
NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

23rd January 2024

Cabinet

Title:	Council Plan Mid-Year Progress Report 2023-24
Purpose:	To consider and approve the Council Plan Mid-Year Progress Report 2023-24.
Recommendation:	Cabinet agrees: (i) To approve the Council Plan Mid-Year Progress Report 2023-24 attached at Appendix 1; (ii) To refer the Council Plan Mid-Year Report 2023-24 to the Audit and Scrutiny Committee for consideration.

1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 [Our Council Plan 2023-28](#) is the overarching strategy of our Council and details our Council's strategic priorities. We have a statutory duty to publish information that enables effective scrutiny of our performance.
- 1.2 This report presents the progress made in delivering our new Council Plan 2023-28 as at Mid-Year 2023/24 (30th September 2023). The approach and layout have been refreshed to reflect our new Council Plan as well as the results of our Best Value Thematic Audit. Following Cabinet approval, our corporate performance reports are published on our website www.north-ayrshire.gov.uk/performance.

2 Background

- 2.1 Under the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1992 and Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 we have a duty to demonstrate Best Value. To ensure we support our residents, fulfil our statutory duties and invite scrutiny, we actively manage performance and develop our reporting to make it accessible and engaging.
- 2.2 Our new Council Plan 2023-28 was approved by Council in June 2023 with the Performance Management Framework (PMF) approved in August 2023. Targets were set for 2023/24, however due to the timing of the PMF development, mid-year targets were not set for all indicators (it would not have been best practice to set targets so close to the mid-year point). This has been mitigated by including a review of progress within the report, comparing performance to year end targets.

- 2.3 In parallel to the approval of Our Council Plan, we undertook our Best Value Thematic Audit focusing on “Leadership of the development of new local strategic priorities”. The outcomes of this Audit were extremely positive stating we have a culture of continuous improvement.
- 2.4 In addition, some areas could be improved further such as how we report on audits, inspections and self-assessment activity. This has been reflected in our new report at Appendix 1, with the ‘Best In Class’ section of previous reports refocused towards existing and completed audits, inspections and accreditations – linking to the published reports where available. This approach was discussed with our External Auditors during the Best Value Thematic Audit, primarily as it meant that context (such as reasons for and next steps) rather than purely a list of audits would be available for our residents to scrutinise.
- 2.5 The use of the Inclusive Growth Dashboard was included in our report to Council in June and is highlighted in the Best Value Thematic report. This tool provides a contextual overview of North Ayrshire, is currently being reviewed and will be available in 2024/25 for use within our reporting. However contextual indicators as outlined in our PMF are included in the report.

3 Assessment of Performance

- 3.1 The development of Our Council Plan leaned towards evolution rather than revolution. As a result, many areas are continuing to progress well from the previous Council Plan and are detailed within the body of the report.
- 3.2 There are 47 actions within Our Council Plan, with one reported directly through the HSCP and therefore excluded from this report. The remaining 46 actions are all on target at mid-year.
- 3.3 There are 26 performance indicators within our framework. At mid-year, the status of 16 PIs were either unknown or data only, seven were on target and three were slightly adrift of target (amber). The status of the three indicators slightly adrift of target (amber) were included in our previous Council Plan and scrutinised at year end.
- 3.4 Though not all mid-year targets were available this period, our annual targets give confidence that performance is on schedule, with some areas such as the number of unemployed people progressing into employment already exceeding their annual target at mid-year (652 against a target of 450). Our Street Cleanliness score shows we have performed better than expected at 90.1% against a target of 87%. Participatory Budgeting is currently showing 2.06% of our Council budget to date, ahead of the 1.5% target for Quarter two and year end.
- 3.5 Other areas include the number of empty properties brought back into use and number of new build properties (all tenures) which are progressing at over 50% of target at mid-year, though these may be subject to seasonal fluctuations later in the year.

3.6 Key Highlights

- Our Council Plan 2023-28 was developed with our communities and approved in June.
- We established our Financial Inclusion Partnership to increase access to financial advice and support for our residents.
- Our £198,377 participatory budgeting grants programme was launched for 2023/24.
- 6,529 adults took part in adult learning and capacity building activities.
- Our Regeneration Development Plan's action programme 2023-25 was approved by Cabinet and includes £4million of funding.
- Several significant Ayrshire Growth Deal milestones were reached, including contractor appointments at the Ardrossan Coastal Quarter site of Ardrossan Campus, breaking ground on i3 in Irvine and further progress on the delivery of Irvine Harbourside.
- We launched a £350k Community Net Zero Carbon Fund, enabling local community groups to bid for funding to help with feasibility and/or installation of renewable energy technologies on land or buildings they own.
- Over 100 tonnes of furniture and mattresses were collected to encourage the reuse of items through our bulky waste partner.

3.7 Key Next Steps

- We will meet with the Improvement Service to push forward our data sharing work following the outcome of our Scottish Government Child Poverty Practice Accelerator Fund and Cash First Fund application.
- We will continue drafting our new Community Wealth Building strategy following consideration by the Policy Advisory Panel and Cabinet.
- We will present a paper on treating Care Experienced as a protected characteristic to Council in December.
- We will continue the development of the Participation Strategy and new Community Planning Partnership website and Community Directory.
- We will continue to plan for our 2024 Community Planning Conference, which will focus on Democracy Matters Phase 2.
- We will publish our new 'Sustainable North Ayrshire' and Energy Efficiency Strategies.
- We will progress to construction stage for our new solar farm projects.
- We will launch new energy efficiency measures offer as part of our Energy Smart programme.
- We will progress the procurement exercise for the new Ayrshire Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure project.
- We will progress with our fleet decarbonisation route map, including exploration of a hydrogen production feasibility study.
- We will continue the construction of the North Crescent Coastal Path Phase 1, Ardrossan.

- We will review and implement any actions following our Best Value report due to be published in November.
- We will support our External Auditors in the audit of the next Best Value Thematic Approach early in 2024, focussing on workforce innovation.
- We will continue to engage with the Island Plan Delivery and Steering Groups to shape the annual action plans for the Island Plans.

4 Proposals

- 4.1 Cabinet agrees: (i) To approve the Council Plan Mid-Year Progress Report 2023-24 attached at Appendix 1; (ii) To refer the Council Plan Mid-Year Report 2023-24 to the Audit and Scrutiny Committee for consideration.

5 Implications/Socio-economic Duty

Financial

- 5.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Human Resources

- 5.2 There are no human resource implications arising from this report.

Legal

- 5.3 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

Equality/Socio-economic

- 5.4 There are no equality/socio-economic implications arising from this report.

Climate Change and Carbon

- 5.5 There are no climate change and carbon implications arising from this report.

Key Priorities

- 5.6 The Mid-Year Progress Report enables the effective scrutiny of the delivery of our Council Plan strategic priorities.

Community Wealth Building

- 5.7 There are no Community Wealth Building implications arising from this report.

Consultation

- 5.8 The Executive Leadership Team (ELT) reviewed and scrutinised the report prior to submission to Cabinet.

Aileen Craig
Head of Service (Democratic)

For further information please contact **Isla Hardy, Team Manager (Corporate Policy and Performance)**, on 01294 324035 or email IslaHardy@north-ayrshire.gov.uk.



Our Council Plan

Mid-Year Progress Report 2023-24



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Our Performance at a Glance

We established our **Financial Inclusion Partnership** to increase access to financial advice and support for residents.

Council approved Our **Council Plan 2023-28**, developed with our communities. Focus now moves to delivery of this contract with our residents.

1,300 residents participated in 'Take Time on the Road' roadshows focussing on mental health and wellbeing.

Our **£198,377** participatory budgeting grants programme launched for 2023/24.

11,000 young people accessed holiday meals provisions during the summer holidays.

6,529 adults took part in adult learning and capacity building activities between April and September.

Community Transport Pathfinder approved to explore transport needs in our communities.

Our Regeneration Development Plan's action programme 2023-25 was approved by Cabinet and includes **£4m** of funding

28 Community Wishes have been delivered, linking the needs of communities to our contracted businesses. **61** have been granted since launch in October 2021.

We launched a **£350k Community Net Zero Carbon Fund**, enabling local community groups to bid for funding to help with feasibility and/or installation of renewable energy technologies on land or buildings they own.

Over **100 tonnes of furniture and mattresses** collected to encourage the reuse of items through our bulky waste partner.

Several significant **Ayrshire Growth Deal milestones reached** including contractor appointments, breaking ground on i3 and a move towards the delivery of Irvine Harbourside.

Welcome

Welcome to our first Mid-Year Progress Report on [Our Council Plan 2023-28](#). Our Council Plan was approved by Council in June 2023. Our vision remains **‘A North Ayrshire that is fair for all’**, and our mission is **‘Working together to improve the lives of our people in North Ayrshire’**. We worked with our communities to create our plan and identify our four priorities. We view Our Council Plan as our contract with our communities, ‘our’ plan. It is more than a document, it is an active commitment to support our residents and deliver on our joint priorities.

Our four priorities are Wellbeing, Communities and Local Democracy, Climate Change and A Sustainable Council. All of these four areas are interlinked and interdependent - they do not sit in isolation as the progress of each priority directly impacts the other three areas.

Challenges for our residents and communities persist due to the cost of living crisis and supporting our residents is a significant role within our new Council Plan. For example, through our Child Poverty and Cost of Living Board, we are exploring different ways in which we can use information to identify and address need in our communities. Our colleagues in the Third and Voluntary sector continue to work alongside us.

As part of our ambition to achieve net-zero by 2030 we continue to work with our communities across a variety of projects. This includes providing educational opportunities such as the STEM trail at Eglinton Park and supporting the various volunteer groups who give their time to help protect the environment.

Our communities drive the work that we do and as such, lived experience is a crucial element to our decision-making process. This can be seen through our work in implementing the Ten-Year Island Plans for Arran and Cumbrae. This will prove crucial in forming the annual action plans for the islands.

Everything we do is achieved in the context of our environment. Moving forward we will demonstrate this through our ‘Inclusive Growth Dashboard’ which gives an overview of the status of North Ayrshire. This tool is currently being refreshed and will be available in 2024/25. As an overview, our key contextual indicators are shown below:

Population of North
Ayrshire:
134,220 (June 2021)

29% of our children live in
poverty after housing costs
(2021/22)

28% of our households live
in fuel poverty (2021/22)

72.1% of working age
population are in
employment (as at June
2023)

11.7% of people earn less
than the living wage
(2021/22)

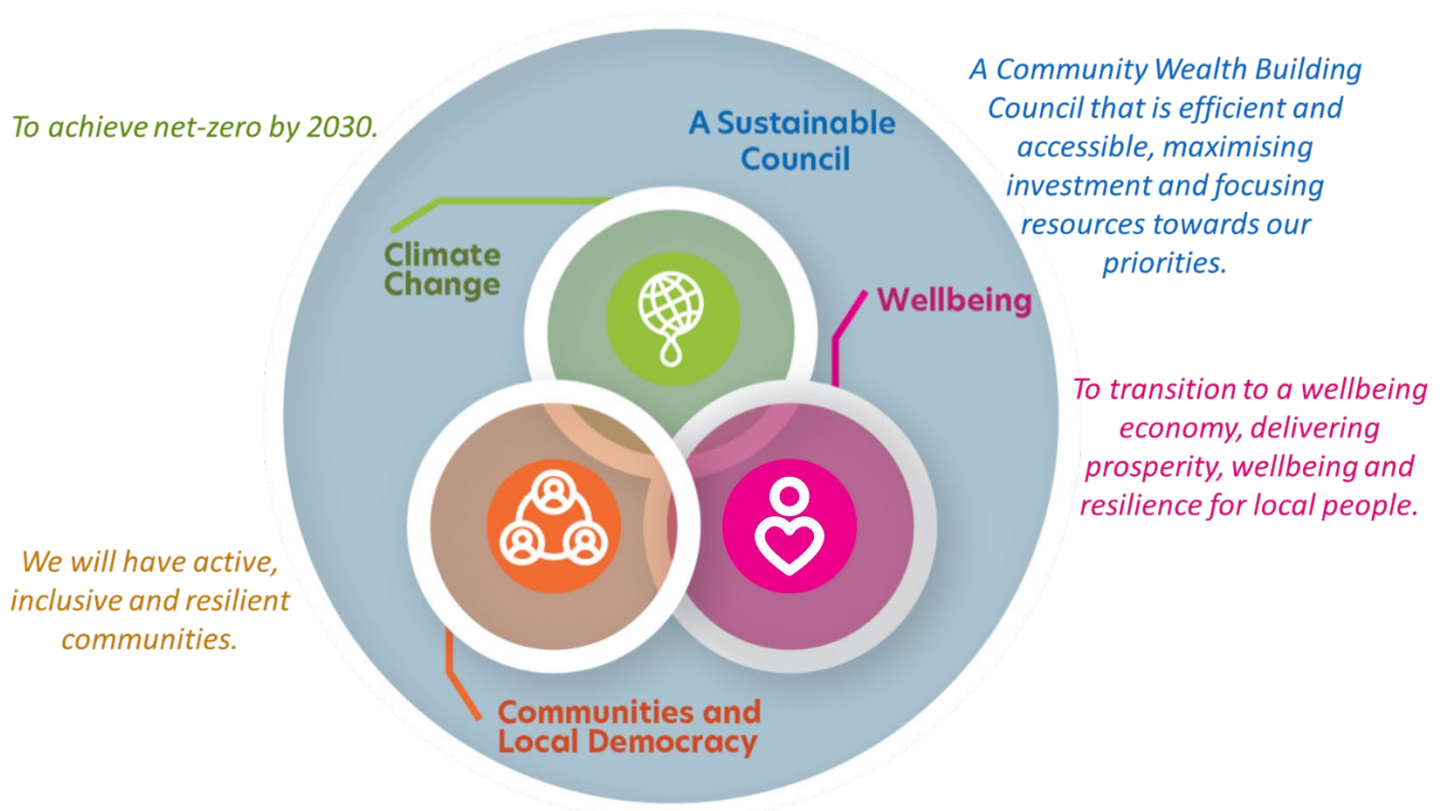
Area wide CO2 emissions are
5.43kt CO2e

Together we will create a North Ayrshire that is fair for all.

Our Priorities

Our Vision – A North Ayrshire that is fair for all.

Our Mission – Working together to improve the lives of our people in North Ayrshire.



Wellbeing

Key Activities

Cost of Living

We are working alongside our residents to identify the areas that will make the greatest impact when supporting them financially. The Financial Inclusion Partnership, established in May, will improve promotion of and access to advice services for our residents. We are implementing a new case management system. This will enable us to see the journey of each of our residents to provide joined up support to meet their needs.

To ensure residents are supported with help around energy costs and health and wellbeing services, we have referral pathways established between North Ayrshire Welfare Rights and Debt Advice Services and a number of other services/agencies including CHAP, Housing and Employability Services, and Citrus Energy (Lemon Aid).

Our Child Poverty and Cost of Living Board has applied for funding from the Scottish Government Child Poverty Practice Accelerator Fund and Cash First Fund. If approved this will fund a small team within our Transformation Team to accelerate progress on our 'No Wrong Door' initiative including our Single Shared Assessment initiative, which would help identify the support a resident and their family is entitled to more quickly.

Full details of financial support we have provided can be found in our [six monthly Cost of Living report](#).

Lifelong Learning Opportunities

6,529 adults took part in adult learning and capacity building activities between April and September. This included 241 New Scots adults who engaged in learning opportunities supporting their language and resettlement needs over the summer. Some of the activities included language cafes,

volunteering opportunities and speaking clubs.

We are delivering the Discovery Award. This helps people 50 or over to adopt an active and healthy lifestyle by offering challenges to both stimulate and motivate.

The "Multiply Project" funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund has now officially launched in North Ayrshire. This project aims to boost people's ability to use maths in their daily life, at home and work, targeting learners who are 19+ that have not previously attained a Level 2 SCQF, Level 5 or Higher Maths qualification.

In the Garnock Valley, the North Ayrshire Digital Network, is working in partnership with the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO), to deliver a Place-based Digital Inclusion Project. Place-based digital inclusion builds sustainable solutions to digital exclusion which take into consideration the assets, and needs, for a specific place. Action is co-ordinated through strong and trusted partnerships and informed by regular communication with those who live there.

Mental Health & Wellbeing

During the summer over 1,300 residents took part in the 'Take Time on the Road' roadshow, focusing on mental health and wellbeing. Attendees took part in gaming activities, wellbeing workshops, yoga and a 'Therapy' Petting Zone. Mental health and wellbeing is a key focus in all of our youth voice, children's rights and youth work programmes. All our programmes are fully inclusive for all young people and we specifically support Additional Support Needs (ASN), Mental Health & Wellbeing, LGBT and New Scots, focussing on tackling inequalities and reducing barriers to participation.



Our 'Drama for Wellbeing' programme took place during the school holidays. The programme saw primary school pupils working on mini plays while learning about mindfulness and wellbeing. Senior secondary school pupils developed their stage presence and delivery, presenting their own thought-provoking play focused on the pressures of modern teenage life. This ended with a live performance at the Harbour Arts Centre.

The Active Schools team has offered a wide variety of extra-curricular opportunities on offer to all primary, secondary and ASN establishments. The work of the Active Schools and Communities Partnership Officers has focussed on care experienced young people and New Scots. The Active Schools Team has further enhanced leadership opportunities to widen achievement by introducing a new pathway in partnership with KA Leisure and Ayrshire College. The sole focus is the National Progression Award (NPA) Fitness Course at Level 6.

Over 11,000 young people accessed holiday meals provisions over the 2023 summer holiday period.

The 2023/24 round of our Participatory Budgeting grants programme offers four separate funds for communities to make a spending decision. These are 'Arts & Culture', 'Locality', 'Youth and UK Shared Prosperity Communities' and 'Place'. A total of £198,377 is available to local organisations. Full details of the projects behind the applications can be found [here](#).

We launched our Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Trail at Eglinton Country Park to help children discover and understand STEM concepts using the outdoor environment as a stimulus.

Our North Ayrshire Wellbeing Alliance builds on extensive existing work to develop the Wellbeing priority from the [Community Plan](#). The work aims to tackle health inequalities by co-locating services, delivering preventative activities and strengthening the relationship between health and leisure. In order to progress and develop our Wellbeing Alliance, KA Leisure has been hosting a series of workshops and working group meetings. Through this work, a project has been developed in the Garnock Valley to respond to an identified need around engaging hard to reach young people.



Public Spaces

Our play facilities programme of investment continues to progress. Building on the coastal park installations last year the focus has now moved to inland facilities with 14 facilities upgraded since June. Officers attend the Scottish Government Play Facilities Working Group. Attending this group gives the service confidence that play facility upgrades within North Ayrshire are progressing well.

We are continuing to make play accessible for all children by installing communication boards in parks. The boards make a big difference to youngsters with neurodivergent conditions – including autism, dyslexia and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) - by giving them images, symbols and patterns to help them express themselves and communicate. They have been installed at seven key parks and further rollout is being considered.

This investment programme provides great facilities for families and visitors and helps deliver facilities that are more inclusive and accessible.

Our Enforcement Team worked in partnership with Police Scotland, Network Rail, Coast Watch, the Maritime and Coastguard Agency and Scottish Fire and Rescue to implement the 'Safer Shores' programme over the summer. This partnership allows visitors and residents to enjoy our coastal locations safely.

We are working in partnership with Strathclyde Partnership for Transport (SPT) on the Strathclyde Regional Bus Strategy. This will undertake a study into rural transport needs and an appraisal of bus operation models. We are also supporting their regional funding bid to Transport Scotland's Community Bus Fund to further develop the strategy. Access to effective transport is key in enabling our residents to work, access facilities and enjoy social opportunities.

In May 2023, Cabinet approved the next steps for a new Community Transport pathfinder. This includes plans for detailed engagement with local communities to understand their transport needs, as well as exploration of potential delivery models. We are working with the Garnock Valley Locality Partnership to develop a study that will identify what the travel challenges and barriers are within the area, providing an evidence base for intervention and offering practical and realistic recommendations to help address these challenges in the locality. A North Ayrshire survey will be undertaken to establish the demand for community transport and how this could be shaped to meet the needs of the community. A further update will be provided to Cabinet in December 2023.

We have identified improvements to bus stop infrastructure as part of the recent £146,000 capital award under the Community Bus Fund. The fund aims to enable local transport authorities to improve local public transport, with a focus on rural deprived areas where lower population density means bus services can be less commercially viable. These will be delivered alongside the bus corridor improvements funded under SPT's Capital Programme.

Our Streetscene Service has installed 41 wheelchair accessible picnic benches, 115 new benches and 51 large capacity Nexus bins. The picnic benches and benches are galvanised steel and come with a 15-year guarantee which helps futureproof our street assets. The larger capacity bins have been a key element in allowing Streetscene to review schedules for street cleaning, and this will help balance resources between coastal and residential areas to focus on achieving improved Local Environmental Audit and Management System (LEAMS) outcomes.

We continue to support the British



Legion to ensure our war memorials are presented in the best way possible. In particular this year, around the Ardrossan War Memorial and the Dasher Memorial gardens.

Cabinet approved the Regeneration Delivery Plan action programme for 2023/24 and 2024/25 alongside the 2023/24 funding proposals. This included over £4m funding under the Place Based Investment Programme, Cycling Walking and Safer Routes, Vacant and Derelict Land Fund and SPT's Capital Programme. Additionally, a report on the B714 Upgrade was approved by Cabinet on 29 August 2023 that approved the realignment of £5m to support the project.

The Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities' (DLUHC), Head of Scotland Team and Regional Leads visited on 24th August. They viewed the projects funded from the Community Renewal Fund, Shared Prosperity Fund and Levelling Up Fund. New Area Leads are now in place from the Department of Levelling Up Housing and Communities with an introductory site visit programme planned for 17th November. The third round of Levelling Up Fund (LUF) is still expected this year, with date to be confirmed.

Ayrshire Growth Deal

We have reached significant milestones around the Ayrshire Growth Deal.

A contractor has been appointed to undertake remediation at the Ardrossan Coastal Quarter site of the future Ardrossan Campus. This is a key milestone in the wider regeneration proposals for the Ardrossan area, and critical to enabling the development of the Campus.

The i3 Ayrshire Growth Deal Flexible Space programme has broken ground and development is underway to provide the first phase of the commercial advanced manufacturing space. This is one of the leading projects in the Ayrshire Growth Deal to have reached physical development stage and will be important to local businesses

providing quality flexible space with low carbon sustainable design to support high value jobs in North Ayrshire. Work has now also commenced on the design for Phase 2, to accelerate the programme of delivery.

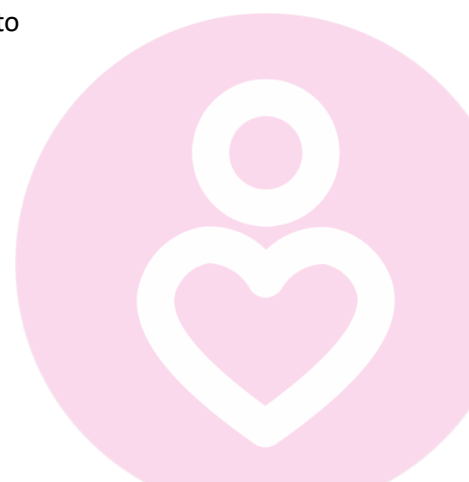
The Ayrshire Growth Deal programme at Irvine Harbourside has made significant progress with the consultation on a masterplan for the area complete and the appointment of designers to complete a technical design for the coastal hub playpark to start on site in 2024. This represents the programme moving towards delivery stage, which will ensure the location maximises its potential as a regional tourism destination, providing jobs, increased visitors and improved facilities.

The Ayrshire Skills Investment Fund has been approved by the Scottish Government and is now in the implementation stage. An employer grant scheme has been launched to support local businesses develop their workforce with skills for the future in key sectors.

A 2023 Visitor Management Plan was approved, collating the wider range of place-based services offered throughout our Council to support and enhance the visitor experience in North Ayrshire, while minimising the impact on communities. This provides an overall investment of over £2m in revenue and capital investment to support the sector.

A cross-party member/officer working group – the Tourism Forum – has been formed and now meets quarterly to oversee strategic development of programmes and initiatives to support the tourism sector in North Ayrshire.

Our Council renewed its partnership with the Crown Estate Scotland to support continued partnership working to support coastal communities and support the



advancement of Ayrshire Growth Deal marine tourism projects.

Attainment

Significant work has been undertaken to continue efforts to close the poverty related attainment gap through finalising plans to implement a new model for the Professional Learning Academy. This model commenced in August 2023 and initial feedback from school leadership teams highlighted how this is providing targeted support to raise attainment and achievement, with a specific focus on those most impacted by poverty.

We have gathered evidence on the impact of planned interventions and initiatives during the 2022-23 academic year. This is being used to inform future approaches. Full details are available in the Education Services [report](#).

Employability

We currently have 11 Modern Apprentices studying for their SVQ Level 3 in Youth Work, with on-the-job training being provided by our Modern Apprentice Co-ordinator. Our Youth Work Modern Apprentice programme is part of the regular HM Inspectors of Education (HMIE) Progress Review Visit of Community Learning and Development which took place in September. Results are due in October.

We have continued to expand the use of the Skills Development Scotland Data Hub, which is leading to further improvements. For example, the recently published Annual Participation Measure for 16-19 year olds is the highest on record for our Council and the 2nd highest increase across all 32 local authorities in Scotland. This is a result of increased partnership working with members of the Local Employability Partnership including Education, Employability, Self-Directed Support (SDS), Ayrshire College and Third Sector partners to ensure positive destinations for all school leavers.

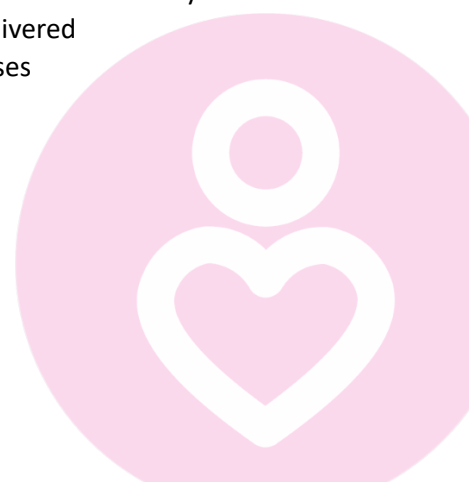
Employability week was held in May 2023 and the key highlights were:

- 1,000 people attended events across the week.
- Almost 140 young people attended the Modern Apprenticeship recruitment day. 90 applications for Modern Apprenticeships were received immediately after the event, with 249 applications to date (an increase from last year). CEIS also received 30 applications on the day for their youth employment support programme.
- The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) job fair attracted almost 500 people and, of these, eight people found work, 34 interviews were arranged or conducted and 141 job applications were filled in within the two hours of the event.
- At the Parent Hub, more than 100 people attended and four new parents registered to get support in finding employment.

Community Wealth Building

We are developing a refreshed Community Wealth Building (CWB) Strategy that focuses on achieving a wellbeing economy. This reflects the significant change in the local, regional and national economy since the original strategy was launched, including the impacts of the Covid pandemic, war in Ukraine and the cost of living crisis, alongside a shift in the national policy environment towards a wellbeing economy. This will be considered by Cabinet in early 2024.

We have led on the development and approval of the [Ayrshire Regional Economic Strategy \(RES\) - Delivery Plan for Year One](#). This focuses on actions that can feasibly be commenced and/or delivered in Year One. It recognises the substantial level of activity already underway which aligns with the priorities of the RES



including projects delivered by the Ayrshire Growth Deal and the pioneering work of the Ayrshire Community Wealth Building Commission. It seeks to build on existing work, add value and align to the RES priority themes, in addition to identifying new activity targeted to achieving the strategy's long-term ambitious priorities. This will be led by the RES Delivery Group to be formed later in the year.

Care Experienced Children and Young People

Following a Council motion in March that agreed care experienced should be treated as a protected characteristic in North Ayrshire, work has been ongoing on the definition of care experienced for use within Equality Impact Assessments (EIA's) and Children's Rights Impact Assessments. An EIA on the proposed policy will be presented to Council later this year alongside an update on the definition and work required to include it within the EIA template for future policy changes (including budget proposals).

Our Education Service has increased the capacity of their Care Experienced Tutor by extending weekly contracted hours funded by the Scottish Government's Care Experienced Children and Young People Fund. Initial evidence of impact of this intervention is positive.

The work to review our Education Quality Improvement Framework and process for Establishment Reviews for session 2023/24 is complete. There is a renewed focus on identified target groups including care experienced learners. The framework supports effective improvement planning and evaluation and is used to support the quality improvement agenda in all educational establishments.

Additionally, we have increased opportunities to further develop mentoring relationships and have plans to increase the use of

Motivation, Commitment and Resilience (MCR) Pathways next session. We have developed a planning document to help target support and review and identify effective practice for care experienced learners.

Wellbeing

Next Steps

- We will increase the use of Motivation, Commitment and Resilience (MCR) Pathways next session.
- We will await the results of our Child Poverty and Cost of Living Board applications for funding from the Scottish Government Child Poverty Practice Accelerator Fund and Cash First Fund.
- We will meet with the Improvement Service to push forward our data sharing work following the outcome of our Scottish Government Child Poverty Practice Accelerator Fund and Cash First Fund application.
- We will continue drafting our new Community Wealth Building strategy following consideration by the Policy Advisory Panel and Cabinet
- We will present a paper on treating Care Experienced as a protected characteristic to Council later this year.
- We will support SPT with their funding bid to Transport Scotland to further develop the Strathclyde Regional Bus Strategy.
- We will update Cabinet on progress on the Community Transport pathfinder in December 2023.



Case Study – Townend Skills Hub

Greenwood Academy needed a space outside the school that could be used for learning activities for young people who find being in a school environment difficult. School staff approached our local Community Learning and Development team for support. They identified Townend Community Centre in Dregghorn as a potential venue for a community café. This would link community groups, the community association and the school.

In a pilot project before the summer holidays, our young people served around 40 customers. The young people involved were consulted on what their expectations would be of the project and how they would expect to benefit from it in terms of preparing them for the world of work.

At the end of the pilot an evaluation was undertaken with our young people who were involved. All of them valued the project and engaged really well – more so than if it had been delivered in the school.



Some preferred it to the school environment because it was quieter, more approachable and easier for them to engage with. Several teachers from Greenwood Academy have visited the space and there is excellent support from both them and the senior management team in the school to continue the project.

Future plans include expanding the project to include provision for parents to attend adult learning classes, provide volunteer opportunities for people of all ages and offer targeted support to 16 – 24 year olds who are not currently in work. Our Community, Learning and Development team continue to work with the school and community partners to progress this.



Communities and Local Democracy

Key Activities

Partnership Working

Our Officers have been engaging with The Ayrshire Community Trust (TACT), and their regional wider Ayrshire counterparts, to ensure Third Sector representation on the Regional Strategy Delivery Group which will promote opportunities for community organisations to achieve their goals.

We have been working alongside the Third and Voluntary Sector through the Child Poverty and Cost of Living Board and

associated mini enquiries. A Childcare Mini Enquiry took place on 25th May 2023. Approximately 50 people from a variety of community groups, Council services and partner organisations attended the event which shared ideas and information. Groups on the day held around the table discussions on what is going well, what can be improved and what gaps exist in provision. Areas discussed included:

- A need to improve the registration process for Early Years services.
- A need to increase awareness of entitlement to early years provision.
- A requirement for more breakfast opportunities, ensuring they are affordable and available across North Ayrshire.
- A shortage of registered childminders.

Several links are in place with North Ayrshire's Third Sector Interfaces (TSI) across the Community Planning landscape. The TSI is currently Chair of the North Ayrshire Community Engagement Network. The Chief Executive of TACT has taken on the role of Chair for the Community Planning Partnership (CPP) Senior Officer's Group.

Active Involvement

We have recently relaunched our Housing Services' Customer Participation Strategy for 2023 – 2028. This will ensure that our communities are involved in decision making and are empowered to influence how we deliver our Housing Service. Three priorities have been identified to ensure this happens.

- 'Engage and Inform,' focuses on communicating with, consulting and including our customers. Ensuring there is two-way communication with our tenants and customers and providing opportunities for



customers to take part in ways that meet their needs.

- 'Empower and Influence,' focuses on building community capacity, encouraging and supporting customers to take part, and helping them to influence decision making.
- 'Evolve and Innovate' focuses on the continuous improvement and development of our service to best meet the needs of our customers.

We continue to work directly with island communities to develop and facilitate the implementation of the Ten Year Island Plans for [Arran and Cumbrae](#). This has included supporting Arran to develop three theme groups under an 'Island in Balance' approach of Economy, Community and Environment. On Cumbrae, we have worked with the Island Plan Steering Group to progress the 'Carbon Neutral Islands' project in addition to developing governance arrangements and creating a fortnightly island presence to support opportunities for direct engagement.

Community Planning Partnership

The second phase of Democracy Matters will give people across Scotland the opportunity to come together in their communities to imagine how new and inclusive democratic processes can best help their town, village or neighbourhood. Discussions on Democracy Matters Phase 2 have already taken place at the CPP Senior Officers Group and the North Ayrshire Joint Youth Forum, with a further session planned for the Community Engagement Network.

The June Community and Locality Planning training session received positive feedback from participants including community members, partner organisations and Elected Members. Several partner outreach sessions have taken place this year, including Police Scotland and Scottish Fire and Rescue colleagues, KA Leisure and Public Health.

There continues to be significant development around the structure and content of our Locality Partnership agendas to ensure stronger links to partnership, reducing inequalities and addressing local priorities.

[The Community Plan \(LOIP\)](#) for 2022-30 has been refreshed to ensure it is clearer and more engaging for our communities and partners. This has included a redesign and update of data. Engagement with young people around the plan is in progress. The results of this will be used to inform our approach to including young people throughout the lifespan of the Community Plan as well as a 'Plan on a Page' aimed specifically at children and young people.

Locality Planning continues to develop across North Ayrshire with partners becoming even more embedded in the locality model. Six refreshed Locality Plans have been co-produced with Locality Teams and will be approved by the Locality Partnerships at their December 2023 meetings.

Our Community Planning Twitter account continues to grow with over 800 followers and more than 14,000 impressions since the last quarter.

28 Community "wishes" have been delivered in 2023 so far through the Community Benefits Wishlist. This links needs in communities with businesses delivering contracts and ensures community benefit is directed in the way which makes the most impact. In total, 61 "wishes" have been delivered since the Wishlist was launched in October 2021.



Communities and Local Democracy

Next Steps

- We will continue the development of the Participation Strategy and new Community Planning Partnership website and Community Directory.
- We will continue the development of the new Community Planning website, including a consultation list, events calendar and online resources and signposting for staff, partners and community members.
- We will continue to plan for our 2024 Community Planning Conference, which will focus on Democracy Matters Phase 2.
- We will hold meetings in October and November to provide feedback on our six refreshed Locality Plans and seek approval for the Plans at the December 2023 Partnership meetings.
- We will continue our engagement with young people around the Community Plan (LOIP).
- Will continue to develop our Performance Management and Quality Assurance Framework for our Advice Services.
- We will continue to develop our consultation budget tool for the 2024/25 budget.
- We will continue to develop the online Community Directory tool with a view to launching in Winter 2023 along with the new Community Planning website.



Case Study – Irvine Tennis Club

Irvine Tennis Club had a vision to revamp tennis courts in Thornhouse Avenue. Irvine Locality Partnership worked with the tennis club for the club to take on ownership through community asset transfer of the courts from our Council to the Club. We also provided help and support to access funding.

Our Irvine Locality Officer supported the organisation to submit an expression of interest to their Locality Partnership. Irvine Tennis Club was invited to progress to the next round to submit a full application and deliver a presentation to the Partnership of the proposals.

Support to access funding was made available to the club and they were successful in achieving a range of funding:

- Common Good Funding £25,000
- North Ayrshire Ventures Trust £30,000
- Community Investment Fund £100,000
- Sports Scotland £100,000



This funded the resurfacing and development of additional tennis courts, fencing and flood lights to allow access and continued use in winter months.

Irvine Tennis Club intend to build a new club house which will host a social area, toilets and changing area with showers.

The Club has reinvigorated the tennis courts in Irvine to enable the community to come together to enjoy playing tennis and other

games within the refurbished tennis courts. They are now of a standard to enable the club to compete as well as enable their community to use a safe year-round facility.

Irvine Tennis Club welcomed Judy Murray to open the courts on 11th September – video of the moment can be viewed online [here](#). The committee have all worked hard, coming together to take ownership of a community asset and turn old red ash pitches into state-of-the-art tennis facilities for the whole community.

The Club opened the courts up for community use at the end of summer and already have over 70 members. The Club has formed many partnerships with community groups who have all expressed an interest in a variety of activities on offer at Irvine Tennis Club.



Climate Change

Key Activities

Energy

Work continues on the installation of two new solar farms at former landfill sites in Irvine and Kilwinning. The projects both reached the final detailed design stages and are scheduled to commence construction in early 2024. The new solar farms will make a major contribution to renewable energy generation and carbon reduction, as well as bringing sterile land back into productive use.

A detailed feasibility study for further renewable energy at the i3 site in Irvine was also completed, and officers are working on developing a detailed business case for consideration, aligned to wider investment proposals at the site.

A new £350k Community Net Zero Carbon Fund was launched, enabling local community groups to bid for funding to help with feasibility and/or installation of renewable energy technologies on land or buildings they own. Officers are assessing the initial tranche of applications.

As part of our annual investment programme, residents from a total of 900 Council owned homes are expected to benefit from the adoption of various energy efficiency measures, including external wall insulation and solar panels, as we invest to meet the new Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing 2 (ESSH2).

A study to understand the investment requirements for decarbonisation of Council buildings has been commissioned, and will help set out the measures, funding and timelines required to meet our own net zero targets and wider, national 2038 public sector building decarbonisation commitment. The high-level results of the study are expected in January 2024.

Finally, work to develop our Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy and Delivery Plan (LHEES) is nearing finalisation, with the new LHEES due for publication in January 2024. The LHEES is designed to be at the heart of a place based, locally led and tailored approach to the heat transition. These local strategies will cover all of Scotland and underpin an area-based approach to heat and energy efficiency planning and delivery. Since April, Home Energy Scotland have supported 2,611 households with energy efficiency advice.

Transport

Officers continue to work in partnership with the Ayrshire Roads Alliance to develop the new Ayrshire Electric Vehicle Pathfinder which is set to bring £5m public electric vehicle charging investment into Ayrshire to deliver 300 new chargers, subject to external funding. This is an exciting next step in helping residents and businesses transition to electric vehicles, by providing a well-distributed, affordable and reliable public charging network.

A new route map for the decarbonisation of our Council vehicles has prioritised how we will reduce emissions across our fleet. This includes a commitment that we will not purchase any new fossil fuel powered passenger or Light Commercial Vehicles (LGVs), two years ahead of the 2025 target set out in the Programme for Government.

We are committed to improving knowledge and attitudes about sustainable transport choices through the Trinity Active Travel Hub and our Travel Smart programme. This includes working with organisations and volunteers to provide active travel activities across the area and our workplace engagement programme working with local employers. Activities delivered, included personalised travel planning, bike maintenance classes



and challenges such as 'Cycle to Work September'. We continue to update and promote our Active Travel Hub social media pages to raise awareness.

Regeneration projects that have commenced this year include:

- Construction of the North Crescent Coastal Path Phase 1, Ardrossan.
- An options appraisal study for the Valefield Bridge, Kilbirnie to help re-establish this important active travel link.
- Fairlie Coastal Path Phase 3 with construction expected to start in Q4.
- Detailed design stage for Largs Promenade Active Travel Study.
- Feasibility study for Cumbrae Active Travel Link.
- Design of Old Caledonian Railway Path Phase 2.

The following projects have been completed:

- Upgrade of the Harbour Path, Ardrossan linking between the town centre and ferry terminal.
- Design of the North Crescent Coastal Path Phase 2, Ardrossan with funding for construction secured from Sustrans.
- Improvements to five separate path links in Ardrossan, Saltcoats and Stevenston.
- Upgrade of Old Caledonian Railway Cutting, Saltcoats (Phase 1).
- Upgrades to bus stop shelters to promote walking to public transport.

Environment

Our Streetscene Service continues to support volunteering groups. Following nominations from volunteer groups, Elected Members and the general public, a recognition event was held at Saltcoats Town Hall to recognise the contribution of our volunteers, particularly young environmental ambassadors. There were 64 attendees with five awards presented to the young environmental ambassadors for various activities, such as litter picking and

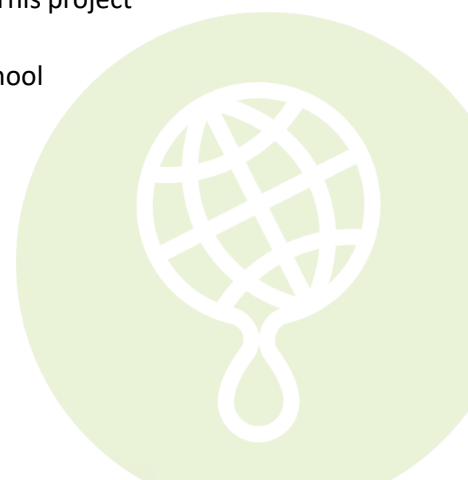
making horticultural enhancements in their local areas. Through working with volunteers, issues and solutions are identified, such as littering of disposable vapes. We worked with the Irvine Clean Up Crew to provide an appropriate disposal solution.

Our Environmental Enforcement Team are working on a 'Sea Starts Here' campaign to educate our residents and raise awareness of litter being placed into drains and waterways, which ultimately leads to pollution of our waterways and coastal locations.

Our 'Intermediate Labour Market' (ILM) initiative has provided extra capacity and enabled a focus on the ensuring paths are edged and encroachment is cut back on our cycle network to enable our residents to access zero carbon travel.

Successful bids for 'Food for Thought' grants were evaluated effectively by a number of North Ayrshire schools. They are individually investigating the adoption of low carbon behaviour change in their communities.

Our Climate Action Town Stevenston Project launched after successful funding from the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals in Scotland (CILIPS). This will offer a series of climate and environmental themed activities for schools, families and the local community in the library and surrounding area, including climate cinema screenings, climate classroom, eco-learning activities and outdoor learning. Our Streetscene Service has been working with the friends of Kirkton Hall Glen to further enhance the biodiversity of the area and involved the local primary school in seeding of the wildflower meadow in preparation for the 2024 growing season. This project has helped to bring biodiversity into the school curriculum, supporting learning outcomes and the biodiversity of the local area.



Our North Ayrshire 2030 Woodland Project is progressing well with 35,627 new trees planted. The target is to plant 108,000 new trees by 2030.

Reuse and Recycling

Waste Services worked alongside our Economic Development team to outline options and recommendations for a potential 'remakery' project to increase re-use and repair across North Ayrshire. The study recommended options to be progressed in line with the new Shared Prosperity Fund programme.

Our Council's bulky waste reuse partner, Cunninghame Furniture Recycling Company (CFRC), collected 107 reusable mattresses (1.3 tonnes) from April to September 2023, as part of the initiative to promote opportunities for their reuse along with 97.6 tonnes of household furniture that would otherwise have been disposed of.

An Elected Members development session took place on 20th April 2023 to discuss some of the key drivers for increasing reuse and recycling performance. The Scottish Government has published a draft Circular Economy (CE) Bill, which is expected to become law by May 2024, with a further consultation expected on their Waste Route Map in the coming months. The draft CE Bill

and the Route Map consultation will be used to inform the development of a new Zero Waste Strategy. We will schedule further consultation sessions as part of the development process.

Adaptation

Our Council is undertaking Adaptation Scotland's Capability Framework in order to improve North Ayrshire's resilience to climate change. The framework identifies four capabilities needed for an organisation's adaptation journey. The first internal self-assessment was undertaken in a workshop environment, with representatives from services cross our Council and support from Adaptation Scotland. The group identified evidence for the benchmarking tool, creating a baseline assessment of the current status. A proposed list of actions was also identified which have been progressed over this period. The actions are:

- Create and maintain a Council wide library of climate change and adaptation case studies.
- Investigate potential of introducing a climate change (adaptation) risk assessment template for strategic organisational risks.
- Raise awareness via a staff eLearning module on climate change and adaptation.



- Build external capacity to share understanding on climate change and adaptation.
- Improve reporting by recording evidence and measure outcomes in relation to climate change and adaptation.
- Undertake annually the Adaptation Capability Framework and Benchmarking Tool assessment to review Council wide progress.

Supporting Local Businesses

The Corporate Procurement Unit (CPU) work closely with the Business Support and Development Team, to identify local suppliers to invite them to quick quote. We can now confirm local spend for 2022/23 was £57.7 million (26% of total spend) and £2.7 million worth of Quick Quotes were awarded locally.

Our Business Development Team has supported 83 businesses with a range of activities to reduce their environmental impact including awareness raising, consultancy support, green event hosting, grant support and referrals to partner organisations. We have also directly funded 17 businesses to participate on the Net Zero Accelerator programme. This will seek to provide the individual businesses with advice, support and information relating to reducing (and measuring) their environmental impact. It runs over a 12-month period and evaluation of the impacts will be undertaken during and at the conclusion of the programme.

The [Communities and Place Fund](#) was approved by Cabinet on 30th May. The Fund was developed with input across services, the Ayrshire Community Trust and Arran Council for Voluntary Services and reviewed by the Policy Advisory Panel. It is comprised of a competitive grant fund and Participatory Budgeting (PB) fund. The competitive grant fund opened to applications on 21st June. Nine awards were made to projects across North Ayrshire, with a total value of £160,330. Unsuccessful applicants have been given

support and advice to better position their applications to reapply next year or pursue alternative funding sources. The PB fund is underway with awards being made later this year.

Climate Change

Next Steps

- We will publish our new 'Sustainable North Ayrshire' Strategy.
- We will publish our new Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy.
- We will progress to construction stage for our new solar farm projects.
- We will launch new energy efficiency measures offer as part of our Energy Smart programme.
- We will continue the development of a new Zero Waste Strategy.
- We will progress the procurement exercise for the new Ayrshire Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure project.
- We will progress with our fleet decarbonisation route map, including exploration of a hydrogen production feasibility study.
- We will continue the construction of the North Crescent Coastal Path Phase 1, Ardrossan.
- We will present our Local Transport and Active Travel Strategy to Cabinet in October. It will provide a framework for investment and decision-making in transport for the benefit of our residents, visitors and businesses up to 2028.
- We will complete and submit our statutory Biodiversity Duty report to the Scottish Government in January.



Case Study – Active Travel

Several Active Travel projects took place during the summer months to encourage sustainable travel. Our Active Travel and Communications Teams worked closely together to promote the activities, generating significant interest from across our area.

Public Engagement on Active Travel Options on B777 between Beith and Kilbirnie

In May this consultation on proposed improvements to the B777 to provide walking, cycling and wheeling opportunities, gained a great deal of interest. 104 people took part in the survey and there were 57,400 views of the information and 2,556 interactions on social media.

Family Cycle Event at the Circuit

400 people attended this event at our newest sporting and leisure facility in June following significant promotion through social media, press releases, community radio, poster and leaflet distribution as well as internally to our own employees. Held as part of the nationwide ‘power of the bike’ campaign to promote the UCI Cycling World Championships in Glasgow, the event enabled residents to try-a-bike, access free safety checks and bike loans. As a result, 400 people attended the event and there were 22,000 views of the information on our social media channels.

Cycle Maintenance Drop-In Sessions

38 people attended the sessions during August and September to help our communities get their bikes ready for autumn. Held across North Ayrshire, the sessions empowered residents by teaching them how to care for and make minor repairs ‘on the go’ to their bicycles. In addition, accessible cycle routes and cycling sessions to build confidence were promoted. We received over 16,900 views of the information and 283 interactions on social media.

Ayrshire Walking Festival

This pan-Ayrshire event was organised and promoted by our Active Travel Team. 186 people attended events during the festival - an increase on the previous year despite a more compact schedule.

Through these activities we can see that there is a significant level of engagement with learning more about active travel in North Ayrshire. This is very positive in terms of working with our communities to deliver our Climate Change priority.



A Sustainable Council

Key Activities

Our Council Plan 2023-28

Our Council Plan 2023-28 was approved by Council in June 2023. Developed alongside our communities, our Council Plan vision remains 'A North Ayrshire that is fair for all'. Our mission is 'Working together to improve the lives of our people in North Ayrshire'. This shows how we view our plan as a contract with our communities, hence "our" plan. It aims to continue a culture of continuous improvement by ensuring everyone working in and alongside our Council is focussed on improving the lives of the people we serve.

The first annual Best Value Thematic Approach Audit is in progress. This approach replaces the previous five-yearly audits. The Best Value theme for this year is "Leadership of the development of new local strategic priorities", focussing on the development of our new Council Plan 2023-28. The Best Value report will be appended to the Annual Audit Report and will be presented to our Audit and Scrutiny Committee in November.

Tackling Digital Exclusion

Our Council secured an award of £242,000 from the UK Government's Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT). This funding comes as part of the commitment to advancing wireless infrastructure and 5G technology. We were one of six successful local authorities and the only one in Scotland.

A regional bid was submitted to DSIT's £40 million 5G Innovation Regions (5GIR) programme in September with South and East Ayrshire Councils, with a decision from the UK Government due at the end of October.

The Digital Economy Skills Group: a sub-group of the Ayrshire Skills Group continues to work with partners and have agreed three priority areas for 2024. These are to:

- 1) Develop a Digital Skills Collaboration Pilot with key stakeholders to help streamline support and collectively understand and address the challenges facing our digital economy and align with the new Skills Development Scotland Digital Economy Skills Action Plan (DESAP).
- 2) Undertake Digital Economy Industry/School engagement.
- 3) Undertake Digital Skills Mapping.

Effective Financial Management

The budget process for 2024/25 has commenced and includes a focus on the alignment of strategic investment opportunities linked to our Council's key priorities outlined in our new Council Plan 2023-28. For example, the Nethermains / Shewalton solar investment linked to our Council's focus on achieving Net Zero as well as significant capital investment across flood management and decarbonisation of our Council fleet.

There is ongoing discussions and progress around various areas of financial flexibility with the Scottish Government, including potential changes to Council Tax through the multiplier and second homes levy. Discussions continue on the feasibility of a tourist visitor levy and budget discussions on the Verity House agreement, and what this means within the context of budget conditions.

Further progress has been made with lease income generation from commercial properties and the non-commercial property portfolio will now focus initially on an Irvine locality office accommodation

review which is being managed through the Transformation Board.

In May 2023, Cabinet approved the submission of two applications to the Vacant and Derelict Land Investment Programme. Both applications, Kyle Road and 36 Bank Street were invited to submit Stage 2 applications, due 17th November 2023. Further feedback has been requested to strengthen the Stage 2 submission.

Our Workforce

The Modern Apprenticeship recruitment exercise has been undertaken and various departments have welcomed these new recruits to their teams. In September a cohort of Graduate Apprentices from various directorates across our Council started their courses at the University of the West of Scotland as part of our Council's workforce development commitment.

Craft Apprenticeships continue to be successful within our Council, with a new annual intake commencing earlier in the year.

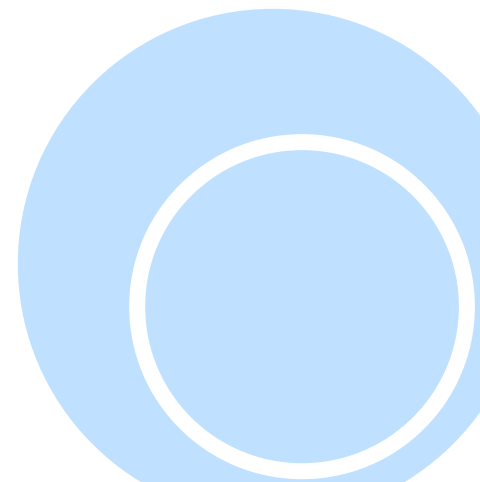
Six-monthly Workforce planning meetings at a Service level have been completed and plans updated. Methodology and tools to aid analysis and review of data are embedded in this process to inform decisions. A PESTLE analysis approach is utilised to provide insight into factors that will impact on workforce planning.

We launched a programme to reshape our workforce in line with financial planning needs in early May. This will be concluded by March 2024.

A Sustainable Council

Next Steps

- We will review and implement any actions following our Best Value report due to be published in November.
- We will support our External Auditors in the audit of the next Best Value Thematic Approach early in 2024, focussing on workforce innovation.
- We will continue to engage with the Island Plan Delivery and Steering Groups to shape the annual action plans for the Island Plans.
- We will seek further feedback that has been requested to strengthen the Stage 2 submissions for Kyle Road and 36 Bank Street.
- We will await the third round of the Levelling Up Fund.
- We will await the decision from the UK Government on the regional bid submitted to DSIT's 5G Innovation Regions (5GIR) programme with South and East Ayrshire Councils.
- We will await the completion of The Digital Connectivity Maturity Assessment.



Case Study – Our Council Plan 2023-28

We developed [Our Council Plan 2023-28](#) together, it is our living contract with our communities, it is 'our' joint plan, 'Our Council Plan'.

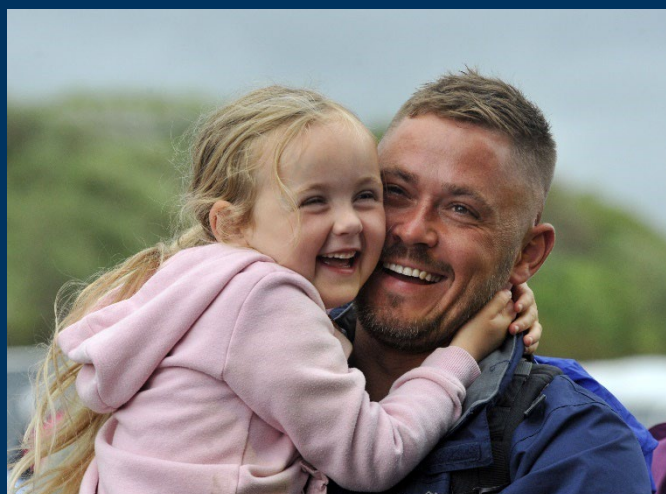
Many of the challenges North Ayrshire experiences are complex and longer-term solutions are required to address them sustainably. As a result, each Council Plan is designed to build on the progress of the previous plan, always with a focus on improving the lives of our residents.

Our aim remains to achieve 'A North Ayrshire that is fair for all' and our mission is 'working together to improve the lives of our people in North Ayrshire'.



Consultation was at the heart of our developing our new Council Plan.

In January 2023 the Leader of the Council, the Chief Executive and Chief Officers held in-depth discussions with community group representatives across all six localities to ensure our Council Plan reflected the priorities of local residents. We also invited views through a joint Council Plan and Budget 2023/24 survey, attracting 1,400 responses. We worked with Communications, the Customer Contact Centre, the Community Learning and Development Team, the Education Service, Library Service and specialist Engagement Officers within the Council to ensure as many of our residents as possible had the opportunity to have their say. We offered British Sign Language interpreters on request at events, induction hearing loops and information in alternative languages.



Real lived experience is the best way to inform what we do. Since October 2022 we have held a series of mini enquiries directed by our Child Poverty and Cost of Living Board to discuss and inform our approach to addressing Child Poverty. These events have included public, private and



third sector partners, alongside representatives from our communities, enabling honest conversations about challenges and how they could be addressed. These directly informed both our recent Child Poverty Action Plan and the Council Plan, particularly within the 'Wellbeing' and 'Communities and Local Democracy' priorities.

Internal consultation included Chief Officer Development Workshops as well as discussion at the employee Leadership Conference and the Executive Leadership Team meetings.

All of this engagement was added to earlier consultations that took place for the Community Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan), Health and Social Care Partnership Strategic Plan, Locality Partnership Plans and Island Plans. It was considered alongside the Strategic Needs Assessment undertaken for the Health and Social Care Partnership Strategic Plan and the People's Panel Survey 2022. This ensured we gathered as wide a range of views as possible while minimising duplication.

The views from the consultation exercises were used to shape our four priorities (see image below) which were thereafter shared with our Modern Apprentices (aged 16 to 24 years) in April 2023 for their comments. They confirmed that the draft priorities are "the most important and crucial" to them and were satisfied that

the language and layout of the plan is clear, straightforward and easy to read. They provided very helpful guidance on providing effective and relevant feedback on progress and we will continue to work with them.

Our Council Plan has also been informed by use of data including that relating to population decrease and demographic change, child poverty, the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation as well as data on climate change. The financial sustainability of the Council is essential to the future delivery of services and due regard is therefore paid to that as a priority so we can continue to work in partnership to meet the needs of our communities.



Now Our Council Plan 2023-28 is approved, we are focussing on delivering on our priorities. If you have any questions or comments, please contact the Corporate Policy, Performance and Elections Team on 01294 310000 or email NorthAyrshirePerforms@north-ayrshire.gov.uk.



Audits, Inspections and Accreditations

Our Council's External Audit of the accounts and wider scope Audit is due to be presented at the Audit and Scrutiny Committee in November. This includes the first in the new Best Value Thematic Approach audits, replacing previous five yearly audits. Best Value is a statutory duty that ensures we are always striving to improve, have effective governance, strong leadership and work closely with partners (in particular our communities) to inform decision making.

In this new annual approach, each year the Accounts Commission will decide on a particular theme to form the basis of the Best Value Thematic Audit in all 32 Scottish local authorities that year. This will enable effective benchmarking and scrutiny of our performance by comparing our audit report to other councils. Previously audits were staggered, rather than synchronised, across local authorities.

The Best Value theme for this year is “Leadership of the development of new local strategic priorities”, focussing primarily on the development of our new Council Plan 2023-28 and the involvement of our communities in developing our priorities. Once published, we will consider any recommendations and develop an action plan.

The Corporate Procurement Team is currently undertaking a Procurement and Commercial Improvement Programme (PCIP) assessment with the outcome being determined later in the year.

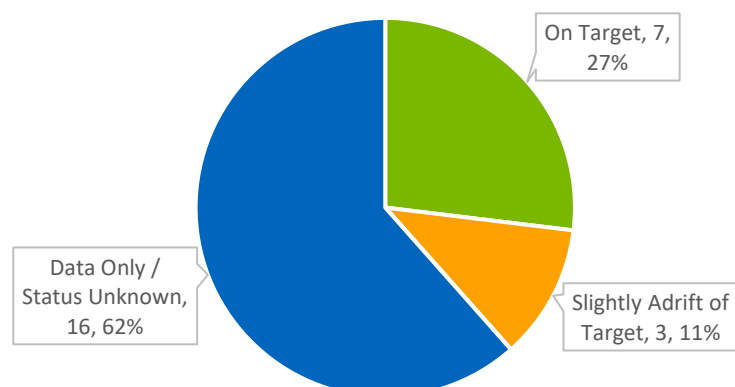
Our Community Learning and Development services are currently undertaking their regular [HM Inspectors of Education \(HMIE\) Progress Review Visit of Community Learning and Development](#). Results of the inspection are due to be published in October.

Schools are subject to periodic external evaluation by the national inspection agency, Education Scotland. Early Learning and Childcare settings are inspected by both Education Scotland and the Care Inspectorate. Recently eight educational establishments were inspected by Education Scotland and the Care Inspectorate, who found the very positive performance within our schools and Early Years centres. Action has been taken to celebrate strengths and address areas for improvement identified in the inspection reports. Reports have been published on the [Education Scotland](#) and [Care Inspectorate](#) websites.

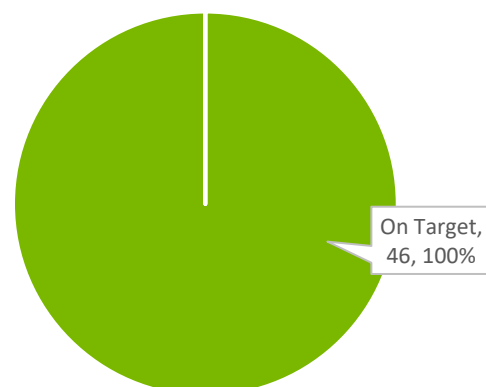
Our Council is undertaking Adaptation Scotland’s Capability Framework in order to improve North Ayrshire’s resilience to climate change. The framework identifies four capabilities needed for an organisation’s adaptation journey. The first internal self-assessment was undertaken in a workshop environment, with representatives from services cross our Council and support from Adaptation Scotland. Full details are included in our Climate Change section above.

Performance Summary

Performance Indicators



Actions



- On Target ■ Slightly Adrift of Target ■ On Target ■ Slightly Adrift of Target ■ Significantly Adrift of Target
- Significantly Adrift of Target ■ Data Only / Status Unknown

There is a high number of performance indicators (16 PIs) where the current status is unknown. This is due to the timing of the performance management framework in August following approval of the Council Plan meaning setting targets, particularly for newer PIs, with only a month left in the quarter would not have been best practice. However, targets where appropriate were set for year-end (see [Performance Indicators](#) section below).

Progress against the annual targets gives confidence that performance is on schedule, with some areas such as the number of unemployed people progressing into employment already exceeding their annual target at mid-year (652 against a target of 450). Our Street Cleanliness score shows we have performed better than expected at 90.1% against a target of 87%. Participatory Budgeting is currently sitting at 2.06% to date, ahead of the 1.5% target for Quarter two and year end.

Other areas include the number of empty properties brought back into use and number of new build properties (all tenures) which are progressing at over 50% of target at mid-year, though these may be subject to seasonal fluctuations later in the year.

Measures adrift of target

This section details the performance indicators adrift of target and the action being taken to address performance. Due to expected data lags the most recent data may relate to previous time periods but may only now be available to report. To avoid duplication, only data that has not previously been reported to our Cabinet is included in this section.

At mid-year, the statuses of all PIs within our new Council Plan are either on target (7) or have previously been reported under our previous Council Plan at Year-End 2022-23.

Performance Indicators

The Council Plan Performance Management Framework was approved by Cabinet on 29th August 2023. As a result, it wasn't feasible to set meaningful targets for Quarter 2 (end of September) for some indicators. The Annual 2023/24 target is included to help support scrutiny of performance.

PI Code and Description	2020/21 Value	2020/21 Target	2020/21 Status	2021/22 Value	2021/22 Target	2021/22 Status	2022/23 Value	2022/23 Target	2022/23 Status	Q2 2023/24 Value	Q2 2023/24 Target	Q2 2023/24 Status	2023/24 Target
CP_36 Number of residents participating in community learning and development activity including youth work*				17,269			17,804			16,503			18,700
CP_04 Proportion of children meeting developmental milestones (LGBF)**	82.2%			78.7%			Data Available February 2024			Measured Annually			79%
CP_37 Average total tariff score of pupils living in SIMD 20% most deprived areas	724			711			Data Available March 2024			Measured Annually			714
CP_06 Average tariff score: All Leavers	912	900		905.6	880		Data Available March 2024			Measured Annually			908
CP_38 Average total tariff for Care Experienced Young People	448			457			Data Available June 2024			Measured Annually			465
CP_07 Percentage of school leavers entering positive destinations (LGBF)	95.2%	96.2%		96%	93.5%		Data Available February 2024			Measured Annually			96.4%
CP_39 Number of unemployed people progressing into employment	285	200		524	450		437			652			450
CP_10a Percentage of procurement spent on local enterprises	21.39%	23.5%		22.93%	24%		26.04%	25%		Measured Annually			26%

PI Code and Description	2020/21 Value	2020/21 Target	2020/21 Status	2021/22 Value	2021/22 Target	2021/22 Status	2022/23 Value	2022/23 Target	2022/23 Status	Q2 2023/24 Value	Q2 2023/24 Target	Q2 2023/24 Status	2023/24 Target
CP_40 Number of new build housing units reaching completion (all tenures) (Actual not cumulative)*							562			223			295
CP_41 Number of empty homes brought back into use (Actual)***	122			335			120			180			200
CP_28 Hectares of vacant & derelict land in North Ayrshire	1,204	1,194		1,198	1,144		Data pending	1,094		Measured Annually			1,094
CP_27 Street Cleanliness Index – Percentage Clean (LGBF)	91.34	94		86.7	94		84.6	90		90.1%			87%
CP_20 Overall percentage of road network that should be considered for maintenance treatment	37.1%	38.1%		33.9%	37.5%		34.8%	33.8%		Measured Annually			34.8%
CP_42 Provided floor space of commercial/industrial space within our Council portfolio (sq ft)*							400,991			Measured Annually			404,755
CP_02 Percentage of Council budget directed via participatory methods	1.13%	1.2%		2.32%	1.1%		2.74%	1%		2.06%	1.5%		1.5%
CP_43 Number of Council assets under community management (cumulative)*							49			51			54
CP_30 Total installed capacity of low carbon heat and electricity generation across the Council's estate	10,720	9,800		11,680	11,000		12,104	11,800		Measured Annually			12,000
CP_29 Overall carbon emissions (tonnes) (Non-domestic Council estate)	22,846	35,127		21,791	21,247		20,896	21,000		4,060			19,500
CP_44 Percentage of council dwellings that are energy efficient	97.6%			97.7%			Data Available February 2024			Measured Annually			98.1%

PI Code and Description	2020/21 Value	2020/21 Target	2020/21 Status	2021/22 Value	2021/22 Target	2021/22 Status	2022/23 Value	2022/23 Target	2022/23 Status	Q2 2023/24 Value	Q2 2023/24 Target	Q2 2023/24 Status	2023/24 Target
CP_45 Length of new or improved active travel routes per annum (Metres)*							1,090			Measured Annually			2,000
CP_46 Number of trees planted under the North Ayrshire 2030 Tree Planting Strategy*							35,627			Measured Annually			40,000
CP_19 Proportion of operational buildings that are suitable for their current use (LGBF)	91.05%	93%		91.1%	93%		91.5%	93%		Measured Annually			92.1%
CP_31 Percentage of total household waste that is recycled (calendar year as per SEPA) (LGBF)	52.1%	52.1%		56.3%	53.1%		55.3%	56.9%		61.3%	51%		57%
CP_25 Percentage of Council dwellings that meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (LGBF)	98.83%	99.5%		49.3%	99.5%		63.2%			Measured Annually			72.5%
CP_47 Gross rent arrears (all tenants) as at 31 March each year as a percentage of rent due for the reporting year (LGBF)	5.5%			6.6%			7.1%			Measured Annually			6.5%
CP_48 Percentage of income due from Council Tax received by the end of the year (LGBF)	92.1%			93.3%			94.7%			Measured Annually			94%

*These indicators have been newly introduced for the Council Plan 2023-28, historical data isn't currently available for the greyed-out time periods.

**CP_04 Proportion of children meeting developmental milestones (LGBF) – This indicator has been renamed from 'Percentage of children achieving their developmental milestones at the time the child starts primary (LGBF)' to fully align wording with the LGBF. The measure is unchanged.

** CP_41 Number of empty homes brought back into use (Actual) – Due to a system issue the historical data for this PI has changed slightly. 2020/21 has been amended from 121 to 122. 2021/22 has been amended from 334 to 335 and 2022/23 has been amended from 123 to 120. This has been rectified for future reporting.

Action Tracker

Priority	Ref #	Existing Overall Action	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2024/25	2024/25	2024/25	2024/25	2025/26	2025/26	2025/26	2025/26	2026/27	2026/27	2026/27	2026/27	2027/28	2027/28	2027/28	2027/28
			Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
	CP01	Ensuring that wellbeing is at the heart of local life and opportunities, with a focus on tackling inequalities.	✓																		
	CP02	Developing a Community Wealth Building approach to a wellbeing economy.	✓																		
	CP03	Improving educational attainment and achievement and closing the attainment gap.	✓																		
	CP04	Improving outcomes for care experienced young people including implementation of The Promise.	✓																		
	CP05	Developing the Young Workforce and ensuring positive destinations for school leavers.	✓																		
	CP06	Providing lifelong learning opportunities for individuals and organisations, including digital literacy.	✓																		
	CP07	Maximising access to and uptake of benefits, entitlements and financial advice.	✓																		
	CP08	Ensuring that supports are available in communities to alleviate cost-of-living pressures through community hubs and networks.	✓																		
	CP09	Through our housebuilding programme and wider Housing Investment provide homes for life that meet the needs of our residents.	✓																		

Priority	Ref #	Existing Overall Action	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2024/25	2024/25	2024/25	2024/25	2025/26	2025/26	2025/26	2025/26	2026/27	2026/27	2026/27	2026/27	2027/28	2027/28	2027/28	2027/28
			Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
	CP10	Increase the number of homes in the area through a mix of private and social developments and bringing empty buildings back in to use.	✓																		
	CP11	Exploration of models and the development of pilot schemes to increase access to and use of public/community transport.	✓																		
	CP12	Ensure our places and spaces where we live, work and visit are well maintained and accessible.	✓																		
	CP13	Developing infrastructure to support business growth.	✓																		
	CP14	Support KA Leisure's leadership of North Ayrshire's Health and Wellbeing Alliance.	✓																		
	CP15	Through the Health and Social Care Partnership Strategic Plan we will protect and provide care and support for those in need.***																			
	CP16	Developing strong relationships with communities and partners based on trust and shared aspirations using their experiences to inform service provision.	✓																		
	CP17	Providing support for community organisations in achieving their goals, including as Community Wealth Building anchor organisations.	✓																		
	CP18	Creating a participation and engagement framework which ensures opportunities and support for all residents to take part in influencing local democracy and Council and partner strategies.	✓																		

Priority	Ref #	Existing Overall Action	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2024/25	2024/25	2024/25	2024/25	2025/26	2025/26	2025/26	2025/26	2026/27	2026/27	2026/27	2026/27	2027/28	2027/28	2027/28	2027/28
			Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
	CP19	Supporting participatory budgeting.	✓																		
	CP20	Supporting community asset transfer and community owned and operated/managed assets.	✓																		
	CP21	Supporting the Community Planning Partnership and the Community Plan (LOIP).	✓																		
	CP22	Developing partnerships with the third and voluntary sector.	✓																		
	CP23	Placemaking, including creation of locality action plans based on the Community Plan (LOIP) priorities and support the delivery of Islands Plans.	✓																		
	CP24	Ensuring an inclusive, fair, rights-based and asset-based approach in our work.	✓																		
	CP25	Accessible public services, both digitally and locally, ensuring a 'No Wrong Door' approach.	✓																		
	CP26	Embedding our net-zero ambition in all democratic decision-making.	✓																		
	CP27	Reducing the carbon footprint of our estate through rationalisation utilising a locality-based approach, and taking a fabric first and low carbon energy generation approach to homes and buildings.	✓																		
	CP28	Improving resilience and reducing carbon by developing and supporting supply chains where materials and goods are sourced locally.	✓																		

Priority	Ref #	Existing Overall Action	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2024/25	2024/25	2024/25	2024/25	2025/26	2025/26	2025/26	2025/26	2026/27	2026/27	2026/27	2026/27	2027/28	2027/28	2027/28	2027/28
			Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
	CP29	Promoting new woodland creation and protecting our green spaces to provide a natural resource for carbon sequestration.	✓																		
	CP30	Supporting local businesses as they meet their climate change obligations.	✓																		
	CP31	Promoting a circular economy in North Ayrshire to reduce consumption of raw materials and promote reuse, repair and recycling, and generating energy from residual waste.	✓																		
	CP32	Developing local Low Carbon energy generation schemes and networks.	✓																		
	CP33	Unlocking the potential of community owned energy generation to bring new income streams into communities and help them take direct action to combat climate change.	✓																		
	CP34	Learning for Sustainability, and work with communities to adopt low carbon behaviour change and encourage climate-based volunteering activities.	✓																		
	CP35	Improving communities' preparedness to deal with the impacts of climate change already locked-in.	✓																		
	CP36	Working with communities to adopt low carbon behaviour change and encourage climate-based volunteering activities.	✓																		
	CP37	Taking a nature-based approach to protect our habitats and species.	✓																		
	CP38	Developing and promoting active travel infrastructure.	✓																		

Priority	Ref #	Existing Overall Action	2023-24	2023-24	2023-24	2024/25	2024/25	2024/25	2024/25	2025/26	2025/26	2025/26	2025/26	2026/27	2026/27	2026/27	2026/27	2027/28	2027/28	2027/28	2027/28
			Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
	CP39	Transitioning to low and zero carbon travel.	✓																		
	CP40	Ensuring robust governance arrangements are in place to fulfil the Council's statutory duties, manage risk and support delivery of key priorities.	✓																		
	CP41	Using dynamic data and lived experiences to inform decision-making.	✓																		
	CP42	Working with partners nationally, regionally and locally to secure investment and target resources towards our priorities.	✓																		
	CP43	Driving change and transformation, using technology where appropriate, to deliver efficient and effective services and support delivery of priorities.	✓																		
	CP44	Maximising financial flexibilities to help support delivery of priorities.	✓																		
	CP45	Maximising value from the use of our assets.	✓																		
	CP46	Focusing our investment on priorities.	✓																		
	CP47	Effective workforce planning ensuring that we have the right skills/resources to deliver priorities.	✓																		

***Delivery of this action is managed through the Health and Social Care Partnership Strategic Plan.

We strive to make our reporting as accessible as possible. If you have any questions or require further information on our Council's performance please contact:

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Reports can be viewed at www.north-ayrshire.gov.uk/performance