
Report To:	Policy and Resources Committee	Date:	19 November 2024
Report By:	Head of OD, Policy and Communications	Report No:	PR/34/24/RB/KM
Contact Officer:	Rhoda Braddick	Contact No:	712146
Subject:	Inverclyde Council Plan Annual Performance Report 2023/24		

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) 2023/34. The APR, which is the first to be produced on the new Council Plan 2023/28, is attached as Appendix 1.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that the Committee:

- Notes the progress made in the delivery of the Council Plan during 2023/24; and
- Approves the publication of the Corporate Plan Annual Performance Report 2023/24.

Morna Rae
Head of OD, Policy and Communications

3.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

- 3.1 A new five-year Council Plan 2023/28 was approved by Inverclyde Council on 20th April 2023. The Plan set out an updated Vision and range of high-level outcomes across the themes of People, Place and Performance.
- 3.2 As part of the Council Plan governance and scrutiny arrangements it was agreed that an Annual Performance Report (APR) and a six-monthly progress report would be presented to the Policy and Resources Committee. The first APR on the Council Plan, covering the period 2023/24, is attached as Appendix 1 for the consideration of the Committee.
- 3.3 The APR aims to provide a balanced range of qualitative and quantitative information to support an informed judgement on the Council's performance in the year. Reporting on progress against desired outcomes forms part of the Council's public performance reporting duty, as set out in the SPI Direction 2021.

3.4 COUNCIL PLAN ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2023/24

- 3.5 The APR 2023/24 is structured around the Council Plan themes of People, Place and Performance and contains details of achievements in the year, information on areas of good or innovative practice, service developments and the delivery of major national projects that support the Council Plan vision. This includes:
 - The introduction of free school meals for all primary school pupils in Inverclyde.
 - Piloting the Scottish Government Affordable Childcare Initiative in Port Glasgow.
 - Employability support for Inverclyde parents and kinship carers via the Inverclyde Parental Employability Programme.
 - The implementation of an 'Ideas to Action' programme to strengthen the support provided to our looked after children.
 - Utilising Inverclyde's allocation of the Shared Prosperity Fund to implement a range projects, from employability programmes to community food growing initiatives.
 - The opening of the Ocean Terminal visitor centre and the completion of Inchgreen Marine Park project.
 - Improving the natural environment through the Coves Local Nature Reserve and peatland restoration projects.
 - Implementation of a refreshed Leadership programme for employees.
 - The implementation of 'Grow your own' initiative to address workforce pressures in Health and Social Care.
- 3.6 Each theme is underpinned by a 'Performance Dashboard' containing a range of national and local performance data for the previous three years. To provide continuity of reporting, the KPIs have been drawn from the previous Corporate Plan 2018/23 and the Committee and Service Plans. Service performance should also be considered alongside the LGBF 2023/24 report which appears elsewhere on the agenda of this Committee.
- 3.7 Where a performance target has been set, a Red/ Amber / Green status is also provided. Where it is not appropriate to set a target, referred to as a 'data only' KPI, the direction of travel is monitored instead. All measures within the APR include trend information to show annual change (increasing / decreasing) and average trend over the longer term (5-year). The KPIs may be subject to further refinement over the life of the Council Plan as new data becomes available.
- 3.8 When considering changes in performance year-to-year and over time, it should be remembered that performance will be influenced by a variety of factors such as budget pressures, reduced

number of staffing posts and / or difficult to fill posts. Demand for services can also vary at different points and the introduction of a new funding streams, or conversely the withdrawal of funding, will also have an inevitable impact.

- 3.9 Following Committee approval, the publication of the APR 2023/24 will be promoted to the public and employees to encourage a greater understanding of the work of the Council and partners, and also the progress that has been achieved.
- 3.10 The Committee is asked to note that a six-month progress report on the Council Plan, relating to reporting year 2024/25, will be presented to its next meeting on 4th February 2025.
- 3.11 **RESPONDING TO THE APR 2023/24**
- 3.12 The APR describes many areas of best practice which services will look to continue and extend as resources allow. Where there have been challenges in service delivery or significant external pressures negatively impacting on performance, remedial action will be explored and improvement activity identified. Overall, performance in 2023/24 provides a strong foundation on which to continue to deliver the Council Plan 2023/28.
- 3.13 An Elected Member Briefing on the Annual Performance Report 2023/24 will 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 2023/24.

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 Annual Performance Report helps the Council to fulfil its 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 2023/24 set out the Council's progress in delivering all the organisational priorities within the Inverclyde Council Plan 2023/28.

6.0 CONSULTATION

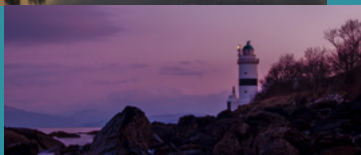
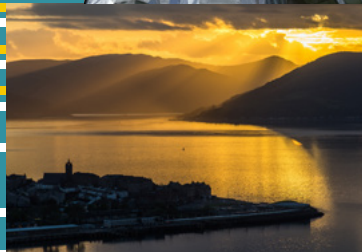
6.1 None.

7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

7.1 None.

INVERCLYDE COUNCIL PLAN 2023/28

Annual Performance Report
2023/24



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



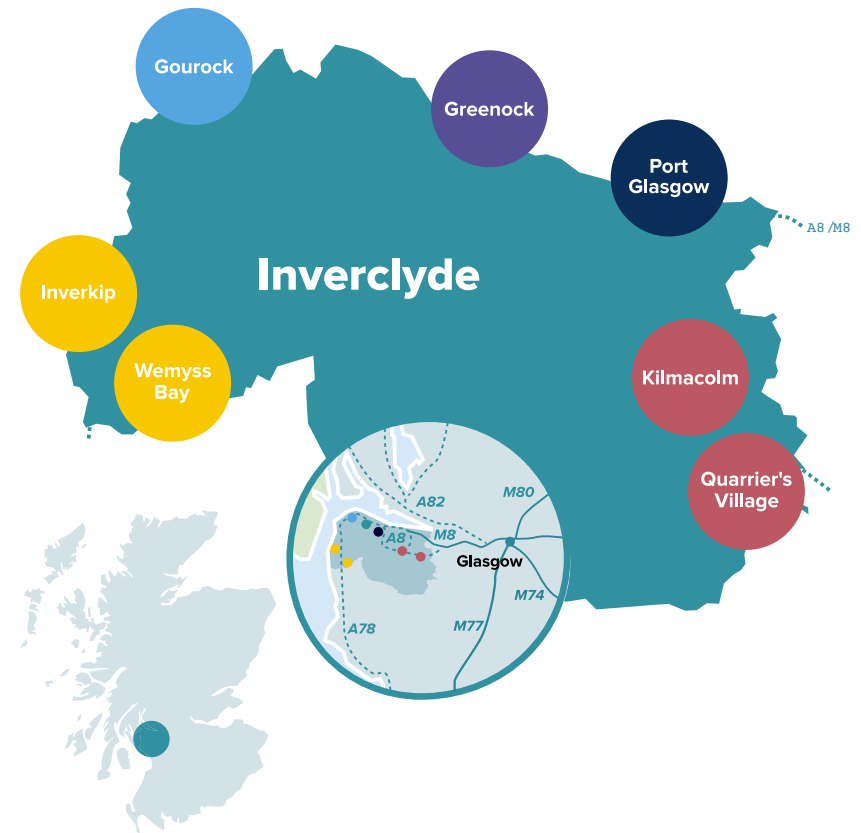
Foreword

Welcome to Inverclyde Council’s Council Plan Annual Performance Report 2023/24, which provides details of our performance in delivering the priorities within our Council Plan 2023/28, to realise our Vision of ‘Success for All: Getting it Right for Every Child, Citizen and Community’.

As a Council we strive to be transparent in keeping residents informed about how well we are performing and this Report, which covers the first year of our Council Plan, is one of the ways in which we do that. It aims to provide you with a range of information on our performance and details of just some of the initiatives that were taken forward during the year to help you measure the progress that was made.

We are very proud of the national recognition that the Council received during the year, with a number of Award successes for impressive performance and innovative services. We are ambitious in our aims and will continue to build on this success and develop new ways of working in these challenging times to strengthen resilience and deliver high-quality services.

As we move into the second year of delivering our Council Plan, we remain as committed as ever to working alongside our communities and supporting the most vulnerable. Reducing inequality is a thread that runs through all aspects of our work and opportunities to improve positive outcomes will be seized wherever possible, from the delivery of major projects such as the £22million Levelling Up Fund to smaller scale initiatives within our communities, such as the Lend and Mend Hub, which was the first of its kind to be launched in Scotland in 2023/24. Finally, public performance reporting is a core element of our Best Value activity. As always, your feedback is particularly important 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 the Council’s performance.

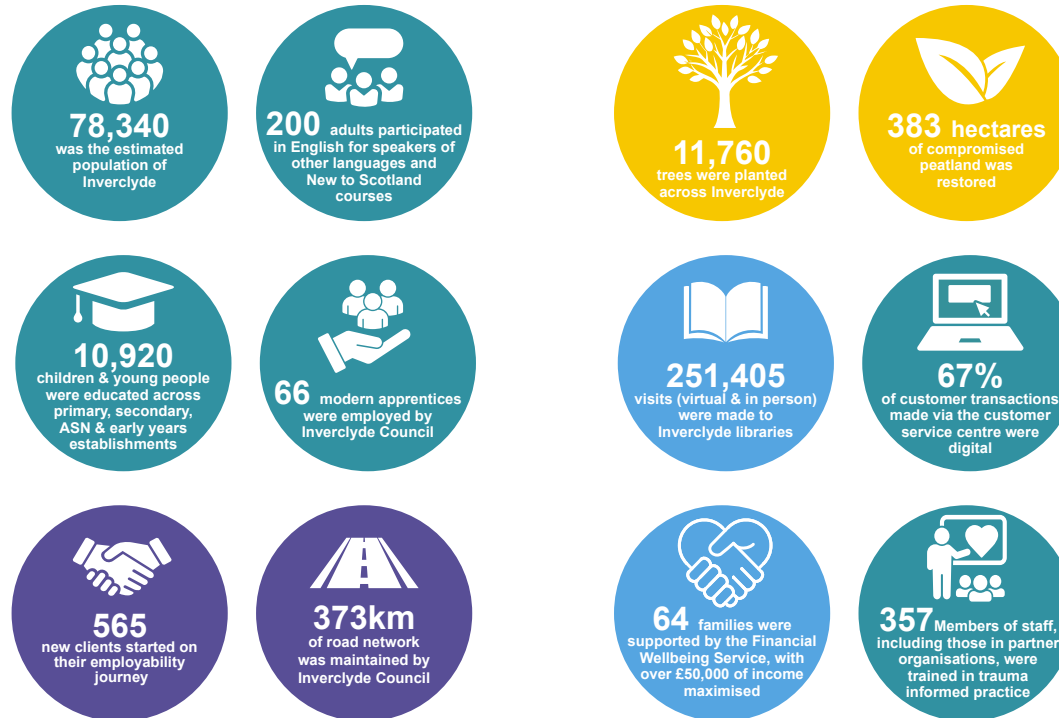


Louise Long
Chief Executive

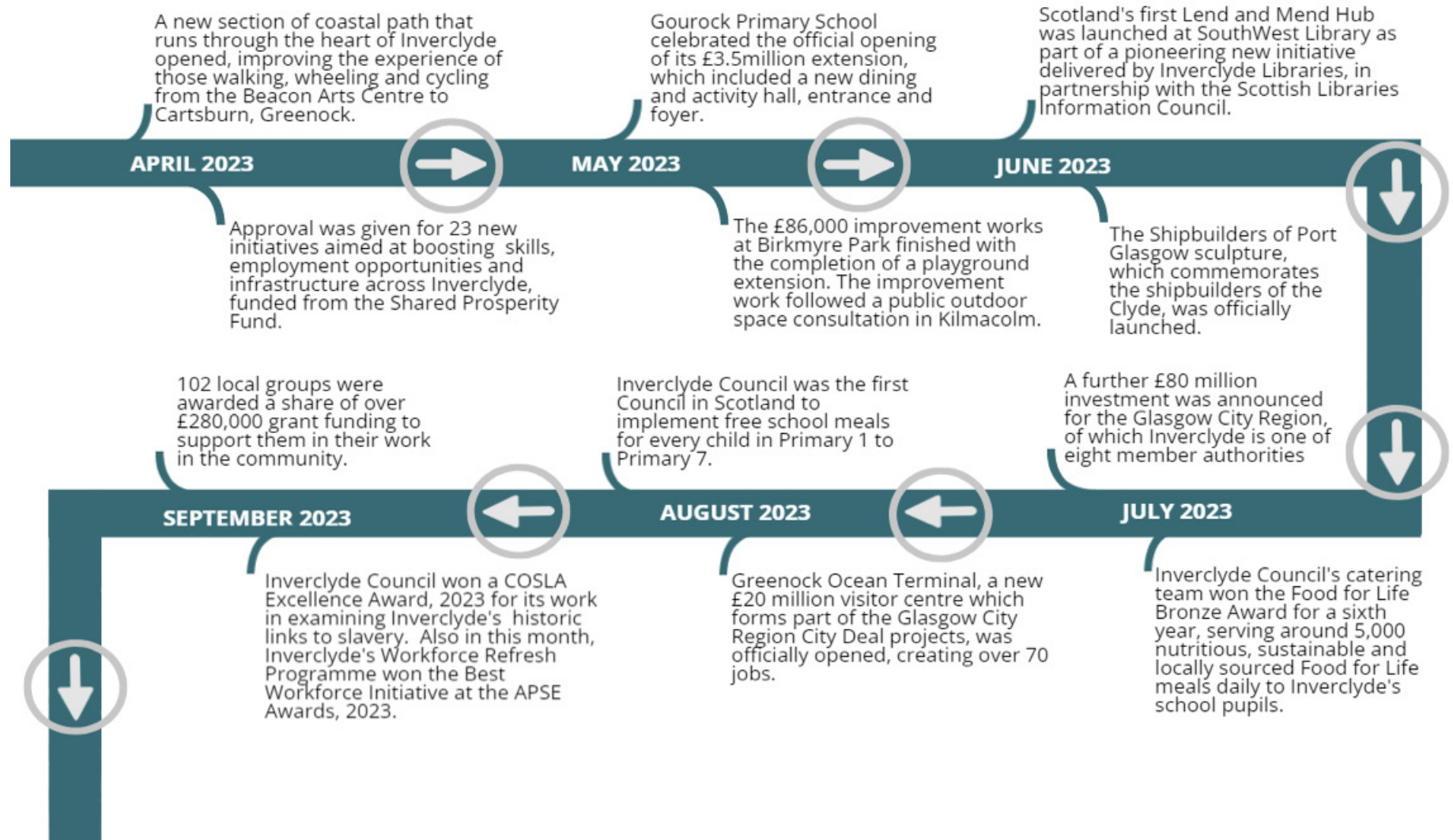


Stephen McCabe
Leader, Inverclyde Council

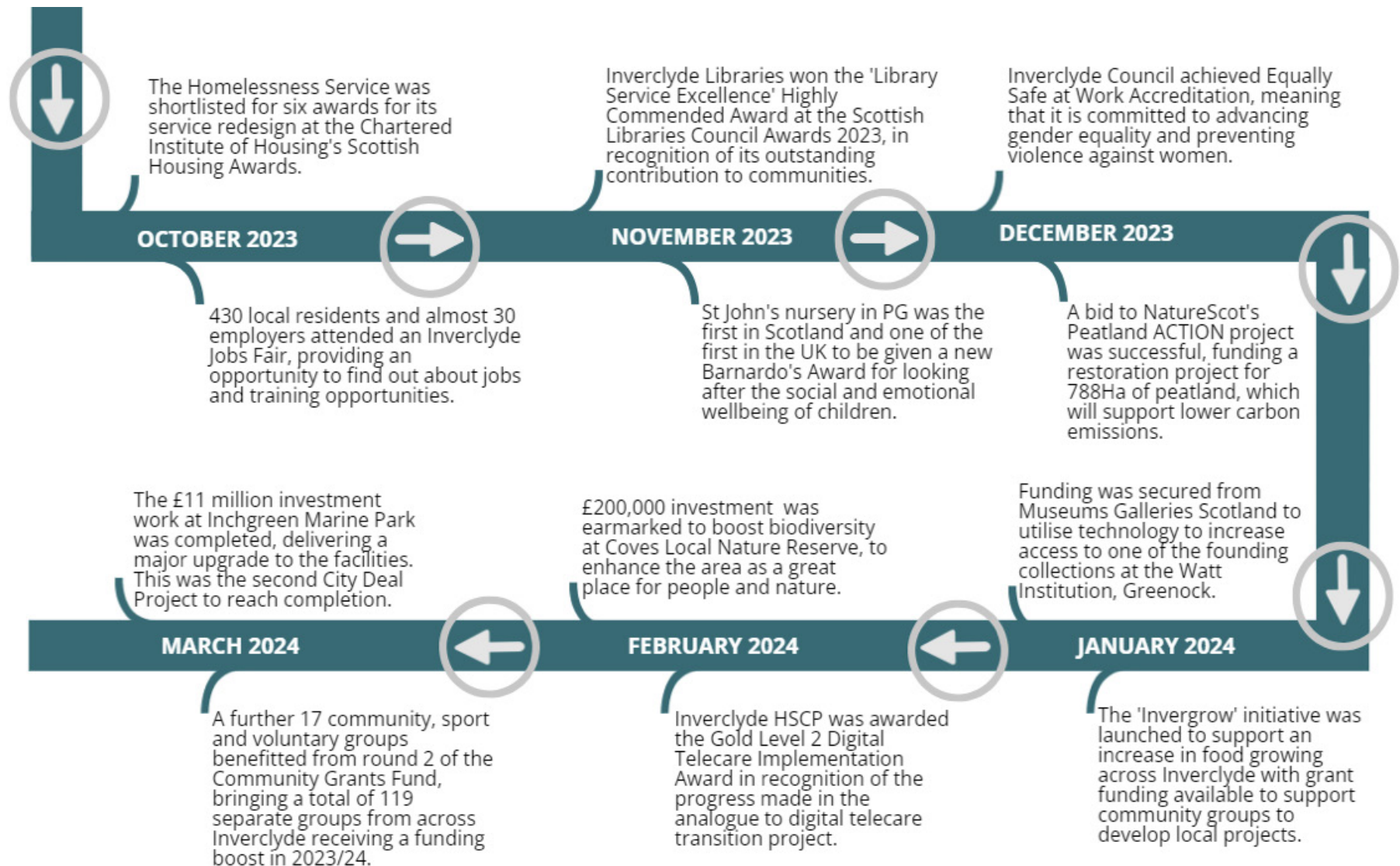
Did you know that in 2023/24



A year in the life...



A year in the life...



Our vision and outcomes

The Council Plan 2023/28 sets out the vision for the Council as a whole and the ways in which we hope to improve the lives of, and deliver better outcomes for, the people of Inverclyde.

Our vision:

Success for all - Getting it right for every child, citizen and community

We are very aware that life opportunities vary across our population and that there are significant challenges within our communities linked to deprivation and inequality.

We want to achieve success for all, with everyone being able to easily access high quality Council services.

Our outcomes:

To deliver our Vision, we have identified three overarching themes and the outcomes we want to achieve:

THEME 1: PEOPLE

- 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
- Our most vulnerable families and residents are safeguarded and supported

THEME 2: PLACE

- 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
- Our natural environment is protected

THEME 3: PERFORMANCE

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

The delivery of these outcomes is via the action plans within our strategic plans, partnership plans and the Committee Delivery and Improvement Plans, with a golden thread bringing together the collective vision, purpose and aspirations.

Evaluating our performance

This Annual Report 2023/24 aims to provide an overview of key achievements during the year, together with key performance information to provide an overview of the progress that has been made in improving local outcomes and delivering Council services.

Reviewing performance

It is not possible to present information on all the work undertaken by the Council during the year within one report. To obtain a fully rounded picture of our performance in 2023/24, it is therefore important to consider this Report alongside the other performance reports published. This includes:

- The Corporate self-assessment of Best Value performance.
- The Committee Delivery and Improvement Plans performance reports.
- Local Government Benchmarking Framework performance.
- Annual Reports on key priority areas, such as the Inverclyde Children's Services Plan, Education Services Standards and Quality Report and the Net Zero Strategy and Action Plan.
- The Inverclyde Alliance Partnership Plan 2023/33 Annual Report.

More information is available on the Inverclyde Council Performance webpage, which you will find here:

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

The Council's Committee Delivery and Improvement Plans set out the strategic workstreams that support the delivery of the Council Plan outcomes. These Plans are subject to regular performance reporting, with information on areas of progress or where there has been slippage highlighted and the reasons for this. All Committee Plan performance reports published in 2023/24 can be found Council's website:

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

External Scrutiny





Inverclyde Council's performance in providing services is also subject to external scrutiny to support good practice and improvement. Since November 2023, Best Value audit work in Scotland has been fully integrated into annual financial audit work with an evaluation of the Council's performance reported via the Annual Audit Report. You can find the latest Inverclyde Council Annual Audit Report here:

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




Performance Dashboard

Each theme within our Council Plan 2023/28 is underpinned by a key performance indicator (KPI) dashboard. 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. Where it is not appropriate to set a target for example, 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.’

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

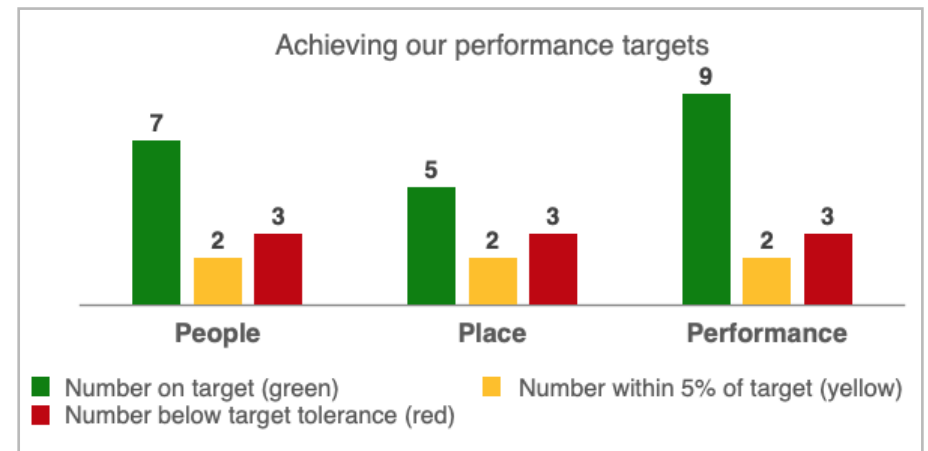
PI Status	
	Performance has not met target and is below the set tolerance level (5%)
	Performance is below target, but is within a set tolerance level (0-5%)
	Performance is at target level or higher
	Performance is being monitored but no target has been set (data only)

Monitoring performance trends is important because performance will naturally fluctuate year for a variety of reasons, some of which are outwith the control or scope of influence of the Council.

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)

Performance Summary 2023/24

The chart below provides a summary of KPI performance during the year, presented by Council Plan theme. Where targets were not achieved during the year, the reasons for this will be explored and improvement activity identified.



How we compare to others

The Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) is a national performance framework that helps Councils compare their performance across a range of activities. The Improvement Service publishes benchmarking data for Scottish Councils however, it is the responsibility of an individual Council to report on its own LGBF performance as part of its public performance reporting duty.

2023/24 LGBF performance data is not currently available for all measures within the framework, however performance analysis of previous years shows that Inverclyde Council consistently ranks amongst the top performing local authorities in Scotland. Areas of particularly high performance include:

- The percentage of pupils from the 20% most deprived areas gaining 5+ awards at level 5 has ranked in the top quartile for the past six years.
- The percentage of unemployed people assisted into work from Council programmes has ranked in the top quartile every year since 2012/13.
- The proportion of adults satisfied with refuse collection has ranked in the top 5 Councils every year since 2011/14 (satisfaction data is provided over a rolling three year period).
- The proportion of Scottish Welfare Fund Crisis Grant decisions made within 1 day has been maintained at 100% every year since 2018/19.
- The proportion of Scottish Welfare Fund Community Care Grant decisions made within 15 days has been maintained at above 99% every year since 2018/19, ranking Inverclyde in the top five performing Councils over the same period.

More information on Inverclyde's LGBF performance is available on the Council website and on the Improvement Service website:

<https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/council-and-government/performance/statutory-performance-indicators/lgbf>

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

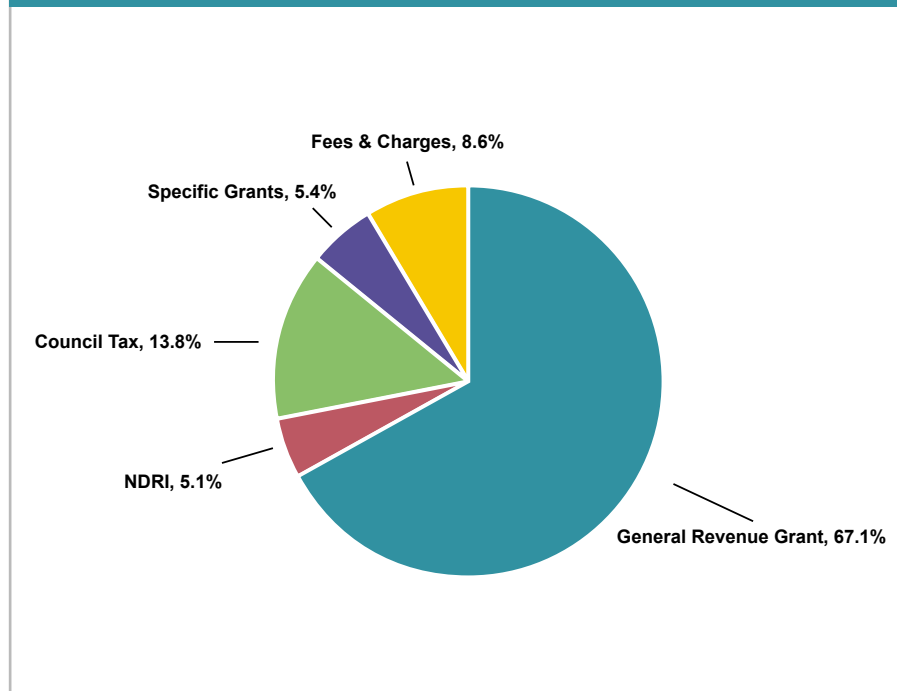
Managing the council's finances

In 2023/24, 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.

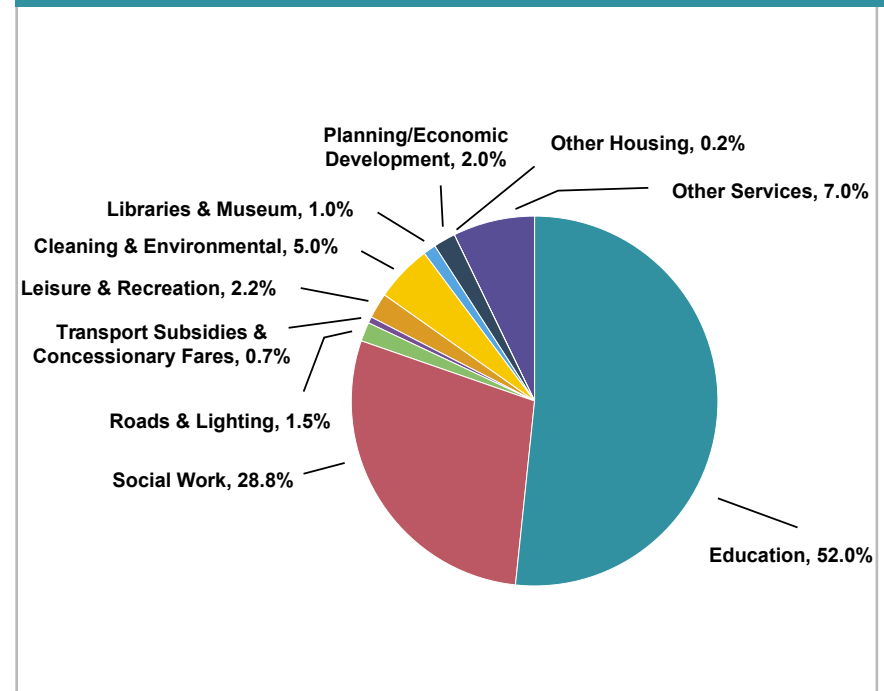
Budget 2024/26

In February 2024, the Council approved a two-year budget for 2024/26. The overall budget is worth almost £250 million each year and a four-year £72 million capital budget to fund one off infrastructure costs was also agreed.

Where our money came from 2023/24



What the money was spent on 2023/24



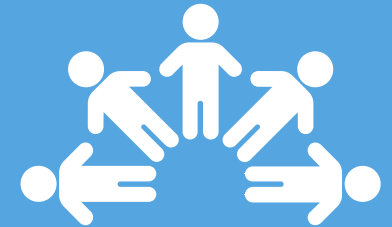


Theme 1 PEOPLE

Why is this a priority?

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

How did we support the delivery of this outcome in 2023/24?

Working in partnership to deliver the Children's Services Plan 2023/26

Partnership working is essential to deliver the range of support required by most families and children or young people to ensure the best start in life. A new integrated Inverclyde Children's Services Plan 2023/26 was approved by the Community Planning Partnership, the Inverclyde Alliance, in October 2023. The Plan, which was developed by the Children's Services Partnership (CSP) contains four outcomes to improve the lives of children and young people in Inverclyde:

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

The Plan, which is based on the five foundations of The Promise Scotland: Voice, Family, Care, People and Scaffolding includes a commitment made to explore every opportunity for joined-up children's services and collaborative improvement. Progress will be reported to the Inverclyde Alliance and the Scottish Government in an Annual Report.

You can find the Inverclyde Children's Services Plan 2023/26 here:

<https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/support-for-children-families/joint-childrens-services-planning/draft-children-s-services-plan-2020-23>

Implementation of a new Literacy Framework

A new Literacy Framework for Inverclyde schools was launched in October 2023, with over 220 practitioners attending the launch event. The Framework, which supports the delivery of the Literacy Strategy for Inverclyde, will help to ensure that there is a consistent and coherent approach to the teaching of core literacy skills across Inverclyde school establishments.

Whilst still at an early stage, very positive feedback has been received so far, particularly relating to increased practitioner confidence in the teaching of reading. A six-month evaluation of the Reading Framework showed increased awareness of the Literacy Framework and confidence in the teaching of reading. **Reading attainment for our most disadvantaged pupils in primary schools has risen from 74.1% to 75.4%, an increase of 1.3% since November 2023 whilst Achievement for Curriculum for Excellence Levels in Literacy overall attainment has risen from 73.8% to 74.1%, an increase of 0.3% since November 2023.**



Supporting learning and development through Play Pedagogy

The implementation of Playful Pedagogy, which is a way of integrating children's play experiences with curricular learning, has been a strategic priority for Inverclyde since 2021 to support the learning and development of children at an early age. The aim is: "to change pedagogical practice to one that empowers children to become active participants in their learning."

In 2023, building on previous training in key areas including child development and high-quality observations, three Inverclyde Head Teachers were appointed to the role of Play Associate to support the leadership of play and enquiry within their establishments. This has proven to be very effective in advancing the implementation of play and enquiry within primary schools.

A dedicated Play and Enquiry event was held in March 2024 to support Head Teachers in shaping the vision across Inverclyde schools. This event was highly informative and impactful, providing a comprehensive overview and sharing of best practice, which highlighted the benefits of play and enquiry practices, in both early years and primary school settings. Notably, discussions included insights into the effects of COVID on children's brain development, emphasising the crucial role of play and enquiry in addressing trauma and nurturing children's holistic growth.

All Inverclyde schools have now introduced play across the early level with plans in place to effectively strengthen the implementation of play in primary one and two.

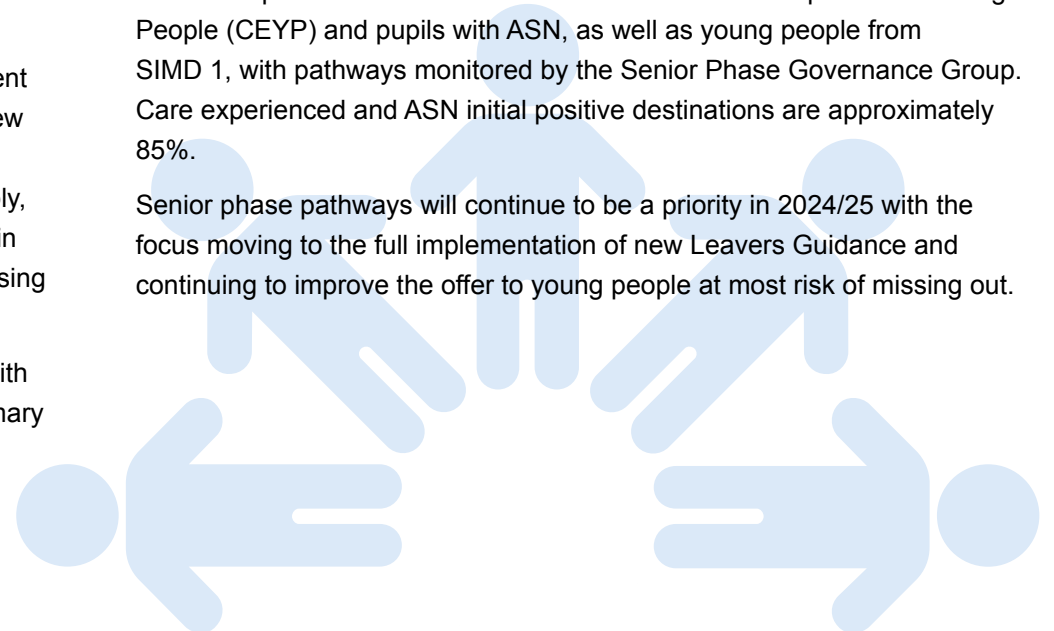
Increasing school leaver positive destinations

Developing skills for learning, life and work is critical to ensuring that young people go on to a sustained positive destination after leaving school, whether that be college, university, training or employment.

The More Choices, More Chances team continued to work closely with Education Services to enhance the offer to young people through greater personalisation and choice. **This has resulted in Inverclyde's Initial School Leaver Destinations increasing from 94% in 2021/22 to 96.4% in 2022/23; the highest figure ever achieved. The 2.4% increase represented the largest increase in Scotland last year with Inverclyde improving its ranking in the Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) from 31st to 9th position out of 32 Councils.**

There is a particular focus on the destinations of Care Experienced Young People (CEYP) and pupils with ASN, as well as young people from SIMD 1, with pathways monitored by the Senior Phase Governance Group. Care experienced and ASN initial positive destinations are approximately 85%.

Senior phase pathways will continue to be a priority in 2024/25 with the focus moving to the full implementation of new Leavers Guidance and continuing to improve the offer to young people at most risk of missing out.





Outcome 2: Gaps in outcomes linked to poverty are reduced

How did we support the delivery of this outcome in 2023/24?

Introduction of free school meals for all primary school pupils

Inverclyde was the first local authority in Scotland to earmark additional funding to provide free school meals to every child in P1 to P7, 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.

Reducing the poverty related attainment gap

Reducing the poverty related attainment gap is a particular priority for the Education Service, particularly following the impact of the pandemic. National data relating to the percentage of pupils achieving expected levels in literacy (reading, writing, listening and talking) and numeracy shows that Inverclyde reached its highest level of attainment over the previous five years (2017/18 – 2022/23) and continues outperform national attainment data figures. On average, 3.5% more of Inverclyde leavers achieve level 4 literacy and numeracy than the national figure, and 6% more achieve level 5 over past 5 years. At Primary 1, 4 and 7 Achievement of Curriculum for Excellence Levels (ACEL) combined, Inverclyde has outperformed national data since the pandemic and exceeded pre-pandemic data in 2022/23.

Moreover, the attainment gap in average complementary tariff points gained by leavers between SIMD 1-2 and SIMD 3-10 has been reduced by an average of 19.7% over the past five years.

Piloting the Scottish Government Affordable Childcare initiative

Poverty at any stage in life can lead to negative outcomes, including ill health and poorer educational attainment. The latest child poverty data shows the challenge faced in reducing local inequalities. It is estimated that the overall percentage of children living in relative poverty (after housing costs) in Inverclyde is 26.1% however, this varies greatly across Inverclyde, ranging from around 5% to more than 30%.

The Inverclyde Child Poverty Action Group (ICPAG) is a multi-agency collaborative that oversees developments in service provision relating to child poverty in Inverclyde. This person-centred approach to child poverty led to Inverclyde being one of only four authorities selected by the Scottish Government as an Early Adopter Community for Affordable Childcare to test ideas and share good practice around what works to support families most likely to be living in poverty with affordable out of school childcare.

The pilot service, which was co-designed with parents ran from January 2023 to June 2024, offers after-school childcare and holiday childcare services, primarily supporting lone-parent households. It also subsidises costs, for those that meet the criteria, of Breakfast Clubs delivered 5 days per week in the Port Glasgow primary schools. Assistance is also offered to the Scottish Childminding Association (SCMA) to recruit and upskill local childminders and to pay the cost of the childcare provision for the families who meet the criteria.



The service successfully supported over 40 children from 33 families over the course of the year. Impact information shows that families report that they feel supported, reassured and that it has reduced the stress of reliance on families for support with childcare. It has also enabled families to take on extra shifts without the worry of being available for school pick-up.

Delivery of Digital Skills classes at Inverclyde Libraries

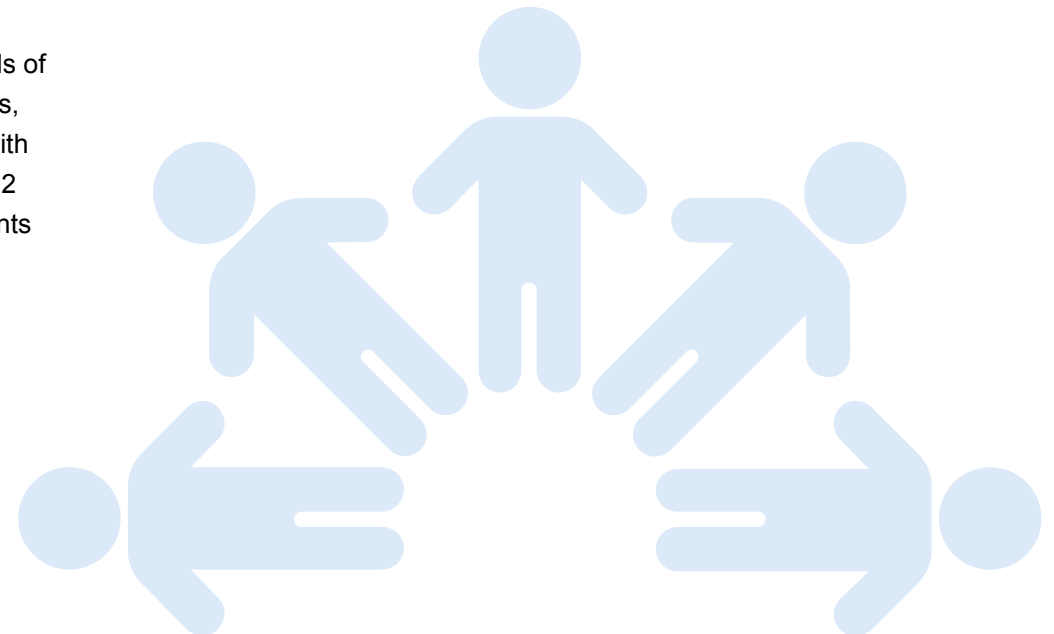
People who are most disadvantaged by their lack of access to services and are also more likely to experience a significant level of digital exclusion. In May 2023, building on the success of a previous project, the Libraries Service resumed its Digital Skills classes, which is a tailored Digital Inclusion outreach service provided to residents within Inverclyde's most deprived communities in Greenock East & Central and Port Glasgow.

On offer across five library branches were a range of classes for all levels of ability, ranging from those with little or no experience with digital activities, those with basic skills but wanting to learn more and classes for those with their own device who wished to build on existing skills for life. In total, 112 sessions were delivered, with 559 attendances recorded, helping residents to build, or enhance, their digital skills.

Support to develop numeracy skills

Additional support for adults to improve their core skills in numeracy was established during the year with the launch of the 'Multiply: Make Numbers Count' project in September 2023, funded from the Shared Prosperity initiative.

Whilst still at an early stage, a total of 80 adult learners had engaged with the project by the end of 2023/24, receiving support to boost their ability to use maths in their daily life, at home and work through the delivery of bespoke adult numeracy programmes. The Multiply project is due to run until March 2025.





Outcome 3: People are supported to improve their health and wellbeing

How did we support the delivery of this outcome in 2023/24?

Refocusing health priorities for Inverclyde

Improving the health and wellbeing of the residents of Inverclyde has been a long-standing priority for Inverclyde Council and HSCP. In recognition of the fact that Inverclyde's communities are in a different place due to the pandemic, a review of the Inverclyde HSCP strategic priorities was carried out during the year to ensure that there is a clear strategic focus on the right outcomes.

Central to the new three-year Strategic Commissioning Plan 2024/27 is a partnership plan, which reflects the close working relationship between the HSCP, the local third and independent sector partners and communities. It builds on the work of the Six Big Actions for Inverclyde to inform the delivery of health and social care services.

Going forward, the focus is on the delivery of four strategic priorities: (i) the provision of early help to respond to health and social care needs, (ii) improving local mental health and embedding recovery focused services (iii) supporting the development of stronger communities and (iv) strengthening the support that is provided to families and carers.

Progress in delivering these objectives will be reported to the IJB, the Strategic Planning Group and other relevant groups and agencies.

The new HSCP Strategic Commissioning Plan 2024/27 can be found here: <https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/strategies-policies-and-plans>

Implementation of an Active Living Strategy to reduce health inequalities

Physical activity and sport can play a key role in improving outcomes and tackling inequalities across many different aspects of lives. The Inverclyde Active Living Strategy provides a framework for partners to work together to increase participation in physical activity and in June 2023, the Inverclyde Alliance Board approved an Active Inverclyde Action Plan that sets out how the aspirations of the 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. It is structured around the four Active Inverclyde themes identified by partners which are integral to achieving a reduction in health inequalities and an increase in levels of physical activity: Active People, Active Communities, Active Partnerships and Active Environment.

The first year of implementing the action plan focused on laying the groundwork to ensure its successful delivery. This included strengthening the partnership to ensure the inclusion of the right people to work on the Plan and gaining a fuller understanding of resident activity levels. An eight-week public consultation was carried out, which received 1,086 responses and highlighted the need for more information to be publicly available regarding local activity. In response to this, the Active Inverclyde Working Group (AIWG) started work on the creation of a public portal for groups and organisations.

A logo for the strategy and programme/projects associated with an active



lifestyle has also been approved to support the wider promotion and marketing of the strategy. Once ready for launch, the AIWG plans to host community road shows within each locality to raise awareness so that groups and organisations are fully included.

Supporting positive mental health and wellbeing in our children and young people

The Action for Children Inverclyde Wellbeing Service (IWS), which is delivered by Action for Children in partnership with HSCP and Education Services, entered its fourth year in 2023/24, continuing to provide support to children and young people in Inverclyde. It promotes children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing and increased resilience through a range of therapeutic support, including targeted one-to-one counselling. As well as direct counselling support, Action for Children offer drop-in sessions, curriculum-based support groups for secondary school pupils as well as an innovative transition support programme for Primary 7 pupils as they move into S1.

Over the period July 2023 – June 2024, 203 new referrals were received by the service. More than 78% of referrals offered support were from secondary schools whilst less than 22% were from primary schools. **A total of 205 children and young people were offered access to counselling support during July 2023 – June 2024. The impact of the service has been highly positive with over 98% of children and young people that completed the sessions showing an improvement.**

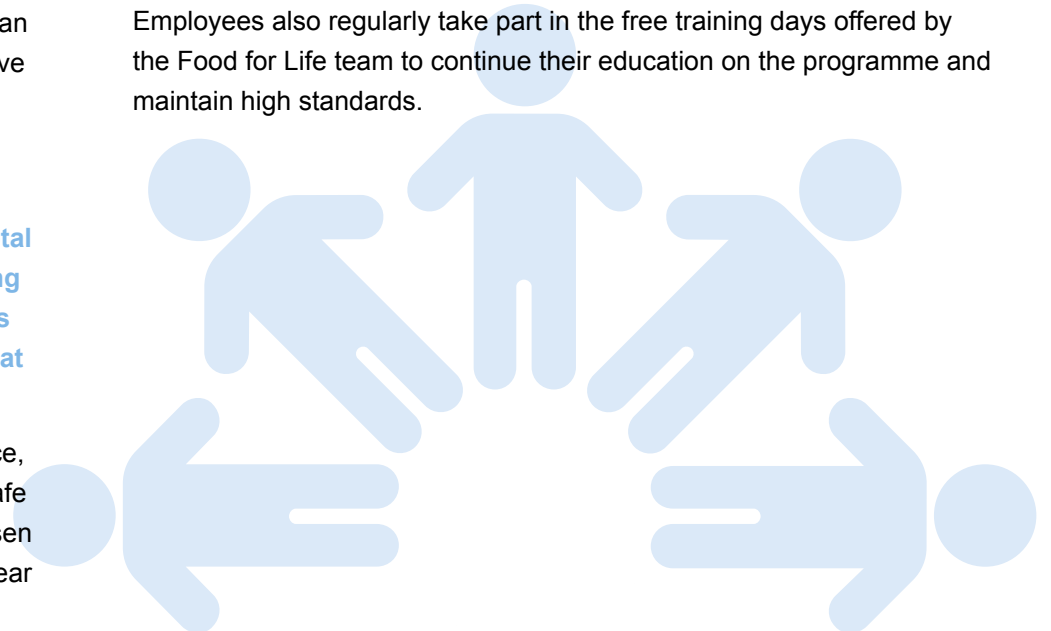
In addition to the Wellbeing Service, an online self-referral support service, Kooth, was introduced in April 2023 to provide a free, anonymous and safe mental health safe to young people aged 16 to 26. The service was chosen by the Council and HSCP for its out of hours provision and 365 days a year availability. A one-to-one text-based chat service also provides access to

experienced counsellors and wellbeing practitioners, 12noon-10pm during the week, and 6pm-10pm at the weekend. Impact information for the year is currently being collated.

Food for Life accreditation achieved for the sixth year

Inverclyde Council's catering team achieved the Food for Life Served Here Bronze award for the sixth year in a row. The Council serves around 5,000 nutritious, sustainable and locally sourced Food for Life meals every day in 20 primary schools and 19 nurseries. 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.

Employees also regularly take part in the free training days offered by the Food for Life team to continue their education on the programme and maintain high standards.





Outcome 4: More people will be in employment, with fair pay and conditions

How did we support the delivery of this outcome in 2023/24?

Delivering the Inverclyde Economic Regeneration Strategy 2021/25

The Inverclyde Economic Regeneration Strategy 2021/25 and supporting Action Plan were developed in consultation with the business community. The main ambition of the strategy is to create, attract and safeguard more and better jobs in Inverclyde, however in response to new developments it has grown to incorporate community benefits, community wealth building, a reduction in carbon / net zero whilst at the same time addressing the impact of Brexit, and COVID-19.

A wide range of Services are delivered under the umbrella of the Economic Strategy, including the Local Employability Partnership, the Inverclyde Parental Employment Programme and Modern Apprenticeship Programme:

Delivering Employability Services in partnership

The Inverclyde Local Employability Partnership (ILEP) is the strategic employability partnership for Inverclyde, which was established to support the effective implementation of relevant local and national policy. The partnership meets every eight weeks and reports to the Inverclyde Alliance via the 'Economy' Sub-Group.

The ILEP provide services that meet the needs of local residents, particularly those with barriers to employment and who require more support than others, such as the long term unemployed, lived experience of criminal justice, young people with no or limited work experience, those with a long term health condition, disability and learning disability and parents from the

six priority types known to be most at risk of poverty.

A 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. Partners review their core services and those available from other organisations annually, identifying gaps in provision or areas where further resources should be targeted.

In 2023/24, 565 residents started on their employability journey, in addition to clients already in receipt of services but who began prior to April 2023. Using 'No-One Left Behind' funding, services are procured to meet the needs of all client groups.

Support for parents to enter employment

Utilising money from the Scottish Government's 'No One Left Behind' (NOLB) workstream, boosted by Inverclyde Council funding to support as many residents as possible, a job creation programme called 'Inverclyde Parental Employment Programme' (I-PEP) for parents / kinship carers was designed and implemented in 2023/24.

Local third sector organisations and River Clyde Homes Group provided flexible employment opportunities for local parents/kinship carers who were unemployed or were looking to diversify their skills/experience and to gain employment that better suited their family responsibilities. **The Programme provided 26 one-year posts on the same terms and conditions as other employees in the organisation, paid at Real Living Wage, with weekly hours to suit each individual employee.**



The project has supported parents to overcome barriers, increase confidence and improve motivation to take action to gain employment, or progress within their current employment and increase family income. In addition to the employment, IPEP clients were also able to access wider Parental Employment Support (PES), which included better off in work calculations, training/learning opportunities, childcare and contributions to driving lessons.

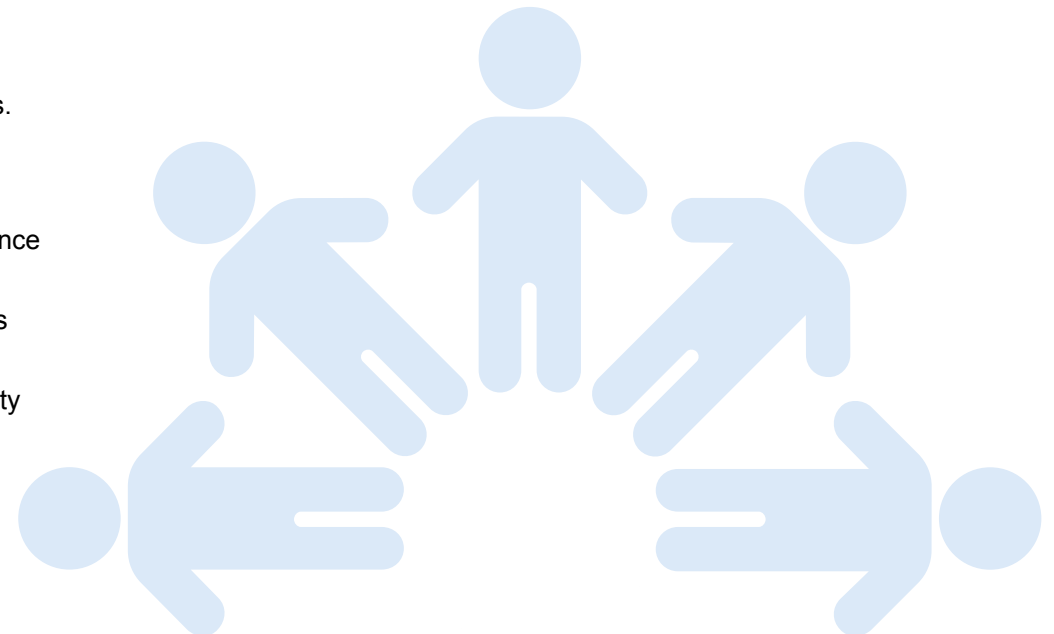
Apprenticeships for local people to deliver positive outcomes

As one of the largest employers in the area, Inverclyde Council seeks to provide opportunities in the workplace wherever possible. Building on the success of the established modern apprenticeship (MA) programme, 20 new apprenticeships were created in summer 2023 with the recruitment programme limited to only Inverclyde residents. Apprenticeships were offered across a wide age range, including opportunities for the over 25s.

Working alongside training providers and drawing on the extensive experience of Council employees across various departments, the programme combines a mix of work-based learning and college attendance / support. Additional on-the-job learning was added to the programme in 2023/24 through partnership working with local third sector organisations including Parklea Branching Out, Branchton Community Centre, Morton in the Community, Belville Community Gardens and Broomhill Community Hub.

Apprentices are employed in a wide range of roles including horticulture, roads maintenance, childcare, business administration, customer service, school technician, vehicle mechanic, stores, waste management and sports coaching. All study at SCQF Level 5, 6 or 7 as appropriate to the vocational route and the individual. As well as a formal apprentice qualification, additional training opportunities are also available, for example, childcare MA's undertake certification in childcare first aid and are given an awareness of some of the specific requirements of working with children with additional support needs.

The programme has a 93% positive destination rate, with 85% of MAs securing employment post programme (within or outwith the Council) and 8% progressing to further or higher education.





Outcome 5:

Our most vulnerable families and residents are safeguarded and supported

How did we support the delivery of this outcome in 2023/24?

Support for care experienced children and young people (I-Promise)

Inverclyde Council is a Corporate Parent to children who are looked after and is responsible for safeguarding their physical, mental and emotional wellbeing. As such, the Council is fully committed to involving our care experienced children and young people in decision making, with a promise that there will be nothing decided about them, without them.

I-Promise Inverclyde is leading on the delivery of the national initiative 'The Promise' at a local level. 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. **From this learning, a 'Language Matters' film was created to challenge depersonalisation of children and young people's experiences of care.** Guidance for the workforce, partner agencies and third sector organisations accompanied the film, which was launched at an event, attended by Clare Haughey MSP, then Minister for Children and Young People. This film was also delivered to all primary and secondary schools in Inverclyde.

Changes in practice have also been taken forward, include the 'Mind of My Own' app, supported by HSCP Transformation Board funding, to gather the views of children and young people who are looked after, with training for 99 staff and 'hug kits' developed by young people, for children moving to live in children's houses or with foster carers.

Ideas to Action: The Lens

Inverclyde HSCP collaborated with 'The Lens' to develop an 'Ideas to Action' Programme which supports the local vision to deliver 'The Promise'. The Lens is a social enterprise that aims to develop intrapreneurship (acting with the mind-set of an entrepreneur within your organisation to generate improvement and innovation) to create opportunities for change

Employees were encouraged to submit ideas that could improve the lives of children, young people and families. An initial twelve applications were submitted, with four selected to receive investment from the HSCP Transformation Board following an 'Investment Event' in December 2023 where shortlisted practitioners presented their ideas. **These four ideas have received a combined financial investment of more than £60,000:**

- **The Practice Pad** - To provide independent living skills to our young people at an earlier age and support them to practice living on their own in a safe, supported environment, before they take on a tenancy of their own.
- **Home from Home** - the creation of a home from home for relationships to thrive in an environment made for families.
- **Feel good fund** - Investing in young people in our children's houses by creating bespoke experiences for them, investing in staff and young people's relationships, equipment and activities.
- **Throughcare Hub** - A person-centred, flexible, and supportive environment for young people to learn new skills, gain qualifications and grown in confidence at their own pace.



Additionally, two ideas which did not seek financial investment will be included in the forthcoming redesign of children and families' services. All six ideas have the potential to improve the lives of children, young people, and families in Inverclyde. These ideas are now being supported towards implementation and will challenge existing systems and structures which will be taken forward into the redesign of children and families services, all with the aim of improving outcomes for local children, young people, and families.

Community Safety

Following a conscious decision to develop a new Community Safety Strategy separate to a Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy, both strategies were approved by the Inverclyde Alliance Board in June 2023. The decision to have these as stand-alone documents was to ensure that each had its own individual focus and objectives.

The key priorities within each Strategy were identified following a comprehensive strategic needs assessment which helped to identify the key issues for the area. All partners participated in setting the vision, strategic outcomes and potential partnership actions that would follow the strategy development.

After a Public Space, Activity and Women's Safety Survey highlighted that safe walking spaces were a concern, the Council successfully bid for UK Government funding to enhance the lighting in Battery Park, Gourock in a bid to make people feel safer during darker mornings and evenings. A further public consultation on the Battery Park, which took place during summer 2023, received more than 500 responses, with 90% of people agreeing that lighting the park would increase their perception of safety and they would use it more. Consequently, work started during 2023/24 to install 35 new LED lampposts in the area. This work is due for completion mid-2024.

Progress in the delivery of both strategies will be presented to the Alliance Board annually, with the first report due in the second half of 2024.

Delivering our commitment to raise trauma awareness

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.

The roll out of the National Trauma Transformation Programme began during the year. New Trauma champions were identified within the organisation and learning resources for employees, sourced from the National Trauma Transformation Programme, have been promoted through the Council's own training platform 'Inverclyde Learns'. These resources aim to support everyone in the workforce to know how to adapt the way in which we work to make a positive difference to anyone who has been impacted by trauma and adversity.

In addition, all Action for Children Inverclyde Wellbeing Service staff have completed online Trauma Skilled Practice modules and attended in-person Trauma Informed Training delivered by Inverclyde Trauma Informed Practice Lead Officer. Training and awareness raising will continue in 2024/25 to ensure that the organisational culture, workforce and services are trauma informed and responsive, and embody the principles of collaboration, choice, safety, empowerment and trust in all that we do.



Encouraging community kindness through the 'Warm Hand of Friendship'

In December 2023, Inverclyde Council awarded a total of £100,000 to local community groups and organisations to create warm spaces, food, companionship and entertainment during winter 2023/24. This was the second year of the 'Warm Hand of Friendship' initiative, and 52 local groups were successful in their applications for funding. The range of projects delivered included:

- The purchase of winter clothing/footwear for children; food hamper for elderly / housebound; assistance with heating costs.
- Provision of 'Soup and Blether' for the elderly.
- Social spaces for people to attend to take part in activities, socialise and keep warm and enjoy some food.
- Provision of a drop-in café for all ages during the winter months offering food and drinks.
- Parkinson's classes offering weekly activities for those affected, giving warm space and alleviating loneliness.
- Provision of zero cost family entertainment day.
- Waterproof clothing for all children to allow for more outdoor play.

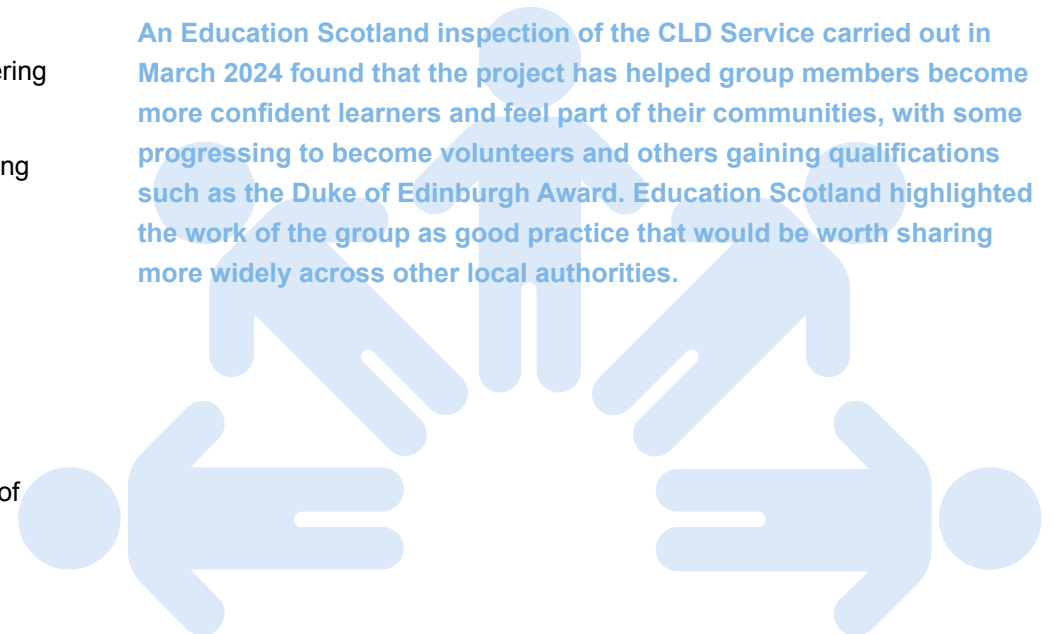
As well as Warm Hand of Friendship Grants, hundreds of 'Warm Boxes' were created over the winter, packed with useful items to help our most vulnerable keep comfortable throughout the cold winter days and nights. These essentials were distributed free to Inverclyde residents in receipt of Home Care support.

Supporting New to Scotland young people

The English as an Additional Language (EAL) group for young people grew in strength during the year and now supports young people aged from 12-17 from over 10 different countries, who meet in a dedicated EAL youth club night to improve their verbal skills, build confidence, promote wellbeing and reduce social isolation.

The project is being delivered by youth work staff from the Community Learning and Development (CLD) service working closely with secondary education staff to signpost New to Scotland young people attending school within Inverclyde. The young people have taken the lead in the creation, design and shaping the project such as creating posters and social media posts, translating into various languages, planning and setting up activities during the youth club.

An Education Scotland inspection of the CLD Service carried out in March 2024 found that the project has helped group members become more confident learners and feel part of their communities, with some progressing to become volunteers and others gaining qualifications such as the Duke of Edinburgh Award. Education Scotland highlighted the work of the group as good practice that would be worth sharing more widely across other local authorities.





THEME 1: PEOPLE KPI DASHBOARD

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	2021 /22	2022 /23	2023 /24	Target	Current Status	Annual change	5-year trend
1. The percentage of P1, P4 and P7 pupils (combined) achieving expected Curriculum for Excellence in literacy (LGBF)	73.7 %	76.4 %	Due Feb 2025	Match/ exceed our Family Group average (72.8%)	🟢	⬆️	⬆️
2. The percentage of P1, P4 and P7 pupils (combined) achieving expected Curriculum for Excellence in numeracy (LGBF)	80.2 %	83.3 %	Due Feb 2025	Match/ exceed our Family Group average (79.4%)	🟢	⬆️	⬆️
3. The percentage of pupils gaining 5+ awards at level 5 (LGBF)	69%	67%	Due Feb 2025	Match / exceed our Family Group average (61%)	🟢	⬇️	⬇️
4. The percentage of pupils from the 20% most deprived areas gaining 5+ awards at level 5 (LGBF)	58%	58%	Due Feb 2025	Match / exceed our Family Group average (51%)	🟢	➡️	⬆️
5. The percentage of children living in relative poverty (after housing costs)	24.4 %	26.1 %	Due July 2025	Decrease %	🔴	⬇️	⬇️
6. The percentage of school leavers participating in education, training or employment (taken over the year 1 April – 31 March) (LGBF)	93.8 %	94%	93.5 %	94.5%	🟡	⬇️	⬆️
7. The claimant count in Inverclyde as a percentage of 16–24-year-old population (LGBF)	6.4%	4.8%	4.7%	Match / lower than our Family Group average (4.5%)	🟡	⬆️	⬆️

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	2021 /22	2022 /23	2023 /24	Target	Current Status	Annual change	5-year trend
8. The claimant count in Inverclyde as a percentage of the working age population (LGBF)	5.3%	3.9%	3.6%	Match/ lower than our Family Group average (3.8%)	🟢	⬆️	⬆️
9. Percentage of clients waiting no longer than 3 weeks from referral to receive an appropriate drug or alcohol treatment that supports their recovery	82%	96%	98%	90%	🟢	⬆️	⬆️
10. Percentage of children issued with a new supervision requirement seen by a supervising officer within timescale	100 %	100 %	100 %	95%	🟢	➡️	➡️
11. Percentage of looked after children with a permanence plan within 6 months of being accommodated	18%	32%	11%	60%	🔴	⬇️	⬇️
12. Percentage of Child Protection review case conferences taking place within the first 3 months of registration (Based on 93 days = 6 months)	24%	50%	20%	80%	🔴	⬇️	⬇️
13. Number of clients with a self-directed support package (one option)	3,103	2,995	2,954		-	⬇️	⬇️
14. Average time (weeks) between presentation and completion of duty by the council for cases assessed as unintentionally homeless or unintentionally threatened by homelessness	21.9 weeks	24.9 weeks	23.3 weeks		-	⬆️	⬆️

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



Theme 2 PLACE

Why is this a priority?

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 6: Communities are thriving, growing and sustainable

How did we support the delivery of this outcome in 2023/24?

Supporting communities through the 'Inverclyde Cares' project

The need to be appreciated, respected and cared for is essential to positive well-being. The 'Inverclyde Cares' project, established in June 2020, built on 'Compassionate Inverclyde' to deliver a whole systems approach across businesses, organisations and neighbourhoods, building on the strength of Inverclyde's people and communities. Led by CVS Inverclyde, the local third sector partner, in collaboration between Inverclyde Council, the Inverclyde Health and Social Care Partnership and the Ardgowan Hospice, four workstreams were established, reflecting the feelings of loss caused by the pandemic and hope for the future:

Bereavement

The No-One Grieves Alone Programme builds on the Scotland Child and Adult Bereavement Charter to offer bereavement support across Inverclyde. As of September 2023, 12 organisations earned a Bereavement Charter Mark. In collaboration with the Culture Collective, the first No-One Grieves Alone Creative Arts event was held in May 2023.

Kindness

The Kindness Awards, first launched in July 2022, grew in strength with 193 Kindness Awards distributed across Inverclyde.

Remembering Together

The Remembering Together Initiative is a Scottish Government backed initiative which seeks to co-create memorials to honour the people we have

lost and preserve the best of what has been learned and created together during the Covid pandemic. Plans for a series of co-created labyrinths in five parks across Inverclyde were approved in early 2024 and will be progressed in 2024/25.

Challenging Stigma

The Challenge Stigma workstream brought together communities and professionals from all sectors to discuss how to address stigma in Inverclyde. This led to the development of the Language of Kindness, which prompts people to consider both what they want to say and how it will be received by others. In response to requests from the third sector and public sector partners, the Resilience Network developed a series of training modules, co-created with people with lived and living experience, service providers and strategic partners with the aim of increasing an understanding of stigma and to help people to challenge it.

The impact of 'Inverclyde Cares' was such that in May 2023, **representatives presented at the 23rd International Conference on Integrated Care in Belgium. An article entitled 'Inverclyde Cares: compassionate and resilience communities in the face of multiple disadvantage' also featured in the International Journey of Integrated Care in December 2023.**

The project's shared principles with the new Inverclyde Alliance Partnership Plan 2023/28, has resulted in Inverclyde Cares becoming a sub-group of the Inverclyde Alliance Board, whilst still retaining the core values and ethos that underpinned the inception of Inverclyde Cares.



Increasing community representation on Community Councils

The review of the Scheme for the Establishment for Community Councils in Inverclyde concluded in early 2024 with the result **that Inverclyde now has nine out of 11 Community Councils formed, including two new Community Councils and a 30% increase in the number of Community Councillors in Inverclyde.**

Maximum community involvement was encouraged as part of the election process. Publicity material and targeted promotion was carried out via social media and the local press. Two digital information sessions and four community drop-in sessions were hosted by the Community Learning and Development Service to allow community members to gain more information on the role of a Community Councillor and offer the opportunity to ask any questions.

Whilst it was not possible to establish a Community Council in two areas of Inverclyde due to insufficient nominations these areas will continue to be supported by the Community Learning and Development team to ensure that they have a platform to have their say and for their views to be represented.

Working with Community Planning Partners to deliver local priorities

Oversight of locality planning in Inverclyde is provided by the Inverclyde Alliance. Inverclyde is divided into six areas for the purposes of locality planning, with each having its own locality plan in place since 2020. Key successes include:

- Members of the public in Kilmacolm and Quarriers Village prioritising projects for the spend of £85,000 funding in their area.

- Port Glasgow Communication and Engagement Group working with the Community Council and GGCNHS to effect change in public transport to hospital appointment and the allocation of appointments.
- A new working group formed in Greenock's East End to deliver positive change on issues such as anti-social behaviour, improving the environment and public spaces.
- The Greenock South and Southwest Grieve Rd Committee has secured over £20,000 to fund events and activities for the local community.
- The Greenock West and Gourock Community Engagement Group (CEG) has provided support for the various warm spaces and sports hubs in the community and organised dementia-friendly training.
- In Inverkip and Wemyss Bay, the organisers of Kipfest have successfully hosted two events bringing the community together. In 2023, the group sought feedback from the wider community, encouraging more members to join the steering group.

The Inverclyde Alliance plans to further develop the locality planning model to support greater community engagement and empowerment. To support this, in March 2024 a new approach to community engagement was approved following development of new Locality Plans. This includes the establishment of an Inverclyde People's Network (IPN) in 2024/25 which will combine online and face-to-face engagement methods and be available for gauging community opinion within and across localities. A key feature is the "Community Conversation Week" which will be held in each locality annually to provide residents with a dedicated opportunity to participate in shaping their Locality Plan.

Progress in the roll out of the IPN and the delivery of refreshed Locality Plans will be monitored by the Alliance Board.



Expanding the local arts infrastructure through the Inverclyde Culture Collective

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 had been made in building and expanding the local arts infrastructure, and in developing and supporting an impactful creative approach. **Across the span of the Culture Collective period an estimated 2,456 participants engaged with Culture Collective activity across 791 organised sessions. In addition, an estimated 56 community partners were involved.**

Although the project has ended, lead partners continue to explore opportunities to support and resource continued activity. In addition, as active participants in the Inverclyde Cultural Partnership they will contribute to the development of a new Arts and Creativity Action Plan that will seek to capitalise on the success of the Culture Collective.

The full evaluation report is available on the Council's website, Culture and Heritage - Inverclyde Council

Support for new local peer group, Inverpride Network

Following a request from a member of the LGBTQ+ community for support to establish a local adult peer support group, the Community Learning and Development team, in partnership with the LGBTQ+ community, launched an online consultation to identify Inverclyde residents who would be interested in becoming involved. 22 LGBTQ+ community members expressed an interest which has led to the development of the 'Inverpride Network'. The Network is now fully constituted with a logo, office bearers, co-produced code of conduct and grievance process. It also independently plans and hosts its own meetings and links in with other local and national networks to support its activities.





Support to deliver the Community Food Growing Strategy

The Inverclyde Community Food Growing Strategy received Alliance Board approval in March 2023, with governance and accountability of the strategy provided by a new Food Growing Strategic Group.

A new initiative, 'Invergrow' was established to support the Inverclyde Food Network and to help implement the priorities in the Food Growing Strategy. The project, which is funded from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, encourages the development of area wide community gardening and food growing through support for community-based voluntary groups to develop growing spaces. Dedicated support, via a new Invergrow Project Officer, was created in November 2023 to increase the capacity of communities to grow their own food. As well as this, a dedicated fund was established offering community groups and organisations the opportunity to apply for a grant of between £1,000 and £6,000 to assist in the development of growing spaces across Inverclyde.

Details of the progress made across all the workstreams within the Food Growing Strategy in year one can be found in the Annual Report which is available here:

<https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/council-and-government/community-planning-partnership/local-food-growing-strategy>

Financial support for community groups

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 grant funding was used 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.





Outcome 7: Our strategic housing function is robust

How did we support the delivery of this outcome in 2023/24?

New Local Housing Strategy launched

A five-year Local Housing Strategy 2023/28, which was co-produced with local partners including the Inverclyde Health & Social Care Partnership, Registered Social Landlords and the third sector, was implemented by the Council in November 2023.

A Partnership Steering Group oversees the Strategy implementation with individual delivery groups, each chaired by a lead partner, responsible for delivering the four outcomes namely:

Outcome 1:

People in Inverclyde live in quality homes in connected communities.

Outcome 2:

People in Inverclyde find it easier to access and sustain a home.

Outcome 3:

People in Inverclyde are supported to live independently and well at home.

Outcome 4:

People in Inverclyde live in good quality, carbon friendly and energy efficient homes which reduce fuel poverty.

The first annual report on the progress that has been made in delivering the Local Housing Strategy action plan will be considered by the Environment & Regeneration Committee in October 2024.

Progressing a joined-up vision for housing

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 master planning approach helps to ensure that a joined-up vision for the area is articulated, taking a holistic view of a range of 'priority places' in Inverclyde, including Greenock Town Centre and central Port Glasgow. A central Greenock Regeneration Strategy, approved by the Environment and Regeneration Committee in August 2023, identifies five potential sites, each with its own level of challenge and achievability, which will inform Housing Led Regeneration in Greenock town centre going forward. The development of a regeneration masterplan for central Port Glasgow also began in 2023/24 and is expected to be complete by the end of 2024.





Outcome 8: Our economy and skills base are developed

How did we support the delivery of this outcome in 2023/24?

Developing Shared Prosperity Fund projects

The UK Shared Prosperity Fund is a £2.6 billion fund for local investment, with all areas of the UK receiving an allocation of funding. Inverclyde received a total allocation of £3,563,961 from the Fund.

In April 2023, approval was given for a series of investment projects, to be delivered over the period 2023/25, funded from Inverclyde's allocation of the £3.5 million Shared Prosperity Fund. In total, 23 initiatives were approved, 17 of which were core Shared Prosperity Fund projects and 6 Multiply Projects. As well as this, funding was allocated to three Glasgow City Region projects; Extend, Clyde Climate Forest and Multiply marketing within Inverclyde's funding allocation. Amongst the projects approved for implementation were:

- 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.

Implementation of the projects, which mainly started in quarters three and four 2023/24, is being delivered wholly, or alongside, partner organisations

including CVS Inverclyde, Parklea Branching Out and West College Scotland.

Securing external investment to support the local economy

In 2023/24 Inverclyde Council was successful in securing additional investment to support growth in the local economy and economic regeneration.

City Region Investment

As a member of the Glasgow City Region (GCR) group of local authorities, Inverclyde will benefit from the region's selection as one of only two Scottish locations identified as an Investment Zone, following an £80 million funding announcement in June 2023. This provides an opportunity to build on the work already delivered as part of the Inverclyde City Deal projects. The collation of formal proposals and projects that will be put forward for Government approval will take place in 2024/25.

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.



Following the award announcement, the first step was the establishment of a Town Board and working with Government officials to undertake the preparatory work to support the Board to engage, consult and establish a delivery programme. It is anticipated that the Town Board will oversee all arrangements for implementation of the Long-Term Plan for Towns Fund. The initial milestone for the Board, as set by UK Government, is to produce an initial 3-year delivery plan by August 2024.

Regenerating Greenock Town Centre

Following a successful Levelling Up funding bid which resulted in £19.39 million being awarded towards a transformative £21.57 million town centre regeneration project, preparatory work progressed between the Council and its partners and stakeholders.

The overall project objectives are to address over provision of retail capacity within Greenock town centre and to better facilitate all user connectivity with the aim of making the town centre more attractive, bring in new visitors, create new opportunities and make the town more accessible for residents and visitors. Updates on progress will be considered by the Environment and Regeneration Committee, with reports also submitted on a quarterly basis to the UK Government.

Delivering the City Deal Projects for Inverclyde

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. **Over 70 new jobs have been created by the project and in wider terms, it is expected to deliver a £26 million boost to the Scottish economy. 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 Inverkip City Deal project is an infrastructure project which seeks to unlock follow-on economic investment through the development of the vacant Inverkip Power Station. It is anticipated that the project will provide many benefits, including on-site jobs in new commercial and industrial space, outdoor community activity space, residential units and commercial and industrial floorspace.

Following approval of the Outline Business Case (OBC) for the Inverkip City Deal Project in November 2023, the focus shifted to developing the Final Business Case (FBC), which sets out the infrastructure improvements on the A78 to facilitate the development of the former Inverkip Power Station, which has been a vacant site since the mid-2000s. The FBC will be presented for approval to the Environment and Regeneration Committee in August 2024 and the City Deal Programme Management Office thereafter.

Inchgreen

The third element of Inverclyde's City Deal Projects is the **Inchgreen Marine Park project, which was completed in February 2024. Over £11m has been invested in a major upgrade of the facilities to help attract new tenants to the site.** The improvement works at the facility in Greenock were carried out over two years as part of a formal joint venture partnership between Peel Ports Clydeport and Inverclyde Council, funded through the Glasgow City Region City Deal. New utility connections, new roadways and the purchase of extra land to make the site more usable are among the developments completed.



Employability Support for residents and employers

The Wage Subsidy Programme continued in 2023/24 as part of the wider 'Inverclyde Works' initiative. The programme consisted of two strands (i) support for apprenticeships by providing a wage subsidy to companies in the area to employ apprentices and (ii) helping local employers to hire residents into fair work.

This support enabled organisations to add to their local workforce and provided them with the opportunity to plan for future recruitment needs.

100 local people were employed as apprentices in a range of sectors including manufacturing, childcare, engineering, hospitality, property management, health & beauty, finance, creative industry and construction.

In addition to the apprenticeships, 40 employers benefitted from the Programme, with 62 local people being employed across a wide range of sectors. Support with training costs was also provided.

Overall, the Wage Subsidy Programmes were well received by local employers and provided excellent opportunities to ensure that residents received first consideration for local jobs





Outcome 9: We have a sufficient supply of business premises

How did we support the delivery of this outcome in 2023/24?

Developing local businesses

A new and intensive business support programme, called the 'Inverclyde Business Growth Programme' was launched in February 2024. The eight-week programme, which was funded from the UK Government Shared Prosperity Fund, aimed to help grow the local economy, create jobs and support the community as part of the delivery of the local Economic Strategy.

Thirteen established small and medium sized Inverclyde companies participated in the programme, which was run on behalf of Inverclyde Council, by Inspirent, a leading not-for-profit business consultancy. The businesses that participated covered a wide range of industry sector from construction and childcare, to manufacturing and retail.

The support provided consisted of themed workshops led by expert consultants followed by individual one-to-one sessions with each business owner and consultant, to help them to apply the learnings into their own business. Themes covered in the programme included innovation, strategy, marketing and Net Zero/sustainability. The support was tailored to help local companies take the next step to develop their business, which in turn supports local jobs and helps to grow the local economy.

Supporting independent retailers

As well as the 'Inverclyde Business Growth Programme' the 'Inverclyde Independent Retailers Growth Programme' was launched at start of 2024 and delivered by Tickety Boo Training and associates, on behalf of Inverclyde Council.

The purpose of the programme was to create an opportunity for twelve independent retailers to collaborate with entrepreneurs to encourage and stimulate growth and provide a platform to connect, share, and learn from each other. This was delivered via five interactive in-person sessions as well as the flexibility to opt for on-site or online 1-2-1 sessions, all under the supervision of industry experts.

As well as practical help, financial support was also available on the successful completion of the programme, with participants able to apply for a grant to help them with implementing the business growth recommendations.





Financial support to encourage new business growth

Proposals for a range of business support interventions to boost the Inverclyde marketplace were developed during the year and received approval from the Environment and Regeneration Committee in March 2024. The new interventions will focus on:

- An Incubator 'Test the market' Space within Port Glasgow and Greenock town centre locations in which the Council will allocate a vacant shop premise, potentially a long-term vacant property. The intervention will offer support to businesses to 'test the market' with their business ideas for a period of 4 months each, supported by the Business Development Team. Cost will include rent, rates, small changes to the commercial property, marketing, temporary signage, and support for the business.
- An Export Grant discretionary fund which can provide an Exporting Grant to businesses that are trading in the area. The grant can be used to cover up to 100% of eligible costs (excluding VAT) of exporting activities up to a maximum contribution of £5,000.
- A Digital Assistance Grant to provide support for businesses to enhance their digital presence e.g. websites with a grant which would be 100% of eligible costs up to a maximum contribution of £2,500.
- Introduction of a Commercial Premises Start Up Grant of £2,000 for those setting up in commercial premises. The grant will be a contribution to the set-up costs for a business and would complement other grants offered e.g. Property Assistance Grant.
- An improved Enhance Start-up Grant offer from £500 to £750 for those not setting up in commercial premises.

- A Business: Employee Wellbeing Grant meeting 100% of costs up to a maximum contribution of £250 for wellbeing activities to support both the mental and physical health of staff.

Non-Domestic Rates Empty Property Relief Policy

With effect from 1 April 2023 local authorities were required to set their own policy for the rating and reliefs of unoccupied properties. This provided the opportunity to make changes to encourage owners to bring empty premises back into use, thereby supporting the aims of the Economic Strategy to strengthen the local economy, support existing businesses and encourage businesses to locate in Inverclyde.

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. To inform this, an NDR EPR Policy Consultation 2023 was conducted between September-October 2023 and 153 responses were received. The consultation responses showed an overall desire to reduce the number of unoccupied premises and agreement over the provision of incentives and support to encourage occupation of empty premises.

The final NRD EPR policy was approved by the Policy and Resources Committee on 6th February 2024 with an implementation date of 1st October 2024.



Outcome 10: Our natural environment is protected

How did we support the delivery of this outcome in 2023/24?

Delivery of our Net Zero Strategy

Inverclyde Council's Net Zero Strategy sets out a route map to achieving net zero direct greenhouse gas emissions by 2045. The primary focus is on 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. Progress across a wide spectrum was achieved in 2023/24, including:

- The Net Zero Strategy priorities are a golden thread across key strategic planning documents such as the Council Plan 2023/28 and Partnership Plan 2023/33.
- A collaborative Glasgow City Region study into funding models for the development of the Electric Vehicle network was conducted, whilst a new Ultra-Low Emissions Vehicle procurement programme phasing is now in place for the Council vehicle fleet.
- Energy efficiency improvements have been carried out, including improvements to the Greenock Town Hall and the Cornalees Visitor Centre.
- An e-Learning module on the Climate Emergency has been developed and will be launched and promoted to employees to raise awareness of the issue.
- A Primary Science Development Officer was appointed at the start of the school year with responsibility for sharing sustainable development practice from across Scotland on initiatives that are successful and to

support teachers in the classroom. Other school developments include kitchens no longer using single use plastic food packaging and cutlery and the introduction of a new ICT catering system to enable pre-ordering in all secondary schools with the aim of reducing food waste.

Progress reports on the delivery of the action plan are presented to the Environment and Regeneration Committee annually, with interim updates also provided to keep the Committee apprised of developments in key areas.

Improving the natural environment

In April 2023, Inverclyde Council agreed to become a signatory to the Clyde Climate Forest Concordat. The aim of the Clyde Climate Forest is to enable and co-ordinate an approach that will deliver a major increase in tree planting across the Glasgow City Region by 2032 as a response to the Climate Emergency. 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 2023/24, 11,760 natural species trees were planted across Inverclyde, with over 10,000 planted at the Coves Local Nature Reserve, which also saw the enhancement of the beauty spot with



the creation of new paths, improved access and habitats through the thinning of overgrown areas. The project was identified and undertaken through procuring the services of The Green Action Trust in an innovative approach to partnership working which goes beyond the Coves Local Nature Reserve initiative. Funding of over £200,000 was secured from the Scottish Government's Nature Restoration Fund.

Alongside this, projects to maximise carbon storage potential of land through peatland restoration and conservation were progressed following approval to deliver Peatland projects at Hardridge and Dowries farms. The Council was awarded £768,705 to carry out peatland restoration at Hardridge Farm from the NatureScot's Peatland Action Fund, whilst a £140,000 grant offer for Dowries, to deliver a one season /year project was also received.

At the end of the first year of the initiative, a reduction in carbon of approximately 279 tonnes CO2 was achieved. **Inverclyde Council is one of the first local authorities in Scotland to carry out peatland restoration on this scale, with this work being cited as an example of best practice by NatureScot.**

Developing a Strategy to improve energy efficiency

As part of its efforts to tackle climate change and fuel poverty, the Scottish Government introduced a statutory duty for all Local Authorities in Scotland to produce a Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy that sets out how the energy efficiency of buildings in the Local Authority area can be improved and how they can be heated using 'non-polluting' heating systems.

The Council appointed Turner and Townsend in August 2023 to complete the Inverclyde LHEES Strategy 2024 and accompanying Delivery Plan. A public consultation on the draft LHEES ran from March - April 2024 and following analysis of the feedback, the final strategy was published in April 2024. As well as being aligned to the Scottish Government national policies, the Strategy focuses on local priorities in Inverclyde: to maximise the potential for heat networks and addressing fuel poverty.

The Strategy will be delivered in partnership with stakeholders to enable the delivery of the LHEES to reach net zero and tackle fuel poverty, which will bring many benefits to the Inverclyde area, residents and businesses.

You can find the both the Inverclyde LHEES and the Delivery Plan here: <https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/planning-and-the-environment/local-heat-and-energy-efficiency-strategy>



THEME 2: PLACE KPI DASHBOARD

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	2021 /22	2022 /23	2023 /24	Target	Stat us	Ann ual change	5- year trend
1. The percentage of the population with an active Community Council	62.95 %	62.95 %	84.72 %	100%			
2. The percentage of the Citizens' Panel that are satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live	(2021) 86%	Biennial PI	(2023) 79%	Maintain %			
3. The number of adult learners supported by the CLD service that achieved a core skills qualification (SCQF levels 2 - 4)	149	126	143	150			
4. The number of community organisations involved in the Community Asset Transfer process	8	4	7		-		
5. Median earnings for employees living in the area (all full-time workers) (NOMIS)	£568.00	£633.80	£718.50	Match / exceed the Scottish average (£702)			
6. Number of employability clients supported by the Employability Service who gained a partial / full vocational qualification	363	326	457	400			
7. Number of unemployed people that progressed into employment from Council funded/operated employability programmes.	459	467	414	420			
8. Number of business gateway start up per 10,000 population (LGBF)	29.5	25.4	20.2	To match/ exceed our Family Group average (15.8)			
9. Number of Council funded business / property grant assists	16	10	13	16			
10. Number of sites in Inverclyde used for community food growing (2023/24 baseline year, first year of data)	Not measured	Not measured	8	-	-	-	-

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	2021 /22	2022 /23	2023 /24	Target	Stat us	Ann ual change	5- year trend
11. The percentage of household waste that is recycled (LGBF) (*Data is subject to SEPA verification)	48.5 %	47%	48%*	45%			
12. CO ₂ emissions area wide; emissions within scope of Local Authority per capita (in tonnes). (LGBF)	4.2t per capita	3.7t per capita	Due July 2025	4t per capita			
13. Tonnes of waste sent to landfill	2021 27,318t	2022 25,775t	2023 25,757t		-		

Stat us On or above target Below target, but within 5% tolerance 5% or more below target Data only PI, no target set
Tre nd Improving performance / got better Declining performance / got worse





Theme 2 PERFORMANCE

Why is this a priority?

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





Outcome 11: We are an ambitious Council, always striving to improve and develop

How did we support the delivery of this outcome in 2023/24?

Delivering innovative services

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.

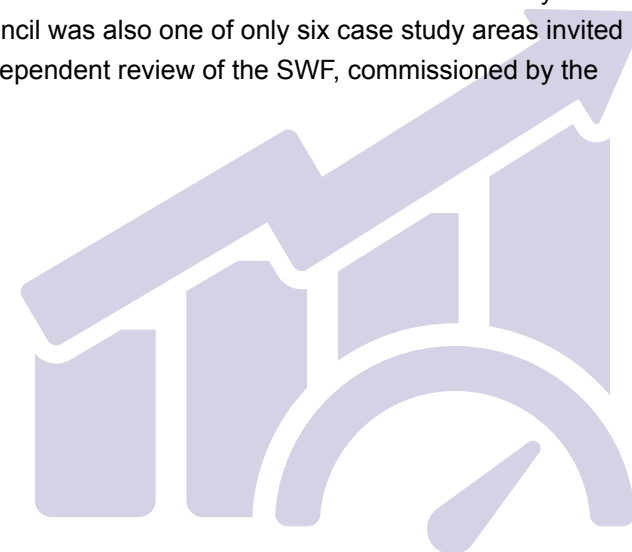
At the APSE Awards in September 2023, Inverclyde Council won the Best Workforce Initiative category for the delivery of the Workforce Refresh Programme. This was followed by success at the COSLA Awards 2023, also held in September, when Inverclyde Council was announced as the winner in the Strengthening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

The Homelessness Service was nominated for Scotland Housing Awards and 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. In addition to this the Service also 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.

Inverclyde Libraries Service was Highly Commended in the Library Service Excellence Award category at the Scottish Library and Information Council (SLIC) Awards 2023 in November 2023. The service was recognised for its efforts in delivering the Collective Force for Health and Wellbeing initiative, supporting individuals in communities across Inverclyde to access health literature; self-manage health concerns; and prevent ill health.

The Discretionary Payments Team was invited by the Improvement Service to participate in the testing of the Peer Collaborative Improvement approach, launched with the Scottish Welfare Fund (SWF). As part of the process, a new step was suggested by Inverclyde Council to conduct a self-assessment to compare our results with the results of the Council being supported (i.e. the host Council). The results were independently analysed by the Improvement Service which described them as 'very good'. Inverclyde Council was also one of only six case study areas invited to contribute to an independent review of the SWF, commissioned by the Scottish Government.





Delivering a balanced budget

An updated Financial Strategy 2023/33 was approved by Inverclyde Council in June 2023. The Strategy is refreshed 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. In February 2024, the Council approved a two-year budget, worth an overall £250million each year and a four-year capital budget of £72 million. The budget addressed an estimated funding gap of £12.5million over two years and helps to provide some short-term stability and a greater degree of certainty for both employees and residents.

Funding allocated within the budget included support for young people and families by making summer playschemes free to attend on a permanent basis and to pay the Real Living Wage to the Council's Modern Apprentices. Funding was also earmarked for universal free school meals for all primary school pupils, the only local authority in Scotland to do so.

Improving services through digital modernisation

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 managed by the Digital Modernisation Programme Board and chaired by the Chief Executive.

A development session, attended by front-line managers was held in partnership with the Improvement Service at the end of September 2023, with a view to identifying new areas for digital improvement. Projects that were progressed during the year include:

- **The implementation of a replacement Schools Catering System after the school Easter holiday.**
- **The procurement of a Service desk replacement was completed, and a new system under development.**
- **Approval for the implementation of Victoria Forms for Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rates and a stand-alone e-billing for Council Tax customers.**
- **The modernisation of the current Payroll and HR21 system to provide additional functionality.**

In a related workstream, work began on the integration of ICT Strategy with the Digital Strategy and the Customer Services Strategy to become a fully comprehensive Digital and Customer Service Strategy. This is due to be completed by November 2024.



Strengthening our performance management arrangements

Following a review of the strategic planning and performance management framework, a new Performance Management Framework was implemented in 2023/24. The framework clearly sets out the arrangements for the planning, delivery, review and improvement of what we aim to achieve, both as a Council and a community planning partner through the delivery of the Inverclyde Alliance Partnership Plan 2023/33 and the Inverclyde Council Plan 2023/28.

A new Self-Evaluation Framework was also developed and implemented alongside the Performance Management Framework. Together, they provide a robust structure to enable the Council to manage and improve as an organisation and ensure a cohesive approach to improvement that supports the delivery of the partnership and organisational priorities.

A review of the new arrangements is planned in 2024 to ensure that it is meeting the needs of the organisation, the management team and supports Councillors in their scrutiny role.

Quality assuring our procurement practice

Scotland Excel's Procurement & Commercial Improvement Programme (PCIP) is designed to support and encourage the continuous improvement of procurement and commercial practices.

Inverclyde Council signed up to the PCIP pilot working group and participated in a Procurement and Commercial Improvement Programme (PCIP) pilot assessment in November 2023. 11 areas of procurement practice were assessed as part of the PCIP assessment, 5 were graded as 'developing' and 6 as 'improving'. The audit supports the Council's own continuous improvement in procurement practice to ensure that value for money continues to be achieved.





Outcome 12: Our employees are supported and developed

How did we support the delivery of this outcome in 2023/24?

Setting the strategic direction for workforce planning

The People and Organisational Development (POD) Strategy seeks to ensure that the Council can continue to deliver its core objectives with an engaged and motivated workforce in a climate of financial and resource constraints, alongside increased service delivery demands. As well as recognising that a strong workforce is integral to delivering the Council Plan 2023/28 aspirations, it has a particular focus on the outcomes of “High quality and innovative services are provided, giving value for money” and “Our employees are supported and developed”.

As the POD 2020/23 reached the end of its lifespan, a new POD 2024/27 was developed in consultation with key stakeholders and approved by the Policy and Resources Committee on 26th March 2024. The new Strategy sets out several key workforce and organisational development priorities across the themes of Organisational Development; Employee Skills Development, Leadership, Succession Planning; Employer of Choice and Fairness & Equality.

The Council’s Workforce Planning & Development group will contribute to the development and monitoring of the key components and actions of the plan. It will ensure greater awareness of specific initiatives and plans and inform policy development.

Developing the leadership skills of our employees

The Council introduced an updated Leadership Programme in 2023 with the aim of providing a pragmatic hands-on approach to leadership development and reconnect teams across the council after the COVID pandemic. The programme covered:

- Leading in a hybrid world,
- managing people,
- getting the culture of leadership right,
- leading in a political and public service environment,
- managing change, and
- using self-evaluation to bring about improvement.

An evaluation showed that the programme was rated highly by those that participated, welcoming the opportunity to network as well as finding the content useful. It also provided valuable feedback from participants on further training or development needs that would be found helpful, such as equalities assessments and development of mentoring programmes.

The intention is to run a programme of this nature at least once every two to three years.



Developing employee potential

It is widely recognised that mentoring can deliver significant learning and development benefits and support employees to fulfil their potential. It enables mentees to develop their knowledge, skills, and mind-set, gain practical insights and constructive challenge whilst mentors will benefit from passing on their knowledge, expertise, experience and develop their own leadership skills.

In January 2024, the Council launched the Inverclyde Mentoring Programme, which built upon a previous cross-organisational Mentoring Programme that the Council carried out in 2018/19. **A total of 22 employees signed up to the Mentoring Programme**, which will continue into 2024/25. The overall aim of the Programme is to increase employee satisfaction, leading to better staff retention in management positions as well as improved leadership skills. The impact of the programme and its success in meeting these aims will be evaluated upon completion.

New initiative to reduce workforce pressures

Increasing workforce challenges, including national skill shortages in critical service areas such as Health and Social Care, are putting all Councils in Scotland under continued pressure. These challenges have been exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic.

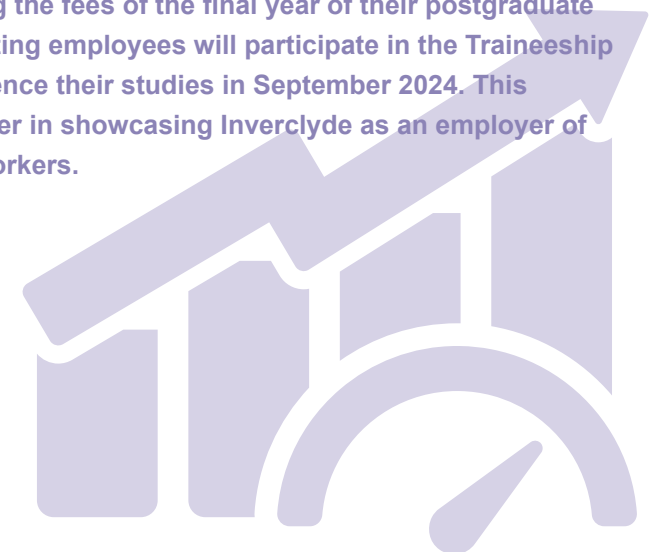
The HSCP Workforce Plan 2022/25 identified specific issues around the recruitment, support, and retention of staff in the health and social care sector. Reducing the turnover of Qualified Social Workers was identified as a priority to ensure the continuation of support to the most vulnerable members of our community. To tackle this, an innovative project was developed with the aim of 'futureproofing' the service by combating the

core challenges around recruiting, supporting and retaining Qualified Social Workers. The focus of the initiative was:

- to provide support during the first year of practice for newly qualified Social Workers.
- to provide financial incentives for final year MSc Social Work students, with the aim of promoting Inverclyde as an employer of choice.
- to implement our fully funded and supported pathways for existing para-professional staff to enable them to obtain a professional social work qualification.

It also provides a foundation to meet local and national priorities, for example the delivery of our obligations around The Promise which aims to ensure that care-experienced children and young people in Scotland will grow up loved, safe and respected.

The year one results proved very positive, six Social Workers were supported by paying the fees of the final year of their postgraduate course; and 12 existing employees will participate in the Traineeship Scheme and commence their studies in September 2024. This represents a key offer in showcasing Inverclyde as an employer of choice for Social Workers.





Supporting workplace equality

Inverclyde Council made a pledge in August 2022 to take part in a range of activities and develop policies and practice towards becoming an Equally Safe at Work accredited employer. 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, over a period of 16 months Inverclyde Council put significant effort into collecting and analysing data, reviewing and updating policies, practices and resources.

In December 2023, the Council was awarded bronze accreditation for Equally Safe at Work, in recognition that it is committed to advancing gender equality and preventing violence against women, which affects all aspects of women's lives, including the workplace.

In March 2024, the Council also successfully completed the assessment to retain its membership of the Disability Confident Scheme (DCS). The scheme aims to challenge attitudes, remove barriers and improve opportunities for disabled people and those with long-term health conditions. By maintaining its involvement with the DCS at 'Leader' level, the Council has been recognised for acting as a champion within the Inverclyde business and local communities.

Building positive relationships in the workplace

A new appraisal process for employees, 'Positive Conversations' was introduced in September 2023. The ethos of the innovative approach is to actively facilitate relationship development, build motivation and engagement and creating value for employees. It replaced a formal appraisal process which took place annually, shifting the focus to managers and their teams having regular discussions on work related goals, performance, feedback, wellbeing, and development needs. The purpose of the conversations is to enable meaningful conversations with an aim of building relationships and securing continuous improvement.





THEME 3: PERFORMANCE KPI DASHBOARD

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	2021 /22	2022 /23	2023 /24	Target	Sta tus	Ann ual cha nge	5- year tren d
1. Proportion of adults satisfied with refuse collection (LGBF) (data is presented as a rolling 3-year average)	2018/21 88.4 %	2019/22 92.3 %	2020/23 91.3 %	To match/exceed Family Group (82.7%)	✓	↓	↑
2. Proportion of adults satisfied with leisure facilities (LGBF) (data is presented as a rolling 3-year average)	2018/21 77.8 %	2019/22 77%	2020/23 75.7 %	To match/exceed Family Group (65.3%)	✓	↓	↓
3. Proportion of adults satisfied with parks and open spaces (LGBF) (data is presented as a rolling 3-year average)	2018/21 86%	2019/22 87%	2020/23 88.3 %	To match/exceed Family Group (87.6%)	✓	↑	↑
4. Proportion of adults satisfied with libraries (LGBF) (data is presented as a rolling 3-year average)	2018/21 76.5 %	2019/22 74.3 %	2020/23 70%	To match/exceed Family Group (64.5%)	✓	↓	↓
5. The total number of days lost due to sickness absence (employee full time equivalent)	8.3 days	11.1 days	11.3 days	9 days	●	↓	↓
6. The employee gender pay gap (LGBF)	6.6%	4.38 %	4.16 %	4.2%	✓	↑	↑
7. The percentage of Council Tax collected in the year (LGBF)	95.5 %	95.9 %	94.7 %	95%	⚠	↓	↓
8. The percentage of invoices that were paid within 30 days (LGBF)	95.5 %	96.15 %	96.08 %	95.5%	✓	↓	↓
9. The percentage of customer transactions made via the Customer Services Centre portal that are digital	2021 66%	2022 71%	2023 67%	75%	●	↓	↑
10. The percentage of housing benefit cases where the calculation of benefit due was accurate	100 %	100 %	100 %	99%	✓	-	↑

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	2021 /22	2022 /23	2023 /24	Target	Sta tus	Ann ual cha nge	5- year tren d
11. The percentage of category 1 pothole repairs made safe within 24 hours of identification	100 %	91.7 %	100 %	92%	✓	↑	↑
12. The percentage of all planning applications decided in under 2 months	66%	38.6 %	49%	80%	●	↑	↓
13. The percentage of the Inverclyde road network that requires maintenance	32.7 %	31.2 %	33.2 %	32%	⚠	↓	↑
14. Number of complaints received (per 1,000 population)	4.1	4	3.73	4	✓	↑	↑

Stat us
 ✓ On or above target
 ⚠ Below target, but within 5% tolerance
 ● 5% or more below target
 📊 Data only PI, no target set

Tre nd
 ↑ Improving performance / got better
 ↓ Declining performance / got worse



Contact us

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Write to Corporate Policy and
Performance Team

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