oversight of local authorities, we shall no longer undertake routinely an inspection as has previously been the case. Instead, the Investigatory Powers Commissioner (IPC) has agreed that each local authority should provide a written update, in the first instance, on its compliance with the legislation. This will enable us to assess whether or not a remote, or in some cases, in-person inspection is required. This approach takes cognisance of the general decline in the use of covert powers by many local authorities, and seems the right approach for now, based upon our assessment of risk and where our limited resources are best directed for the coming year.

It is, of course, the responsibility of your authority to ensure that any covert activity is conducted in accordance with the legislation. The IPC expects early notification of any Errors in the use of the powers, which will then be investigated fully. However, generally speaking, if you have not used the powers since your last inspection, and your responses to the questions below assure us of having maintained good levels of compliance, we shall probably require no further engagement. Where the powers have been used, or you are planning to use them in the near future, an appropriate discussion with an Inspector will be arranged in order to help us form a view of the approach you are taking.

In addition, we will conduct a dip sample of in-person inspections during the coming year. This might include your authority, even if you have not used the powers for some time. You will be given sufficient prior notice if this is the case.

I have been allocated your Council to inspect this year. If you wish to discuss anything in advance of sending me your response, please feel free to get in touch.

I should be grateful if you would provide me with the following details through a return email. Please ensure that your contact details or those of your Senior Responsible Officer, through whom you might wish to respond, are provided in that reply.

The IPC expects you to have paid ongoing, due regard to the requirements of the legislation and associated Codes of Practice and seeks your written confirmation of the following:

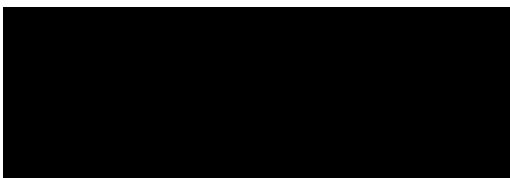
1. Any Areas of Non-Compliance identified at your last inspection have been remedied
2. Your RIPSAs Policy is subject to annual review and submitted to your Elected Members for approval (please advise when this was most recently revised and shared with Members)
3. Training, both initial and ongoing for key officers, plus awareness training for all staff, is provided (please provide dates since the last inspection)
4. A Central Record that meets the requirements of the relevant Codes of Practice is in place
5. You have a named SRO in place, as well as designated Authorising Officers
6. You have policies and training that appropriately cover the potential or actual use of social media as part of investigations/enforcement activities
7. The potential (for inadvertent, unauthorised) use of such media is actively monitored by managers
8. If you own/manage a town centre CCTV system, that this is operated and appropriately managed in line with RIPA considerations, including when used by third parties such as the local police.
9. Your Council has recognised and adheres to the Safeguards outlined in the relevant Codes of Practice in relation to its retention, review and destruction of material obtained through the use of covert powers.

Finally, in relation to use of the covert powers available to you, can you please confirm whether you have:

- Used the powers since the last inspection, or plan to use them imminently (or can envisage doing so following the formation of a new investigative/enforcement team or strategy)
- If you have used the powers, please provide an electronic copy of the relevant applications and authorisations for my review when you reply to this letter.

I look forward to hearing from you,

Yours faithfully,



**John Coull**  
**Oversight Inspector**  
**Investigatory Powers Commissioner's Office**  
Tel: [REDACTED] Email: [REDACTED]  
Check out our website at <https://www.ipco.org.uk>

Our Ref: LL/JMcL

Date: 15<sup>th</sup> June 2023

**Louise Long**  
**Chief Executive**  
Municipal Buildings  
Clyde Square  
Greenock  
PA15 1LY

Tel: [REDACTED]

Mr John Coull  
Oversight Inspector  
IPCO

Dear Sir

I write further to your letter of 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2023, and apologies for the delay in responding. The Council would respond to the points raised in your letter, as set out below.

**1. Any Areas of Non-Compliance identified at your last inspection have been remedied**

Whilst there were a number of observations and recommendations at the time of the last inspection, in June 2020, the Council does not believe that any areas of non-compliance were identified.

**2. Your RIPSAs Policy is subject to annual review and submitted to your Elected Members for approval (please advise when this was most recently revised and shared with Members)**

The Council's [RIPSA Policy](#) is not currently the subject of an annual review. The Council's Policy & Resources Committee did, however, receive an update on the Council's RIPSAs activity in September 2022. A copy of the report can be found [here](#), which (as noted in paragraph 4.4 of the report) will be an annual report going forward.

The annual report which will be submitted to Committee later in 2023 will also include a review of the RIPSAs Policy, which will likewise be undertaken annually going forward.

**3. Training, both initial and ongoing for key officers, plus awareness training for all staff, is provided (please provide dates since the last inspection)**

The Council instructed an external training provider, Act Now, to provide RIPSAs training in April and May 2022 to its five RIPSAs Authorising Officers and to another 12 officers who are most likely to make RIPSAs applications. The latter are mostly officers within the Council's Public Protection Service.

The Council will carry out internal refresher training sessions for its RIPSAs work in Summer 2023, which will again be primarily aimed at those officers described above.

In addition, the Council has a cross-service working group, the Information Governance Group (IGSG), whose purpose, as set out in its Terms of Reference (ToRs), is to:-

- support and drive the broader information governance agenda across the Council;
- ensure the effective management of all information governance risks; and
- provide assurance to the Council's Corporate Management Team that appropriate frameworks, work-streams and initiatives are in place to support, co-ordinate, promote, monitor, and assure the development and delivery of effective information governance.

RIPSA is a standing agenda item on the monthly meetings of the IGSG, and for 2023 one of its key tasks set out in its Terms of Reference is to oversee the “preparation and management of the Council’s external RIPSA inspection by the Office of the Investigatory Powers Commissioner”.

**4. A Central Record that meets the requirements of the relevant Codes of Practice is in place**

The Council holds a Central Register of RIPSA applications that meets the requirements of the relevant Codes of Practice.

**5. You have a named SRO in place, as well as designated Authorising Officers**

Senior Responsible Officer – Iain Strachan, Head of Legal, Democratic, Digital and Customer Services.

Designated Authorising Officers

Louise Long - Chief Executive

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

Alan Puckrin - Chief Financial Officer

Stuart Jamieson - Director, Environment and Regeneration

Kate Rocks - Chief Officer, Inverclyde Health and Social Care Partnership

The Council’s Head of Legal, Democratic, Digital and Customer Services is also a Designated Authorising Officer. However, given his role as Senior Responsible Officer he would only consider authorising an application where (i) the application was urgent and, for whatever reason, no other authorising officer was available and (ii) another Council solicitor with sufficient knowledge of RIPSA was available to conduct a separate peer review on the application.

**6. You have policies and training that appropriately cover the potential or actual use of social media as part of investigations/enforcement activities**

The Council has covered off this area in the external training sessions delivered by Act Now in relation to the use of social media as part of investigations/enforcement activities. A copy of the presentation delivered by Act Now is enclosed with this letter.

The Council will again cover this in the training to be delivered this summer and will update its Policy later this year to also include additional guidance around such use of social media.

**7. The potential (for inadvertent, unauthorised) use of such media is actively monitored by managers**

As noted above, such use of social media for investigations/enforcement was included in the training delivered by Act Now, and the Council’s Policy will be updated to also include additional guidance around this. The Council is content that relevant managers know they need to undertake such active monitoring.

**8. If you own/manage a town centre CCTV system, that this is operated and appropriately managed in line with RIPA considerations, including when used by third parties such as the local police.**

Inverclyde Council operates its own Public Space CCTV system. We refer to our Covert Use of Public Space CCTV Guidance and Protocol with Police Scotland. In general, the system is used for general observation duties which do not require authorisation under RIPSA.

Public Space CCTV, including mobile CCTV, is also used for both planned and spontaneous events e.g. youth gatherings, unauthorised firework displays, marches and demonstrations and the like. RIPSAs authorisations are required where Police Scotland wish to carry out directed surveillance on individuals or groups using the system.

The use of the Public Space CCTV system is overt rather than covert.

**9. Your Council has recognised and adheres to the Safeguards outlined in the relevant Codes of Practice in relation to its retention, review and destruction of material obtained through the use of covert powers.**

The Council continues to adhere to the Security and Retention of Documents section of its RIPSA Policy. We have recently been revisiting our position on data assurance and as advised above this area will be addressed in our Policy renewal later this year.

In relation to retention/disposal of RIPSAs authorisations and associated records we can confirm the following.

The Council has a retention period of five years for RIPSAs Registers and Authorisations as well as associated records (correspondence, emails and the like).

The Council has a retention period of six months for RIPSAs Authorisations and associated records that are not approved.

Training records and Learning materials will be kept indefinitely for training purposes. However, no personal data or any Authorisations will be held as part of that.

**Finally, in relation to use of the covert powers available to you, can you please confirm whether you have:**

- Used the powers since the last inspection, or plan to use them imminently (or can envisage doing so following the formation of a new investigative/enforcement team or strategy)

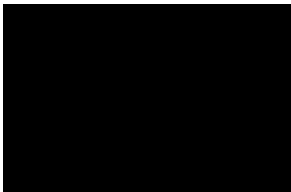
Please find attached electronic copies of our 2020 and 2021 Authorisations, one in each year.

- If you have used the powers, please provide an electronic copy of the relevant applications and authorisations for my review when you reply to this letter.

As above

Should you wish to discuss anything contained in this letter, then please feel free to contact myself, or my colleagues Iain Strachan, or Martin Hughes.

Yours sincerely



**Louise Long**  
**Chief Executive**

OFFICIAL

# IPCO

Investigatory Powers  
Commissioner's Office

PO Box 29105, London  
SW1V 1ZU

Ms. Louise Long  
Chief Executive  
Inverclyde Council  
24 Clyde Square  
Greenock  
PA15 1LY

16 June 2023

Dear Chief Executive,

Thank you for providing IPCO with your response to the matters identified at points 1 to 9 of my Inspector's letter dated 2 May 2023.


I am satisfied that your reply provides your assurance that ongoing compliance with RIP(S)A 2000 and the Investigatory Powers Act 2016 will be maintained. As such, your Council will not require further inspection this year.

I would ask that you ensure that the key compliance issues continue to receive the necessary internal governance and oversight through yourself and your Senior Responsible Officer: policy refreshes; annual updates to your Elected Members; ongoing training and awareness raising; internal compliance monitoring by lead managers within their business areas; and the retention, review and destruction (RRD) of any product obtained through the use of covert powers (Records and Product Management in accordance with the Safeguards Chapters of the relevant Codes of Practice).

Your Council will be due its next inspection in 2026, but please do not hesitate to contact my Office if IPCO can be of assistance in the intervening period.

Yours sincerely,

**The Rt. Hon. Sir Brian Leveson**  
The Investigatory Powers Commissioner

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## SUMMARY OF PROPOSED REVISIONS TO RIPSA POLICY – NOVEMBER 2023

PAGE	TITLE	SECTION	PROPOSED CHANGE
1	Title Page	n/a	New Title Page
2	Document Control Page	n/a	New Document Control Section
3/4	Policy Statement	3	Minor deletion, and here and elsewhere changes to make clear is a policy and not a procedure
4	Objective of the Policy	3	Minor deletion
4	Scope of the Policy	5	Minor deletion and change of service name. Inclusion of reference to new Pre RIPSA Authorisation Review Form.
4/5	Principles of Directed Surveillance and the Use or Conduct of Covert Human Intelligence Sources	6	Minor amendments of roles
5/6	The Authorisation Process	7	Minor amendment for change of service name
7	Security and Retention of Documents	11/12	Minor amendments for changes of service name
8	Oversight and Complaints	12	Inclusion of IPCO website details
10	Appendix 1 - Definitions	n/a	Inclusion of text to make clear references to statute etc are to such provisions as amended from time to time
12/3	Appendix 3 – Internet & Social Media	n/a	Minor amendments and new sections inserted to give guidance on use of social media by officers carrying out surveillance which may involve RIPSA considerations, including in relation to online social media research carried out for child/adult protection work and test purchasing.
14	Appendix 4 – Authorising Officers	n/a	Changes to reflect changes in officers and job titles
-	Appendices 2 and 4 in previous Policy removed	n/a	Removed as more operational in nature, and will be made available separately to staff, including on ICON.

# Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Act 2000 (RIPSA) Policy

Version 2.2

*Produced by:*  
*Information Governance Steering Group*  
*Inverclyde Council*  
*Municipal Buildings*  
*GREENOCK*  
*PA15 1LX*



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**DOCUMENT CONTROL**

<b>Document Responsibility</b>		
<b>Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Service</b>
Information Governance Steering Group	RIPSA Policy	Information Governance Steering Group
<b>Change History</b>		
<b>Version</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Comments</b>
1.0	August 2020	RIPSA Policy Review
2.0	August 2023	Revisions made by Information Governance (Solicitor)
2.1	October 2023	Revisions made by Head of Legal, Democratic, Digital & Customer Services
2.2	October 2023	Revisions made by Head of Legal, Democratic, Digital & Customer Services following CMT review
<b>Distribution</b>		
<b>Name/ Title</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Information Governance Steering Group	August 2023	Minor amendments to Policy and new insertions at Appendix 3
Information Governance Steering Group	October 2023	Minor amendments
CMT	October 2023	Deletions of more operational/procedural aspects not required for a policy

*Distribution may be made to others on request*

<b>Policy Review</b>			
<b>Updating Frequency</b>	<b>Review Date</b>	<b>Person Responsible</b>	<b>Service</b>
Annually unless required earlier	November 2024	Information Governance Steering Group	Legal, Democratic, Digital and Customer Services

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## **1 Introduction**

The use of surveillance to provide information is a valuable resource for the protection of the public and the maintenance of law and order. In order that local authorities and law enforcement agencies are able to discharge their responsibilities, use is made of unaided surveillance and surveillance devices. Where this surveillance is covert i.e. the subject of the surveillance is unaware that it is taking place, then it must be authorised to ensure that it is lawful.

CCTV systems in the main will not be subject to this policy as they are "overt" forms of surveillance. However, where CCTV is used as part of a pre-planned operation of covert surveillance, then authorisation should be obtained.

The use of human beings to provide information ("informants") is a valuable resource for the protection of the public and the maintenance of law and order. In order that local authorities and law enforcement agencies are able to discharge their responsibilities, use is sometimes made of "undercover" officers and informants. These will be referred to in this document as "covert human intelligence sources" ("CHIS") and the area of work of undercover officers and informants to whom this procedure applies will be referred to as "CHIS work".

Until October 2000 the use of covert surveillance and covert human intelligence sources was not subject to statutory control in the UK. From that date a legal framework ensures that the use, deployment, duration and effectiveness of covert surveillance and the use of covert human intelligence sources is subject to an authorisation, review and cancellation procedure.

## **2 Definitions**

Appendix 1 contains definitions of the terms used within this policy.

## **3 Policy Statement**

In some circumstances it may be necessary for Inverclyde Council employees in the course of their duties to make observations of a person in a covert manner and to make use of informants and to conduct undercover operations in a covert manner. By their nature such actions constitute an interference with that person's right to privacy and may give rise to legal challenge as a potential breach of Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights and the Human Rights Act 1998 ("the right to respect for private and family life").

The Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA) and the Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Act 2000 (RIPSA) together provide a legal framework for covert surveillance and the use of covert human intelligence sources by public authorities (including local authorities) and an independent oversight regime to monitor these activities.

Inverclyde Council employees must adhere to the authorisation framework specified in this policy, and the associated procedures, before conducting any covert surveillance or using a source or allowing or conducting an undercover operation.

Employees of Inverclyde Council will not carry out intrusive surveillance within the meaning of RIPSA. This is covert surveillance of anything taking place on residential premises or in a private vehicle that involves the presence of an individual on the premises or in the vehicle or is carried out by means of a surveillance device capable of providing information of the same quality and detail as might be expected to be obtained from a device actually present on the premises or in the vehicle.

#### **4 Objective of the Policy**

The objective of this policy, and the associated procedures, is to ensure that all work involving directed surveillance by Inverclyde Council employees is carried out effectively while remaining in accordance with the law. Directed surveillance is defined as covert surveillance undertaken "for the purposes of a specific investigation or operation" and "in such a manner as is likely to result in the obtaining of private information about a person". This policy, and the associated procedures, should be read in conjunction with RIPSA and the Scottish Government's Codes of Practice on covert surveillance and the use of covert human intelligence sources.

#### **5 Scope of the Policy**

This policy, and the associated procedures, apply in all cases where "directed surveillance" is being planned or carried out and in all cases where the use of an undercover officer or source is being planned or carried out. This includes the use of media such as the internet or social media sites (see Appendix 3).

This policy, and the associated procedures, do not apply to:-

- *ad hoc* covert observations that do not involve the systematic surveillance of a specific person.
- observations that are not carried out covertly.
- unplanned observations made as an immediate response to events.
- covert test purchase transactions under existing statutory powers where the officers involved do not establish a personal or other relationship for the purposes stated (see definition of a covert human intelligence source). As an example, the purchase of a music CD for subsequent expert examination would not require authorisation but where the intention is to ascertain from the seller where he buys suspected fakes, when he takes delivery etc, then authorisation should be sought beforehand.
- Tasks given to persons (whether those persons are employees of the Council or not) to ascertain information which is not private e.g. the location of cigarette vending machines in licensed premises.

In all cases of doubt, legal advice should be sought from the Head of Legal, Democratic, Digital and Customer Services.

Officers might also find it helpful to consider the Pre RIPSA Authorisation Review Form that is available from Legal, Democratic, Digital & Customer Services, to assist them in deciding whether or not a RIPSA authorisation is required in terms of this policy, and the associated procedures.

#### **6 Principles of Directed Surveillance and the Use or Conduct of Covert Human Intelligence Sources**

In planning and carrying out directed surveillance or CHIS work, Inverclyde Council employees shall comply with the following principles:-

##### Lawful purposes

Directed surveillance and source work shall only be carried out where necessary to achieve one or more of the permitted purposes (as defined in RIPSA) namely:-

- for the purposes of preventing or detecting crime or the prevention of disorder
- in the interests of public safety
- for the purpose of protecting public health

Employees carrying out surveillance shall not interfere with any property or harass any person.

Employees carrying out CHIS work or using sources must be aware that a source has no licence to commit crime. Any source that acts beyond the acceptable legal limits in regard to this principle risks prosecution.

#### Confidential Material

Applications where a significant risk of acquiring confidential material has been identified shall always require the approval of an Authorising Officer.

Confidential material consists of:

- matters subject to legal privilege (for example between professional legal adviser and client)
- confidential personal information (for example relating to a person's physical or mental health)
- confidential journalistic material

#### Vulnerable Individuals

Vulnerable individuals (such as the mentally impaired) will only be authorised to act as a source in the most exceptional circumstances and the authorisation of the Authorising Officer shall be required.

#### Juvenile Sources

The use or conduct of any source under 16 years of age living with their parents (or any person having parental responsibilities for them) cannot be authorised in relation to giving information about their parents (or any person having parental responsibilities for them).

Sources under the age of 16 can give information about other members of their immediate family in exceptional cases.

A parent, guardian or other appropriate adult must be present at meetings with the juvenile source. There must always be an officer with responsibility for ensuring compliance with this requirement.

An authorisation for any source under the age of 18 shall not be granted or renewed unless or until:

- the safety and welfare of the juvenile have been fully considered;
- a risk assessment, or an updated risk assessment as appropriate, has been undertaken as part of the application to deploy a juvenile source, covering the physical dangers and the moral and psychological aspects of his/her deployment;
- the Authorising Officer has considered the risk assessment, or an updated risk assessment as appropriate, and is satisfied that any identified risks are justified; and
- the Authorising Officer has satisfied himself/herself that any identified risks will be suitably managed

Deployment of juvenile sources will only be authorised by an Authorising Officer.

## **7 The Authorisation Process**

Applications for directed surveillance or the use or conduct of a source will be authorised at level of "Investigations Manager" or "Assistant Head of Service" as prescribed in the Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Prescription of Offices etc. and Specification of Public Authorities) (Scotland) Order 2010.

For the purposes of Inverclyde Council, the person granting authorisation shall be no lower than Head of Service or its equivalent. For public authorities such as Inverclyde Council, there are no substitutes of

lower grade prescribed to authorise "urgent" cases. A list of the current Authorising Officers is attached at Appendix 4.

Authorising Officers within the meaning of this policy, and the associated procedures, shall avoid authorising their own activities wherever possible and only do so in exceptional circumstances. An Authorising Officer should not also act as a controller or handler of a source. These roles should be separate.

Authorisations shall be in writing. However, in urgent cases the authorising officer **may approve** applications orally. A case may be regarded as urgent if the time that would elapse before the Authorising Officer was available to grant the authorisation would, in the judgement of the Authorising Officer, be likely to endanger life or jeopardise the investigation or operation for which authorisation is being given.

All applications for authorisations or renewals of authorisations shall be made on the appropriate form, details of which can be obtained from Legal, Democratic, Digital & Customer Services. The applicant in all cases should complete the form. In urgent cases an oral approval may be given by the Authorising Officer and in such a case a statement that the Authorising Officer has expressly granted the authorisation should be recorded on the application form or, if that is not possible, in the applicant's notebook or diary. This should be done by the person to whom the Authorising Officer spoke (normally the applicant) and must later be endorsed by the Authorising Officer. A written authorisation shall be issued as soon as practicable.

Where an authorisation ceases to be either necessary or appropriate, the Authorising Officer or an appropriate deputy shall cancel the authorisation on the appropriate form.

All forms, codes of practice and supplementary material are available from the Head of Legal, Democratic, Digital and Customer Services.

Any person giving an authorisation must be satisfied that:

- account has been taken of the likely degree of intrusion into the privacy of persons other than those directly implicated in the operation or investigation ("collateral intrusion"). Measures must be taken, wherever practicable, to avoid unnecessary intrusion into the lives of those affected by collateral intrusion;
- the authorisation is necessary;
- the authorised surveillance is proportionate; and
- in the case of source work that satisfactory arrangements exist for the management of the source.

#### Necessity

Surveillance operations and CHIS work shall only be undertaken where there is no reasonable and effective alternative way of achieving the desired objectives.

#### Effectiveness

Surveillance operations and CHIS work shall be undertaken only by suitably trained or experienced employees or under their direct supervision.

The Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) shall be followed when technical equipment is used in any directed surveillance operation. The SOP is available from the Head of Legal, Democratic, Digital and Customer Services.

#### Proportionality

The use of surveillance and sources shall not be excessive i.e. it shall be in proportion to the significance of the matter being investigated. A balance requires to be struck between the degree of intrusion into a person's privacy against the necessity of the surveillance.

### Authorisations

Oral applications expire after 72 hours. If required, authorisations can be renewed for a further period (three months in the case of directed surveillance and 12 months in the case of the use of a covert human intelligence source) if renewed in writing.

Written authorisations expire after three months in the case of directed surveillance and 12 months in the case of the use of a covert human intelligence source; these periods begin on the day from which the authorisation took effect. Authorisations expire after a period of one month in relation to a source under the age of 18.

### Review

The authorising officer shall review all authorisations at intervals of not more than one month. The appropriate review form should always be used. Details of the review and the decision reached shall be noted on the original application. The results of the review should be recorded on the central register of authorisations.

### Renewals

If at any time before an authorisation would expire (including oral authorisations) the Authorising Officer considers it necessary for the authorisation to continue for the purpose for which it was given, it may be renewed in writing for a further period beginning on the day on which the previous authorisation ceases to have effect; the renewal periods are three months in the case of directed surveillance and 12 months in the case of the use of a covert human intelligence source. Applications should only be made shortly before the authorisation is due to expire.

Any person entitled to authorise may renew authorisations. Authorisations may be renewed more than once, provided that they continue to meet the criteria for authorisation.

Authorisations for the deployment of a juvenile source are renewable for one further period of one month.

## **9 Cancellation**

The Authorising Officer or appropriate deputy (or a substitute of the same or more senior rank to that of the authorising officer) must cancel an authorisation if he/she is satisfied that the directed surveillance no longer satisfies the criteria for authorisation or the use or conduct of the source no longer satisfied the criteria for authorisation or that procedures for the management of the source are no longer in place. Where possible a source must be informed that the authorisation has been cancelled.

Records should be kept of the use that was made of an authorisation and in particular what material was acquired. This should contain detail of the covert activity conducted under the authorisation, what had been achieved by that covert activity and what surveillance material, if any, had been acquired. If material has been acquired, then the authorising officer must be satisfied that it is being properly handled, stored or destroyed (for reference see the Scottish Government's Covert Surveillance Code of Practice). The IPCO preferred form of cancellation should always be used.

## **10 Monitoring**

Each service or discrete location within services must maintain a record of all applications for authorisation (including its users), renewals, reviews and cancellations. The most senior authoriser in that service or at that location shall maintain the monitoring form. See Appendix 2 for the matters that must be included in the record.

## **11 Security and Retention of Documents**



Documents created under these procedures are highly confidential and shall be treated as such. Services shall make proper arrangements for their retention, security and destruction, in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018/the General Data Protection Regulation and Inverclyde Council's relevant policies and procedures.

The Head of Legal, Democratic, Digital and Customer Services shall maintain the central register of authorisations. Authorising Officers shall notify him/her of the grant, renewal or cancellation of any authorisations and the name of the Authorising Officer within one working day to ensure the accuracy of the central register.

The Authorising Officer shall retain the original authorisation and all renewal forms until cancelled. On cancellation, the original application, renewal and cancellation forms shall be forwarded to the Head of Legal, Democratic, Digital and Customer Services with the authorising officer retaining a copy.

The Authorising Officer shall retain the copy forms for at least one year after cancellation. The Head of Legal, Democratic, Digital and Customer Services shall retain the original forms for at least five years after cancellation. In both cases, these will not be destroyed without the authority of the Authorising Officer if practicable.

All information recovered through the use of a source which is relevant to the investigation shall be retained by the Authorising Officer for at least five years after the cancellation of the authorisation or the completion of any court proceeding in which said information was used or referred to. All other information shall be destroyed as soon as the operation is cancelled.

## **12 Oversight and Complaints**

The Investigatory Powers Commissioner's Office (IPCO) provides an independent review of the use of the powers contained within RIPA. This review includes inspection visits by inspectors appointed by the IPCO. An independent tribunal, the Investigatory Powers Tribunal has full powers to investigate cases for use of surveillance. The website for the Investigatory Powers Tribunal has more information on its role and its work, including details of how a person can make a complaint to the Tribunal. <https://investigatorypowerstribunal.org.uk/>

## APPENDIX 1

**Covert Human Intelligence Source** (“source” or “CHIS”) means a person who establishes or maintains a personal or other relationship with another person for the covert purpose of facilitating anything that:

- covertly uses such a relationship to obtain information or to provide information or to provide access to information to another person, or
- covertly discloses information obtained by the use of such a relationship or as a consequence of the existence of such a relationship.

A relationship is used covertly if, and only if, it is conducted in a manner calculated to ensure that the person is unaware of its purpose.

**Directed Surveillance** is surveillance that is covert but not intrusive and is undertaken

- for the purpose of a specific investigation or a specific operation, in such a manner as is likely to result in the obtaining of private information about a person (whether or not one specifically identified for the purposes of the investigation or operation, and
- otherwise than by way of an immediate response to events or circumstances the nature of which is such that it would not be reasonably practicable for an authorisation to be sought for the carrying out of the surveillance.

**Intrusive Surveillance** is covert surveillance that:

- is carried out in relation to anything taking place on residential premises or in a private vehicle and involves the presence of an individual on the premises or in the vehicle or
- is carried out by means of a surveillance device capable of providing information of the same quality and detail as might be expected to be obtained from a device actually present on the premises or in the vehicle.

**Authorising Officer** is the person who is entitled to give an authorisation for the use or conduct of a source in accordance with Section 5 of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Act 2000.

**Private Information** includes information about a person relating to that person’s private or family life.

**Residential Premises** means any premises occupied or used, however temporarily, for residential purposes or otherwise as living accommodation.

**Private Vehicle** means any vehicle that is used primarily for the private purpose of the person who owns it or of a person otherwise having the right to use it. This does not include a person whose right to use a vehicle derives only from having paid, or undertaken to pay, for the use of the vehicle and its driver for a particular journey. A vehicle includes any vessel, aircraft or hovercraft.

**Handler** means the person referred to in Section 4(6)(a) of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Act 2000 holding an office or position with the Local Authority and who will have day to day responsibility for:-

- dealing with the source on behalf of the Local Authority;
- directing the day to day activities of the source;
- recording the information supplied by the source; and
- monitoring the source’s security and welfare.

**Controller** means the person/the designated managerial Officer within the Local Authority referred to in Section 4(6)(b) of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Act 2000 responsible for the general oversight of the use of the source.

**The conduct** of a source is action of that source falling within the terms of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Act 2000 or action incidental to it.

**The use** of a source is any action to induce, ask or assist a person to engage in the conduct of a source or to obtain information by means of an action of the source.

References to any legislation, regulation, statutory instrument or the like is to the same as it may be varied, supplemented or replaced from time to time.

## APPENDIX 2

### PARTICULARS TO BE CONTAINED IN RECORDS

- a) the identity of the source;
- b) the identity, where known, used by the source;
- c) any relevant investigating authority other than the authority maintaining the records;
- d) the means by which the source is referred to within each relevant investigating authority;
- e) any other significant information connected with the security and welfare of the source;
- f) any confirmation made by a person granting or renewing an authorisation for the conduct or use of a source that the information in paragraph (e) has been considered and that any identified risks to the security and welfare of the source have where appropriate been properly explained to and understood by the source;
- g) the date when, and the circumstances in which, the source was recruited;
- h) the identities of the persons who, in relation to the source, are discharging or have discharged the functions mentioned in section 7(6)(a) to (c) of the 2000 Act or in any order made by the Scottish Ministers under section 7(2)(c);
- i) the periods during which those persons have discharged those responsibilities;
- j) the tasks given to the source and the demands made of him or her in relation to their activities as a source;
- k) all contacts or communications between the source and a person acting on behalf of any relevant investigating authority;
- l) the information obtained by each relevant investigating authority by the conduct or use of the source;
- m) any dissemination by that authority of information obtained in that way; and
- n) in the case of a source who is not an undercover operative, every payment, benefit or reward and every offer of a payment, benefit or reward that is made or provided by or on behalf of any relevant investigating authority in respect of the source's activities for the benefit of that or any other relevant investigating authority.

## APPENDIX 3

### THE INTERNET AND SOCIAL MEDIA SITES

#### Circumstances that Might Give Rise to an Authorisation of Directed Surveillance

The fact that digital investigation is routine or easy to conduct does not reduce the need for RIPSA authorisation. It is important to note that individual social networking sites vary in their operation and care should be taken to understand how they work.

Council officers may be called upon in the course of their duties to undertake surveillance by accessing website or social media content. Online activity applies equally to activities that are offline/in person operations.

Surveillance activities needing authorisation might include:

- visiting a third-party website or accessing social media posts, profiles or groups
- visiting/viewing websites, posts, profiles and/or groups regularly over a period of time
- entering into a personal relationship with a third party or parties via online or social media platforms.

If there is any covert use (i.e. the other party does not realise the enquirer is a Council employee) made of these media in support of a specific investigation or operation and any privacy settings are passed, then there are good grounds to consider seeking an authorisation for directed surveillance.

Where privacy settings are available but not applied the data may be considered “open source” and an authorisation is not usually required. However, repeat viewing of “open source” sites may constitute directed surveillance and this has to be considered on a case by case basis.

It is not unlawful for a Council Officer to set up a false identity but it is inadvisable to do so for covert purposes without requisite authorisation.

#### CHIS

If a relationship is likely to be established or maintained (i.e. the activity is more than mere reading of the site’s content) then a CHIS authorisation should be considered.

The identity of a person likely to be known to the subject of interest should not be adopted without authorisation and explicit written consent of the person whose identity is used.

#### Online Social Media Research in Child Protection cases

In relation to child protection work, social workers carrying out research online on social networking sites in the interests of the child may still engage an individual’s rights under Article 8 of the European Convention of Human Rights.

A documented decision trail will ensure that parameters are set, both to avoid any interference with Convention rights which is or may be disproportionate to the legitimate aim pursued, and for the protection of individual employees.

Applications to conduct online research in child protection cases will need to be authorised by the Authorising Officer for Inverclyde Health & Social Care Partnership or failing this, the Chief Executive or Head of Legal, Democratic, Digital and Customer Services.

The same approach will also apply to the carrying out of such research in adult protection cases too.

#### Test Purchases

The criteria for directed surveillance should be applied on a case by case basis. Council officers making undisclosed site visits or test purchases do not count as ‘covert human intelligence sources’ and such activities generally do not require formal authorization. The use of disguised purchaser details in a simple,

overt, electronic purchase does not require a CHIS authorisation, because no relationship is usually established at this stage. However, CHIS authorisation may be required for the use of an internet trading organisation such as eBay when a covert relationship is likely to be formed.

#### **APPENDIX 4**

##### **AUTHORISING OFFICERS**

1. Louise Long, Chief Executive
2. Ruth Binks, Corporate Director, Education, Communities & Organisational Development
3. Alan Puckrin, Chief Financial Officer
4. Stuart Jamieson, Director, Environment and Regeneration
5. Kate Rocks, Chief Officer, Inverclyde Health and Social Care Partnership
6. Iain Strachan, Head of Legal, Democratic, Digital & Customer Services (but only (i) where the RIPSAs application is urgent and no other Authorising Officer is available and (ii) another Council solicitor with sufficient knowledge of RIPSAs is available to conduct a separate peer review of the application, given the Head of Legal, Democratic, Digital & Customer Services is also the RIPSAs Senior Responsible Officer)

(As at November 2023)

##### **SENIOR RESPONSIBLE OFFICER**

Iain Strachan, Head of Legal, Democratic, Digital and Customer Services

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<b>Report To:</b>	<b>Policy &amp; Resources Committee</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>21 November 2023</b>
<b>Report By:</b>	<b>Chief Financial Officer</b>	<b>Report No:</b>	<b>FIN/65/23/AP/LA</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Alan Puckrin</b>	<b>Contact No:</b>	<b>01475 712090</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Governance of External Organisations - Annual Update and Review</b>		

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## **1.0 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY**

- 1.1  For Decision  For Information/Noting
- 1.2 In May 2011 the Policy & Resources Committee approved the Council's approach towards the Governance of External Organisations part of which is an annual report on adherence each November.
- 1.3 Over the intervening years major improvements have been made in formalising funding agreements and specifying service delivery requirements and at today's date all relevant organisations provide services funded by the Council backed up by at the very least, a Service Level Agreement if not a more detailed specification or tender document.
- 1.4 The 2022/23 Annual Governance Statement approved by the Audit Committee included the action that the governance of external organisations process would be reviewed and refreshed to ensure required monitoring processes are undertaken and confirmed through annual reporting on key partnerships to Committee. The proposals within this report intend to fulfil that requirement.
- 1.5 The Corporate Management Team are proposing the changes outlined in the report and would also recommend that it would also be timely to undertake a review of councillor nominations to a number of the organisations given the passage of time since these nominations first took place.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Committee considers the matters raised within this report and thereafter:
1. Notes the significant improvement in the commissioning and service procurement landscape since the current approach to external organisations was implemented in 2011.
  2. Notes the assessment of adherence to the Governance of External Organisations requirements in the last 12 months.
  3. Approves the list of organisations set out in Appendix 2 subject to the revised External Organisation Governance process in the next 12 months which is detailed in Appendix 3.
  4. Notes that organisations covered by relevant Social Care contracts will continue to be monitored with updates on a cyclical basis to the IJB and the Social Work & Social Care Scrutiny Panel and no longer form part of this annual report and,



5. Notes that specific reports in respect of the two Council ALEOs will be presented to the relevant strategic Committee next cycle covering the requirements set out in the Financial Regulations.
- 2.2 It is recommended that the Committee agrees that a further report be presented to the Council by the Chief Executive following a review of appropriateness of Councillor nominations to the Boards of organisations which tender for Council contracts.

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

### **3.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT**

- 3.1 Following the collapse of a local third sector Nursey in 2010 due to financial difficulties, elected members asked officer what governance checks were carried out on organisations which delivered services on the Council's behalf. An officer working group chaired was set up with representatives from all Directorates plus Finance, Legal and Procurement to develop a corporate process to fulfil the Council's governance obligations. The resultant approach was approved by the Policy & Resources Committee in May 2011 with an annual report on adherence produced for the Policy & Resources Committee each November.
- 3.2 At that time around 20 organisations were receiving grants without any service level agreement (SLA) or commissioning arrangement in place setting out the organisations' requirements in terms of service delivery on behalf of the Council. A further 40 had informal commissioning arrangements in place with limited officer awareness of governance within the organisation. In addition, there was no process in place for Committees to scrutinise the performance, financial resilience of these organisations.
- 3.3 Over the years major improvements have been made supported by Procurement and Legal Services and at today's date all organisations have at the very least an SLA in place to support the receipt of material Council funding in addition which there has been a significant increase in formal commissioning or tendering arrangements. In addition to regular service delivery meetings, in most cases, specific meetings take place to review the organisations' financial position and other governance matters.
- 3.4 Organisations delivering Social Work/Social Care services continue to form the vast majority of the commissioned services and detailed cyclical updates covering a range of quality and governance matters are presented to both the IJB and Social Work & Social Care Scrutiny Panel. These updates are held in private which allows the IJB/Scrutiny Panel to discuss relevant matters in the required detail.
- 3.5 For organisations covered by the Education & Communities Committee and Environment & Regeneration Committee updates have generally been in public and as a result have been less detailed.
- 3.6 As a result of an action identified in the Procurement Strategy, in September 2023 the CMT agreed to pilot a balanced scorecard supplier management approach. This includes most of the governance requirements set out in the current External Organisations Governance process. Given most of the services delivered by external organisations are now procured via tenders or Direct Awards supported by specifications/SLAs then the CMT propose that this approach is used to manage contracts of this nature going forward.
- 3.7 **2022/23 Annual Governance Statement Requirement**

The 2022/23 Annual Governance Statement (AGS), which is one of the principal documents in the Annual Accounts, identified an action allocated to the Chief Financial Officer namely:

"The governance of external organisations process will be reviewed and refreshed to ensure required monitoring processes are undertaken and confirmed through annual reporting on key partnerships to Committee".

This report intends to address the action set out in the AGS.

### **3.8 Arms Length External Organisations (ALEOs)**

An ALEO is a body formally separate from the Council but subject to its control and influence. ALEOs are one step removed from the Council (albeit they form part of the Councils Group Accounts), and as a result governance can be complex. The Council remains responsible for ensuring that the ALEO uses public funds responsibly and is “following the public pound”.

3.9 The Council has two ALEOs; Inverclyde Leisure and Riverside Inverclyde. Within the financial regulations the requirements for governance reporting for ALEOs is set out as follows:

“For the Council’s Arms Length External Organisations (ALEO) then there is a requirement for an Annual Monitoring Report submitted to the relevant Committee which shall cover:

1. The aims and objectives of the External Organisation and how these have been met
2. The overall financial position of the External Organisation
3. Performance against targets and value for money indicators and an overall assessment of the governance risk to the Council
4. Key issues for the forthcoming period”

3.10 The CMT recognise that there has been only partial adherence to these requirements in recent years because of matters such as Covid and changes to the overall delivery model for Riverside Inverclyde.

### **3.11 Councillor representation on external organisation boards**

At the first meeting of each new Council, elected members approve councillor representation on outside bodies. These bodies can vary from national organisations to relatively small local organisations and can give councillors valuable experience and be a route by which the Council can be sighted on any emerging difficulties within an organisation.

3.12 However, representation on several bodies pre-dates 1996 re-organisation and has not been reviewed for many years. This becomes more relevant when the primary Council funding of some of these organisations now comes from tendered work rather than grants as was the case 10-20 years ago.

## **4.0 PROPOSALS**

4.1 Appendix 1 shows the compliance with the approved governance requirements in relation to the organisations approved in the November 2022 update. This confirms a high level of compliance. However, more detailed reports in line with the Financial Regulations are required in coming months for the Council’s two ALEOs.

4.2 Taking into the account that the default position should be that organisations receiving the bulk of their Council funding via tenders/direct awards/commissioning should be treated as suppliers and managed through the supplier management framework, the CMT would propose a far reduced list of organisations to fall under the External Organisations Governance requirements.

4.3 The proposed list is shown in Appendix 2 and excludes organisations already being reported to the IJB unless non- HSCP funding represents a material sum. In arriving at the proposed list the CMT have taken into account service delivery and reputational risks for the Council, an element of the latter being linked to councillor representation on the boards.

4.4 Appendix 3 sets out the minimum governance requirements to be undertaken by officers between November 2023 and October 2024 for those organisations listed in Appendix 2.

4.5 Whilst it is possible for the Council to have councillor representation on organisations tendering for Council contracts this is an area which officers believe is worthy of review. It is therefore proposed that The Chief Executive and Head of Legal, Democratic, Digital & Customer Services carry out a review councillor representation on outside bodies and report back to Committee prior to the summer 2024 recess.

## 5.0 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendations are agreed:

<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
Financial	x	
Legal/Risk	x	
Human Resources		x
Strategic (Partnership Plan/Council Plan)	x	
Equalities, Fairer Scotland Duty & Children/Young People's Rights & Wellbeing		x
Environmental & Sustainability		x
Data Protection		x

## 5.2 Finance

Based on previous experience there can be significant financial implications when an organisation funded by grants delivering services for the Council gets into difficulty. This makes elected member scrutiny of governance related matters in these organisations a key requirement in terms of "Following the Public Pound".

### 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					

## 5.3 Legal/Risk

Any changes to councillor representation on approved outside bodies would require approval from the full Council.

An overall assessment of the risks posed to the Council were an organisation to get into difficulty formed the key factor in determining the organisations proposed in Appendix 2.

## 5.4 Human Resources

There are no HR implications arising from the proposals in this report.

## **5.5 Strategic**

The organisations listed in Appendix 2 all contribute towards the Councils strategic priorities.

## **6.0 CONSULTATION**

6.1 The CMT support the proposals in this report.

## **7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

7.1 The Council's Governance Responsibilities- External Organisations, Policy & Resources Committee 24.5.2011  
Arms- Length Organisations, are you getting in right- Audit Scotland – June 2011  
Scottish Charity Regulator Report – ALEOs- Policy & Resources Committee – 24.3.2015

## Governance of External Organisations List for 2022/23

## Appendix 1

Supplier / Provider	Payments	Service	Last or Planned Governance Monitoring Date	Date Reported to Committee	Nature of Payments	Total
INVERCLYDE LEISURE	£2,106,939.98	E&C	15/08/2023	05/09/2023	Direct Award	26
CRAIGEND RESOURCE CENTRE	£738,004.51	E&C	04/10/2023	07/11/2023	Grant - With SLA	24
YOUR VOICE	£428,808.07	HSCP	06/07/2023	31/10/2023	Direct Award	24
INVERCLYDE CARERS CENTRE LTD	£371,085.00	HSCP	01/09/2023	31/10/2023	Direct Award	24
WELLINGTON PLAYGROUP	£291,114.14	E&C	25/05/2023	05/09/2023	Direct Award	24
COTTAGE CARE SERVICES SCOTLAND LTD	£254,448.65	HSCP	09/05/2023	31/10/2023	Direct Award	24
ICDT LTD	£1,968,043.15	E&R	06/09/2023	25/08/2023	Tenderered	22
MADEIRA NURSERY	£191,468.35	E&C	30/05/2023	05/09/2023	Direct Award	22
PARTNERS THAT CARE	£166,379.38	HSCP	31/05/2023	31/10/2023	Direct Award	22
BATTERY PARK NURSERY LTD	£155,835.72	E&C	23/05/2023	05/09/2023	Direct Award	22
DUCHAL NURSERY SCHOOL	£115,776.68	E&C	02/06/2023	05/09/2023	Direct Award	22
YOUTH CONNECTIONS	£110,499.98	E&C	04/10/2023	07/11/2023	Grant - With SLA	22
FINANCIAL FITNESS	£85,900.00	HSCP	16/06/2023	31/10/2023	Direct Award	22
INVERKIP COMMUNITY INITIATIVE	£78,860.00	E&C	10/10/2023	07/11/2023	Grant - With SLA	22
GIBSHILL COMMUNITY CENTRE	£72,600.00	E&C	09/10/2023	07/11/2023	Grant - With SLA	22
INVERCLYDE ADVICE & EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS	£65,421.00	E&R	19/09/2023	25/08/2023	Direct Award	22
RIVER CLYDE HOMES	£425,031.63	HSCP	07/07/2023	31/10/2023	Direct Award	20
THE BEACON	£274,829.85	E&C	28/08/2023	07/11/2023	Grant - With SLA	20
BRANCHTON COMMUNITY CENTRE	£172,002.00	E&C	25/09/2023	07/11/2023	Grant - With SLA	20
MOVING ON (INVERCLYDE)	£100,500.00	HSCP			Direct Award	20
QUARRIERS	£2,912,491.59	HSCP	15/06/2023	31/10/2023	Direct Award	18
HAPPITOTS	£536,558.76	E&C	31/05/2023	05/09/2023	Direct Award	18
CVS INVERCLYDE	£222,801.25	HSCP	05/09/2023	31/10/2023	Direct Award	18
RIVERSIDE INVERCLYDE	£101,243.16	E&R	20/08/2023	25/08/2023	Direct Award	18
MARINER SUPPORT ASSOCIATES LTD	£57,936.01	HSCP	11/10/2023	31/10/2023	Direct Award	18
THE KILMACOLM NEW COMMUNITY CENTRE COMPANY LIMITED	£41,200.00	E&C	11/10/2023	07/11/2023	Grant - With SLA	18
NAS SERVICES LTD	£127,926.91	HSCP	29/06/2023	31/10/2023	Direct Award	16
INVERCLYDE WOMENS AID	£118,441.38	HSCP	07/09/2023	31/10/2023	Direct Award	16
UNITY ENTERPRISE	£80,525.58	HSCP	31/10/2023	31/10/2023	Direct Award	16
EMBRACE (COMBINED) LIMITED	£64,944.11	HSCP	20/10/2023	31/10/2023	Direct Award	16
STARTER PACKS INVERCLYDE	£41,272.00	HSCP	18/07/2023	31/10/2023	Direct Award	16

No longer contracts with the Council

Key External Organisations – November 2023 – October 2024

<u>Organisation</u>	<u>Reason for Inclusion</u>
1/ Inverclyde Leisure	ALEO, Significant Councillor Board Representation.
2/ Riverside Inverclyde	ALEO, Significant Councillor Board Representation.
3/ Inchgreen Marine Park Ltd	Joint Venture Significant Councillor Board Representation.
4/ Inverclyde Community Development Trust	Significant Councillor Board Representation and highly reliant on Council contracts.
5/ The Beacon	Councillor Board Representation, significant financial investment by Council, no alternative service delivery organisation. Grant with SLA.
6/ Craigend Resource Centre	Significant financial investment by the Council, no readily identified alternative service provider, Grant with SLA.
7/ Youth Connections	As for Craigend Resource Centre.
8/ Kilmacolm New Community Centre.	As for Craigend Resource Centre plus Councillor Board Representative.
9/ Inverkip Community Initiative	As for Craigend Resource Centre.
10/ Gibshill Community Centre	As for Craigend Resource Centre.
11/ Branchton Community Centre	As for Craigend Resource Centre.
12/ Inverclyde Voluntary Council of Social Services	Councillor Board Representation. Financial risk to Council if organisation ceased to operate.

Note – Organisation Governance reports for numbers 2,3 & 4 would be presented to the Environment & Regeneration Committee. The remainder would go to Education & Communities.

AP/LA  
2/10/23

External Organisations Governance

Governance Oversight

- a) Annual Accounts received by Service and reviewed by Finance.
- b) Briefing circulated after each board meeting attended by officers to Director, Head of Service, Chief Financial Officer and Head of Legal, Democratic, Digital & Customer Services.
- c) Annual documented Governance meetings with organisations where senior officers do not attend board meetings.
- d) Annual Committee report covering performance and quality issues.
- e) Committee identify and monitor specific governance, finance and performance indicators in order to give early warning of any potential problems.
- f) Evidence that risks associated with these organisations are considered as part of the preparation of Service/Directorate risk registers.
- g) Contingency Plans are in place within the service to ensure continuity of service delivery if the agreement ends/organisation ceases to exist.
- h) Where services are delivered through ALEOs, the Council has well-developed strategy for the delivery of services which is linked to the wider Council's strategic objective and priorities, this strategy being reviewed and reported to Committee every 5 years as a minimum

Note: 1. The above are the minimum requirements however Services may decide on more frequent meetings / reporting based on specific risks / intelligence.



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<b>Report To:</b>	<b>Policy &amp; Resources Committee</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>21 November 2023</b>
<b>Report By:</b>	<b>Chief Financial Officer</b>	<b>Report No:</b>	<b>FIN/66/23/AP</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Alan Puckrin</b>	<b>Contact No:</b>	<b>01475 712090</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>2024/26 Budget Update</b>		

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## **1.0 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY**

1.1  For Decision  For Information/Noting

1.2 This report provides updates on several matters in relation to the 2024/26 Revenue Budget and 2024/27 Capital Programme and seeks a number of decisions from Committee.

1.3 The report provides updates in respect of:

- Confirmation of the date for the Draft Scottish Budget for 2024/25
- The Council Tax Freeze in 2024/25 announced by the First Minister
- The financial impact of the Pension Fund Actuarial Review on the Council and Inverclyde Leisure
- Development of Budget pressures for 2024/26
- The development of savings proposals
- Proposed reductions in the 2024/27 Capital Programme
- Review of earmarked reserves

1.4 The Council Tax Freeze announcement by the First Minister makes the 21 December Finance circular detail pivotal in clarifying the level of funding gap faced by the Council and will also inevitably impact upon the Council's previously agreed Budget planning assumptions. Whilst the MBWG will continue to review potential savings options, the 2024/27 Capital Programme and the use of Reserves with a view to making recommendations to the Full Council, such decisions will now take place in early 2024 with the resultant impact upon the consultation process and final decision-making timescales.

1.5 The proposals in the report and appendices, if approved, will reduce the funding gap over 2024/26 by a further £1,020,000 with the latest estimated funding gap position shown in Appendix 5.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 It is recommended that the Committee notes the latest 2024/26 Budget update and specifically the impact of the Council Tax Freeze announcement and the date of the Scottish Government Draft 2024/25 Budget announcement on the Council's anticipated decision-making timescales.

2.2 It is recommended that the Committee approves the proposed 2024/26 Budget Pressures in Appendix 2 including the proposal to provide a one-off sum of £600,000 from the Inflation

Smoothing Reserve for the ASN transport pressure whilst the current Delivering Differently review is being progressed.

- 2.3 It is recommended that the Committee approves the proposed reductions to the capital programme in Appendix 3 and notes the decision to progress with the peatland restoration project whilst grant condition discussions are on-going.
- 2.4 It is recommended that the Committee agrees the proposed approach in respect of the savings which will be experienced by Inverclyde Leisure due to the recent actuarial review as set out in 4.2 and 4.3.
- 2.5 It is recommended that the Committee approves the savings and adjustments in Appendix 4 and notes the illustrative 2024/26 Revenue Budget funding gap in Appendix 5.

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

### **3.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT**

3.1 Several decisions have already been taken in respect of the forthcoming budget. These include:

- Development of a 2024/26 Revenue Budget and 2024/27 Capital Budget.
- A planning assumption that Council Tax income will increase by £5.0 million by 2025/26.
- Delegated authority granted to the Chief Executive to progress voluntary severance trawls where these will help inform the development of savings proposals.
- The creation of a Workstream programme with an estimated savings target of £2.5 million over 2024/26.
- Approval of initial savings/adjustments at the September meeting.
- The Budget Consultation will commence in January 2024.

3.2 Based on the above the Committee was advised in September that the estimated funding gap over 2024/26 was £9.65 million.

3.3 Since the previous meeting there has been considerable activity and further clarity on several matters as set out in the following paragraphs.

#### **3.4 Scottish Government Draft Budget date & Council Tax Freeze announcements**

The Deputy First Minister (DFM) has confirmed that it is intended to present the Draft 2024/25 Budget to the Scottish Parliament on 19 December, the lateness of the date being attributed to the date announced for the UK Government Autumn Statement of 22 November. The Finance Circular, which provides the detail of the settlement for individual Councils will not then be issued until 21 December, the day before the Christmas/New Year break for the Council, Cosla and large parts of the Scottish Government.

3.5 Given the critical importance of the Scottish Government Grant settlement and any associated conditions in determining the Council's funding gap, the main impact on the Council of the announced date is that it will not be feasible for the Council to consider the impact of the Draft Budget in any detail before the Christmas/New Year break. As such consideration is being given as to the timing of finalisation of the Consultation package and the Budget setting date.

3.6 On 17 October, the First Minister announced there would be a Council Tax Freeze for 2024/25. Cosla had not been made aware in advance of this announcement and raised strong concerns over the nature of the announcement, the impact this potentially had on council budget plans/delivery of local services and the Verity House agreement. Meetings took place over subsequent days between Group Leaders and the First Minister/DFM and a letter from the DFM dated 19 October is attached at Appendix 1.

3.7 Negotiations are now taking place between Cosla and the Scottish Government seeking to clarify how Council's can be compensated for the income lost due to the Council Tax Freeze, the future of the Verity House Agreement and how council service delivery can be protected. These matters will require to be clarified no later than the 19 December and will delay the Council's own Budget decision making processes.

#### **3.8 Verity House Agreement**

Officers have committed to report developments in respect of the Scottish Government's New Deal with Local Government, also known as the Verity House Agreement, which was entered into between the Scottish Government and Cosla on 30 June 2023.

3.9 At the time of preparing this report, whilst there have been many discussions and meetings on a wide range of factors, there have been no substantive agreements in relation to the level of funding or flexibility of funding for councils. The negotiations mentioned in 3.7 above now take on a critical importance in delivering the commitments in the Verity House Agreement.

### 3.10 **Triennial Actuarial Review of the Strathclyde Pension Fund**

In advance of the last meeting of the Committee, all elected members received a briefing note explaining the outcome and potential implications for the Council of the triennial actuarial review of the Strathclyde Pension Fund. In summary, there is proposed to be a 12.8% reduction from current rates in employer's contributions for each of 2024/25 and 2025/26 followed thereafter an on-going 1.8% reduction. The proposed long -term rate now being 17.5%.

3.11 These rates also apply to Council employees within the HSCP and all pensionable employees in Inverclyde Leisure (IL) whose membership of the Strathclyde Pension Fund is sponsored by the Council. Following discussions with the Chief Executive of IL, proposals are included later in the report regarding the treatment of the time limited and on-going savings in pension contributions. Discussions in respect of the HSCP savings are on-going.

### 3.12 **2024/26 Budget Pressures**

The 2024/26 Budget contains a £1.2 million allowance for Budget pressures split £600,000 per year. £200,000 was allocated towards funding £3.0 million of prudential borrowing as part of the June 2023 Finance Strategy, leaving £1.0million for other pressures. In line with previous budget processes, the CMT carried out a review of potential budget pressures and identified 5 pressures. A short pro-forma for each is contained in Appendix 2 along with a summary.

3.13 After the inclusion of a £134,000 contingency for pressures (unavoidable or policy led), which may emerge prior to approving the 2024/26 Budget, a £200,000 sum remains unallocated.

3.14 Subject to Committee agreement to the pressure sums identified, reports will be presented to the relevant Committee in coming months where appropriate to allow the financial impact to be finalised and included in the March 2024 Budget.

### 3.15 **Savings**

The last meeting of the Committee approved the creation of 6 savings workstreams with a savings target of £2.5 million over 2024/26. Regular updates will be provided to Committee as savings are achieved or decisions are required.

3.16 The CMT developed a package of potential saving options, the majority of which were options carried over from the 2023/24 Budget development. Detailed savings sheets/EquIAs are being finalised and should be circulated to all elected members in advance of the Committee meeting. The Members Budget Working Group (MBWG) will review the proposals with the CMT whilst discussions are on-going with Trades Unions via the Joint Budget Group (JBG).

3.17 It is planned that subject to agreement by the Full Council, some of these savings will form part of the Budget proposal to go out for Public Consultation early in 2024.

### 3.18 Medium Term Capital Programme

The MBWG have been considering an update in respect of the medium-term capital programme covering 2024/29. A programme of this duration clearly indicates the growing pressure on capital resources and the need for early action to both increase resources and manage demand. The indicative shortfall over the 5 year period is around £5 million and therefore initial proposals are included in section 4 of the report to reduce this estimated shortfall. The MBWG will continue to consider further proposals whilst considering the use of reserves, more prudential borrowing and the impact of potential revenue savings.

### 3.19 Earmarked Reserves

A review of earmarked reserves is taking place with an update recently reported to the CMT. The expected large one- off saving arising from the reduction in employers pension fund contributions will be factored into this exercise and reported to elected members in coming months.

3.20 The actuarial review of the pension fund is estimated to generate a one-off sum of £9.0million for the Council (excluding HSCP Council employees) over 2024/26. Consideration of the use of this one -off sum will be factored into proposals for the use of reserves. A specific proposal in respect of the Inflation Smoothing Reserve is included in Section 4.

## 4.0 PROPOSALS

- 4.1 Based on the announced Council Tax Freeze and the delayed date for the Draft Scottish Budget, a special Council meeting later in January is being considered with a proposed date to be included in a report to the December Council meeting.
- 4.2 IL are estimated to save £45,000 on a recurring basis from 2024/25 because of the actuarial review of employer's pension contributions. It is proposed that the Council should apply an equal reduction in the Council's Management Fee from 1 April 2024.
- 4.3 Related to this it is proposed that IL retains the estimated time limited pension contribution saving of £550,000 but in return the Council removes the £400,000 IL Budget smoothing reserve approved as part of the 2023/24 Budget. This will be added back into the unallocated reserves.
- 4.4 It is proposed that the Committee allocates up to £800,000 to the Budget pressures identified in Appendix 2 and notes that more detailed reports in respect of the HR Review, Parking Income and the potential move to a 35 hour week will be presented to the relevant Committee prior to March 2024. In respect of the ASN Transport pressure, it is proposed that a one-off sum of £600,000 is allocated to cover the period until the Delivering Differently review is completed and reported to the Education & Communities Committee.
- 4.5 It is proposed that the following reductions to two core allocations in the Capital Programme are implemented from 2024/25:
  - 10% (£59,000) reduction in the ICT allocation
  - 25% (£15,000) reduction in the Zero Waste Fund allocation
  - The estimated Peatland Action Fund grant of £768,000 is used to replace Council Net Zero funding.
- 4.6 Appendix 3 gives greater detail of the assessed impact of the first two proposals.

Due to time pressures, officers have decided to progress the peatland restoration project whilst discussions around full compliance with the Fairwork First grant condition is being agreed. There is a small risk that agreement may not be possible and in this eventuality, officers will report back to the relevant Committee via the MBWG.

- 4.7 As part of the 2023/24 Budget and after considering the volatile economic situation, £3.0million was allocated for an Inflation Smoothing earmarked reserve. It is proposed that the use of this reserve be expanded to address other one-off costs associated with the delivery and development of the 2024/26 Budget such as the £600,000 ASN transport pressure in 4.4 above.
- 4.8 Finally, Appendix 4 lists further adjustments/savings which do not impact on front line service delivery, whilst Appendix 5 shows the estimated 2024/26 funding gap assuming all proposals are agreed. It should be noted though that until the Finance circular is received/reviewed, and any associated funding conditions quantified, this funding gap is an estimate only.

## 5.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendations are agreed:

SUBJECT	YES	NO
Financial	x	
Legal/Risk	x	
Human Resources		x
Strategic (Partnership Plan/Council Plan)	x	
Equalities, Fairer Scotland Duty & Children/Young People's Rights & Wellbeing		x
Environmental & Sustainability		x
Data Protection		x

## 5.2 Finance

### One off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Years	Proposed Spend this Report	Virement From	Other Comments
Earmarked Reserves	Inflation Smoothing	2023/25	£600,000		To fund ASN Transport pressure pending review
	Unallocated Reserves	2024/26	(£9,400,000)		Estimated one off saving due to Actuarial review
Capital Programme	Net Zero	2024/26	(£768,000)		Reduction in Council Net Zero costs due to the successful PAF bid

### Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact	Virement From (If Applicable)	Other Comments
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Various	Various	2024/25	£800,000		Budget Pressures per Appendix 1 including £134k contingency
Capital Programme	Various	2024/25	(£74,000)		Reductions in capital allocations per 4.5 above
Various	Various	2024/26	(£1,020,000)		Recurring revenue savings per Appendix 4

### 5.3 Legal/Risk

Whilst the First Minister has announced a Council Tax Freeze for 2024/25, there is no legislation which can stop the Council approving an increase if it decides to do so. What is not clear however are any financial sanctions which would be imposed on the Council if it took this course of action.

The risk around progressing the peatland restoration project whilst discussions around the grant conditions is highlighted in the report. In the event the grant is not received, officers will advise Members via a report to MBWG and then to the appropriate Committee.

There remain several key aspects of the 2024/26 Budget which remain to be confirmed and when these are clearer, they will be reported to elected members. Until these matters are clarified, uncertainty remains around the estimated funding gap.

### 5.4 Human Resources

There are no HR implications arising from the proposals in this report.

### 5.5 Strategic

The proposals in this report have been informed by the Council's strategic priorities.

## 6.0 CONSULTATION

6.1 This report has been agreed by the MBWG and discussed with the JBG.

## 7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 None.

Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Finance  
Shona Robison MSP



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E: scottish.ministers@gov.scot

Councillor Shona Morrison, COSLA President  
Councillor Steven Heddle, COSLA Vice President  
Councillor Katie Hagmann, COSLA Resources  
Spokesperson

By email: [REDACTED]

Copy to: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

19 October 2023

Dear Shona, Steven and Katie

Thank you for our frank discussion on Wednesday following the First Minister's announcement of our intention to deliver a Council Tax Freeze for 2024-25 in recognition of the impact of the current cost of living crisis on households. I acknowledge the concerns and questions that you raised as part of that call and on behalf of Council Leaders, and know you and Group Leaders have now had the opportunity to discuss those directly with the First Minister earlier today.

In our discussions you raised your concerns about the principle of the decision itself, the impact of this decision on the Verity House Agreement including how it was announced, and thirdly how we intend to implement and fund the freeze.

In taking forward this decision we are recognising the prolonged impact of rising prices on all households across Scotland. Raising taxes is a decision that no tax authority, national or local, takes lightly. In the context of more than 20 months of an inflationary crisis - and given the acknowledged regressiveness of Council Tax and the potential impact on vulnerable households, notably those in Bands A to D – this step enables us to do what we can with one of the very few levers we have to offer support.

As the First Minister and I have both confirmed, we give our assurance that Councils will be fully funded for the foregone Council Tax revenue associated with the freeze. We have not stated any figure publicly and that is because we recognise that we must come to agreement with COSLA about the appropriate quantum of funding. My offer, subject to the views of COSLA Leaders tomorrow, is that our officials should work intensively together, considering the range of factors and information we each hold and find a way to recognise the importance of Council Tax income for Scotland's Councils. They should seek to come to an agreed recommendation, or if necessary options, which we can then further discuss and reach political agreement on.

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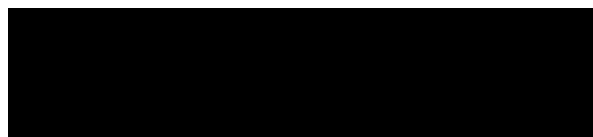
With regards to the Verity House Agreement, as I said in our meeting I remain wholly committed to the Verity House Agreement. Alongside each of you and every Council Leader, I have personally invested in the reset in the relationship between us that this represents. I was heartened to hear the acknowledgement in parliament recently by you, Steven, of the significant improvement in our relationships and the depth of discussion we are having over recent months. It is essential to good government in Scotland and delivering outcomes for people and communities that that trajectory of improvement continues.

I believe that the Verity House Agreement offers wide reaching benefits for both local and national government, and that taking forward the next steps set out in the Agreement – including the completion of a fiscal framework and the review of ringfencing – is of vital importance. I listened carefully during our conversation and acknowledge that there is a feeling that the agreement has been undermined. The First Minister and I have heard clearly the concerns and anger expressed about this announcement, partnership is always most important in difficult times and I hope that we can maintain our shared commitment to the Verity House Agreement, learn from this week, and move forward in the spirit of cooperation.

The First Minister committed to examining how the reconsideration process for the European Charter of Local Self-Government Incorporation Bill can be expedited. We will take that forward, including with the Member in charge of the Bill Mark Ruskell MSP, and communicate how we can do that as soon as possible. We will also consider carefully the other areas suggested where more could be done in the coming weeks and months to rebuild trust.

We remain fully committed to joint working, and to principles of the Verity House Agreement for the benefit of public services and our communities. I believe that it is imperative that we continue the collaborative work we have begun to deliver meaningful longer-term reforms to the Council Tax system. Local Government is a key voice in any local tax reform discussion, and the Joint Working Group on Sources of Local Government and Council Tax Reform remains a critical priority to me, and to the First Minister.

I look forward to our next conversation, and opportunity for continued partnership working.



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## Pressures Proposals - 2024/26 Budget

<u>Pressure</u>	<u>24/25 £000</u>	<u>25/26 £000</u>	<u>Total £000</u>	
Housing Benefits Subsidy	50	3	53	
37/35 Hour Working Week	50	150	200	Note 1
HR Services Review	113	-	113	
Parking Income	190	110	300	Note 2
	<u>403</u>	<u>263</u>	<u>666</u>	

Notes

1. CMT assessed cost (ex-HSCP). Report to come to Policy & Resources Committee (Feb 2024) via MBWG, firming up figures and highlighting any service delivery implications.
2. Allowance is the most expensive of options being finalised by the CMT. Report to go to January Environment & Regeneration Committee via the MBWG.
3. In addition there is a one off pressure for ASN Transport funded from the Inflation Smoothing Reserve pending the review agreed as part of Delivering Differently.
4. Proposed to retain a £134k contingency to any new pressures (unavoidable or policy led) between now and March 2024.

AP/LA  
16/10/23

**Pressure Template 2024/26 Revenue Budget**

**Service:**

Appendix2 (2)

**Pressure Area:**

Budget Area	2021/22 Outturn £000	2022/23 Outturn £000	2023/24 Projected £000	Reason for Pressure What has Changed Implications if Not Funded	2024/25 Pressure £000	2025/26 Pressure £000
Housing Benefit Subsidy: Supported Exempt Accommodation-Haven	TBC	£79	£95	<p>Housing Benefit on Supported Exempt Accommodation not owned by the Council is not fully covered by Housing Benefit Subsidy. Requests to increase rents by organisations are assessed by the Revenues &amp; Benefits Manager with a right for the organisation to appeal to the Scottish Tribunal Service.</p> <p>A rent increase of 49% applied by The Haven from 1st December 2023 will increase the Housing Benefit subsidy shortfall by £50k from 2024/25 and assuming a rent increase of 5% from 1st April 2025, by a further £2.5k in 2025/26. Officers assessment is that the increase can be justified and as such £53k is sought from the Pressures Allowance as part of the 2024/26 Budget.</p>	£ 50	£ 3

**Notes:**

1/ Outturn figures should be gross (expenditure prior to use of Earmarked Reserves)

**Pressure Template 2024/26 Revenue Budget**

**Service: Corporate**

Appendix 2 (3)

**Pressure Area:**

Budget Area	2021/22 Outturn £000	2022/23 Outturn £000	2023/24 Projected £000	Reason for Pressure What has Changed Implications if Not Funded	2024/25 Pressure £000	2025/26 Pressure £000
37/35 Hour Working Week	134494	142593	150302	A proposal to reduce the standard working week is part of the wider Recruitment & Retention initiative. A working group has been establishing the impact of reducing the working week from 37 hours to 35 hours. There is an anticipated cost associated with the change which has been initially reviewed by the CMT who have agreed that, excluding the HSCP, an allowance of £200,000 should be sufficient to fund the additional costs associated with the move to 35 hours. In addition there will be some minor changes to some aspects of service delivery and these would be reported in advance of a final decision. The phasing of the pressure assumes a 1 January 2025 implementation date.	50	150

**Pressure Template 2024/26 Revenue Budget**

**Service:** Culture, Communities and Educational Resources

Appendix 2 (4)

**Pressure Area:** ASN Transport

Budget Area	2021/22 Outturn £000	2022/23 Outturn £000	2023/24 Projected £000	Reason for Pressure What has Changed Implications if Not Funded	2023/25 Pressure £000																														
ASN Transport	502	646	805	<p>Additional Support Needs Transport is demand-led and is provided through our agency agreement with SPT. There is a range of provision from specially adapted buses through to taxi provision and is used for Craigmarnoch School and also to transport ASN pupils in a mainstream setting. We also provide transport for some pupils who are in a placement outwith Inverclyde. In line with mainstream transport providers, costs have increased significantly in the past few years caused by increased fuel costs and the availability of drivers for both buses and taxis. Need and demand is also increasing with many pupils requiring bespoke transport arrangements in the short and longer term. In recognition of this budget pressure, the service is currently undertaking a review of ASN transport provision to look at different ways of providing transport in order to reduce costs. This review however is unlikely to be concluded before the end of 2024/25. Pending the review a one off sum of £600k is requested from the Inflation Smoothing earmarked reserve to meet the pressure until any changes can be implemented. Any recurring pressure would thereafter be addressed from 2026.</p> <p>Pupil numbers have been fairly consistent over the past 3 years. (see below):</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th><u>Year</u></th> <th><u>Budget</u></th> <th><u>Spend</u></th> <th><u>Over</u></th> <th><u>Pupils</u></th> <th><u>Cost per pupil</u></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>23/24</td> <td>476,500</td> <td>805,480</td> <td>328,980</td> <td>336</td> <td>2,397</td> </tr> <tr> <td>22/23</td> <td>351,500</td> <td>646,003</td> <td>294,503</td> <td>352</td> <td>1,835</td> </tr> <tr> <td>21/22</td> <td>351,500</td> <td>501,759</td> <td>150,259</td> <td>336</td> <td>1,493</td> </tr> <tr> <td>20/21</td> <td>351,500</td> <td>412,912</td> <td>61,412</td> <td>335</td> <td>1,232</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Note that in 2021/22 the core budget was supplemented by £124k smoothing EMR and in 2022/23 £120k ASN Review EMR. The above spend includes the spend through EMR.</p>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Spend</u>	<u>Over</u>	<u>Pupils</u>	<u>Cost per pupil</u>	23/24	476,500	805,480	328,980	336	2,397	22/23	351,500	646,003	294,503	352	1,835	21/22	351,500	501,759	150,259	336	1,493	20/21	351,500	412,912	61,412	335	1,232	600
<u>Year</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Spend</u>	<u>Over</u>	<u>Pupils</u>	<u>Cost per pupil</u>																														
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20/21	351,500	412,912	61,412	335	1,232																														

**Pressure Template 2024/26 Revenue Budget**

**Service: OD, Policy and Communications**

**Pressure Area:**

Budget Area	2021/22 Outturn £000	2022/23 Outturn £000	2023/24 Projected £000	Reason for Pressure What has Changed Implications if Not Funded	2024/25 Pressure £000	2025/26 Pressure £000
Human Resources Service Review	1396	1441	1544	<p>The external review of Human Resources and Organisational Development Team identified that in comparison to other local authorities the Service has reduced capacity. A number of temporary staffing arrangements are also in place. This has lead to (1) backlogs (2) lack of development of new more efficient processes and systems (3) challenges with recruitment and retention of employees within HR and OD. The CMT support a net increase of 2.8 FTE in the size of the core team and this forms the basis of the pressure request.</p> <p>Funding will be used to support the consolidation of temporary arrangements, filling of vacant posts and establishment of additional posts. If not funded the current challenges will continue.</p>	113	0

**Notes:**

1/ Outturn figures should be gross (expenditure prior to use of Earmarked Reserves)

**Pressure Template 2024/26 Revenue Budget**

**Service: Roads Parking**

**Pressure Area:**

Budget Area	2021/22 Outturn £000	2022/23 Outturn £000	2023/24 Projected £000	Reason for Pressure What has Changed Implications if Not Funded	2024/25 Pressure £000	2025/26 Pressure £000
Roads Parking Income	On Budget	35 Under Budget	164 Under Budget	<p>There has been a decrease in income due to less activity following the reintroduction of charging post to Covid-19 pandemic. This is down to a combination of factors such as home working/cost of living pressures and changes made to the parking charging arrangements in Gourock and Port Glasgow</p> <p>The prior year figures and projected 2023/24 are after the use of earmarked reserves while parking charges was suspended (2021/22 &amp; 2022/23). Charges were re-introduced in October 2022.</p> <p>A report will be presented to Members on the basis of a number of options including stopping charges altogether. The pressure is based on the most expensive and assumes implementation from October 2024. The pressure also assumes the non-implementation of the planned increase in the charge from £2 to £3 /day from April 2024</p>	190	110







**2024/26 Budget  
November Policy & Resources Committee- Savings/Adjustments**

	Savings 2024/25 £000	Savings 2025/26 £000	Comments	FTE
<b>E&amp;R</b>				
1/				
2/				
3/				
<b>ECOD</b>				
1/				
2/				
<b>HSCP</b>				
1/				
<b>Corporate</b>				
1/ Pension Fund- Actuarial Reduction	800	0	Following the triennial actuarial review of Strathclyde Pension Fund it is proposed that the new long term contribution rate reduce by 1.8% to 17.5%. This will save an estimated £800,000 per year of which £45,000 is estimated to relate to Inverclyde Leisure.	0
2/ Release part of the Pressures Allowance	50	150	Per report elsewhere on the agenda, it is proposed to release £200,000 from the 2024/26 Pressures Allowance. This currently leaves a £134,000 unallocated contingency for future pressures over the 2024/26 period.	0
3/ Increased turnover linked to change in AVC options for employees	20	0	A recent legislative change allows part of an employees AVC contributions to be deducted prior to the calculation of employee / employer NI contributions. After intermediary fees this results in a small saving which it is proposed is added to the turnover target.	0
4/				
<b>Total</b>	870	150		0

2/10/23

**2024/26 Estimated Funding Gap**

	2024/25 <u>£000</u>	2025/26 <u>£000</u>	
Gap per June 2023 Financial Strategy	5983	6593	
Sept P&R Committee Decisions:			
Savings Workstreams	-1320	-1180	
Savings/Adjustments	-421	0	
Nov P&R Committee Decisions:			
Savings Adjustments	-870	-150	Appendix 4
<b>Balance Remaining Post 21.11.23</b>	<u>3372</u>	<u>5263</u>	
Council Tax increase(£350k/1%)	Nil	tbc	<b>Note 1</b>
Remaining Savings Options	tbc	tbc	

Notes

1. Committee have agreed to a planning assumption of a £5.0million increase in Ctax income by 2025/26
2. The value and phasing of remaining savings is being finalised by CMT

AP- 24.10.23

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<b>Report To:</b>	<b>Policy &amp; Resources Committee</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>21 November 2023</b>
<b>Report By:</b>	<b>Corporate Director, Education, Communities and Organisational Development</b>	<b>Report No:</b>	<b>PR/25/23/TM</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Tony McEwan</b>	<b>Contact No:</b>	<b>01475 712828</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Update on Inverclyde Anti-Poverty Initiatives</b>		

---

## **1.0 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY**

- 1.1  For Decision  For Information/Noting
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to provide the Policy & Resources Committee with evaluations on the Anti-Poverty Initiatives funded by the Inverclyde Council Anti-Poverty recurring budget to date and make recommendations for next steps.
- 1.3 Inverclyde Council and the HSCP allocated a total budget of £1.08 million per year for financial year 2021/22 and 2022/23 to fund a range of time-limited local initiatives to mitigate poverty and deprivation. The Council contributed £830k and HSCP £250k. This report provides progress against the initiatives relevant to the Council-funded projects and make recommendations for further use of the fund.
- 1.4 The report also recommends the Committee notes the actions to alleviate food poverty which were agreed through agreed delegated authority to the Director of Education, Communities and Educational Resources.
- 1.5 Overall, good progress has been made in implementing the various initiatives, which has resulted in a significant number of local residents and their families benefiting both directly and indirectly from the anti-poverty funding over the past two years.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Policy and Resources Committee:
- notes the content of this report and the evaluations in section 4 of the report;
  - notes the financial information in Appendix 1 and agrees the proposals in section 5 of this report;
  - notes the use of delegated powers to support food insecurity in Winter 2023;
  - notes the use of emergency powers to make payments to families in receipt of free school meals on days of school industrial action; and
  - agrees to a further progress report being submitted to this committee in six month's time.

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

### **3.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT**

- 3.1 In 2021 Inverclyde Council and HSCP agreed to create a £1.08 million budget to fund a range of local initiatives to mitigate the impact of poverty and deprivation levels that were reported in the Scottish Indices of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) 2020.
- 3.2 Many of these initiatives were targeted towards communities and people most likely to be affected by deprivation, poverty, and inequalities, including males affected by drug and alcohol use, early intervention for families living in poverty and encouraging new businesses to start up in areas with the greatest deprivation levels.
- 3.3 Since the initial initiatives were agreed, some changes were made to better reflect the changing needs of communities and also to continue/ discontinue funding where required.
- 3.4 Progress on initiatives and against spend have been reported regularly to the Policy and Resources Committee, with a specific report being submitted on 21 March 2023 which made adjustments to the anti-poverty recurring budget in the context of the 2023/25 budget exercise.
- 3.5 The Full Council in December 2022 agreed a £600k saving from the Council's portion of the recurring anti-poverty budget of £830k, leaving £230k. It also agreed to add in existing Education funding for various education initiatives relating to anti-poverty, totalling £259k. The total recurring anti-poverty budget available for 2023/24 being £489k
- 3.6 In addition to this recurring budget there is an earmarked reserve made up of the carry forward from previous year's anti-poverty funding of £1,202,000 together with £800,000 additional funding from reserves, agreed by Members as part of the 2023/24 budget process. A portion of this funding is required in 2023/24 for completion of some of the original anti-poverty projects, due to when these commenced. In addition, Policy and Resources agreed funding for Playschemes and staffing costs on 23 May 2023. Recommendations to utilise some of this unallocated balance are contained in Section 5 of this report. Appendix 1 details the projects currently being funded from the earmarked reserve.
- 3.7 The initiatives and interventions developed with the Anti-Poverty Funding are just one part of the Council's approach to alleviating poverty in Inverclyde and are, together with the anti-poverty fund, aligned with the actions and outcomes of the Local Child Poverty Action Report which is reported to the Alliance Board annually in line with the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017.

### **4.0 EVALUATION/PROGRESS OF INITIATIVES**

- 4.1 An anti-poverty officers' group was established to provide strategic governance and monitoring of the initiatives funded by the original allocation of funding. Dedicated time of a team leader within CLD has been funded from the anti-poverty budget to provide support to each of the project leads to ensure the outcomes achieved remained in line with the Inverclyde anti-poverty agenda. It is recommended some dedicated time for the anti-poverty post and the officer group remains in place while the anti-poverty funding remains.
- 4.2 Overall, good progress has been made in implementing the various initiatives which has resulted in a significant number of local residents and their families benefiting from the anti-poverty funding, either directly or indirectly with a summary of each of the projects provided below.
- 4.3 **IRISE (Inverclyde Routes in to Supported Employment) PROJECT**

Project Timescale November 2021 – November 2023

This project aimed to provide individualised support to young men aged 20-40 residing in the most deprived areas of Inverclyde, with the aim of moving them into employment. Clients have a range of complex issues such as being in recovery, offending or homelessness and receive support from an Occupational Therapist and Support Workers to improve their skills and reduce the barriers to employment, education, or training.

The IRISE project had initially faced multiple challenges to become established within the Inverclyde community and focused work needed to be undertaken to improve the referral pathway from partner agencies. Even with these improvements, many challenges remain around whole-system approaches to working with vulnerable clients when all services have competing priorities. However, the development of this project has allowed services to share these challenges, improve learning and celebrate successes. The project is currently engaging with 22 men with a total of 38 men being engaged in the work of the project since it began. The most significant forms of support provided has been in relation to housing and homelessness with the lack of safe and secure accommodation being one of the largest barriers to clients moving on with their lives. Most clients have made positive progress towards achieving household stability, healthier lifestyles, emotional wellbeing and increased income.

Although the project has not yet achieved its original outcomes to move clients onto secure employment, there have been other, significant and positive impacts of the project. Trusting relationships take time to form and individualised support available to each client, in addition to the input of an occupational therapist, has meant that clients are now engaging with services in a much more positive way. Central to this work is the team's assessment of trauma and substance use and the ability to work with clients so that they can participate in daily activities. Overall, IRISE is supporting clients with incremental changes to improve the life chances and outcomes for each of its clients.

Officers recommend that due to the successes of the initiative that the project is extended to December 2024, but with a more focused, intensive approach involving fewer clients. The costs of extending the timeframe for IRISE can be contained within the original allocation. The project team will also continue to work with the HSCP to develop a future, more sustainable model of delivery beyond December 2024.

#### 4.4 **Business Start Up**

Project Timescale - June 2021 – May 2023

The objective of the Business Start-up initiative was to create opportunities for 30 local entrepreneurs to create local businesses in the Port Glasgow and Greenock Town Centre areas because of the high levels of deprivation.

The aim of the support was to be more inclusive with fewer conditions applied to the grants than the traditional, standard offer.

While this project initially faced several challenges particularly around recruiting staff to the project in year 1, this was remedied in year 2 by extending the contracts of business development advisors of the Council's Business Gateway contractor to support the anti-poverty project and work with the target audience to start their business. This also allowed for some funding to be returned to the anti-poverty budget.

This project expired in May 2023 and although 24 grants have been provided to support businesses and 27 local residents have been supported by the Business Gateway Contractor, officers recommend no further anti-poverty funding is allocated to the project due to the lower than expected uptake of the grants. It has been widely reported across economic development

forums that the cost of living crisis and the cost of doing business is impacting on the number of people willing to take the risk of starting their own business.

#### 4.5 **Food Insecurity**

Project Timescale - December 2021- December 2023

This funding committed Inverclyde Council to implement and develop the first Zero Waste Food Pantry in Grieve Road in December 2021. The funding was used to commission the Inverclyde Community Development Trust to deliver the Pantry; to support the local community with volunteering opportunities; and engage with a wide range of service users to access the service and ensure it meets their needs.

The funding allocated to the Grieve Road Pantry provided it with leverage to receive match funding opportunities and to apply to the National Lottery to establish a second pantry in Port Glasgow. Currently, across the two Zero Waste Food Pantry's there are 1700 members, of which 60% are members of the Grieve Road Pantry. The Pantry in Port Glasgow is developing a place-based, person-centred approach to service delivery by partnering with Mind Mosaic, Financial Fitness and Social Security Scotland to offer a range of support that meets the needs of the local community. Although both Pantries rely on surplus food from the Glasgow Fare Share Membership (see section 4.5), the groceries are subsidised with food purchased from a local cash and carry, with developing relationships with local supermarkets and local donations from partner organisations. However, the closure of the Amazon warehouse in Gourock had a detrimental effect on the range of goods offered to the communities from the Pantry.

Not only has the Pantry supported communities with surplus and zero waste food, more than 30 people have had the opportunity to volunteer between the two pantries, gaining skills and experience which have supported them into further learning or employment in the area.

Officers recommend continuing to allocate £30,000 for another year to support the Grieve Road pantry, to provide fresh low-cost food to the 1700 community members living in the Grieve Road and surrounding community areas. This funding also contributes towards the cost of a local co-ordinator who supports the volunteers to manage the pantry and can be contained within the initial allocation of anti-poverty funding for food insecurity. Continued funding will also enable the development of local collaborations and partnerships to adapt the service provision, to attract new members to both pantries, including younger households and those not in employment.

#### 4.6 **Glasgow Fare Share Membership**

Project Timescale - December 2021 – December 2023

Inverclyde Council has purchased 2 Super Memberships from Fare Share Scotland each year for the past two years. This charity is based in Glasgow and is the 4<sup>th</sup> largest Fareshare depot in the UK with more than 100 members. Inverclyde's Fareshare memberships have provided 74 tonnes of surplus food per annum to Inverclyde. The food mainly consists of vegetables, dairy, fruit, bread and meat, tins and occasional ready meals. Fare Share Scotland stock is received from the 5 largest supermarket retailers including Tesco and Morrisons, therefore the food delivered is dependant of the surplus food received from them. The Glasgow depot is looking to adapt its business model from September 2023 to support future demand for the next two years. They have advised that part of this revised business model will be to reduce the cost of the Super Memberships to £10,281 each, which will be a saving of £6,000 for each membership.

Officers recommend that the committee continues to allocate anti-poverty funding to purchase two Super Membership Fairshare Scotland to replace the existing membership to continue to support the two local pantries and their local members. This alleviates the pressure on the pantry



as the Fare Share memberships guarantees weekly stock that is subsidised with local surplus contributions.

#### 4.7 **Fuel Insecurity**

##### **IHeat/Wise Group**

Inverclyde Council originally provided a direct award to IHEAT of £200,000 in 2021/23 to provide advice, information, and funding of £75 to older people over 70 years to prevent them falling into debt due to utility costs. Committee agreed to increase this with an additional £100,000 from the Winter Support Fund during Winter 2022, and in November 2022 a further £30,000 was allocated to support older people facing fuel insecurity. This funding has supported more than 450 households through the IHEAT project. The I Heat project has undergone some internal organisational and management challenges, conversations are ongoing with the WISE Group and Home Energy Scotland to identify longer term and more sustainable approaches to support people facing fuel insecurity. The officers group recommend that HSCP continue to explore the best approaches to support fuel poverty and report back to the policy and resources committee where appropriate.

#### 4.8 **Support for Credit Union Movement**

Inverclyde has two local credit unions operating in the area, both of which contribute to the local Financial Inclusion Partnership. Credit Unions facilitate easier access to affordable credit for its members by working in direct collaboration with its partners. Inverclyde Council and Inverclyde HSCP are supporting the local credit unions by helping them to develop improved communications, newsletters, briefing sessions for managers and lead officers, on access to affordable credit to council staff. Publicity material will be jointly developed in collaboration with each of the local credit unions for distribution to the Third Sector, community centres, and within and other voluntary organisations.

The Port Glasgow Credit Union is working closely with a local NHS project which is being piloted in Rainbow Family Centre. The Thrive Under 5 project is taking a whole systems approach to tackling child poverty. The programme aims to support children under the age of five to achieve a healthy weight by tackling the issue of food insecurity, by providing families with the resources and knowledge to make healthier choices around food and money management. The money management aspect will incentivise households and families with young children to open and use a credit union account. The incentive from Port Glasgow Credit Union will amount to payment of the £5.00 membership fee, opening a junior CU account for the oldest child, "seeding" each of these accounts with an initial £5.00 which will enable 25-30 households become members of the Port Glasgow Credit Union. A sum of £400.00 has been donated by a local resident to enable these payments. The donor has indicated that a further £200 would be available if take-up warranted.

Both Credit Unions are facing challenges to implement and monitor the increasingly onerous regulatory and compliance burden placed on them as unpaid volunteer directors from the Financial Conduct Authority and the Prudential Regulatory Authority. They are looking at the future delivery model and are now considering support from Right Way Credit Union. Right Way Credit Union is based in Paisley with branches in Dunoon and Rothesay. The Financial Inclusion Partnership continues to support both credit unions to gather information to understand the implications of this development more fully. However, this change is unlikely to take place before Summer 2024. This project does not require any additional financial support at this time.

Officers recommend that this project is monitored and supported, with progress reports submitted to future meetings of this committee and relevant service committees as appropriate.

#### 4.9 **Warm Hands of Friendship 2022/23**

October 2022-March 2023

In recognition of the cost-of-living challenges faced by communities, Inverclyde Council provided an initial £100,000 to support local community organisations to deliver a range of grass root services that would meet the needs of their community. This funding was bolstered with an additional £50,000 from HSCP which together with the Council funding, empowered more than 44 community groups across Inverclyde to support residents throughout the Winter months of 2022/23 to provide warm spaces, local social connections, meals, and food at times. The grants were administered and distributed through our third sector interface, CVS Inverclyde.

The Warm Hands of Friendship is a good practice example of community and the public sector working together to support residents. Not only did this project provide new ways to engage with local people it also provided the opportunity for local organisations to understand the challenges faced by children and families and ensure that their voices were heard in the development of the Warm Hands provision.

The evaluation of the project highlighted that volunteering had a significant role in the success of the projects. The majority of services were either aimed at families or older people and most had food provision as a key element of their offer. However, more than half of these projects reported that people were hesitant to engage with their warm space due to concerns around “needing charity and free food” which highlights the continuing stigma around poverty and need. The Warm Hands of Friendship helped reduce stigma by this issue by having at its heart, that the warm space was intended to provide warm and friendly spaces to enable communities to come together. Maximising household income was offered through many of the local services to local people £11,000 of income was generated for residents through unclaimed benefits, with around £100,000 of benefit claims still outstanding at the time of the evaluation. A more detailed evaluation of the Warm Hands of Friendship is available as appendix 2 to this report.

Officers recommend that given the current cost of living crisis and the continued high cost of utilities as colder months approach, a further £100,000 is allocated to the Warm Hands of Friendship initiative for 2023/24.

#### 4.10 **Fully funded Summer Playschemes**

Inverclyde Council commissioned Inverclyde Leisure to provide 7 playschemes for four weeks of the school summer holiday period. These playschemes were provided from the following primary schools: Kilmacolm, St Michael's, St Patrick's, Moorfoot, Inverkip and Wemyss Bay. Auchmountain Community Centre was the venue for provision in Greenock East locality. Inverclyde Leisure provided the playschemes from 3 July until 28 July 2023 and Inverclyde Council provided additional funding through its anti-poverty fund to ensure the service was free of charge for all children who attended the playschemes. Inverclyde Leisure reported more than 2000 attendees with the service being accessed around 8000 times, an increase of around 2000 from previous years. Over the 4 week period. Moorfoot Primary School was the most popular location accessed followed by St Michael's Primary School, the least used facility was Auchmountain Community Centre followed by Wemyss Bay Primary School. The average age of the children and young people that attended the playscheme service during the holiday period was 8 years old.

## 5.0 Proposals

5.1 At the Policy and Resources Committee in March 2023, it was agreed that proposals for the unallocated Anti-Poverty EMR, would be brought to a future meeting. The balance of the EMR is currently £2.095m, with £901k currently unallocated, and officers would recommend either a further allocation of funding or an extension to the current project which can be contained within its previously agreed allocation:

- IRISE Project: £260,000 from within the existing allocation to continue project to December 2024;
- Inverclyde Zero Waste Food Pantry - £30,000 for one further year to December 2024 from existing allocation;
- Glasgow Fare Share Membership - £21,000 for two further years of membership for surplus food from the existing allocation within the recurring budget;
- Warm Hands of Friendship Winter 2023 - £100,000 to support people facing cost of living crisis during the winter 2023/24; and
- Supplementing the Scottish Welfare Fund - The Council's Anti-Poverty fund has supported the Scottish Welfare Fund core allocation over several years. Expenditure this year is projected to be contained within one-off carried forward Cost of Living allocations from Scottish Government however a shortfall of £50k is forecast for 2024/25 and £75k 2025/26.

5.2 In addition, and in recognition of the increased pressure on foodbanks this winter, the Corporate Director of Education, Communities and OD, used her delegated authority to approve £30,000 anti-poverty funding for the following:

- I 58 Project (Trussell Trust) £15,000
- Port Glasgow Church Angels £ 5,000
- Branchton Community Centre £ 5,000
- Port Glasgow Salvation Army £ 2,000
- Other Community Food Share £ 3,000

5.3 An emergency powers report was signed by the Chief Financial Officer, Head of Legal, Chief Executive and Cllrs McCabe, McCluskey and Roberston on 21 September 2023. The reason for the use of emergency powers was the need for payments to be made to parents of children in receipt of free school meals and clothing grants during the industrial action in September 2023. This payment was in lieu of free school meals. Approval was given to allocate £27,000 from the anti-poverty ear-marked reserve with approval for the Corporate Director to allocate a further £9000 per strike day, should the industrial action continue.

5.4 Appendix 1 shows the spend to date from the anti-poverty EMR and that the unallocated budget is currently £901k. It is proposed that officers investigate further opportunities to develop anti-poverty initiatives that have been successful in other local authority areas, such as the multi-bank project which has been established in Fife.

## 6.0 IMPLICATIONS

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

SUBJECT	YES	NO
Financial	X	
Legal/Risk		x

Human Resources		x
Strategic (Partnership Plan/Council Plan)	X	
Equalities, Fairer Scotland Duty & 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
Anti-Poverty EMR		2023/24-2024/25	£545k		Leaves a balance unallocated of £901k

### Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact	Virement From (If Applicable)	Other Comments
Anti-Poverty Recurring Budget	Other Expenditure	2023/24	£21k		Leaves £63k unallocated.

## 6.3 Legal/Risk

None.

## 6.4 Human Resources

None.

## 6.5 Strategic

Tackling the causes of poverty and deprivation to reduce inequalities in Inverclyde is a key priority for Inverclyde Council and HSCP. This report provides recommendations which are in line with this priority.

## 7.0 CONSULTATION

7.1 The CMT support the proposals within this report.

## 8.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

8.1 None.

## Appendix 1

### Total EMR Budget

EMR C/F	£1,202,000
Additional funding from Reserves	£800,000
Projected underspends in FSM	£30,000
Projected underspend Fair Share Membership	£11,000
Core AP Unallocated balance	£52,000
	<u>£2,095,000</u>

### Anti Poverty EMR

	Budget	Projection	Spend to 24/10/23
<u>Proposed Allocation:</u>	Allocation	Projection	24/10/23
Dedicated Team Leader	£6,779	£6,779	£6,779
Employment	£587,107	£587,107	£60,684 1/
Employment - IRISE ADP Funding	£145,000	£145,000	£0
Business Start Up	£6,770	6770	£6,770
Food Insecurity	£37,356	£37,356	£37,356
Early Intervention Support & Mentoring for Families	£26,000	£26,000	£13,000
Additional Food Insecurity Funding	£81,424	£81,424	£5,000 2/
Dedicated Team Leader - one day per week	£27,500	£27,500	£4,803
Summer Playschemes	£15,000	£15,000	£0
	£932,935	£932,936	£134,393
<b>FSM - Strike Days - September</b>	<b>£27,000</b>	<b>£27,000</b>	
<b>FSM - Strike Day - November</b>	<b>£9,000</b>	<b>£9,000</b>	
<b>Scottish Welfare Fund</b>	<b>£125,000</b>	<b>£125,000</b>	
<b>Warm Hand of Friendship</b>	<b>£100,000</b>	<b>£100,000</b>	
<b>Total new funding</b>	<b>£261,000</b>	<b>£261,000</b>	<b>£0</b>
EMR Unallocated	£901,065	£0	£0
	<u>£2,095,000</u>	<u>£1,193,936</u>	<u>£134,393</u>

1/ Assumes full budget will be required.

2/ Projection includes £30k additional funding for foodbanks approved by Corporate Director, Education, Communities and OD October 2023 and £30k for one additional year's funding of Inverclyde Zero Waste Food Pantry.

*Inverclyde Warm Hand of  
Friendship Final Report  
June 2023*



# Background

In recognition of the negative impact of the Cost-of-Living Crisis on the residents of Inverclyde, Inverclyde Council provided £90,000 to support and encourage communities to work together to help each other during the 2022-23 winter months. As the local Third Sector Interface, CVS Inverclyde worked in partnership with Inverclyde Council to administer the Warm Hand of Friendship Small Grant Fund.

Beginning in October 2022, the funding was available to organisations and small groups to allow them to develop additional activities to offer warm spaces and activities for those most likely to be adversely affected by the impact of the Cost-of-Living Crisis, and who experience continued disadvantage. Through these warm spaces and activities, the “Warm Hand of Friendship” was extended into the heart of our communities.



Souper Kitchen at Greenock Torpedo Factory.



Inverclyde Faith in Throughcare delivered warm packs to their service-users.

# Process

The Warm Hand of Friendship fund used a rolling programme, with applications assessed weekly. The maximum award was £3,000, and all funds were to be spent by the end of March 2023. CVS Inverclyde staff provided additional support for groups that were unfamiliar with funding applications. It was recognised that some applications did not adequately reflect the quality of the support available from the group.

Successful organisations and groups were asked to post their Warm Hand of Friendship on Inverclyde Life to maximise access to the various projects. Likewise, CVS Inverclyde provided Inverclyde Council with a fortnightly update report with new successful organisations and the details of their projects. This information was also posted on the Inverclyde Council website, offering an additional way for residents to learn about the supplementary support available in their community.

The initial £90,000 was allocated before Christmas 2022, with 33 community groups receiving a portion of this funding. Inverclyde Health and Social Care Partnership kindly provided an additional £50,000 to continue the initiative, which provided funding for an additional 18 community groups. The period between October and December 2022 is considered Round 1, and Round 2 from January to March 2023.



# Data

The Warm Hand of Friendship Small Grant Fund provided a total of 51 grants to 44 organisations and community-based groups. Approximately 94% of the organisations submitted an activity report by the end of May 2023.

The reports were analysed by the number of sessions each project held and total number of participants. Several projects noted that they recorded numbers per session and that people often attended multiple times. As such, this number should be considered in terms of local engagement rather than number of people supported. The predominant theme from the data was *social interactions and connections*. Approximately 88% of projects reported that a key element of their Warm Hand of Friendship spaces and activities was the opportunity to be with other people and build the connections and relationships that were lost during the Covid-19 Pandemic. Projects described intergenerational coffee mornings, meeting new people from different backgrounds, and reducing social isolation. Likewise, projects offering warm boxes and food parcels highlighted that the support often went beyond the number of participants they documented. The food parcels, warm boxes and energy top-ups supported entire families, not just those who attended the Warm Hand of Friendship sessions. This indicates the wider reach of the Warm Hand of Friendship initiative within communities across Inverclyde and the positive impact it had during the Winter 2022/2023 Cost-of-Living Crisis.

The other Warm Hand of Friendship data domains include the type of support the projects offered and the reported client group(s) that

engaged with the project. Many of the projects indicated that a mix of participants joined their Warm Hand of Friendship session, which provided an opportunity for members of the community to meet new people. Although some projects were aimed at particular demographics, most projects welcomed people from any group.

The preliminary Warm Hand of Friendship report in April 2023 reviewed projects from Round 1 of the funding. This data showed that almost 74% of projects highlighted that volunteers had a significant role in the delivery of their projects. However, overall data for the initiative outlines that only 56% of projects report the use of volunteers. The benefits of volunteering for individuals and communities are widely recognised and future initiatives should further promote the volunteer involvement.

A summary of the data domains and totals is available in Table 1. A full breakdown for each organisation by domain is available in the appendices.



Gourock Park Bowling Club

Table 1: domains and totals

Domain	Total	Percentage
Number of WHF Sessions	1,254	
Number of participants	10,022	
Projects that mentioned companionship/reducing social isolation/increasing social connections	42	88%
Hot drinks, biscuits and/or snacks provided	45	94%
Warm food provided	36	75%
Food vouchers/food parcels provided	10	21%
Projects offering clothing/clothing banks	8	17%
Projects offering Warm Boxes	9	19%
Projects aimed at older people	34	71%
Projects aimed at children and young people	24	50%
Projects aimed at families	38	80%
Projects aimed at other vulnerable groups	32	67%
Direct financial advice offered	4	8%
Energy support offered	3	6%
Projects identifying to role of volunteers	27	56%

# Challenges

Among the 94% of projects that reported on their Warm Hand of Friendship activity, eleven projects identified challenges in the delivery of their work. One organisation identified that a lack of understanding as to what people truly needed delayed the start of their activity. Likewise, another organisation highlighted that one of their warm spaces was better attended than the other, and feedback from the community stated that many people felt uncomfortable accessing the underutilised space due to its close proximity to the staff office. In both cases, working with the community provided learning for the organisations and enabled them to adjust their offer. Conversely, one organisation reported that their project received no engagement from the community, with no participants attending any of their Warm Hand of Friendship sessions. Understanding the factors that have contributed to the delivery of successful Warm Hand of Friendship projects will provide learning for future community support and engagement programmes.

As a rolling application process, organisations that were awarded funding towards the end of the initiative had a limited amount of time to delivery their projects. One organisation described this as a challenge; however, they also noted the immense social impact generated by the Warm Hand of Friendship activity, which allowed visitors to socialise more with other members of the local community and their wider client base. Similarly, two organisations recognised staffing and resourcing the Warm Hand of Friendship activities as challenging. It was highlighted that both volunteers and support from Inverclyde Council's Community Learning and Development team were essential to the successful delivery of their project. This provides

evidence of the value of partnership working that reaches into communities and across all sectors. Together we can accomplish more.

The most common theme among those reporting challenges was the perceived stigma related to accessing the Warm Hand of Friendship spaces. More than half of these projects stated that people were hesitant to engage with their warm space due to concerns around “needing charity and free food”. These projects overcame this issue by explaining that the warm space was intended to provide warm and friendly spaces to enable communities to come together. Projects suggested that framing the purpose of their warm space more specifically had a positive influence on community participation, with some projects describing their activity as similar to a coffee morning. All projects agreed that their approach to addressing the perceived stigma was underpinned by dignity and kindness, which along with social connectedness, created the foundation of the Warm Hand of Friendship initiative.

# Inverclyde Life

In response to the Warm Hand of Friendship Fund, CVS Inverclyde's Communications Team were able to add 20 new services to the Inverclyde Life website. The website saw a huge boost in users in the initial weeks of the Warm Hand of Friendship work, with a 23% increase in the number of users, as well as a 132% increase in the time users were spending on the site. In total, 800 pages were viewed on the site in that first week. The Inverclyde Life social media accounts similarly saw a huge upsurge in interest, with 147% increase in Post Reach. The team were further able to write and publish 8 new Community Spotlight Blogs, further highlighting the great work being done across Inverclyde's third sector with the funding.

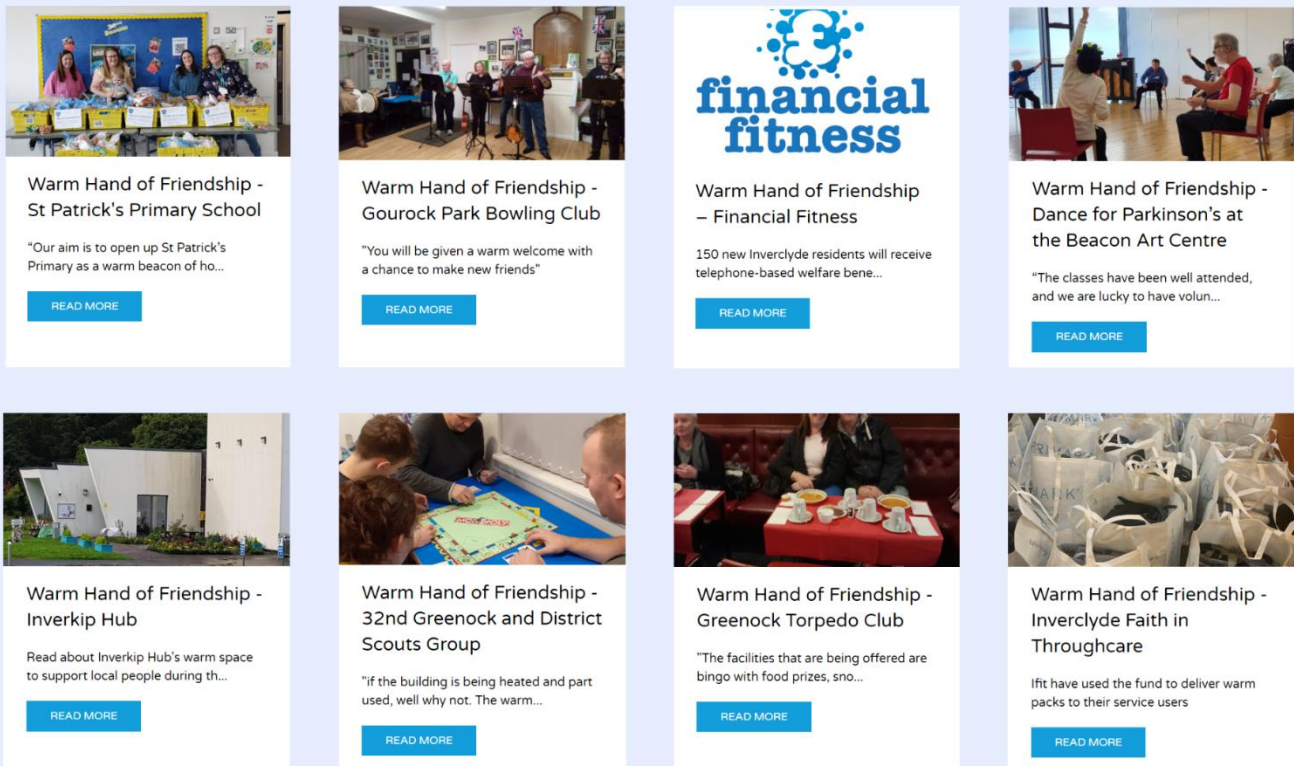


Figure 1 displays eight Community Spotlight Blogs from Inverclyde Life, arranged in a 2x4 grid. Each blog card includes a representative image, a title, a short introductory text, and a 'READ MORE' button.

- Warm Hand of Friendship - St Patrick's Primary School**: "Our aim is to open up St Patrick's Primary as a warm beacon of ho..."
- Warm Hand of Friendship - Gourrock Park Bowling Club**: "You will be given a warm welcome with a chance to make new friends"
- Warm Hand of Friendship - Financial Fitness**: 150 new Inverclyde residents will receive telephone-based welfare bene...
- Warm Hand of Friendship - Dance for Parkinson's at the Beacon Art Centre**: "The classes have been well attended, and we are lucky to have volun..."
- Warm Hand of Friendship - Inverkip Hub**: Read about Inverkip Hub's warm space to support local people during th...
- Warm Hand of Friendship - 32nd Greenock and District Scouts Group**: "If the building is being heated and part used, well why not. The warm..."
- Warm Hand of Friendship - Greenock Torpedo Club**: "The facilities that are being offered are bingo with food prizes, sno..."
- Warm Hand of Friendship - Inverclyde Faith in Throughcare**: Ift have used the fund to deliver warm packs to their service users

Figure 1: Inverclyde Life Community Spotlight Blogs

(find them here to read more: <https://inverclydelife.com/community-spotlight>)



Table 2 highlights the activity on both the Inverclyde Life website and Facebook page during the week commencing 23rd January 2023. The analytics were particularly important this week due to several factors. The Warm Hand of Friendship took time to gain momentum. Due to the timing of the initiative, this momentum merged with the standard increased support available across the community in preparation for and over the Christmas period. This included the annual CVS Inverclyde Christmas Mapping, developed in partnership with organisations and groups across the third sector. The week beginning the 23<sup>rd</sup> January coincided with Round 2 of the funding and indicates the impact of the Warm Spaces Mapping and the collaborative effort to share it across Inverclyde.

Table 2: Inverclyde Life Facebook and Website data – week commencing 23/01/2023

Domains	Data	Percentage Change
<b>Inverclyde Life Facebook</b>		
Page Views	27	↑ 575%
New Page Likes	2	↑ 100%
Post Reach	1,177	↑ 143.7%
Top Post	24/01 Warm Spaces post	
<b>Inverclyde Life Website</b>		
Website Users	8	↑ 22.9%
Website Bounce Rate	9	↓ 1.7%
Website Sessions	34	↑ 20.4%
Average Website Session Duration	24	
Number of New Website Sessions	38	
Percentage of New Website Sessions	32	
Route for Access to Website	Organic Search – 222 Direct – 29 Referral – 9 Social Media – 12	
Average Number of Website Pages Per Session	2.42	
Website Page Views	800	

This snapshot of analytics for Inverclyde Life demonstrates the significant influence the Warm Hand of Friendship had on how people seek support. All domains saw increased activity except the website bounce back rate, which measures the percentage of visitors to a website who navigate away from the site after viewing only one page. Having a negative bounce back rate is desirable, indicating that people are engaging more fully with the website. Although CVS Inverclyde hosts Inverclyde Life, the website's successful contribution to the Warm Hand of Friendship would not have been possible without the cooperation of partners from Inverclyde Council, HSCP and community-based groups across Inverclyde.





# Feedback from Communities

The Warm Hand of Friendship offered support that was warmly welcomed by communities. Below is some of the feedback the community-based organisations provided.

Most attendees are older and have really enjoyed the social aspect of our Monday lunches and we started inviting primary aged children and a teacher, a different 4 each week plus the teacher, and all have thoroughly enjoyed chatting and sharing information between the different age groups. A win for all concerned.'

A woman came to our WHF cafes. She lives alone and her family has grown up and moved away from Inverclyde. We were the only people she spoke to all week, but she made some friends at the café. She's not isolated anymore, which is lovely

A group of ladies met at our weekly warm space and became really good friends. They started messaging each other between sessions and then began to meet up outside of the warm space.

Volunteers speak to all that come the reply that we get is they look forward to Friday, love coming due to meeting and getting the companionship in a warm and friendly environment

One Warm Hand of Friendship project providing income maximisation support. Through this project, Inverclyde residents received:

- ◆ 103 benefits checks and income maximisation advice
- ◆ 42 internal referrals for in-person form filling support
- ◆ 8 referred to better-off-in-work advice to support people into employment
- ◆ 8 people supported to challenge unfavourable benefit decisions

Approximately £11,000 worth of financial outcomes was secured via successful welfare benefit claims, with around £100,000 worth of benefit claims submitted but still outstanding. To complement the Warm Hand of Friendship project, this organisation also offered each service-user free, in-house money and debt advice from their Money Adviser, to help clients deal with their outgoings, debts, and household budgets. Fourteen clients accessed money/debt advice as a result of this offer, enabling said clients to manage and/or reduce their outgoings accordingly.

"The Cost-of-Living has made it hard, but this service has really helped. Getting what I'm entitled to will really make a difference"

"I really appreciate the help sorting my finances. Money's tight just now, but they've made it a lot easier"

# Conclusion

The Warm Hand of Friendship has been deemed a success by the groups involved with delivering the projects and more importantly, the members of the community who participated in the warm spaces. Some of the projects have been so successful that the groups have identified they will continue their projects through their own organisation's finances, while other groups have asked CVS Inverclyde to support them to find continuation funding. The Warm Hand of Friendship initiative has prompted the development of additional community assets, which would not have been possible without the initial investments from Inverclyde Council and HSCP.

The success of the Warm Hand of Friendship also demonstrates the kindness and compassion that is in the very fabric of Inverclyde. Similarly, the appetite to support others in the community, champion kindness and challenge stigma in Inverclyde says so much about the compassion and resilience of the people who live and work there. Through initiatives like the Warm Hand of Friendship, they are changing the narrative about Inverclyde.

# Appendices

# Appendix A – A-D

1st Gourock Scouts	
Number of sessions	21
Number of participants	420
Projects involving volunteers	Yes
Social Interaction/Reduced Isolation/Socialising/ Friendship/Companionship/ Strengthening Relationships	Yes
Hot drinks/ Snacks/ biscuits	Yes
Warm food	Yes
Clothing/ clothing bank	No
Warm boxes	No
Food vouchers/ food parcels	No
Aimed at older adults	Yes
Aimed at children & young people	Yes
Aimed at families	Yes
Aimed at other vulnerable groups	No
Project offering financial advice	No
Offered energy support	No

32nd Greenock Scouts	
Number of sessions	22
Number of participants	80
Projects involving volunteers	Yes
Social Interaction/Reduced Isolation/Socialising/ Friendship/Companionship/ Strengthening Relationships	Yes
Hot drinks/ Snacks/ biscuits	Yes
Warm food	No
Clothing/ clothing bank	No
Warm boxes	No
Food vouchers/ food parcels	No
Aimed at older adults	No
Aimed at children & young people	Yes
Aimed at families	Yes
Aimed at other vulnerable groups	No
Project offering financial advice	No
Offered energy support	No

Ardgowan Hospice	
Number of sessions	0
Number of participants	40
Projects involving volunteers	No
Social Interaction/Reduced Isolation/Socialising/ Friendship/Companionship/ Strengthening Relationships	Yes
Hot drinks/ Snacks/ biscuits	Yes
Warm food	Yes
Clothing/ clothing bank	No
Warm boxes	No
Food vouchers/ food parcels	No
Aimed at older adults	Yes
Aimed at children & young people	No
Aimed at families	No
Aimed at other vulnerable groups	Yes
Project offering financial advice	No
Offered energy support	No

<b>Auchmountain Centre</b>		<b>Barnardo's Nurture</b>		<b>Beacon Arts Centre</b>	
Number of sessions	13	Number of sessions	28	Number of sessions	10
Number of participants	350	Number of participants	82	Number of participants	15
Projects involving volunteers	No	Projects involving volunteers	No	Projects involving volunteers	No
Social Interaction/Reduced Isolation/Socialising/ Friendship/Companionship/ Strengthening Relationships	Yes	Social Interaction/Reduced Isolation/Socialising/ Friendship/Companionship/ Strengthening Relationships	Yes	Social Interaction/Reduced Isolation/Socialising/ Friendship/Companionship/ Strengthening Relationships	Yes
Hot drinks/ Snacks/ biscuits	Yes	Hot drinks/ Snacks/ biscuits	Yes	Hot drinks/ Snacks/ biscuits	Yes
Warm food	Yes	Warm food	Yes	Warm food	No
Clothing/ clothing bank	Yes	Clothing/ clothing bank	Yes	Clothing/ clothing bank	No
Warm boxes	Yes	Warm boxes	Yes	Warm boxes	No
Food vouchers/ food parcels	No	Food vouchers/ food parcels	Yes	Food vouchers/ food parcels	No
Aimed at older adults	Yes	Aimed at older adults	No	Aimed at older adults	Yes
Aimed at children & young people	No	Aimed at children & young people	Yes	Aimed at children & young people	No
Aimed at families	Yes	Aimed at families	Yes	Aimed at families	No
Aimed at other vulnerable groups	Yes	Aimed at other vulnerable groups	No	Aimed at other vulnerable groups	Yes
Project offering financial advice	No	Project offering financial advice	No	Project offering financial advice	No
Offered energy support	No	Offered energy support	Yes	Offered energy support	No

<b>Branchton Comm Centre</b>	
Number of sessions	20
Number of participants	660
Projects involving volunteers	No
Social Interaction/Reduced Isolation/Socialising/ Friendship/Companionship/ Strengthening Relationships	Yes
Hot drinks/ Snacks/ biscuits	Yes
Warm food	Yes
Clothing/ clothing bank	No
Warm boxes	No
Food vouchers/ food parcels	No
Aimed at older adults	Yes
Aimed at children & young people	Yes
Aimed at families	Yes
Aimed at other vulnerable groups	Yes
Project offering financial advice	No
Offered energy support	No

<b>Clune Park Resource Ctr</b>	
Number of sessions	45
Number of participants	40
Projects involving volunteers	Yes
Social Interaction/Reduced Isolation/Socialising/ Friendship/Companionship/ Strengthening Relationships	Yes
Hot drinks/ Snacks/ biscuits	Yes
Warm food	Yes
Clothing/ clothing bank	No
Warm boxes	No
Food vouchers/ food parcels	No
Aimed at older adults	Yes
Aimed at children & young people	No
Aimed at families	Yes
Aimed at other vulnerable groups	No
Project offering financial advice	No
Offered energy support	No

<b>Designed Necessities</b>	
Number of sessions	11
Number of participants	24
Projects involving volunteers	No
Social Interaction/Reduced Isolation/Socialising/ Friendship/Companionship/ Strengthening Relationships	Yes
Hot drinks/ Snacks/ biscuits	Yes
Warm food	No
Clothing/ clothing bank	No
Warm boxes	No
Food vouchers/ food parcels	No
Aimed at older adults	Yes
Aimed at children & young people	No
Aimed at families	Yes
Aimed at other vulnerable groups	Yes
Project offering financial advice	No
Offered energy support	No

# Appendix B – H-I

<b>Financial Fitness</b>	
Number of sessions	20
Number of participants	140
Projects involving volunteers	No
Social Interaction/Reduced Isolation/Socialising/ Friendship/Companionship/ Strengthening Relationships	No
Hot drinks/ Snacks/ biscuits	No
Warm food	No
Clothing/ clothing bank	No
Warm boxes	No
Food vouchers/ food parcels	No
Aimed at older adults	Yes
Aimed at children & young people	No
Aimed at families	Yes
Aimed at other vulnerable groups	Yes
Project offering financial advice	Yes
Offered energy support	No

<b>Gibshill Comm Centre</b>	
Number of sessions	34
Number of participants	500
Projects involving volunteers	Yes
Social Interaction/Reduced Isolation/Socialising/ Friendship/Companionship/ Strengthening Relationships	Yes
Hot drinks/ Snacks/ biscuits	Yes
Warm food	Yes
Clothing/ clothing bank	No
Warm boxes	No
Food vouchers/ food parcels	Yes
Aimed at older adults	Yes
Aimed at children & young people	Yes
Aimed at families	Yes
Aimed at other vulnerable groups	Yes
Project offering financial advice	No
Offered energy support	No

<b>Gourock Park Bowling Club</b>	
Number of sessions	23
Number of participants	700
Projects involving volunteers	Yes
Social Interaction/Reduced Isolation/Socialising/ Friendship/Companionship/ Strengthening Relationships	Yes
Hot drinks/ Snacks/ biscuits	Yes
Warm food	Yes
Clothing/ clothing bank	No
Warm boxes	No
Food vouchers/ food parcels	No
Aimed at older adults	Yes
Aimed at children & young people	No
Aimed at families	Yes
Aimed at other vulnerable groups	Yes
Project offering financial advice	No
Offered energy support	No



<b>Greenock Baptist Church</b>	
Number of sessions	24
Number of participants	200
Projects involving volunteers	Yes
Social Interaction/Reduced Isolation/Socialising/ Friendship/Companionship/ Strengthening Relationships	Yes
Hot drinks/ Snacks/ biscuits	Yes
Warm food	Yes
Clothing/ clothing bank	No
Warm boxes	No
Food vouchers/ food parcels	No
Aimed at older adults	Yes
Aimed at children & young people	Yes
Aimed at families	Yes
Aimed at other vulnerable groups	Yes
Project offering financial advice	No
Offered energy support	No

<b>Greenock East End Church</b>	<b>No data available</b>
Number of sessions	
Number of participants	
Projects involving volunteers	
Social Interaction/Reduced Isolation/Socialising/ Friendship/Companionship/ Strengthening Relationships	
Hot drinks/ Snacks/ biscuits	
Warm food	
Clothing/ clothing bank	
Warm boxes	
Food vouchers/ food parcels	
Aimed at older adults	
Aimed at children & young people	
Aimed at families	
Aimed at other vulnerable groups	
Project offering financial advice	
Offered energy support	

<b>Greenock Torpedo Factory Club</b>	
Number of sessions	22
Number of participants	47
Projects involving volunteers	Yes
Social Interaction/Reduced Isolation/Socialising/ Friendship/Companionship/ Strengthening Relationships	Yes
Hot drinks/ Snacks/ biscuits	Yes
Warm food	Yes
Clothing/ clothing bank	No
Warm boxes	No
Food vouchers/ food parcels	No
Aimed at older adults	Yes
Aimed at children & young people	Yes
Aimed at families	Yes
Aimed at other vulnerable groups	No
Project offering financial advice	No
Offered energy support	No

<b>Grieve Rd Community Ctr</b>	
Number of sessions	9
Number of participants	470
Projects involving volunteers	Yes
Social Interaction/Reduced Isolation/Socialising/Friendship/Companionship/Strengthening Relationships	Yes
Hot drinks/ Snacks/ biscuits	Yes
Warm food	Yes
Clothing/ clothing bank	No
Warm boxes	No
Food vouchers/ food parcels	No
Aimed at older adults	Yes
Aimed at children & young people	No
Aimed at families	Yes
Aimed at other vulnerable groups	Yes
Project offering financial advice	No
Offered energy support	No

<b>Hamilton Bardrainey CoS</b>	
Number of sessions	12
Number of participants	34
Projects involving volunteers	Yes
Social Interaction/Reduced Isolation/Socialising/Friendship/Companionship/Strengthening Relationships	Yes
Hot drinks/ Snacks/ biscuits	Yes
Warm food	Yes
Clothing/ clothing bank	No
Warm boxes	No
Food vouchers/ food parcels	No
Aimed at older adults	Yes
Aimed at children & young people	No
Aimed at families	Yes
Aimed at other vulnerable groups	No
Project offering financial advice	No
Offered energy support	No

<b>Home-Start R&amp;I</b>	
Number of sessions	42
Number of participants	154
Projects involving volunteers	Yes
Social Interaction/Reduced Isolation/Socialising/Friendship/Companionship/Strengthening Relationships	Yes
Hot drinks/ Snacks/ biscuits	Yes
Warm food	Yes
Clothing/ clothing bank	No
Warm boxes	No
Food vouchers/ food parcels	No
Aimed at older adults	No
Aimed at children & young people	Yes
Aimed at families	Yes
Aimed at other vulnerable groups	No
Project offering financial advice	No
Offered energy support	No

<b>Hope Community Church</b>	
Number of sessions	16
Number of participants	472
Projects involving volunteers	Yes
Social Interaction/Reduced Isolation/Socialising/Friendship/Companionship/Strengthening Relationships	Yes
Hot drinks/ Snacks/ biscuits	Yes
Warm food	Yes
Clothing/ clothing bank	No
Warm boxes	No
Food vouchers/ food parcels	No
Aimed at older adults	Yes
Aimed at children & young people	Yes
Aimed at families	Yes
Aimed at other vulnerable groups	Yes
Project offering financial advice	No
Offered energy support	No

# Appendix C – J-K

IAMH	
Number of sessions	11
Number of participants	47
Projects involving volunteers	Yes
Social Interaction/Reduced Isolation/Socialising/ Friendship/Companionship/ Strengthening Relationships	Yes
Hot drinks/ Snacks/ biscuits	Yes
Warm food	Yes
Clothing/ clothing bank	No
Warm boxes	No
Food vouchers/ food parcels	No
Aimed at older adults	Yes
Aimed at children & young people	No
Aimed at families	No
Aimed at other vulnerable groups	Yes
Project offering financial advice	No
Offered energy support	No

ICD Trust	
Number of sessions	58
Number of participants	55
Projects involving volunteers	No
Social Interaction/Reduced Isolation/Socialising/ Friendship/Companionship/ Strengthening Relationships	Yes
Hot drinks/ Snacks/ biscuits	Yes
Warm food	No
Clothing/ clothing bank	No
Warm boxes	No
Food vouchers/ food parcels	No
Aimed at older adults	Yes
Aimed at children & young people	No
Aimed at families	Yes
Aimed at other vulnerable groups	Yes
Project offering financial advice	Yes
Offered energy support	Yes

I-FiT	
Number of sessions	4
Number of participants	38
Projects involving volunteers	Yes
Social Interaction/Reduced Isolation/Socialising/ Friendship/Companionship/ Strengthening Relationships	No
Hot drinks/ Snacks/ biscuits	Yes
Warm food	Yes
Clothing/ clothing bank	Yes
Warm boxes	Yes
Food vouchers/ food parcels	Yes
Aimed at older adults	No
Aimed at children & young people	No
Aimed at families	No
Aimed at other vulnerable groups	Yes
Project offering financial advice	No
Offered energy support	Yes

Inverclyde Homeless Forum	
Number of sessions	8
Number of participants	40
Projects involving volunteers	Yes
Social Interaction/Reduced Isolation/Socialising/ Friendship/Companionship/ Strengthening Relationships	Yes
Hot drinks/ Snacks/ biscuits	Yes
Warm food	Yes
Clothing/ clothing bank	Yes
Warm boxes	Yes
Food vouchers/ food parcels	Yes
Aimed at older adults	No
Aimed at children & young people	No
Aimed at families	Yes
Aimed at other vulnerable groups	Yes
Project offering financial advice	No
Offered energy support	No

IL- AuchmeadRd/Ravenscraig	
Number of sessions	17
Number of participants	170
Projects involving volunteers	No
Social Interaction/Reduced Isolation/Socialising/ Friendship/Companionship/ Strengthening Relationships	Yes
Hot drinks/ Snacks/ biscuits	Yes
Warm food	No
Clothing/ clothing bank	No
Warm boxes	No
Food vouchers/ food parcels	No
Aimed at older adults	Yes
Aimed at children & young people	Yes
Aimed at families	Yes
Aimed at other vulnerable groups	Yes
Project offering financial advice	No
Offered energy support	No

<b>IL - Boglestone Centre</b>	
Number of sessions	13
Number of participants	268
Projects involving volunteers	No
Social Interaction/Reduced Isolation/Socialising/ Friendship/Companionship/ Strengthening Relationships	No
Hot drinks/ Snacks/ biscuits	Yes
Warm food	No
Clothing/ clothing bank	No
Warm boxes	No
Food vouchers/ food parcels	No
Aimed at older adults	No
Aimed at children & young people	Yes
Aimed at families	Yes
Aimed at other vulnerable groups	No
Project offering financial advice	No
Offered energy support	No

<b>IL - Greenock Sports Centre</b>	
Number of sessions	15
Number of participants	0
Projects involving volunteers	No
Social Interaction/Reduced Isolation/Socialising/ Friendship/Companionship/ Strengthening Relationships	No
Hot drinks/ Snacks/ biscuits	No
Warm food	Yes
Clothing/ clothing bank	No
Warm boxes	No
Food vouchers/ food parcels	No
Aimed at older adults	Yes
Aimed at children & young people	Yes
Aimed at families	Yes
Aimed at other vulnerable groups	No
Project offering financial advice	No
Offered energy support	No

<b>IL - Lady Octavia Centre</b>	
Number of sessions	13
Number of participants	
Projects involving volunteers	No
Social Interaction/Reduced Isolation/Socialising/ Friendship/Companionship/ Strengthening Relationships	No
Hot drinks/ Snacks/ biscuits	Yes
Warm food	No
Clothing/ clothing bank	No
Warm boxes	No
Food vouchers/ food parcels	No
Aimed at older adults	No
Aimed at children & young people	Yes
Aimed at families	Yes
Aimed at other vulnerable groups	No
Project offering financial advice	No
Offered energy support	No

<b>IL - Waterfront Leisure Ctr</b>	
Number of sessions	13
Number of participants	76
Projects involving volunteers	No
Social Interaction/Reduced Isolation/Socialising/ Friendship/Companionship/ Strengthening Relationships	Yes
Hot drinks/ Snacks/ biscuits	Yes
Warm food	Yes
Clothing/ clothing bank	No
Warm boxes	No
Food vouchers/ food parcels	No
Aimed at older adults	No
Aimed at children & young people	Yes
Aimed at families	Yes
Aimed at other vulnerable groups	No
Project offering financial advice	No
Offered energy support	No

<b>Inverclyde Youth Theatre</b>	
Number of sessions	14
Number of participants	20
Projects involving volunteers	No
Social Interaction/Reduced Isolation/Socialising/ Friendship/Companionship/ Strengthening Relationships	Yes
Hot drinks/ Snacks/ biscuits	Yes
Warm food	Yes
Clothing/ clothing bank	No
Warm boxes	No
Food vouchers/ food parcels	No
Aimed at older adults	No
Aimed at children & young people	Yes
Aimed at families	No
Aimed at other vulnerable groups	No
Project offering financial advice	No
Offered energy support	No

<b>Inverkip Church</b>	
Number of sessions	22
Number of participants	50
Projects involving volunteers	Yes
Social Interaction/Reduced Isolation/Socialising/ Friendship/Companionship/ Strengthening Relationships	Yes
Hot drinks/ Snacks/ biscuits	Yes
Warm food	Yes
Clothing/ clothing bank	No
Warm boxes	No
Food vouchers/ food parcels	No
Aimed at older adults	Yes
Aimed at children & young people	Yes
Aimed at families	No
Aimed at other vulnerable groups	No
Project offering financial advice	No
Offered energy support	No

Inverkip Community Initiative	
Number of sessions	100
Number of participants	136
Projects involving volunteers	No
Social Interaction/Reduced Isolation/Socialising/ Friendship/Companionship/ Strengthening Relationships	Yes
Hot drinks/ Snacks/ biscuits	Yes
Warm food	Yes
Clothing/ clothing bank	No
Warm boxes	No
Food vouchers/ food parcels	No
Aimed at older adults	Yes
Aimed at children & young people	Yes
Aimed at families	Yes
Aimed at other vulnerable groups	Yes
Project offering financial advice	No
Offered energy support	No

In-Work Enterprises Ltd	
Number of sessions	20
Number of participants	500
Projects involving volunteers	No
Social Interaction/Reduced Isolation/Socialising/ Friendship/Companionship/ Strengthening Relationships	Yes
Hot drinks/ Snacks/ biscuits	Yes
Warm food	Yes
Clothing/ clothing bank	No
Warm boxes	No
Food vouchers/ food parcels	No
Aimed at older adults	Yes
Aimed at children & young people	No
Aimed at families	No
Aimed at other vulnerable groups	Yes
Project offering financial advice	No
Offered energy support	No

Kilmacolm Primary Parent Partnership	
Number of sessions	82
Number of participants	79
Projects involving volunteers	Yes
Social Interaction/Reduced Isolation/Socialising/ Friendship/Companionship/ Strengthening Relationships	Yes
Hot drinks/ Snacks/ biscuits	Yes
Warm food	Yes
Clothing/ clothing bank	Yes
Warm boxes	Yes
Food vouchers/ food parcels	No
Aimed at older adults	No
Aimed at children & young people	Yes
Aimed at families	Yes
Aimed at other vulnerable groups	No
Project offering financial advice	No
Offered energy support	No



# Appendix D – L-P

Larkfield ELC	
Number of sessions	120
Number of participants	120
Projects involving volunteers	No
Social Interaction/Reduced Isolation/Socialising/ Friendship/Companionship/ Strengthening Relationships	No
Hot drinks/ Snacks/ biscuits	No
Warm food	No
Clothing/ clothing bank	Yes
Warm boxes	Yes
Food vouchers/ food parcels	No
Aimed at older adults	No
Aimed at children & young people	Yes
Aimed at families	
Aimed at other vulnerable groups	No
Project offering financial advice	No
Offered energy support	No

Lyle Gateway	
Number of sessions	14
Number of participants	204
Projects involving volunteers	No
Social Interaction/Reduced Isolation/Socialising/ Friendship/Companionship/ Strengthening Relationships	Yes
Hot drinks/ Snacks/ biscuits	Yes
Warm food	Yes
Clothing/ clothing bank	No
Warm boxes	No
Food vouchers/ food parcels	No
Aimed at older adults	Yes
Aimed at children & young people	No
Aimed at families	Yes
Aimed at other vulnerable groups	Yes
Project offering financial advice	No
Offered energy support	No

Man On! Inverclyde	
Number of sessions	22
Number of participants	45
Projects involving volunteers	Yes
Social Interaction/Reduced Isolation/Socialising/ Friendship/Companionship/ Strengthening Relationships	Yes
Hot drinks/ Snacks/ biscuits	Yes
Warm food	Yes
Clothing/ clothing bank	No
Warm boxes	No
Food vouchers/ food parcels	No
Aimed at older adults	No
Aimed at children & young people	No
Aimed at families	Yes
Aimed at other vulnerable groups	Yes
Project offering financial advice	Yes
Offered energy support	No

<b>Mount Kirk Greenock</b>	
Number of sessions	17
Number of participants	100
Projects involving volunteers	Yes
Social Interaction/Reduced Isolation/Socialising/ Friendship/Companionship/ Strengthening Relationships	Yes
Hot drinks/ Snacks/ biscuits	Yes
Warm food	Yes
Clothing/ clothing bank	No
Warm boxes	Yes
Food vouchers/ food parcels	Yes
Aimed at older adults	Yes
Aimed at children & young people	No
Aimed at families	Yes
Aimed at other vulnerable groups	Yes
Project offering financial advice	No
Offered energy support	No

<b>Moving On Inverclyde</b>	
Number of sessions	68
Number of participants	60
Projects involving volunteers	0
Social Interaction/Reduced Isolation/Socialising/ Friendship/Companionship/ Strengthening Relationships	Yes
Hot drinks/ Snacks/ biscuits	Yes
Warm food	Yes
Clothing/ clothing bank	No
Warm boxes	Yes
Food vouchers/ food parcels	Yes
Aimed at older adults	No
Aimed at children & young people	No
Aimed at families	No
Aimed at other vulnerable groups	Yes
Project offering financial advice	No
Offered energy support	No

<b>Parklea Branching Out</b>	
Number of sessions	110
Number of participants	230
Projects involving volunteers	Yes
Social Interaction/Reduced Isolation/Socialising/ Friendship/Companionship/ Strengthening Relationships	Yes
Hot drinks/ Snacks/ biscuits	Yes
Warm food	Yes
Clothing/ clothing bank	No
Warm boxes	No
Food vouchers/ food parcels	Yes
Aimed at older adults	Yes
Aimed at children & young people	Yes
Aimed at families	Yes
Aimed at other vulnerable groups	Yes
Project offering financial advice	No
Offered energy support	No

<b>Port Glasgow Blowing Club</b>	<b>No data available</b>
Number of sessions	
Number of participants	
Projects involving volunteers	
Social Interaction/Reduced Isolation/Socialising/Friendship/Companionship/Strengthening Relationships	
Hot drinks/ Snacks/ biscuits	
Warm food	
Clothing/ clothing bank	
Warm boxes	
Food vouchers/ food parcels	
Aimed at older adults	
Aimed at children & young people	
Aimed at families	
Aimed at other vulnerable groups	
Project offering financial advice	
Offered energy support	

# Appendix E – s-Y

<b>SAMH</b>	
Number of sessions	11
Number of participants	110
Projects involving volunteers	No
Social Interaction/Reduced Isolation/Socialising/ Friendship/Companionship/ Strengthening Relationships	Yes
Hot drinks/ Snacks/ biscuits	No
Warm food	No
Clothing/ clothing bank	No
Warm boxes	Yes
Food vouchers/ food parcels	No
Aimed at older adults	Yes
Aimed at children & young people	No
Aimed at families	No
Aimed at other vulnerable groups	Yes
Project offering financial advice	Yes
Offered energy support	No

<b>St Margaret's Greenock</b>	
Number of sessions	12
Number of participants	100
Projects involving volunteers	Yes
Social Interaction/Reduced Isolation/Socialising/ Friendship/Companionship/ Strengthening Relationships	Yes
Hot drinks/ Snacks/ biscuits	Yes
Warm food	Yes
Clothing/ clothing bank	No
Warm boxes	No
Food vouchers/ food parcels	No
Aimed at older adults	Yes
Aimed at children & young people	No
Aimed at families	Yes
Aimed at other vulnerable groups	Yes
Project offering financial advice	No
Offered energy support	No

St Patrick's RC Church		St Patrick's Parent Council		Tail O' The Bank Credit Union	
Number of sessions	3	Number of sessions	10	Number of sessions	12
Number of participants	95	Number of participants	1,394	Number of participants	100
Projects involving volunteers	Yes	Projects involving volunteers	Yes	Projects involving volunteers	No
Social Interaction/Reduced Isolation/Socialising/Friendship/Companionship/Strengthening Relationships	Yes	Social Interaction/Reduced Isolation/Socialising/Friendship/Companionship/Strengthening Relationships	Yes	Social Interaction/Reduced Isolation/Socialising/Friendship/Companionship/Strengthening Relationships	Yes
Hot drinks/ Snacks/ biscuits	Yes	Hot drinks/ Snacks/ biscuits	Yes	Hot drinks/ Snacks/ biscuits	Yes
Warm food	Yes	Warm food	Yes	Warm food	No
Clothing/ clothing bank	No	Clothing/ clothing bank	Yes	Clothing/ clothing bank	No
Warm boxes	No	Warm boxes	No	Warm boxes	No
Food vouchers/ food parcels	No	Food vouchers/ food parcels	Yes	Food vouchers/ food parcels	No
Aimed at older adults	Yes	Aimed at older adults	No	Aimed at older adults	Yes
Aimed at children & young people	No	Aimed at children & young people	Yes	Aimed at children & young people	No
Aimed at families	Yes	Aimed at families	Yes	Aimed at families	Yes
Aimed at other vulnerable groups	Yes	Aimed at other vulnerable groups	No	Aimed at other vulnerable groups	Yes
Project offering financial advice	No	Project offering financial advice	No	Project offering financial advice	No
Offered energy support	No	Offered energy support	No	Offered energy support	No

Wellington Park Blowing Club		Westburn Parish Church		Youth Connections	
Number of sessions	12	Number of sessions	21	Number of sessions	32
Number of participants	55	Number of participants	420	Number of participants	535
Projects involving volunteers	Yes	Projects involving volunteers	Yes	Projects involving volunteers	Yes
Social Interaction/Reduced Isolation/Socialising/Friendship/Companionship/Strengthening Relationships	Yes	Social Interaction/Reduced Isolation/Socialising/Friendship/Companionship/Strengthening Relationships	Yes	Social Interaction/Reduced Isolation/Socialising/Friendship/Companionship/Strengthening Relationships	Yes
Hot drinks/ Snacks/ biscuits	Yes	Hot drinks/ Snacks/ biscuits	Yes	Hot drinks/ Snacks/ biscuits	Yes
Warm food	Yes	Warm food	Yes	Warm food	Yes
Clothing/ clothing bank	No	Clothing/ clothing bank	No	Clothing/ clothing bank	No
Warm boxes	No	Warm boxes	No	Warm boxes	No
Food vouchers/ food parcels	No	Food vouchers/ food parcels	Yes	Food vouchers/ food parcels	Yes
Aimed at older adults	Yes	Aimed at older adults	Yes	Aimed at older adults	Yes
Aimed at children & young people	No	Aimed at children & young people	No	Aimed at children & young people	Yes
Aimed at families	No	Aimed at families	Yes	Aimed at families	Yes
Aimed at other vulnerable groups	Yes	Aimed at other vulnerable groups	Yes	Aimed at other vulnerable groups	Yes
Project offering financial advice	No	Project offering financial advice	No	Project offering financial advice	No
Offered energy support	No	Offered energy support	No	Offered energy support	No

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<b>Report To:</b>	<b>Policy &amp; Resources Committee</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>21 November 2023</b>
<b>Report By:</b>	<b>Head of Legal, Democratic, Digital &amp; Customer Services</b>	<b>Report No:</b>	<b>LS/114/23/IS</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Iain Strachan</b>	<b>Contact No:</b>	<b>01475 712710</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Update on the Digital Modernisation Programme and Delivery of the ICT and Digital Strategies</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 the Committee on the work of the Council's Digital Modernisation Programme. In particular, this report notes the progress in moving to the procurement phase of several projects, the establishment of a cross-service Microsoft 365 Development Sub-group and the promotion of Power BI Analytic tools by the Council's Data Analyst Network to create working data dashboards following the success of HSCP initiatives with it.
- 1.3 In addition, the report notes the recent use of the Chief Executive's delegated authority to authorise some consultancy work from the Digital Modernisation Earmarked Reserve, and also seeks authority to appoint a two year ICT Project Support Officer within the ICT Team, to help support delivery and implementation of the approved digital modernisation projects, funded from the Digital Modernisation Earmarked Reserve
- 1.4 This report also provides an update on the recent Improvement Service led digital modernisation workshop and the work of the ICT Team in delivering the Council's ICT and Digital Strategies.

## 2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Committee note the update on the work of the Digital Modernisation Programme, and the projects within it.
- 2.2 It is recommended that the Committee note the Chief Executive's use of delegated authority to authorise the use of £2k from the Digital Modernisation Earmarked Reserve to commission consultancy work from Talentlink, as referred to at paragraph 4.3 of this report.
- 2.3 It is recommended that the Committee approve the use of £105k from the Digital Modernisation Earmarked Reserve to appoint a two year ICT Project Support Officer within the ICT Team, to help support delivery and implementation of the approved digital modernisation projects, as referred to at paragraph 4.5 of this report.
- 2.4 It is recommended that the Committee note the update on the work of the Council's ICT Team.

- 2.5 It is recommended that the Committee note that updates on the progress of the Digital Modernisation Programme will continue to be reported to the Committee at least every second cycle.

**Iain Strachan**  
**Head of Legal, Democratic, Digital & Customer Services**



### **3.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT**

- 3.1 At its meeting on 21 March 2023, the Committee noted the creation of a Digital Modernisation Project Board (DMPB), chaired by the Chief Executive, to oversee delivery of the Council's Digital Modernisation Programme. The DMPB meets bi-monthly, and includes representation from the 3 Directorates plus ICT, Legal, Finance and HR, its purpose being to provide support and challenge and ensure that momentum is maintained in the delivery of individual digital modernisation projects. The Digital Modernisation Programme is intended to comprise projects of a more tactical nature that seek to implement digital improvements aligned to specific service requirements, but also aligned to wider strategic objectives.
- 3.2 Linked to this, as part of the approval of the Council's Revenue Budget for 2023/24, on 2 March 2023, it was agreed that £1M of reserves be utilised towards digital modernisation. Specifically, it was agreed that these reserves are to fund investment in digital modernisation within the Council, including increased officer capacity, to improve both internal service processes/efficiency and access to services for the public, with the use of the reserves to be as agreed by the Committee. As reported to the Committee in August 2023, this fund has been consolidated with other reserves and now totals £1.25 million.
- 3.4 In considering the projects that might be included in the Digital Modernisation Programme, relevant service areas will need to prepare business cases, supported by the ICT Team, which would then require approval from the DPMB/Corporate Management Team, and it will also be a requirement that the business cases can demonstrate the following:-
- That there is full service area support for the project, with a commitment to make suitable officer resources available;
  - That the project will support delivery of the Council's wider strategic objectives, including the Council Plan, the Council's Digital Strategy, the Council's ICT strategy and the New Ways of Working Programme;
  - That the project will improve regulatory compliance in respect of information governance;
  - That the project has a clear timescale for delivery;
  - That any anticipated efficiency savings are identified; and
  - That the project will help deliver improvements in service delivery for the benefit of citizens and other service users.

### **4.0 PROPOSALS**

#### **Digital Modernisation Project Updates**

- 4.1 There are now a number of projects being taken forward by the Digital Modernisation Programme, and others for which business cases are being prepared. As previously reported to the Committee, the live projects include the replacement of the Secondary School ICT Catering System, the adoption of electronic forms by HR and Payroll (which is funded from the New Ways of Working project) and the replacement of the system used for the handling of corporate complaints. A summary of the projects currently overseen by the DMPB, and their current status is included in Appendix 1 to this report.
- 4.2 Since the last update reported to the Committee, the Chief Executive has also used the delegated authority granted at that meeting to authorise the use of £2k from the Digital Modernisation Earmarked Reserve to commission Talentlink, the recruitment portal used by the Council, to undertake a small amount of consultancy work. This work will enhance the module used by the Council to pull through additional contract information from myjobscotland, to automatically populate the employment contracts which is are offered to successful applicants, reducing the

work needed by Council staff to complete the contract offers. This will support the work already underway to review the systems and processes used by the HR Team.

- 4.3 A Digital Modernisation Workshop facilitated by the Improvement Service was held in Greenock Municipal Buildings on 29 August, attended by approximately 20 service managers and team leaders, from a variety of Council/HSCP services, together with the DMPB. The intention of the workshop was to help identify potential new projects, using ideas that are already in practice in other local authorities.
- 4.4 The Improvement Service took the workshop through a range of exercises to establish a “digital baseline” from which to encourage services to reflect and subsequently develop digital modernisation projects to be considered by the DMPB. In the period since the workshop was held a number of proposals have been submitted for initial consideration by the DMPB and are now having business cases prepared. The workshop will also help inform the updating of the Council’s ICT and Digital Strategies, which are due in 2024.
- 4.5 With the number of proposals now being worked on, and status of the projects already underway, it is now felt appropriate to expand the capacity within the ICT Team to support the Digital Modernisation Programme. It is proposed that a two year fixed term ICT Project Support Officer post be recruited to. It had always been the intention to seek authority for this additional capacity, but to wait until the DMPB were confident there was a suitable pipeline of work for them to work on, which it now is. It is proposed that the cost of this post, approximately £105k, is funded from the Digital Modernisation Earmarked Reserve, and the Committee’s approval is sought for that,
- 4.6 As the Committee will be aware, the Council has now completed the initial roll out of Microsoft 365. This offers the Council access to Office 365, MS Teams, SharePoint and Onedrive as well as access to a wider range of tools and applications. The DMPB has approved the creation of a cross-service Microsoft 365 Development Sub-Group, which will work across service areas to support the Council in optimising the opportunities afforded by Microsoft 365, and in a way which still ensures the Council is meeting its duties around information governance. The first meeting was held on the 19 October, the group having been established with four main aims:

Security: To deliver a secure environment across the 365 Platform, aligning with the Council’s existing Records Management Policy, extending and replicating the Council Business Classification Scheme into the cloud (SharePoint and OneDrive) and ensuring all relevant Information governance requirements including Freedom of Information and Subject Access Request obligations can be met.

Collaboration: To recommend and develop a strategy for the implementation of Teams, SharePoint and other collaborative tools across the Council. Investigate requirements for external collaboration with trusted partners, develop protocols and checklists to ensure that the security obligations developed above are adhered to as use of M365 collaboration tools grow. Determine best practice and guidance for the successful implementation, management, and control of collaborative arrangements.

Innovation: To investigate and recommend applications and features within the M365 ecosystem that would improve efficiency or otherwise enhance the working practices for individual services or for wider cross service adoption. Determine best practice for existing tools and applications.

Training: To promote the use of the Microsoft Enterprise Skills Initiative learning platform and recommend training paths as appropriate for staff across the Council.

## **Data Analysts Network**

- 4.7 The Council's Data Analyst Network has been tasked with utilising Power Bi, a Microsoft analytics tool, to create dashboards to exploit the wide range of data available on existing Council systems. Innovative work by HSCP staff has demonstrated the powerful nature of the tools available and the relative speed that the system can be built and deployed, with HSCP giving a presentation to the most recent meeting of the DMPB. Additional Power BI licences were included in the annual renewal of the M365 licence subscription to allow wider uptake.

## **Updates on Delivery of the Council's ICT and Digital Strategies**

- 4.8 As previously reported to the Committee, the Council's ICT Team leads on delivery of the Council's ICT and Digital Strategies. As the Committee will be aware, these strategies 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; and
- Improving efficiencies and productivity of services.

- 4.9 The ICT Team has been taking forward a number of initiatives in implementation of these strategies, as follows:-

- Further to the update provided in the previous report to the Committee, the implementation of Microsoft 365 for Corporate Services and Schools is now complete. The next phase will focus on collaboration and developing apps and tools from the wide range available within the Microsoft 365 environment, overseen by the Microsoft 365 Development Sub-Group;
- A new self-service password reset function will shortly be rolled out, through Microsoft 365, to enable Council/HSCP staff to reset their Microsoft 365 passwords from any internet connected device at any time of day. This will allow accessibility "anytime anywhere" and enable staff to reset their own passwords outside of the service desk's standard opening hours, which will in turn reduce workload for the service desk and support those staff that work on a remote/hybrid basis under the Council's revised Flexible Working Policy;
- Migration to a new corporate data storage solution is now complete, providing additional capacity and security and improved performance;
- The PC refresh programme continues to focus on the School Estate, a full hardware refresh having been completed for the Corporate Estate in 2021/22. There were 270 PCs refreshed over the summer break, to finalise the refresh of all of the High School computer suites. The refresh of senior manager and office staff equipment and classroom based PCs was also completed in the first term of the new school year;
- Replacement of the current schools Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) network pilot has successfully concluded in one High School (Inverclyde Academy) and one Primary School. (St Johns). A phased roll-out to the remaining schools is now underway, with the Port Glasgow Community Campus getting access to the new BYOD system on 6 November 2023. A rolling programme will follow over subsequent months with the aim to have all High Schools active early in the New Year. A rolling programme for Primary Schools will follow. Additional work to provide access to this network for interactive whiteboard replacements, will be trialled at the same time, to provide additional functionality;
- A major upgrade to the Council's telephony system has been completed. This will allow future enhancements and integrations with existing and proposed system developments;
- The Council's EDRMS (electronic document and record management system) has been upgraded;

- A number of improvements to the Council's cyber security arrangements, have been implemented, with additional actions in progress.
- The current Scottish Wide Area Network (SWAN) contract is concluding and the contract for SWAN2 has been awarded to BT. ICT have evaluated the new contract with a view to continuing as members of this group, and contract negotiations are underway.

4.10 A proposal to move to a cloud based service desk tool is also being assessed as part of the wider Digital Modernisation Programme. As above, this will also allow accessibility "anytime anywhere" and introduce a significant element of self service, allowing staff access to report issues outside of the service desk's standard opening hours. It will be possible to extend the functionality across a wider range of services if required, such as Facilities Management, providing Council/HSCP staff with a single point of contact for a number of internal service related issues. However, further work will be required post adoption, to understand what that might entail, and how that might be rolled out.

4.11 The Committee will recall that at its meeting on 19 September it approved the creation of 6 savings workstreams, including a Digital & Customer Services Workstream. As noted at paragraph 3.4 of this report, it is a requirement of any business cases being considered by the DMPB that any anticipated efficiency savings are identified. As such, it is expected that the work of the Digital Modernisation Programme will actively support and feed into this Workstream. The Committee will, though, note that there is a separate report on this Agenda in connection with the 2024/26 Budget in which is recommended that the Committee approves certain reduction in the Capital Programme, including a 10% (£59,000) reduction in the ICT allocation.

## 5.0 IMPLICATIONS

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

SUBJECT	YES	NO
Financial	X	
Legal/Risk	X	
Human Resources	X	
Strategic (Partnership Plan/Council Plan)	X	
Equalities, Fairer Scotland Duty & Children/Young People's Rights & Wellbeing		X
Environmental & Sustainability		X
Data Protection		X

## 5.2 Finance

### One off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Years	Proposed Spend this Report	Virement From	Other Comments
Digital Modernisation Reserve	Talentlink (HR Contracts)	23/24	£2k	-	Funded from Digital Modernisation EMR £1.254m
Digital Modernisation Reserve	ICT Project Support Officer	23/25	£105k	-	Funded from Digital Modernisation EMR £1.254m. This post has not yet been recruited to.

Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

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

**5.3 Legal/Risk**

The adoption of new digital ways of working, such as referred to in this report, will help the Council ensure compliance with its regulatory duties, in particular around information governance and records management and help mitigate the risk to operational delivery that is posed by some current working practices. There are, naturally, risks associated with the adoption of new systems. These risks would need reviewed, and suitable mitigations put in place. However, the Council also needs to consider the risks of not progressing such initiatives, including with information governance compliance and Council service delivery but also staff retention. The DMPB has a risk register which is reviewed at every meeting.

**5.4 Human Resources**

The development and implementation of modernisation and digitalisation will help the Council maximise the potential of its staffing capacity. To facilitate this, there is a need to increase understanding and awareness of these opportunities and thereafter ensure that appropriate resources are available to allow these opportunities to be grasped. The funding and governance approved for the Digital Modernisation Programme will help address this.

**5.5 Strategic**

Increasing investment in the development and roll out of modernisation and digitalisation projects will support a number of key strategic and policy directions of the Council. This includes supporting delivery of the Council’s Digital Strategy (2021 – 2024), which recognises the need to increase and promote the range of digital services available to employees and customers, and to exploit the opportunities that digital services can achieve by (i) improving user experience and interaction with Council services; (ii) reducing cost to deliver services via channel shift opportunities; and (iii) improving efficiencies and productivity of services. In addition, the Digital Modernisation Programme will help support delivery of the Council Plan (2023-28), and in particular Theme 3 (Performance), by helping the Council achieve the provision of high quality and innovative services, giving value for money.

**5.6 Data Protection**

Has a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) 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.

Although a DPIA was not required for this report, adoption of certain digital solutions will assist the Council in ensuring it is meeting its obligations around the storage and use of personal data. A DPIA would also be required prior to adoption of certain solutions, to ensure that any personal data was suitably protected, such as employee records.

## **6.0 CONSULTATION**

6.1 The Corporate Management Team and the DMPB have been consulted on this report.

## **7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

7.1 N/A.



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<b>Report To:</b>	<b>Policy &amp; Resource Committee</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>21 November 2023</b>
<b>Report By:</b>	<b>Chief Officer Inverclyde Health &amp; Social Care Partnership</b>	<b>Report No:</b>	<b>PR/26/23/JH</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Jonathan Hinds</b>	<b>Contact No:</b>	<b>01475 715282</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Tender for the Provision of a Children's Advocacy Service</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 seek approval to change the tender weightings for the forthcoming tender process for a Children's Advocacy Service in Inverclyde as noted in Contract Standing Order 16.3.

1.3 The tender for the provision of a Children's Advocacy Service in Inverclyde is being prepared for advertising. As in all cases with Social Care Service provision, the quality of the care service is of paramount importance. In light of this, it is recommended that the Children's Advocacy Service contract is awarded on an 80% Quality and 20% Cost of Service weighting split to help ensure the required quality of service and best value cost of service can be procured. This is a change to the weighting split in Contract Standing Order 16.2.

1.4 Recent Inverclyde HSCP tenders have been conducted successfully using a higher Quality weighting. Children's Advocacy Services are already provided in Inverclyde with the overall cost being approximately £80,000 per annum.

1.5 The current contract is due to end on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024. The new Contract will commence on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024.

## 2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that the Policy and Resource Committee agree to:

- a) Approve the use of an 80% Quality and 20% Cost of Service weighting in the forthcoming tender for the Inverclyde HSCP Children's Advocacy Service and therefore suspends Contract Standing Order 16.2.

**Kate Rocks**  
**Chief Officer**  
**Inverclyde Health & Social Care Partnership**



### **3.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT**

- 3.1 Access to Independent Children's Advocacy Services is recognised as contributing to health and social care policy goals such as health improvement, equality and involving individuals as partners in care. The Council has a statutory responsibility to provide access to independent advocacy for children and young people under 18, which also includes children and young people looked after at home or a child or young person subject to child protection procedures.
- 3.2 In addition to the legislative requirement to provide access to Independent Children's Advocacy, the 2013 Guidance issued by the Scottish Government and the Principles and Standards issued by the Scottish Independent Advocacy Alliance (SIAA) recognises that Independent Advocacy ensures equality of access to services particularly for those groups which may otherwise be excluded.
- 3.3 The provision of advocacy seeks to ensure the ability of an individual to have an equal voice in consideration of response to their needs. Accordingly, the provision of Independent Children's Advocacy is wider than the Council's statutory duty as children and young people should be able to get involved in discussions and decisions that may affect their lives; this may be directly or with the help from a friend or adult. Where support is needed, advocacy is one way that a child or young person's voice can be heard. At the core of the Promise 21-25 Plan is listening to and crucially making sense of what is heard from children and young people and embedding into practices and processes to ensure their voices are heard.
- 3.4 A tender process is about to commence to ensure the required service contract is in place when the current arrangement expires on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024. This will facilitate the continuation of a quality service provision in a cost-effective manner.

### **4.0 PROPOSALS**

- 4.1 The tender for the provision of the Children's Advocacy Service will be advertised in December 2023. As in all cases with social care services, the quality of the care service is of paramount importance.
- 4.2 The aim of the tender is to accurately describe the high quality and cost-effective service required in the Inverclyde area and identify the quality service provider required to deliver the service which will ensure that all children and young people have access to Advocacy Services. An essential factor in achieving this aim is to weigh the quality aspects of the service more than the cost. Where the price weighting is high, it leaves less scope to reward good quality providers.
- 4.3 It is recommended that the Children's Advocacy Service contract is awarded on an 80% Quality and 20% Cost of Service weighting split. This will help to ensure the required quality of service and best value cost of service can be procured.
- 4.4 The tender strategy and subsequent contract will be focussed on ensuring that providers are sustainable and that services remain within budget.

### **5.0 IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 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>
Financial	X	
Legal/Risk		X
Human Resources		X
Strategic (Partnership Plan/Council Plan)	X	
Equalities, Fairer Scotland Duty & Children/Young People's Rights & Wellbeing		X
Environmental & Sustainability		X
Data Protection		X

## 5.2 Finance

The tender will be structured and managed in a way which ensure that the costs included in and the overall value of any contract award resulting from the tender will be met within the overall HSCP budget.

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>
		1.04.24	£80,000	N/A – within existing resources	

## 5.3 Legal/Risk

There are no specific legal implications arising from the report.

## 5.4 Human Resources

There are no specific Human Resource implications arising from this report.

## 5.5 Strategic

This report supports the delivery of HSCP Strategic Plan Big Action 2 “A nurturing Inverclyde will give our children and young people the best start in life and delivering on The I Promise Plan 21-24”. This links to the Council Plan 2023 – 2028 Theme 1 – People - Our young people have the best start in life through high quality support and education.

## 6.0 CONSULTATION

6.1 The report has been prepared by the Chief Officer of Inverclyde Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) after due consideration with relevant senior officers in the HSCP.

## **7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

7.1 N/A.

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<b>Report To:</b>	<b>Policy &amp; Resources Committee</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>21 November 2023</b>
<b>Report By:</b>	<b>Director, Environment &amp; Regeneration</b>	<b>Report No:</b>	<b>PR/24/23/MM</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Martin McNab</b>	<b>Contact No:</b>	<b>01475 714246</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Business Continuity Policy</b>		

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## **1.0 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY**

- 1.1  For Decision  For Information/Noting
- 1.2 The Council and HSCPs' Business Continuity Policy is reviewed every three years to take account of changes in the legislative and risk landscapes. The 2023 revised Policy is attached at Appendix 1 for approval.
- 1.3 The Business Continuity Policy together with the plans and arrangements made under it are an explicit requirement of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and are also essential to enable the Council and Inverclyde Integrated Joint Board (IJB) to meet all other statutory obligations in the event of a disruptive event.
- 1.3 The main changes in the policy from the previous version are detailed in Section 4 of this report. The policy provides a framework to support the decision-making response of the Council and HSCP around service prioritisation in the event of a disruptive event. Although both the Council and IJB are separately cited as Category 1 responders under the Civil Contingencies Act (2004) and Contingency Planning (Scotland) Regulations 2005 both work together in the response to an event as was seen to be the case during the Covid pandemic.
- 1.4 The Corporate Management Team recommends approval of the Business Continuity Policy.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 That Committee approves the revised Business Continuity Policy

**Stuart Jamieson**  
**Director, Environment & Regeneration**

### 3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 The Civil Contingencies Act (2004) and the Contingency Planning (Scotland) Regulations 2005 place statutory obligations on Category 1 Responders in the event of a disruptive event/emergency. These obligations include a specific duty to maintain Business Continuity Plans. The Council has always been a Category 1 Responder under the legislation however Integration Joint Boards have been added to the list of Category 1 Responders since the previous version of the Business Continuity Policy. While this makes a change to the legal status of the IJB it does not alter the way both business continuity and the wider emergency response is delivered in Inverclyde as the Council and HSCP have always acted together in response to incidents.

3.2 The Business Continuity Policy and the framework of Business Continuity Plans made under it have been informed by the experience of the Covid Pandemic, in particular in respect of service prioritisation. The framework identifies “Essential Services” which must be prioritised when large scale disruptions occur. This does not indicate that other services are not extremely important in the long term, rather it seeks to identify services which must be delivered in the short term.

3.3 The main changes in the Business Continuity Policy from the previous iteration are:

- Inclusion of a specific reference to the Inverclyde HSCP within the Policy to reflect the IJB’s new statutory responsibilities under the CCA.
- Further reference to the guiding principles which underpin the policy, e.g., consideration of key risks as identified in the National Risk Assessment (NRA) and Scottish Risk Assessment (SRA)
- Further reference to the prioritisation of “Essential Services” during a disruption informed by experience during the Covid pandemic.
- Providing the rationale through which “Essential Services” are identified and referenced in BC Plans.
- Incorporation of the Council’s Incident Management System, which provides the mechanism for the Strategic (Gold) – Tactical (Silver) – Operational (Bronze) tiers of response in a serious or major incident.
- Identifying the specific documentation and plans which together comprise the Council and HSCP’s business continuity arrangements – and the process / timeframes through which they are reviewed and updated.
- More clearly defining the roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders in adhering to the policy.

### 4.0 PROPOSALS

4.1 That the Committee approves the Business Continuity Policy attached at Appendix 1.

### 5.0 IMPLICATIONS

5.1 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>
Financial		X
Legal/Risk	X	
Human Resources		X

Strategic (Partnership Plan/Council Plan)		X
Equalities, Fairer Scotland Duty & Children/Young People's Rights & Wellbeing		X
Environmental & Sustainability		X
Data Protection		X

## 5.2 Finance

None.

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					

## 5.3 Legal/Risk

The Business Continuity Policy together with the plans and arrangements made under it are an explicit requirement of the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 and are also essential to enable the Council and IJB to meet all other statutory obligations in the event of a disruptive event.

## 5.4 Human Resources

None.

## 5.5 Strategic

None.

## 5.6 Equalities, Fairer Scotland Duty & Children/Young People

### (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. An EqIA will be required at the point that processes are developed for approval.

(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.

(c) 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.

**5.7 Environmental/Sustainability**

None.

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.

**5.8 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 The Corporate Management Team recommends approval of the Business Continuity Policy.

## **7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

7.1 None.





# **BUSINESS CONTINUITY POLICY**

**DRAFT Version 3.0 – Updated August 2023**

DRAFT

## DOCUMENT CONTROL

Document Responsibility			
Name	Title	Service	
Council Resilience Management Team (CRMT)	Business Continuity Policy	Civil Contingencies Service (CCS)	
Change History			
Version	Date	Comments	
1.0	2011	Policy Created	
2.0	November 2019	Review	
3.0	August 2023	Review incorporating CRMT / CMT Feedback	
Policy Review			
Updating Frequency	Review Date	Responsibility	Service
3 years unless required earlier	May 2026	Council Resilience Management Team (CRMT)	Civil Contingencies Service (CCS)
Document Review & Approvals – this document requires the following approvals			
Name	Action	Date	Communication
CMT			
P&R Committee			

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## Introduction

Inverclyde Council and Inverclyde HSCP deliver services that affect every aspect of people's lives across the area. It is therefore vital that Essential Services are maintained to an acceptable level in the event of a disruption, whether from potential risks / threats as identified in the UK National Risk Register / Scottish Risk Register, or from more routine disruptions.

## Statement of Intent

Inverclyde Council and Inverclyde Integration Joint Board require to meet their statutory obligations as 'Category 1' responders under the Civil Contingencies Act (2004) and Contingency Planning (Scotland) Regulations 2005, which includes a specific duty to maintain Business Continuity Plans.

The Council / HSCP's response to a disruptive event or serious emergency, and the continued delivery of our key services when facing an interruption, is supported by maintaining effective business continuity plans and incident response procedures.

The Chief Executive and Corporate Management Team (CMT) provides leadership in matters of Business Continuity Management. The Council Resilience Management Team (CRMT) of Heads of Service and Service Managers provide co-ordination during periods of service disruption.

The Council and HSCP's business continuity arrangements identify Essential Services and the maximum tolerable period of disruption for which those services could be suspended. These arrangements follow the 'consequences, not causes' ethos enshrined in Scottish Integrated Emergency Management principles.

## Aim

This policy outlines the way in which Inverclyde Council and Inverclyde HSCP conducts its business continuity management. This includes identifying roles and responsibilities across the organisation to ensure arrangements are effective, up to date, tested and validated.

The policy provides a framework to support the Council and HSCP's decision-making processes around service prioritisation during periods of significant disruption. This process will always depend on the circumstances faced – so the rationale included in this policy is intended as a guide and is not a substitute for professional experience and flexible approach to decision making.

The Council and HSCP's business continuity arrangements take a holistic approach to:

- Support the ongoing provision of Essential Services in times of disruption.
- Make best use of personnel and resources when the availability of either may be scarce.
- Support the resumption of normal working after a period of disruption.
- Comply with recognised standards of corporate governance.
- Maintain a level of embedded resilience across the Council.
- Reduce the operational, financial and reputational impacts of any disruption.

## Approval

This Business Continuity Policy is owned by the Corporate Management Team (CMT) and the Council Resilience Management Team (CRMT). Compliance with the policy is monitored by the CMT, with activities coordinated through the CRMT.

## 1. Scope

### Incident Management System

Business continuity informs our work throughout all three phases within the Incident Management Cycle (Planning, Response & Recovery) and will impact all three recognised tiers of the Council / HSCP’s established incident management system (Strategic, Tactical & Operational). These business continuity arrangements seek to provide a framework for coordinating response in the event of a disruption.

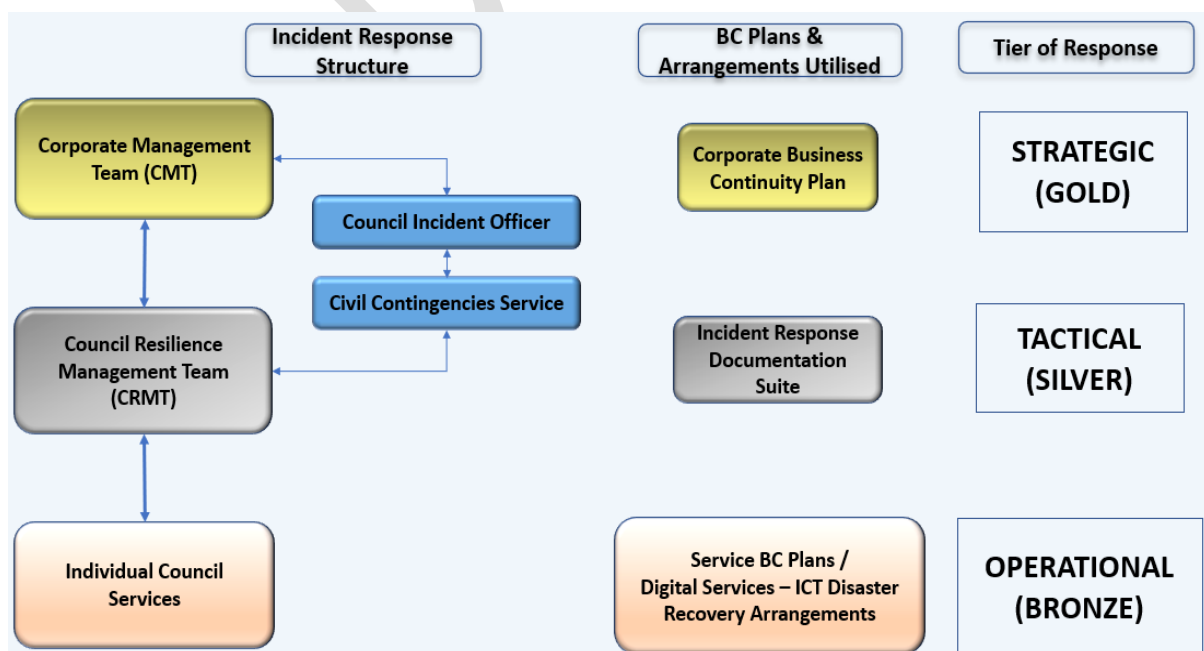
Business Continuity Plans are supported by arrangements comprising the Council / HSCP’s Incident Response Documentation Suite – a range of dedicated, incident focussed arrangements which are either consequence-specific (e.g., Support Centre Guidance for use in evacuations) or generic (e.g., Incident Response Procedures).

Inverclyde Council / HSCP’s established tiers of Coordination and Response, are:

- **Strategic (Gold)** – fulfilled by the Corporate Management Team (CMT).
- **Tactical (Silver)** – fulfilled by the Council Resilience Management Team (CRMT).
- **Operational (Bronze)** – fulfilled by Service Managers / Team Leads and their supporting officers within services.

Where appointed, the Council Incident Officer (CIO) provides a focal point of communication between the Council and other responding agencies – and supports the activities of the CMT / CRMT.

The Civil Contingencies Service (CCS) supports the incident response activities of the CIO, and wider to the CMT / CRMT.



## Business Continuity Management

Inverclyde Council / Inverclyde HSCP's business continuity arrangements consist of the following documentation:

Document	Description	Approved By	Maintained By	Review Frequency
<b>Business Continuity Policy (This document)</b>	Document outlining the Council's approach to business continuity management, with roles & responsibilities.	CMT / CRMT	CRMT / Civil Contingencies Service (CCS)	Every 3 years
<b>Corporate Business Continuity Plan</b>	Defines the procedures to support the continued operation / restoration of essential services in a significant disruption.	CMT / CRMT	CRMT / Civil Contingencies Service (CCS)	Annually or following a major incident
<b>Service Level Business Continuity Plan</b>	Document outlining service priorities, resource and personnel requirements in a significant disruption.	Heads of Service / Service Managers	Service Managers, supported by CCS	Annually or following a major incident
<b>ICT Disaster Recovery Arrangements</b>	Identifying how ICT systems will be recovered following an incident affecting these systems.	Digital Services (ICT)	Digital Services (ICT), supported by CCS	Annually or following a major incident

## Business Continuity Lifecycle

Inverclyde Council / HSCP's business continuity arrangements are implemented on a continuous (cyclical) basis, as follows:

<b>1. Policies &amp; Programmes (Embedding)</b>	<p>A policy is in place, with strategic support that outlines key responsibilities for the implementation of business continuity.</p> <p>Templates &amp; training are in place to empower and equip staff to understand and carry out the business continuity role.</p>	The policy will be updated every three years. Templates & training are regularly reviewed to support Services.
<b>2. Plans: Reviewed &amp; Maintained (Analysis, Design &amp; Implementation)</b>	<p>Consideration is given to the functions that Services deliver; the constraints upon them and the support required to facilitate delivery. Essential Services are prioritised, and minimum resource requirements to support these are identified. Strategies and solutions to disruptions are considered and outlined.</p>	Service Level Business Continuity Plans and the Corporate BCP are reviewed and updated annually.

<b>3. Validation</b>	Learning from incidents, or the training and exercise programme to test the assumptions within our Business Continuity arrangements will be adopted to ensure they remain appropriate and support an improved response to future incidents.	The Civil Contingencies Service will coordinate regular training and exercising activity, while offering support / guidance for Service Level Plan validation.
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## 2. Roles & Responsibilities

### CMT / CRMT

The CMT / CRMT maintain ownership of this Business Continuity Policy, which will be updated by the Civil Contingencies Service (CCS).

Business Continuity is a standing item at the regular meetings of the CRMT to facilitate discussion across Council / HSCP services on best practice, accounting for the current and emerging risk landscape, and reviewing / updating on key training and exercising requirements. Any escalations or concerns will be raised to the CMT.

### Civil Contingencies Service (CCS)

The CCS is responsible for ensuring that the business continuity model employed by Inverclyde Council / Inverclyde HSCP is fit for purpose and reflective of established best practice. This will include:

- Facilitate updates of the Council / HSCP's Business Continuity Policy, in conjunction with the CRMT.
- Develop and provide access to templates that empower services to take ownership of their business continuity arrangements. Templates will be reviewed to account for the current and emerging risk landscape.
- Provide training opportunities and professional guidance— ensuring that appropriate officers are equipped to carry out their business continuity role(s).
- Assist in developing exercises / tests to validate Service Business Continuity Plans.
- Ensure that Council-wide exercising is provided to test and validate Business Continuity arrangements.
- Maintain oversight of Corporate and Service BC arrangements and provide ongoing support to their ongoing development.
- Provide Digital Services (ICT) with access to appropriate business continuity data to assist in the ongoing development and maintenance of ICT Disaster Recovery arrangements.

### Heads of Service / Service Managers

Heads of Service and Service Managers are expected to take ownership of Service business continuity plans, their annual review, and to contribute to the development and review of the Corporate Business Continuity Plan. Heads of Service and Service Managers should endeavour to participate in training and exercises to validate their business continuity arrangements.

### 3. Decision Making

#### Decision Making in a Widespread Disruption

In the event of widespread interruptions to service delivery, the Corporate Management Team (CMT) and Council Resilience Management Team (CRMT) will take the appropriate strategic / tactical decisions to support response and recovery

They will determine which services will continue, and if necessary to support the Council / HSCP's strategic priorities, which will be paused. This decision-making will include identifying resource / support requirements and potentially re-allocating resources across the Council / HSCP.

Meeting frequency during a Business Continuity disruption will be determined by the CMT in conjunction with the CRMT.

Contact details for CMT & CRMT members are held in the Council / HSCP's Incident Management Contacts Directory. This is regularly updated and supports prompt contact between key officers in a disruption either in, or out-with standard business hours.

#### Decision Making in Single Service Disruptions

Where a single service has been impacted by a disruption to their established service delivery, the Service Business Continuity Plan will be activated, and the service will be supported on direction of the appropriate Head of Service / Director.

They will determine which services will continue, and if necessary to support the Council / HSCP's strategic priorities, which will be paused. This decision-making will include identifying resource and support requirements, and potentially reallocating resources.

The Service Manager (or depute) will be supported by their Head of Service and Senior Management Team, or officers determined as appropriate to addressing the disruption encountered.

#### Decision Making in a Disruption – Prioritisation of Essential Services

Each Essential Service has one of three levels of tolerance for disruption – these are identified in Service / Corporate Level BCP's.

Category	Tolerance for Disruption
Category 1	Up to 24 hours
Category 2	1 to 7 days
Category 3	8 to 14 days

To categorise each Essential Service, competent officers (Service Managers and Heads of Service) have considered four key potential consequences of their non-delivery:

- Life and limb impact (on service users and / or the wider community),
- Whether the essential service is undertaken as a 'statutory duty',
- Financial impact (on the Council and wider community),
- Reputational impact of non-delivery (on the Council and / or service delivery partners).



Categorising Essential Services into three broad categories across the Council and HSCP provides a clear and consistent approach to corporate prioritisation and continued delivery in a significant disruptive incident. 'Essential' or 'key' workers can be defined as those officers that are involved in the delivery of Essential Services.

A key planning assumption for the categorisation of Essential Services is the occurrence of a major incident that results in profound community and / or organisational impacts – hence the requirement for important strategic priorities, e.g., the preservation of life to be considered first and foremost. 'Category 1' Essential Services, as identified in Service / Corporate BC plans are intended to reflect this requirement.

DRAFT

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<b>Report To:</b>	<b>Policy &amp; Resources Committee</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>21 November 2023</b>
<b>Report By:</b>	<b>Head of Legal, Democratic, Digital &amp; Customer Services</b>	<b>Report No:</b>	<b>LS/110/23/CM</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Colin MacDonald</b>	<b>Contact No:</b>	<b>01475 712113</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Revised Risk Management Strategy – Remit from Audit Committee</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 request the Committee consider a remit from the Audit Committee relative to a review of the Council's Risk Management Strategy.
- 1.3 The Audit Committee at its meeting of 24 October 2023 considered a report by the Head of Legal, Democratic, Digital & Customer Services.
- 1.4 A copy of the report to the Audit Committee is attached as Appendix 1 (excluding the draft Strategy that was presented to the Committee).
- 1.5 The Audit Committee decided:
- (1) that the Committee having considered the revised Risk Management Strategy detailed at appendix 1 to the report approve its submission to a meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee, subject to officers' consideration of points raised by members during the meeting; and
  - (2) that it be noted that the Corporate Risk Register will be reported to the January 2024 meeting of the Audit Committee, followed by the February 2024 meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee.
- 1.6 Following the Audit Committee, officers have updated the Risk Management Strategy, to include detail around the role and responsibility of Elected Members at Appendix 2, which includes attendance at an annual risk management workshop with the Corporate Management Team, and the frequency of the reporting of the Corporate Risk Register. Some other more minor changes have also been made. The updated Risk Management Strategy is attached as Appendix 2, the changes from the version reported to the Audit Committee being shown in tracking.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to consider the remit from the Audit Committee, which seeks approval of the Risk Management Strategy, as updated and attached as Appendix 2.

2.2 The Committee is asked to note that a Risk Management Workshop will be arranged, for Elected Members and the Corporate Management Team.

**Iain Strachan**  
**Head of Legal, Democratic, Digital & Customers Services**

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<b>Report To:</b>	<b>Audit Committee</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>24 October 2023</b>
<b>Report By:</b>	<b>Head of Legal, Democratic, Digital and Customer Services</b>	<b>Report No:</b>	<b>LS/103/23</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Iain Strachan</b>	<b>Contact No:</b>	<b>01475 712210</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Revised Risk Management Strategy</b>		

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## 1.0 PURPOSE

1.1  For Decision  For Information/Noting

1.2 The purpose of this report is to present an updated Risk Management Strategy to the Committee, for its consideration. Following the Committee's review of the Strategy it would go to the Policy & Resources Committee for approval.

## 2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that the Audit Committee consider and provide feedback on the proposed revised Risk Management Strategy at Appendix 1.

2.2 It is recommended that the Audit Committee approve the Risk Management Strategy for onward submission to the Policy & Resources Committee.

2.3 It is recommended that the Audit Committee notes that the Corporate Risk Register will be reported to the Audit Committee in January 2024, followed by Policy & Resources Committee in February 2024.

**Iain Strachan**  
**Head of Legal, Democratic, Digital and Customer Services**

### **3.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT**

- 3.1 There have been increasing pressures for public sector bodies to adopt formalised approaches to risk management.
- 3.2 In its Code of Practice, Audit Scotland makes it clear that the audited bodies are responsible for developing systems of internal control, including risk management, and for conducting annual reviews of the effectiveness of the system of internal control.
- 3.3 The Council developed a Risk Management Strategy in 2007 which provided a sound basis for risk management.
- 3.4 In 2010, the Corporate Risk Management Group, subsequently disbanded, reviewed the Risk Management Strategy and developed a Risk Assessment and Prioritisation Matrix to ensure consistency of practice and provide a useful tool to management in the achievement of goals and objectives.
- 3.5 The 2004 Best Value guidance was refreshed in 2020 and is structured around seven themes which include risk management as an integral part in demonstrating best value.
- 3.6 In January 2022 the Audit Committee approved a refreshed approach to risk management reporting arrangements which has provided an opportunity to review and update the risk management strategy. In addition, in June 2022 it was reported to the Committee that the Corporate Risk Register would be updated by July 2022. However, work capacity pressures have meant this work has not yet been completed.
- 3.7 Elsewhere on this agenda, the Audit Committee is considering the annual update on risk management activity for 2022/23.

### **4.0 PROPOSALS**

- 4.1 The Risk Management Strategy has now been reviewed and an updated revised version is attached at Appendix 1 for the Committee's consideration. Subject to the views of the Committee the Risk Management Strategy would then be submitted to the Policy & Resources Committee for approval.
- 4.2 Whilst there are no substantive changes to the Risk Management Strategy and operational procedures, there are some key aspects of the Strategy where revisions have been made which are worth highlighting to the Committee, these are:
  - The exclusion of Inverclyde Health and Social Care Partnership (IHSCP) from the Council's overall risk management monitoring and reporting arrangements, given the Inverclyde Integration Joint Board has its own strategic approach to risk management, and the operational activity flows from that.
  - A Corporate Risk Management Group has been established, chaired by the Chief Executive, the aim of this group being to steer the direction of the Council's overall approach to risk management and provide a clear mechanism for ongoing monitoring and review. The members of the Group will act as conduits between the CMT and Directorate/Service risk management operations. The senior officer nominated to chair the Corporate Risk Management Group.
  - A new Corporate Risk Adviser post has been created, agreed to by the CMT. This post will be jointly funded by the Council and the IHSCP, to provide the operational advice and support that is required to further embed risk management into operational activity and enable service areas to fulfil their risk management duties under the Risk Management Strategy, including in their use of Pentana for risk register recording. Given the joint funding, this post will also provide that operational support to IHSCP.

- 4.3 The Corporate Risk Register is in the course of being reviewed, and it is intended that it will be reported to the Audit Committee in January 2024, followed by Policy & Resources Committee in February 2024. Going forward, the Corporate Risk Register will be reported 6 monthly to CMT and annually to the Audit Committee and the Policy & Resources Committee.
- 4.4 It has been recognised by the CMT that work is needed, across all Council service areas, to ensure the Council's approach to risk management is suitably robust and embedded in operational activity. It is envisaged that the revisions to the Strategy, coupled with the operational changes summarised above, will provide that additional focus. This will, however, be monitored by CMT, and through the Corporate Risk Management Group.

## 5.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendation is agreed:

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

## 5.2 Finance

### 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
Legal Services	Employee Costs	1.1.24	£60k		£30k funded from Insurance Charges and £30k from IHSCP

## Legal/Risk

### 5.3

Having an up-to-date risk management strategy demonstrates that the Council is taking ownership of risk management so that effective measures are put in place for managing risk. The current approach to risk management allows the Council to demonstrate a clear understanding of the risk profile of the organisation, but work is required across all service areas to ensure this approach is embedded and being actioned, with suitable internal reporting.

## 5.4 **Human Resources**

The human resources implications are set out in this report.

### **Strategic**

- 5.5 This report helps ensure strong governance, and its findings will help support delivery of the Council Plan adopted by Inverclyde Council on 20 April 2023, and in particular outcome theme 3: Performance, with the Council seeking to provide high quality and innovative services that deliver value for money.

## 6.0 **CONSULTATIONS**

- 6.1 Relevant officers have been consulted in the review and update of the risk management strategy, including the Corporate Management Team.

## 7.0 **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 7.1 None



**Risk Management Strategy**

21 ~~Novem~~ber 2023  
V4.43



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## 1. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

- 1.1 Risk management is defined in the Institute of Risk Management Risk Management Standard as follows:-

*“Risk Management is a key part of an organisation’s strategic management. It is the process whereby organisations methodically address the risks attached to their activities with the goal of achieving sustained benefit within each activity and across the portfolio of all activities.”*

- 1.2 Due to the recognised importance of managing risks as stated above, there is an expectation for public sector organisations to have adopted formalised approaches to risk management. These expectations emanate from, among other things, the Combined Code and the CIPFA/Solace publication on corporate governance best practice entitled “Delivering Good Governance in Local Government”.
- 1.3 In addition, Audit Scotland in its Code of Audit Practice makes it clear that the audited bodies are responsible for developing and implementing systems of internal control, or internal financial control, including risk management, and for conducting annual reviews of the effectiveness of the system of internal control.
- 1.4 Furthermore, the 2004 Best Value guidance was refreshed in 2020 and is structured around seven themes which include Risk Management as an integral part of demonstrating Best Value.
- 1.5 The purpose of this Strategy is to clearly define Inverclyde Council's approach to Risk Management and support officers and Members in managing risks and opportunities effectively, putting them in a stronger position to deliver the corporate objectives.
- 1.6 The Risk Management Strategy will therefore be an essential element of the strategic planning processes and will be focused around corporate and Committee objectives. The Strategy will focus on detailing the processes for identifying, assessing, evaluating and managing the risks that face the organisation and how these will assist in the delivery of the corporate goals.

## 2. RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY STATEMENT

### 2.1 Policy statement

Inverclyde Council is dedicated to the management of risks within its control to enhance the Corporate Governance process, and in doing so aims to:-

- ◆ Identify, assess and manage risks;
- ◆ Safeguard the Council's assets; and
- ◆ Enhance the delivery of its services to the Community.

## 2.2 Aim

The aim of this Strategy is to deliver a consistent, effective framework and approach for managing risks across the organisation at all levels. This will aid the achievement of Inverclyde Council's corporate goals.

The approach is to use best practice tools and techniques to manage the risks that the Council faces, with the aim of reducing the level of risk in the organisation to a tolerable level.

The Strategy aims to focus on the organisation's processes, and looks to raise the awareness of risk and its importance throughout the organisation, enabling front line staff, managers and directors to identify and manage risk in a controlled environment. It is also intended to make risk management an integral part of the strategic planning process through the Committee Delivery Plans.

[This strategic approach is summarised by the Risk Management Cycle in Appendix 1](#)

## 2.3 Objectives

To facilitate the effective delivery of the Risk Management Strategy, the following objectives have been identified:-

- to deliver more effective financial and resource management, and maintain effective stewardship of public funds;
- to meet statutory responsibilities;
- to minimise the Council's exposure to risk and potential loss;
- to promote and support health and safety, welfare issues and appropriate people management both internally and externally;
- to promote a more risk aware culture for employees and Elected Members;
- to improve and enhance service delivery;
- to achieve better forward planning through identifying and prioritising risks;
- to protect and promote a favourable corporate image; and
- to embed robust systems for identifying and evaluating significant risks.

## 2.4 Outputs

The Council aims to demonstrate the achievement of these objectives by:-

- Including Risk Management as an integral part of its management processes and day-to-day operations through corporate, committee and service delivery plans;
- Ensuring sound systems of internal control;
- Incorporating Risk Management into major service reviews including Best Value and project management;
- Preparing contingency plans in areas where there is a potential for serious adverse effects on service continuity;
- Regular monitoring and review of arrangements; and
- Ensuring that legislative responsibilities in relation to the management of risk are responded to and met.

## 2.5 Scope

The Risk Management Strategy is directly applicable to the Council's Directorates and Services as follows:-

Directorate	Services
Chief Executive	Finance Services; Legal, Democratic, Digital and Customer Services
Education, Communities and Organisational Development	Education; Culture, Communities and Education Resources; OD, Policy and Corporate Communications
Environment and Regeneration	Physical Assets; Regeneration, Planning and Public Protection

Where appropriate, strategic partnerships and specific projects will also be covered by the strategy, following due engagement with partners to develop and deliver the risk management requirements in these areas. As noted below, the Inverclyde Health & Social Care Partnership has its own risk management arrangements.

## 3. INTERFACES

3.1 Risk Management is part of the overall Corporate Governance framework for the Council. While the responsibility for risk management policy development and co-ordination lies in Legal, Democratic, Digital and Customer Services and is co-ordinated by the Head of Legal Democratic, Digital and Customer Services, there are a number of key interfaces that must be managed to support the effective transition of risk management across the Council.

### 3.2 Internal Audit

The Internal Audit service provides an independent and objective assurance and advisory service to management and the Audit Committee. The assurance role of Internal Audit is to provide an opinion the adequacy and effectiveness of the processes by which risks are identified, prioritised, managed, controlled, mitigated and reported.

### 3.3 Insurance

While the overall Risk Management Strategy is not insurance driven, insurance is one form of response the Council adopts to manage risk. By implementing effective risk management, Inverclyde Council should be better placed in the insurance market to achieve cost effective premiums. Therefore, close liaison will be required with the insurance team in Finance to review the number and types of claims, and trends as risk management becomes embedded.

### 3.4 Health & Safety

Inverclyde Council has made a significant investment in terms of having qualified staff with a Corporate Health and Safety team.

The Health & Safety function sits within the OD, Policy and Communications service but there is clearly a need for Health & Safety and risk management to interface. While specific Health & Safety risk assessments must continue to be conducted, major risks should be included in the service risk registers. Therefore, the Corporate Risk Adviser and the Health and Safety team leader will meet regularly to review common areas of risk to support the achievement of best practice, and escalate any identified areas of concern to the Head of Legal Democratic, Digital and Customer Services and the Head of OD, Policy & Communications.

### 3.5 Civil Contingencies

The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 came into effect in Scotland in various stages between 2004 and 2006. The specific Regulations made under the Act are the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 (Contingency Planning) (Scotland) Regulations 2005, which came into effect in November 2005. This legislation requires local authorities to have business continuity strategies and plans in place and tested. Risk management ties in with business continuity management in the low probability, high impact risks which, if they occur, could constitute an emergency situation for the Council, potentially resulting in key services or systems failing. The Council operates a shared civil contingencies planning arrangement with Renfrewshire, East Renfrewshire and West Dunbartonshire Councils.

### 3.6 Physical Assets

The Assets Team, within Physical Assets, is responsible for the operational management and control of the Council's property portfolio and requires to demonstrate compliance with various regulatory requirements encompassing, for example, electrical installation, PAT testing, asbestos management, Disability Discrimination Act compliance, gas installations and fire assessments. Due of the inherent risks in these operations, and the need for appropriate and consistent corporate responses it is important that the Assets Team engage in the Council's risk management process through participation in the Corporate Risk Management Group. This will allow structured discussion on property issues in the context of risk management as a whole.

### 3.7 Inverclyde Integration Joint Board

Whilst the Council and the Inverclyde Health & Social Care Partnership share a corporate risk adviser post, the Inverclyde Integration Joint Board's Integration Scheme sets out its own responsibilities for risk management, and it is this to which services within the Inverclyde Health & Social Care Partnership will have reference to, and not this Risk Management Strategy.

## 4. RISK CONTEXT

- 4.1 The Risk Management Strategy is objective driven, and the risk registers will clearly link to the corporate, committee and service objectives and plans.

The complete integration of risk management into the culture of the organisation can only be achieved through the full commitment and understanding of all stakeholders, including:-

- Elected Members;
- Corporate Management Team;
- Senior Managers; and
- All Council Officers.

All of these stakeholders have a role to play in the control environment within which the Council operates, whether in connection with policy setting and decision making, the accountability challenge process, the implementation of Council objectives, setting of internal controls or the provision of a safe working environment.

Ultimate responsibility for the delivery of Council objectives lies with the Council, Chief Executive and the Council's Corporate Management Team (CMT).

To take the agenda forward, the Chief Executive has lead responsibility for Corporate Risk Management.

Operationally, a Corporate Risk Management Group (CRMG) will be established to steer the development of the overall approach and to provide a mechanism for ongoing monitoring and review. CRMG members are required to be of appropriate seniority and experience, and are identified and nominated by Directors to represent the interests of the Directorate or of specific Services within each directorate.

The Chief Executive, or an alternative senior officer responsible to the Chief Executive, chairs the quarterly meetings of the CRMG.

The role of the CRMG members has been defined as being to act as representatives of their directorates and provide a conduit between the Corporate Management Team and directorate/service risk management operations.

The terms of reference for this group are as follows:-

- To develop and embed risk management as part of the culture of the Council.
- To monitor the risk profile of the organisation against the Council's desired risk appetite.
- To monitor the effectiveness and output of the risk management process.
- To assess the overall population of risk within the Committee Delivery & Improvement Plan and service risk registers, including any changes during the period.
- To consider and challenge risk prioritisation as provided by the risk owners, including discussion of any perceived discrepancies.
- To prioritise and accelerate those risk management strategies that are critical to the achievement of corporate objectives.
- To ensure that risk management is appropriately embedded within line management and that this process is monitored.
- To reach agreement on the significant matters arising in the period that should be brought to the attention of the CMT and Audit Committee.
- To monitor the effectiveness of Council wide policies and to feed into strategy development and review.
- To review the results of internal audit reviews and reviews by external bodies.
- To provide a mechanism for risk management issues to be discussed and disseminated to all areas of the Council, with a view to sharing good practice.

Reports from the CRMG are submitted to the [Corporate Management Team/CMT](#) on at least an annual basis.

Regular risk management updates are provided to the Audit Committee, with a Risk Management Annual Report being presented to [the Audit Committee Members](#) after the end of each financial year, [the Annual Report also being accompanied by the Corporate Risk Register](#).

[The roles and responsibilities of stakeholders are included in more detail in Appendix 2.](#)

## 5. RISK IDENTIFICATION

This stage can be separated into two distinct phases:

**Initial risk identification** – for Directorates or services that have not previously identified risk in a structured way.

**Continuous risk identification** – to identify new risks that did not previously arise, changes to existing risks and risks which have ceased to be relevant.

In either case, risks should be related to the Council's corporate objectives and be considered at both a strategic and operational level. Strategic risks focus on identifying the key barriers to successful achievement of the Council's objectives. Operational risks are more likely to focus on continuity of business services.

**Common Areas of Risk are:**

<b>Strategic</b>	Doing the wrong things as an organisation. Missing opportunities.
<b>Financial</b>	Losing resources or incurring liabilities.
<b>Reputational</b>	The Council's image. Loss of public confidence.
<b>Political</b>	Political embarrassment. Not delivering on local or national policies.
<b>Partnerships</b>	Specific risks to the Council as a result of being in a partnership.
<b>Legal/Regulatory</b>	Claims against the Council. Non-compliance.
<b>Operational</b>	Service delivery failure, targets missed.
<b>Information</b>	Loss of, or inaccurate data, systems or reported information.
<b>Customer/citizens</b>	Understanding their needs, delivery of services.
<b>Environmental</b>	Things outside of our control. Environmental impact of the Council.
<b>People</b>	Employees, management, Members, Chief Officers.

Not all services of the Council will have risks under all these categories.

## 6. ASSESSMENT, PRIORITISATION AND MANAGEMENT OF RISK

The Council has adopted a clear structured process for risk assessment for which both impact and likelihood are considered.

Some types of risks allow objective analysis eg financial risks whereas others may be more subjective eg risk to reputation. This assessment matrix allows for assessing all types of risk and considers the perspectives of the whole range of stakeholders likely to be affected.

The assessment is carried out by evaluating the impact if the risk is realised and the likelihood of the risk being realised.

A framework ~~document~~ which outlines the Council's approach [in more detailed is attached at/included in](#) Appendix 3.

## 7. ASSIGNING OWNERSHIP

Once the risks have been assessed and the most appropriate treatment strategy chosen, an individual risk owner needs to be nominated.

Risk ownership is fundamental to the risk process as it identifies the person best placed to manage and influence the risk.

The owner will be accountable for either managing out the risk or reducing it to an acceptable level. Risk ownership needs to be assigned to individuals. Where the risk impacts across different areas, ownership will still be assigned individually, with nominated individuals assisting in the management of the risk.

Risk owners may delegate some actions to reduce or contain the risk, but they are still ultimately accountable to ensure the risk is controlled.

## 8. RISK REVIEW

8.1 Risk has to be reviewed and reported on for the following important reasons:

- To monitor whether or not the risk profile is changing;
- To gain assurance that risk management is effective; and
- To identify to both the Council and Corporate Management Team where and when further action is required.

With this in mind a risk reporting framework has been developed.

### 8.2 Risk Registers

Risk registers have been developed at corporate, committee, directorate, service and (where appropriate) project level. The risk registers, as a minimum, will contain:-

- A list of risks including their associated factors and consequences;
- The assessment of the likelihood and impact of the risks;
- The agreed strategy for treating the risk and the actions and control measures to be adopted;
- The acceptable level of risk after the controls have been implemented; and
- Details of the nominated risk owner.

The use of formal risk registers and risk progress reports will provide an effective basis for risk reporting and will provide a compliant audit trail.

### 8.3 Corporate Risk Reporting

To enable a complete assessment of the overall risks across the Council the reporting process is as follows:



A three staged process for the reporting of risk.

1. Following the completion of the risk management process in the service area the appropriate Head of Service and Director will sign off completed risk registers, as a true and accurate reflection of the risk exposure within the service area.
2. The registers will be presented at CRMG to establish if the associated level of risk is acceptable for the service. If the tolerance level of the risk is deemed to be too high, the CRMG will advise what tolerance level should be adopted and what appropriate action is to be taken by the service to reach the required level.
3. Each Committee register will also be presented to the Corporate Management Team and appropriate service committee for discussion and comment as part of the CDIP reporting process.

The Head of Legal Democratic, Digital and Customer Services will be responsible for compiling a Corporate Risk Register for the Council as a whole, taking the risk registers signed off by Heads of Service and Directors. This [Corporate Risk Register](#) will be reported to the CMT on a 6 monthly basis, and following a full review reported to the Audit Committee and Policy & Resources Committee on an annual basis at the start of each calendar year, [with the Audit Committee also receiving the Corporate Risk Register as referred to above as part of the Risk Management Annual Report following the end of each financial year.](#)

The reporting process will allow the Council to determine both the individual and corporate risk tolerance levels across the organisation, meet corporate governance requirements and demonstrate to the Council the service areas of greatest risk exposure.

## 9. GENERAL

9.1 As risk management is being rolled out and embedded throughout the Council, it is imperative that staff, managers, heads of service, directors and Elected Members understand its principles and how these are adopted in practice.

### 9.2 Raising risk awareness

It is intended to provide risk management training as part of the corporate induction process for employees. Risk Management training is provided to [Elected](#) Members on a regular basis as part of ongoing CPD requirements.

### 9.3 Tailored/Specific Training

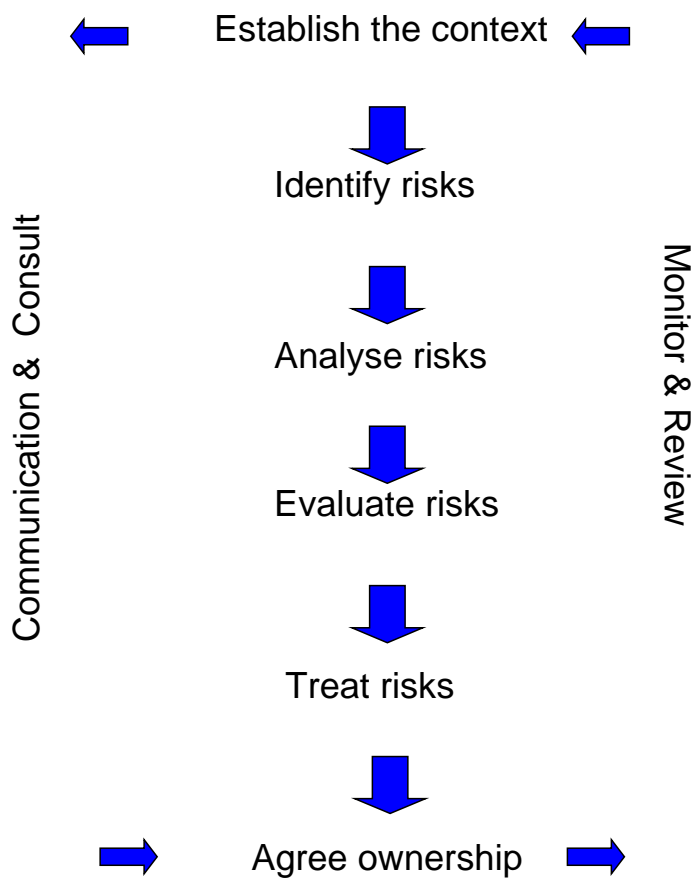
If a service identifies there are specific training requirements, a tailored training package will be designed and delivered to meet the required needs.

## 10. COMMUNICATIONS

So that the corporate Risk Management Strategy is communicated to as wide an audience as possible, a communications process has been developed. Once approved, a copy of the Strategy will be made available on the intranet and cascaded to service areas.

A series of briefings will also be undertaken to communicate the Strategy through the Service Management Teams.

# Risk Management Cycle



## Appendix 2

### Roles & Responsibilities

#### The Council (through the Audit Committee and the Policy & Resources Committee)

- The role of the Council is to approve or ratify the Risk Management Strategy which will reflect the Council's risk appetite.
- The Council has responsibility to scrutinise policy effectiveness and review performance.

#### Elected Members (in addition to their role on the Audit Committee and/or Policy & Resources Committee above)

- Scrutinise risk registers that are reported to Committee (be it the Corporate Risk Register or via the Committee Delivery & Improvement Plans) to consider (i) the risks which have been included, and how they are being managed, and (ii) whether any additional risks should be included.
- Scrutinise risks that are identified in other matters that are reported to Council, Committees, Scrutiny Panels, Boards and others to consider (i) the risks which have been included, and how they are being managed, and (ii) whether any additional risks should be included.
- Take part in an annual risk management workshop with the CMT, to consider the strategic, corporate and cross-cutting risks facing the Council and how they are being managed.
- Undertake regular training on risk management as it applies to the Council and their roles and responsibilities.

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#### Chief Executive

- Provide strategic leadership that endorses the Council's Risk Management Strategy and plan, driving forward the identification and review of top risks.
- Responsibility for sign off and agreement of the Corporate Risk Register.

#### Directors

- Each director is responsible for ensuring that risks have been properly identified and assessed across all their work areas, particularly cross cutting risks.
- Responsible for agreeing risk register returns for their directorates, ensuring that Heads of Service actively address risks in their command and escalate risk upwards as appropriate.
- Personal ownership of relevant Corporate risks and effectively address and report on their progress.

#### Corporate Management Team

- Determine and ratify risk policy and strategy.
- Set strategic direction.
- Define risk appetite.
- Ensure arrangements are in place to maintain a sound system of internal control.
- Consider the effectiveness of the system of internal control.
- Corporate responsibility for ownership of Risk Management Strategy and implementing the approach to managing risk and strategically reviewing the Council's key risks.
- Key risks to be agreed, owned and addressed by CMT.



## CRMG

- Implementing policies on risk management and internal control;
- Identifying and evaluating the significant risks faced by the Council for consideration by the Audit Committee [and the Policy & Resources Committee](#) of the Council;
- Monitoring the management of significant risks to ensure these are appropriately mitigated;
- Satisfying itself that the less significant risks are being actively managed, with the appropriate controls in place and working effectively;
- Providing adequate information in a timely manner to the Chief Executive and appropriate Committee on the status of risks and controls;
- Undertaking an annual review of effectiveness of the system of internal control and reporting on this to the Chief Internal Auditor, as part of their annual assurance review that is reported to the Council through the Audit Committee;
- setting policy and strategy for risk management;
- primary champion of risk management at strategic and operational level;
- building a risk aware culture within the organisation, including appropriate education;
- establishing internal risk policy and structures for directorates and services;
- designing and reviewing processes for risk management;
- co-coordinating the various functional activities which advise on risk management issues within the organisation;
- developing risk response processes, including contingency and business continuity programmes; and
- preparing reports on risk for the Audit Committee and the stakeholders.

### Directorate Management Teams

- Nominating risk owners for the identified key risks.
- Regular review of risk profile and policy effectiveness.
- Accountable to the Chief Executive for monitoring the system of internal control and providing assurance to the Chief Executive/CMT that it has done so.
- Assessment of the effectiveness of the management of individual risks through quarterly monitoring of the directorate risk register.

### Heads of Service

- Responsible for the review of key service risks.
- Responsible for embedding risk management across their services and identifying the priority risks in their command and particularly cross-cutting risks.

### **Head of Legal Democratic, Digital and Customer Services (Risk Management Responsibilities)**

- Provide advice and guidance on risk management for both Officers and Elected Members of the Council in meeting their risk management responsibilities.
- Develop and co-ordinate the delivery of this Risk Management Strategy and annual plan across the Council and review its effectiveness.

### **Line Managers**

- General responsibilities to ensure staff are familiar with the latest risk management policy, strategy and guidance.
- Ensure that where staff have risk management responsibilities, this is reflected in their work objectives.
- Responsibility to act upon risks identified by staff which cannot be managed at employee level.

### **Audit Committee**

- Responsible for reviewing and agreeing the processes for managing risk in the Council.
- Allocating risk as an agenda item as often as required and no less than twice a year at committee and receiving feedback from the Head of Legal Democratic, Digital and Customer Services on implementation and performance of the risk process.
- Responsible for advising the Council on the performance of the processes and how effectively risk management is being embedded across the organisation.

### **Chief Internal Auditor (Audit Responsibilities)**

- Responsible for auditing the risk management process across the organisation and assessing the effectiveness of its application.
- Identifying through the audit process areas of strength, weakness and non-compliance, advising on improvement areas.

### **Heads of Service (Risk Co-ordinator responsibilities)**

- Co-ordinate with services and- Head of Legal Democratic, Digital and Customer Services over the details within risk registers.
- Update Pentana on significant changes to risk description, score, additional mitigations and new risks identified.
- Provide general feedback to CMT and Head of Legal Democratic, Digital and Customer Services on the implementation of the Risk Management Strategy and the various risk processes at local level.
- Focal point for cascading revisions to the central guidance of useful risk related information.

### **All Staff**

- All staff are responsible for maintaining an awareness of risks inherent in their jobs and reporting to their line manager any risks that they are unable to manage.

### **Risk Owners**

- Risk owners are accountable for managing the risks assigned to them in the risk register. While risk owners may delegate responsibility to others for action to control the risk, they are ultimately responsible for the risk.

**RISK ASSESSMENT AND PRIORITISATION FRAMEWORK**

**OCTOBER 2023**

**VERSION 1.0**

## **Risk Assessment and Prioritisation Framework**

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## **Risk Assessment and Prioritisation Framework**

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### **1 Introduction**

Risk management is an integral part of corporate governance and sound management. The effective identification, assessment and management of risk is key to helping organisations be successful in delivering their objectives whilst protecting the interests of their stakeholders.

Effective risk management will allow the Council to:

- Have increased confidence in achieving its desired outcomes.
- Contain threats to an acceptable level.
- Take informed decisions about exploiting opportunities.

This document describes the Framework within which risks will be assessed and monitored by Inverclyde Council and provides a step-by-step guide. It should be read in conjunction with the Council's Risk Management Strategy.

The Framework will allow Directorates and Services to:

- Undertake risk assessment properly and frequently as a natural way to communicate and plan for improvement.
- Better appreciate their role in managing the strategic and operational risks in their particular area of responsibility.
- Have a good understanding of their role in demonstrating risk is managed to acceptable levels.

There are four main stages to the risk assessment process:

- **Identification** – the means by which threats and opportunities are identified.
- **Assessment** – estimating the levels of impact and likelihood of the risks and opportunities and assessing which risks pose the greatest threat.
- **Management and Control** – developing and putting into place actions and control measures to manage the risk.
- **Review and reporting** – monitoring that the actions and control measures are appropriate, effective and still relevant, identifying changes in circumstances and environment and checking the effect on risk priorities, reporting on progress to the Council.

This document deals in turn with these four stages, describing processes, responsibilities and timescales.

## 2 Identification of Risk

This stage can be separated into two distinct phases:

**Initial risk identification** – for Directorates or services that have not previously identified risk in a structured way.

**Continuous risk identification** – to identify new risks that did not previously arise, changes to existing risks and risks which have ceased to be relevant.

In either case, risks should be related to the Council's corporate objectives and be considered at both a strategic and operational level. Strategic risks focus on identifying the key barriers to successful achievement of the Council's objectives. Operational risks are more likely to focus on continuity of business services.

### Common Areas of Risk are:

<b>Strategic</b>	Doing the wrong things as an organisation. Missing opportunities.
<b>Financial</b>	Losing resources or incurring liabilities.
<b>Reputational</b>	The Council's image. Loss of public confidence.
<b>Political</b>	Political embarrassment. Not delivering on local or national policies.
<b>Partnerships</b>	Specific risks to the Council as a result of being in a partnership.
<b>Legal/Regulatory</b>	Claims against the Council. Non-compliance.
<b>Operational</b>	Service delivery failure, targets missed.
<b>Information</b>	Loss of, or inaccurate data, systems or reported information.
<b>Customer/citizens</b>	Understanding their needs, delivery of services.
<b>Environmental</b>	Things outside of our control. Environmental impact of the Council.
<b>People</b>	Employees, management, Members, Chief Officers.

Not all services of the Council will have risks under all these categories.

## 2 Identification of Risk (Continued)

When considering risk, typical phrasing could be:

Loss of ...	leads to ...	resulting in ...
Failure of ...		
Lack of ...		
Partnership with ...		
Development of ...		

## 3 Assessment and Prioritisation of Risk

The Council has adopted a clear structured process for risk assessment for which both impact and likelihood are considered.

Some types of risks allow objective analysis eg financial risks whereas others may be more subjective eg risk to reputation. This assessment matrix allows for assessing all types of risk and considers the perspectives of the whole range of stakeholders likely to be affected.

The assessment is carried out by evaluating the impact if the risk is realised and the likelihood of the risk being realised.

For Inverclyde Council, we have adopted a 5 x 5 scale for impact and likelihood as follows:

### 3 Assessment and Prioritisation of Risk (Continued)

#### Risk Impact

	1 Insignificant	2 Minor	3 Moderate	4 Major	5 Catastrophic
<b>Financial</b>	<£100k	£100k-£250k	£250k-£500k	£500k-£1,000k	£1,000K>
<b>Reputation</b>	Individual negative perception	Local negative perception	Intra industry or regional negative perception	National negative perception	Sustained national negative perception
<b>Legal and Regulatory</b>	Minor regulatory or contractual breach resulting in no compensation or loss	Breach of legislation or code resulting in a compensation award	Regulatory censure or action, significant contractual breach	Breach of regulation or legislation with severe costs/fine	Public fines and censure, regulatory veto on projects/withdrawal of funding. Major adverse corporate litigation.
<b>Operational/ Continuity</b>	An individual service or process failure	Minor problems in specific areas of service delivery	Impact on specific customer group or process	Widespread problems in business operation	Major service or process failure impacting majority or major customer groups

#### Likelihood

	1 Rare	2 Unlikely	3 Possible	4 Probable	5 Almost Certain
<b>Definition</b>	Not likely to happen in the next 3 years	Unlikely to happen in the next 3 years	Possible to occur in the next 3 years	Likely to occur in the next year	Very likely to occur in the next 6 months

### 3 Assessment and Prioritisation of Risk (Continued)

The first assessment of risk levels against these criteria should take no account of any measures or factors that may be in place to control the risk. This establishes the level of “inherent risk”.

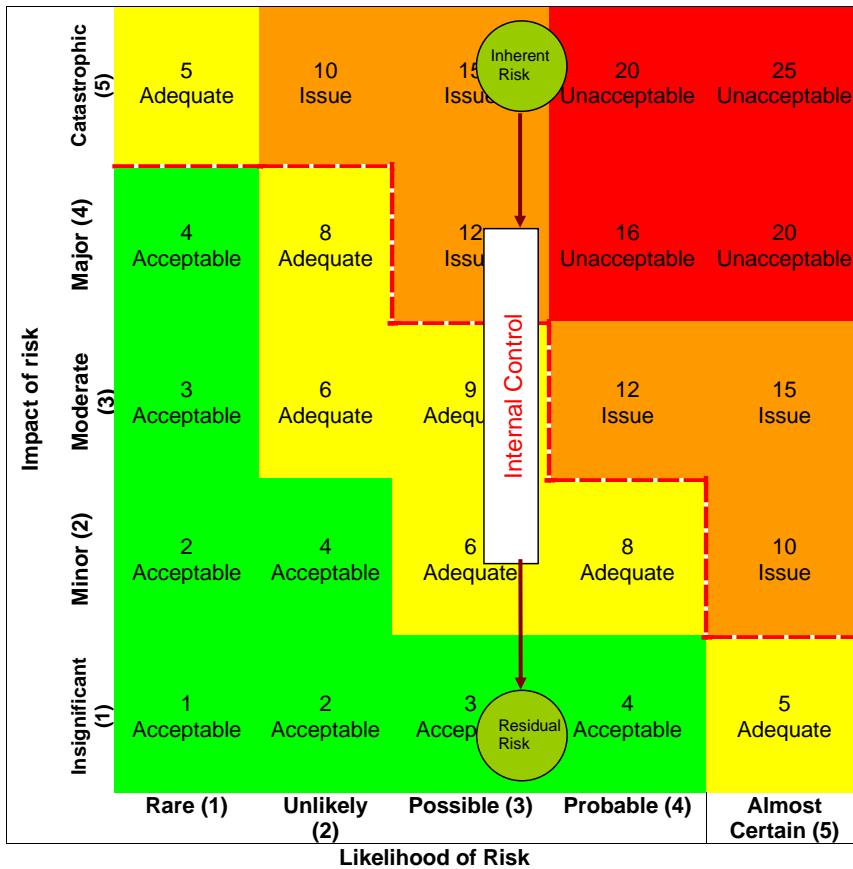
Having used the tables above to score the inherent risk (ie the risk before any corrective action is applied), the next step is to plot the inherent risks on the matrix as shown below.

<b>Impact of risk</b>	<b>Catastrophic (5)</b>	5 Adequate	10 Issue	15 Issue	20 Unacceptable	25 Unacceptable
	<b>Major (4)</b>	4 Acceptable	8 Adequate	12 Issue	16 Unacceptable	20 Unacceptable
	<b>Moderate (3)</b>	3 Acceptable	6 Adequate	9 Adequate	12 Issue	15 Issue
	<b>Minor (2)</b>	2 Acceptable	4 Acceptable	6 Adequate	8 Adequate	10 Issue
	<b>Insignificant (1)</b>	1 Acceptable	2 Acceptable	3 Acceptable	4 Acceptable	5 Adequate
		<b>Rare (1)</b>	<b>Unlikely (2)</b>	<b>Possible (3)</b>	<b>Probable (4)</b>	<b>Almost Certain (5)</b>
<b>Likelihood of Risk</b>						

### 3 Assessment and Prioritisation of Risk (Continued)

Having carried out the inherent risk assessment, the next task is to establish what control procedures exist. These could include policies, protocols, regular meetings or any other activity that has the effect of controlling the identified risk. Once the control measures are identified and validated, a second risk assessment should be performed, again using the Likelihood and Impact criteria but this time taking account of the known control measures. The result of this second assessment is the "Residual Risk".

The table below shows the matrix discussed previously with colour coding to indicate levels of prioritisation.



Risk Appetite - The boundary between the acceptable risks and those which require managing

### 3 Assessment and Prioritisation of Risk (Continued)

An explanation of the risk scores and how the risk should be managed is as follows:

Level of Risk (Inherent Risk Score)	Indicated by	How risk should be managed
Very High Risk (16-25)	<b>Red</b>	<b>Requires active management.</b> High impact/high likelihood: risk requires active management to manage down and maintain exposure at an acceptable level.
High Risk (10-15)	<b>Amber</b>	<b>Contingency plans.</b> A robust contingency plan may suffice together with early warning mechanisms to detect any deviation from plan.
Medium Risk (5-9)	<b>Yellow</b>	<b>Good Housekeeping.</b> May require some risk mitigation to reduce likelihood if this can be done cost effectively, but good housekeeping to ensure the impact remains low should be adequate. Reassess frequently to ensure conditions remain the same.
Low Risk (1-4)	<b>Green</b>	<b>Review periodically.</b> Risks are unlikely to require mitigating actions but status should be reviewed frequently to ensure conditions have not changed.

### 4 Management and Control of Risk

We now need to consider what action is needed to manage the residual risks. The main options for addressing residual risk are set out in the following table:

#### 4 Management and Control of Risk (Continued)

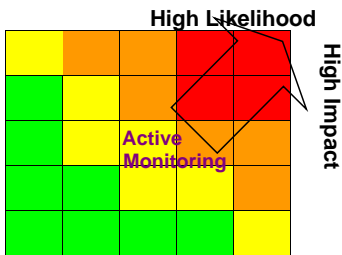
<b>Tolerate</b>	<p>Is the exposure tolerable without any further action being taken? Even if it is not tolerable, the ability to do anything about the risk may be limited or the cost may not be proportionate to the potential benefit gained. This option may be supplemented by contingency planning for handling the impacts that will arise if the risk is realised.</p>
<b>Treat</b>	<p>The greatest number of risks will be addressed in this way. While continuing the activity that gives rise to the risk, action is taken to limit the risk to an acceptable level.</p> <p>Where the decision is to treat the risk, mitigating actions need to be defined. It is important that any additional action is proportionate to the risk. Apart from the most extreme undesirable outcome, it is normally sufficient to design controls to give a reasonable assurance of confining any loss to a level that is acceptable to the Council. Each control action has an associated cost and it is important that the control action offers value for money in relation to the risk that it is controlling.</p>
<b>Transfer</b>	<p>For some risks, the best response may be to transfer them. This might be done by insurance or by paying a third party to take the risk in another way. This may be considered appropriate as it reduces the risk to the organisation or because another organisation is more capable of managing the risk.</p>
<b>Terminate</b>	<p>Some risks will only be treatable to acceptable levels by terminating the activity. There may be limited opportunities for the Council as the activity is driven by legislative requirements.</p>



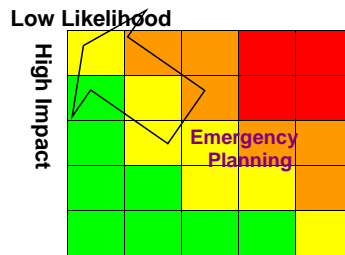
## 5 Review and Reporting

It is important that the management of risk is reviewed and reported on a regular basis in order to monitor whether or not the risk profile is changing and to gain assurance that risk management is effective and to identify when further action is necessary.

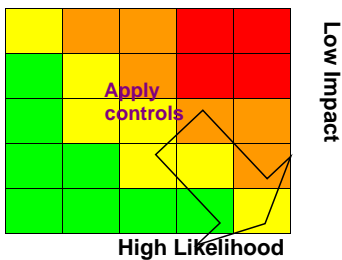
Risks should be monitored according to the following criteria:



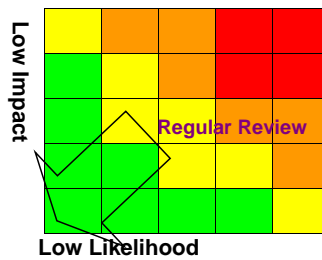
High impact and highly likely risks which must be managed effectively.



High Impact but not likely given either the controls in place or the nature of the risk. Management should periodically review controls and contingencies to deal with these risks.



Low impact and low likelihood risks which should be reassessed on an annual basis to ensure their impact and likelihood does not increase over time.



The Audit Committee is the responsible committee for ensuring that the Council's risk management arrangements are effective and operate as intended.

The Audit Committee will receive regular reports on risk management from the Head of Legal, Democratic, Digital & Customers Services.



### 3.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

- 3.1 At the 20 September 2022 meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee it was agreed that the Council should apply to become a member of the Co-operative Councils Innovation Network (the Network). This application was approved in October, and all councillors advised on 2 November. <https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/meetings/meeting/2487>.
- 3.2 The Network, established in 2012, describes itself as “the fastest-growing network in local government”, having over 100 councils, organisations and supporters from across the UK. The Network states that member councils are committed to reforming the way they work by building an equal partnership with local people based on the values and principles of the International Co-operative Alliance. In particular, the Network promotes the transformation of communities through community action, community engagement and civic empowerment.
- 3.3 More information on the Network can be found on its website: <https://www.councils.coop/about-us/>.
- 3.4 The most senior tier of the Network’s governance structure is its Executive Oversight Committee. More information on this Committee, comprising elected members from different local authority members, can be found on its website, including its terms of reference. The Executive Oversight Committee meets quarterly, in person or remotely.
- 3.5 On 12 September 2023, the Network announced two vacancies on its Executive Oversight Committee. In respect of this there were 3 candidates, none of whom were members of a Scottish local authority. Each member council had the right to exercise a vote for up to two candidates. The votes had to be exercised by Noon on 19 September 2023.
- 3.6 In December 2022 a similar use of delegated powers was exercised to enable the Council to exercise its vote, again through Cllr McCabe, to elect a Chair of the Network. This was reported to the January 2023 meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee. <https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/meetings/meeting/2525>

### 4.0 PROPOSALS

- 4.1 As a member of the Network, it was considered important that the Council exercised its right to vote on the election of two new members to the Executive Oversight Committee of the Network. As such, and in light of the timescales associated with that election, on 13 September 2023, the Chief Executive used their powers under the Scheme of Delegation (Officers) to agree that the Council cast its vote to elect two new members to the Executive Oversight Committee of the Cooperative Councils Innovation Network. It is a requirement of the constitution of the Network that such a vote is cast by the Leader of member local authorities. <https://www.councils.coop/about-us/governance/our-constitution/>

### 5.0 IMPLICATIONS

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

SUBJECT	YES	NO
Financial		x
Legal/Risk		x
Human Resources		x
Strategic (Partnership Plan/Council Plan)		x

Equalities, Fairer Scotland Duty & Children/Young People's Rights & Wellbeing		x
Environmental & Sustainability		x
Data Protection		x

## 5.2 Finance

There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

## 5.3 Legal/Risk

There are no legal risks/implications arising from this report.

## 5.4 Human Resources

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

## 5.5 Strategic

There are no strategic implications arising directly from this report.

## 6.0 CONSULTATION

6.1 None.

## 7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 None