
Report To:	Education & Communities Committee	Date:	19 March 2024
Report By:	Corporate Director Education, Communities and Organisational Development	Report No:	EDUCOM/14/24/TM
Contact Officer:	Tony McEwan, Head of Culture, Communities and Educational Resources	Contact No:	01475 712828
Subject:	Communities Update Report – Overview of Local and National Initiatives		

1.0 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

1.1 For Decision For Information/Noting

1.2 The purpose of this report is to update the Education and Communities Committee with developments in relation to the Communities part of the Committee.

Updates have been provided on the following areas:

1. Review of School Crossing Sites;
2. Community Council Elections;
3. Multiply Inverclyde;
4. The Early Adopter Affordable Childcare Update;
5. Scottish Youth Parliament;
6. LED pitch Lighting; and
7. Libraries Service Developments

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that the Education and Communities Committee notes the updates provided in this report.

Ruth Binks
Corporate Director, Education, Communities and Organisational Development

3.0 Updates

3.1 Review of School Crossing Sites

The Service has begun an assessment of school crossing sites as part of recommendations that the local authority reviews its sites from time to time, to ensure the categorisation of sites remains relevant and supports continued efforts to ensure acceptable walked routes to school supports active travel options. Temporary cameras are being deployed at numerous sites across Inverclyde to capture traffic and pedestrian data between 7.30am-9.30am. The cameras will be removed at the end of the project and the images will be deleted upon final reporting of the site surveys, with subsequent reporting to the Education and Communities Committee should any sites be subject to change.

3.2 Community Council Elections 2024

The Community Council election window opened on the 17 January 2024 and closed on the 7 February 2024. To maximise community engagement, Corporate Communications developed publicity materials and promoted the election via targeted social media and within the local press.

Community Learning and Development (CLD) played a significant role in the Community Council election promotion and made significant efforts to engage with the public as part of the overall engagement plan.

CLD also hosted two digital information sessions and four community drop-in sessions to allow community members to gain more information on the role of a Community Councillor and offer an opportunity to ask any questions. Members of Inverclyde Association of Community Councils also supported the digital information session.

Inverclyde now has nine out of 11 Community Councils formed, with two new Community Councils and a 30% increase in the number of Community Councillors within in Inverclyde.

3.3 The Multiply Programme Inverclyde

The Multiply programme is funded by the UK Government's Shared Prosperity Fund. Multiply courses and activities are available to anyone aged 19 or over who does not have maths qualification above SQA Level 5; and resident in Glasgow, East Dunbartonshire, West Dunbartonshire, Inverclyde, North Lanarkshire, South Lanarkshire, East Renfrewshire or Renfrewshire.

Research from the National Numeracy Charity shows that 40% of the UK's working-age population have the expected numeracy levels of a primary school leaver, and 30% of school leavers feel anxious about using maths and numbers.

Local authorities have joined forces to promote the Multiply123 numeracy programme – which provides funded courses and activities, is free to local residents and available across the eight council areas in the West of Scotland.

A dedicated telephone helpline has been established on freephone (**0808 171 3030**), which connects adults with Multiply support in their local council area. A new website at www.multiply123.co.uk showcases help and support available across the area.

3.4 Update on the Early Adopter Affordable Out of School Childcare Pilot

The Early Adopter Affordable Out of School Childcare pilot continued from August 2023 in Newark Primary School in Port Glasgow and is delivered by Before and After School Kilmacolm

(BASK). Provision remains free for all children who meet the criteria (low-income families/priority families who are more likely to be living in poverty). In January 2024 there were 34 families with 44 children registered for the service.

Proposals have been submitted to Scottish Government for funding for 2024/25 to upscale the project to other localities in Inverclyde where communities face the greatest inequalities and poverty. Other proposals for funding include initiatives to develop a workforce for childcare services, create and improve pathways for Advice Services, Community Development and Parental Employability Support. The Scottish Government will advise of its decision to continue funding in the next few months.

3.5 Scottish Youth Parliament

The SYP is the democratically elected voice of Scotland's young people. It provides a national platform for young people to discuss issues important to them and affect the change they wish to see elections are held every two years, in which young people from across Scotland stand as candidates to become Members of the Scottish Youth Parliament (MSYPs).

CLD Youth Services supports the election process and the young parliamentarians when elected. The declaration for the 2023-26 Scottish Youth Parliament (SYP) elections results took place on 15 February 2024 when candidates Maya McCrae and Matthew Quinn were elected to the parliament.

3.6 DCMS Funding

Inverclyde Council was successful in receiving funding from the DCMS (UK Department for Culture Media & Sport), through its partnership with the Scottish Football Association. The Multi-Sport Grassroots Facilities Programme is investing funding to level up facilities across the UK, including in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The application, which was supported by grassroots team St Andrew Boys, was made to receive match funding to replace existing pitch lighting with energy efficient LEDs as part of the Council's Net Zero strategy. This will affect 17 pitches across the local authority.

The replacement of existing lights will contribute towards our net zero objectives. Energy efficiency LED lights use up to 75% less energy than traditional pitch lights, are cheaper to run, pollute less and have a much longer lifespan making them a more sustainable choice for lighting a pitch.

3.7 Pathways Through Play

Inverclyde Libraries hosted playworkers from Pathways Through Play (part of Play Talk Read, Smart Play Network) in January 2024. 19 free family play sessions were held across the Inverclyde Libraries branch network with a capacity for 152 families to attend. The sessions were for children aged 0-4 and their families.

3.8 Successful Author Visit - Thomas Clark

A successful Live Literature funding bid celebrating Scots Language allowed for a virtual author visit from Thomas Clark to be made available to all secondary schools in January.

This was followed up by an in-person author visit from Thomas in Central Library. 30 people attended the fully booked session for children and young people.

3.9 South West Library events

Introduction to Sewing sessions are taking place in the Lend & Mend hub at South West Library for a young adult audience with the 6 sessions now fully booked. The library also hosted Inverclyde's first seed library with an accompanying Sow and Grow Talk with Martin Gerrish of the Grow Food Project – over 30 people attended, including partners from community garden Network and Inverclyde Food Network. A second seed library in Port Glasgow aims to be launched by the end of March 2024.

Through funding from the Scottish Government's Climate Engagement Fund to deliver Climate Engagement Activities in libraries across Scotland the library hosted 2 sessions with Helen Cross a Scottish storyteller with a passion for food; horticulture, and farming and who also based her debut book 'Grow, Cook, Inspire; Growing and cooking for a healthier mind and planet.' A primary school session also took place where children created a menu or a recipe, and created a mood board with images of the different fruit and veg they need to grow their own meals. Seeds are then sown into mini pots and labels made, to be transplanted back at school or the school library garden. The events also looked at the 'food miles' of fruit and veg bought in the supermarket and see how far it has travelled to compare and contrast. This was followed by a session for adults which looked at Growing for wellbeing where participants made wellbeing branches and developed skills in flower hammering and bundle dyeing using flowers as a dye; making bath salt bags to take and sow calendula seeds. An opportunity was given to create a herbal tea flower bed at the library, for community use.

3.10 Author events at HMP Greenock

Two events were delivered at HMP Greenock in February 2024 with the support of successful Scottish Book Trust Live Literature funding. Dr Jim Ferguson was invited to talk due to the inmates having studied Dr Ferguson's work previously and facilitated a discussion around his book 'Songs to drown a million souls' and also did a reading from his novel 'Punk Fiddle'. The talk was well received by two classes of 12 people.

3.11 International Women's Day Events 8 March 2024

An event in Greenock Central library was facilitated by Andy Clark, an Associate with Newcastle Oral History Unit & Collective of Newcastle University. The talk celebrated the women who stood up collectively for workers' rights during the 1981 seizure of the Lee Jeans factory. The aim of this event was to celebrate the contributions of these women to the textile industry in Greenock, to hear from the women themselves on their experiences of collective action during this time. This event appealed to those with an interest in the local history of the area but also those with an interest in collective action and workers' rights historically, and in present day.

Three associated Libraries outreach activities 'Witches in Word not Deed' took place to support an exhibition in the Watt Institution. The events were held at the Watt Institution, Inverkip Community Hub and in Gourock Library. Participants heard from artist Carolyn Sutton and Inverclyde Council's archivist Lorraine Murray as they remember the real women who were persecuted as witches across Scotland under the Witchcraft Act of 1563. The talks will provide insight into Carolyn's process making the exhibition and Lorraine Murray will provide historical context for the accused women. Carolyn will also be linked with our Lend and Mend Hub at South West Library and will run a workshop to create a fabric adorned with the words used against the accused women during the witchcraft trials, many of which are still relevant today.

3.12 First Aid in a resilient Inverclyde Community Conference

Greenock Central library hosted the St Andrew's First Aid in a resilient Inverclyde in February 2024. Attendees / speakers included Councillor Sandra Reynolds; Inverclyde Young Carers;

Inverclyde Academy; and the National Resilience Centre. Staff from Central Library presented on behalf of Inverclyde Libraries at this well-attended event which saw around 40 people attending.

4.0 IMPLICATIONS

4.1 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

4.2 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					

4.3 Legal/Risk

N/A.

4.4 Human Resources

N/A.

4.5 Strategic

N/A.

4.6 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. Provide any other relevant reasons why an EqIA is not necessary/screening statement.

(b) Fairer Scotland Duty

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.

4.7 **Environmental/Sustainability**

N/A

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.

4.8 **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.

5.0 CONSULTATION

5.1 N/A.

6.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

6.1 N/A.