

Cunninghame House,
Irvine.

20 October 2016

Cabinet

You are requested to attend a Meeting of the Cabinet of North Ayrshire Council to be held in the Council Chambers, Cunninghame House, Irvine on **TUESDAY 25 OCTOBER 2016** at **2.00 p.m.** to consider the undernoted business.

Yours faithfully

Elma Murray

Chief Executive

PLEASE NOTE THE CHANGE TO THE START TIME OF THE MEETING ON THIS OCCASION

1. Declarations of Interest

Members are requested to give notice of any declaration of interest in respect of items of business on the agenda.

2. Minutes (Page 7)

The accuracy of the Minutes of meeting of the Cabinet held on 27 September 2016 will be confirmed and the Minutes signed in accordance with Paragraph 7 (1) of Schedule 7 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (copy enclosed).

EDUCATION ITEMS FOR DECISION

- 3. Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) Examination Results 2016 (Page 13)**
Submit report and receive presentation by the Executive Director (Education & Youth Employment) on the performance of North Ayrshire schools in the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) examinations of 2016 (copy enclosed).
- 4. Annual Participation Measure for 16-19 year olds (Page 41)**
Submit report by the Executive Director (Education & Youth Employment) on the progress being made with the introduction of this annual measure (copy enclosed).
- 5. Education Scotland Validated Self-Evaluation of Psychological Services (Page 55)**
Submit report by the Executive Director (Education & Youth Employment) on the outcomes from the Education Scotland Validated Self-Evaluation of Psychological Service (copy enclosed).
- 6. Children and Young People Support Review (Page 69)**
Submit report by the Executive Director (Education & Youth Employment) on the progress made by the Children and Young People Support Review Board and to seek direction on the implications of some of the planned service improvements (copy enclosed).

GENERAL BUSINESS FOR DECISION

Reports by the Chief Executive

- 7. Social Impact Pledge (Page 77)**
Submit report by the Chief Executive on the production of a North Ayrshire Council Social Impact Pledge (copy enclosed).
- 8. Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) 2014/15 (Page 81)**
Submit report by the Chief Executive on the Directorates' priorities identified following the publication of the latest LGBF report (copy enclosed).
- 9. Public Performance Reporting 2015/16 (Page 93)**
Submit report by the Chief Executive on the public performance reporting and the draft Annual Performance Report 2015/16 (copy enclosed).

Reports by the Executive Director (Finance & Corporate Support)

- 10. Consultation on Social Security in Scotland (Page 173)**
Submit report by the Executive Director (Finance & Corporate Support) on the Scottish Government's consultation on Social Security in Scotland (copy enclosed).

11. Corporate Asset Strategy (Page 255)

Submit report by the Executive Director (Finance & Corporate Support) on the updated Corporate Asset Strategy and advise Cabinet of the revised governance arrangements for the capital programme (copy enclosed).

Reports by the Executive Director (Place)

12. Future Cemetery Provision (Page 269)

Submit report by the Executive Director (Place) on the future provision of cemeteries in North Ayrshire (copy enclosed).

13. Roads Winter Service and Weather Emergencies Plan 2016/17 (Page 283)

Submit report by the Executive Director (Place) on the Roads Winter Service and Weather Emergencies Plan 2016/17 (copy enclosed).

14. Dubbs Road, Stevenston/Kilwinning Prohibition of Driving Order (Page 321)

Submit report by the Executive Director (Place) on a Traffic Regulation Order to prohibit driving on a section of Dubbs Road (copy enclosed).

15. Urgent Items

Any other items which the Chair considers to be urgent.

EXEMPT INFORMATION

16. Exclusion of the Public

Resolve in terms of Section 50(A)4 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, to exclude from the Meeting the press and the public for the following items of business on the grounds indicated in terms of Paragraphs 9 and 10 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

Non Disclosure of Information

In terms of Standing Order 17 (Disclosure of Information) the information contained within the following reports is confidential information within the meaning of Section 50A of the 1973 Act and shall not be disclosed to any person by any Member or Officer.

17. Sale of Surplus Property, 43-45 Ardrossan Road, Saltcoats (Page 329)

Submit report by the Executive Director (Place) on the Council's heritable interest in the former Registration Office at 43-45 Ardrossan Road, Saltcoats (copy enclosed).

18. Sportscotland Facilities Management Tender Opportunity (Page 333)

Submit report by the Executive Director (Place) on the submission of two tenders to Sportscotland to provide facilities management services at their premises in Largs and Cumbrae (copy enclosed).

Cabinet

Sederunt: **Elected Members**

Joe Cullinane (Chair)
John Bell (Vice-Chair)
Alex Gallagher
Peter McNamara
Louise McPhater
Jim Montgomerie

Chair:

Attending:

Apologies:

Meeting Ended:

Cabinet
27 September 2016

IRVINE, 27 September 2016 - At a Meeting of the Cabinet of North Ayrshire Council at 3.30 p.m.

Present

Joe Cullinane, John Bell, Alex Gallagher, Louise McPhater and Jim Montgomerie.

Also Present

Donald Reid.

In Attendance

E. Murray, Chief Executive; C. Hatton, Executive Director and C. Nelson, Divisional Manager (Place); I. Colvin, Director of North Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership; M. Hogg, Head of Finance, D. Forbes, Senior Manager - Financial Management and M. McTeague, Category Manager/Team Leader - Supplies and Services (Finance and Corporate Support); C. MacAuley, Head of Service (Economic Growth) and G. Robson, Senior Employability and Skills Manager (Economy and Communities); A. McClelland, Senior Manager (Education and Youth Employment); J. Hutcheson, Communications Officer and D. McCaw, Committee Services Officer (Chief Executive's).

Chair

Councillor Cullinane in the Chair.

Apologies for Absence

Peter McNamara.

1. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest by Members in terms of Standing Order 10 and Section 5 of the Code of Conduct for Councillors.

2. Minutes

The accuracy of the Minutes of the meeting held on 13 September 2016 was confirmed and the Minutes signed in accordance with Paragraph 7 (1) of Schedule 7 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

3. Revenue Budget 2016/17: Financial Performance to 31 July 2016

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Support) which (a) set out the revenue budgetary control position for the Council at 31 July 2016; (b) provided a brief explanation of Services' major variances at Appendices 1 - 10; (c) detailed the proposed virements at Appendix 11; and (d) detailed the Housing Revenue account budgetary control position at 31 July 2016 at Appendix 12.

Councillor Cullinane proposed that the £1.756m underspend detailed at section 3.1(b) be utilised for the Learning Environment at Kilwinning, Irvine Royal and Auchenharvie Academies. The proposal was unanimously supported by Cabinet Members.

The Cabinet agreed to (a) note the information and financial projections outlined in the report; (b) approve the transfer of £1.756m to the Learning Environment for Kilwinning, Irvine Royal and Auchenharvie Academies; (c) approve the carry forward of £0.189m identified at section 2.3 (viii); (d) note the current financial projection for the Health and Social Care Partnership; and (e) approve the virements detailed in Appendix 11.

4. Capital Programme Performance to 31 July 2016

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Support) which provided information on progress in delivering the Capital Investment Programme as at 31 July 2016.

Members asked a question and were provided with further information in relation to the higher level of SFT funding secured for Largs Academy which has reduced the original anticipated amount of borrowing.

The Cabinet agreed to (a) approve the revisions to budgets outlined at Sections 2.1, 2.2, 2.5 and 2.7 of the report; and (b) note (i) the actual General Services and HRA expenditure and revised budgets to 31 July 2016; and (ii) the forecast of expenditure to 31 March 2017.

5. Submission of Evidence: A Scottish Approach to Taxation

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Support) on North Ayrshire's submission to the Scottish Government's Call for Evidence on A Scottish Approach to Taxation centering around 7 main questions. The full response was attached at Appendix 1 to the report.

Members asked a question and were provided with further information in relation to the process in connection with any clarity which would be received from the Scottish Government once consultation responses are reviewed.

The Cabinet agreed to submit Appendix 1 as North Ayrshire's submission to the Scottish Government's Call for Evidence on A Scottish Approach to Taxation.

6. Submission of Evidence on the Council Tax (Substitution of Proportion) (Scotland) Order 2016

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Support) on North Ayrshire's submission to the Scottish Government's Call for Evidence on the Council Tax (Substitution of Proportion) (Scotland) Order 2016 centering around 4 main questions. The full response was attached at Appendix 1 to the report.

The Cabinet agreed to submit Appendix 1 as North Ayrshire's submission to the Scottish Government's Call for Evidence on the Council Tax (Substitution of Proportion) (Scotland) Order 2016.

7. Sundry Write Off

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Support) which (a) advised of sundry debtor write offs under delegated powers; and (b) requested authority to write off balances which exceed the delegated powers threshold of £10,000.

The Cabinet agreed to authorise the write off of balances over £10,000, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

8. North Ayrshire Economic Development and Regeneration (EDR) Strategy Refresh

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Economy and Communities) on (a) the refreshed Economic Development and Regeneration Strategy outlining 4 strategic outcomes and 6 strategic objectives as detailed in the report; and (ii) associated 2 year action plans. The full Strategy Refresh document was attached at Appendix 1 to the report with the draft final action plan detailed at Appendix 2.

Members indicated their appreciation for the work carried out by Officers in connection with the refreshed Strategy.

The Cabinet agreed to approve the refreshed North Ayrshire Economic Development and regeneration (EDR) Strategy and the 2 year actions place as detailed in the report.

9. Public Realm Improvements Associated with Largs Masterplan

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Economy and Communities) on the proposals for the implementation of the Largs Masterplan following a review of priorities as detailed in the report.

Members asked a question and were provided with further information in relation to other possible funding sources which could be accessed to take forward the additional improvement works detailed at Table 2 within the report.

The Cabinet agreed to (a) note the outcome of the review of priorities for implementation of the Largs Masterplan; (b) approve the proposed improvements utilising funds from the town centre regeneration capital budget; and (c) note the additional improvement works which require to be funded from an alternative source of funding such as Largs Car Park.

10. Ayrshire Growth Deal

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Economy and Communities) on the development of the Ayrshire Growth Deal and on the submission of the Strategic Business Case (SBC) to the Scottish and UK Governments, including a range of projects with North Ayrshire as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report.

Members indicated their appreciation for the work carried out by Officers in connection with the Ayrshire Growth Deal.

The Cabinet agreed to the submission of the Ayrshire Growth Deal Strategic Business Case to the Scottish and UK Governments.

11. Upper Garnock Valley Flood Protection Scheme

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Place) on the flood protection scheme for the Upper Garnock Valley and requesting that Cabinet consider taking "a preliminary decision to confirm" the scheme with unresolved objections as detailed in the report.

The Cabinet agreed to (a) take a preliminary decision to confirm the preferred scheme with unresolved objections; and (b) notify objectors and the Scottish Government in line with the process detailed at section 2.12 of the report.

12. Widening Asylum Dispersal

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Place) on the UK Government's plans to widen Asylum Dispersal in Scotland.

Members asked a question and were provided with further information in relation to the range of services provided by the multi-agency Syrian Refugee Task force in relation to providing a strategic response to the resettlement of refugees.

The Cabinet agreed that Officers develop for further consideration proposals with the Home Office and COSLA to disperse asylum seekers, including unaccompanied asylum seeking children, within North Ayrshire.

13. Procurement EU Tender Plan - 2016/17 and 2017/18

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Support) on the EU procurement tender plan for the remainder of Financial Year 2016/17 and requirements identified for 2017/18 and 2018/19.

The Cabinet agreed to invite tenders for the supplies, services and works listed in the plan detailed in Appendix 1 to the report.

14. Award of Framework - Print Services

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Support) on the result of the tender for the Framework Agreement for Print Services and seek approval to award.

Members asked a question and were provided with further information in relation to legislation limiting the length of time of a contract to 4 years.

The Cabinet agreed to approve the award of the Framework Agreement to Brown Bros (Irvine) Ltd, Fasprint Services (Irvine) Ltd, MacKay and Inglis Ltd, Potts Print (UK), Print Plus (UK) Ltd, Publicity Printing Group, The Kestrel Press (Irvine) Ltd and CG Print Ltd for a period of four years at a total estimated cost of £671,000 over the maximum duration of the contract.

15. Award of Contract - Saltcoats Public Realm Improvement Works

Submitted report by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Support) on the outcome of the tender exercise and award of contract for Saltcoats Public Realm Improvement Works, Countess Street, Saltcoats.

The Cabinet noted the award of the contract to Land Engineering (Scotland) Limited in line with the Council's Standing Orders Relating to Contracts clause 18.7.

The meeting ended at 4.25 p.m.

NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

Agenda Item 3

25 October 2016

Cabinet

Title: **Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA)
Examination Results 2016**

Purpose: To update Cabinet on the performance of North Ayrshire schools in the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) examinations of 2016.

Recommendation: Agree to note the content of the report and the achievements of the pupils in this year's examinations;

Agree that a further report will be submitted in the first quarter of 2017 when the full set of performance measures becomes available which will comment on the overall performance of the 2016 leavers cohort in North Ayrshire as highlighted in the INSIGHT annual report.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report summarises the key performance measures for our examination results in 2016, basing our analysis on the INSIGHT performance evaluation tool.

2. Background

- 2.1 In 2014, INSIGHT replaced the Standard Tables and Charts (STACs) as the main performance evaluation tool for schools and education authorities. INSIGHT is an interactive web based tool published by the Scottish Government using Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) examination results and other accreditation providers. Schools are now engaging with the various dashboards which are designed to analyse, compare and improve performance of young people in the senior phase. INSIGHT promotes a collaborative approach to analysing the data and working together to improve attainment and achievement.

- 2.2 In terms of the dataset being analysed, INSIGHT goes beyond SQA attainment, and also includes a growing range of SCQF (Scottish Credit & Qualifications Framework) awards and programmes which are not managed by SQA. INSIGHT is consistent with the Curriculum for Excellence ethos as it emphasises the best achievement at the *point of exit from school*, rather than at stage-by-stage level, although it still allows users to drill down to cohort, level, subject or socio-demographic characteristics of pupils. The INSIGHT methodology is being updated and improved every year, to serve better the requirement of the new National Qualifications Framework as well as the variety of curricular models developing across all schools in Scotland. INSIGHT strives to meet the need to compare performance at departmental/school and authority level *without* introducing perverse incentives that would distort the school policies with regards to the number, quality and choice of awards and qualifications offered to each pupil, according to their personal abilities and aspirations.
- 2.3 The benchmarking methodology used by INSIGHT is centred on the idea of a “Virtual Comparator” replacing the group of “comparator schools/authorities” used in STACs. This virtual school is built around four key characteristics which go into the make-up of any school: gender balance; staying-on rates; percentage of time spent in mainstream classes and deprivation based on the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD). From these four areas, the tool will match ten pupils from across Scotland to every one of the pupils in each school/authority and treat this matched group as the virtual school/authority.
- 2.4 The main analysis of 2016 attainment and achievement for secondary schools will be published at the end of February 2017 (when data on school leavers will be available from Skills Development Scotland – SDS). This report provides an interim overview of the 2016 SQA results on a cohort (year group) basis. It should be seen as a snapshot of performance per cohort, to be compared with the same performances in the virtual comparator. The main information in this report is structured along the local benchmarking measures aimed at:
1. Improving attainment in Literacy and Numeracy (% of candidates attaining Literacy and Numeracy)
 2. Improving attainment for all (Average Total Tariff Score distribution)
 3. Tackling Disadvantage by Improving the Attainment vs. Deprivation Gap (Average Total Tariff Score by SIMD decile)
- 2.5 In addition to these local benchmarking measures, this report will also highlight key messages in relation to presentation levels as well as the breadth and depth of qualifications undertaken in session 2015-16.

- 2.6 Improving attainment in Literacy & Numeracy (These highlights are supported by charts in Appendix 1a and 1b).
- 2.6.1 The percentage of S4 pupils achieving Literacy at Level 4 in North Ayrshire has been consistently above both the virtual comparator and the National figure for the last five years, rising from 84.2% in 2012 to 91.8% in 2016 (see Appendix 1a). Although last year saw a very slight dip, it is easily offset by significantly improved results in Level 5 Literacy. Performance at Level 5 Literacy has seen a strong improving trend throughout the last 5 years and has exceeded the virtual comparator and National performances for the last four years. The gap between North Ayrshire and its virtual comparator has been widening for the last three years, with 68.5% of our S4 pupils gaining level 5 Literacy in 2016, which is 10 percentage points higher than the virtual comparator.
- 2.6.2 In Numeracy, the trend is also positive although progress is not as marked as in Literacy.(see Appendix 1a). This is consistent with both the virtual comparator and the national picture. The percentage of S4 pupils in North Ayrshire achieving Level 4 in Numeracy has risen to 82.1% in 2016, with a slight dip from the top performance year in 2015. In North Ayrshire, we have succeeded in reducing the gap between performances in Literacy and Numeracy at Level 4 in S4 over the last few years. Performance at Level 5 Numeracy has continued the strong improving trend over the past 5 years, with the percentage of our pupils gaining this award in S4 doubling, from 26.6% in 2012 to 52.9% in 2016. At Level 5, the current figure represents our best performance to date and it is above both the virtual comparator and the national figures. Nevertheless, we recognise that there is still room for improvement in Numeracy. As a result, improving performances in Numeracy is a major focus on the Directorate Plan and on every School Improvement Plan for 2016-17.
- 2.6.3 The proportion of S6 pupils (out of the initial S4 cohort) in North Ayrshire achieving Level 5 Literacy or better in 2016 has increased to 72.3% (from 67.5% in 2015) and is above the virtual comparator (71.1%) but slightly below the National performance, which was 75.0% in 2016 (see Appendix 1b). In Numeracy, the percentage of S6 pupils in North Ayrshire achieving Level 5 or better in 2016 was 65.7%, a considerable increase from the previous year and well above both the virtual comparator (59.5%) and the National figure (63.9%) and represents our best performance to date. At Level 6 in Literacy, 47.6% of our S6 pupils achieved this level, which is in line with the virtual comparator but below the national performance (51.9%). In Numeracy at Level 6 in S6, the strong performance in 2015 has unfortunately not been maintained in 2016, which mirrors the National picture. This year's figure of 24.5% for North Ayrshire (down from 31% last year) is in line with the virtual comparator (24.4%) but lower than the National performance 28.6% (also down from 30.5% last year).

- 2.6.4 Whilst overall, we can report a very encouraging picture, the best overall set of results the authority has ever had, there is a recognition that further work needs to be undertaken to ensure that the level of progress is maintained for all young people into S5 and S6. To this end, there is a focus within senior phase planning on ensuring that young people are leaving our schools with the highest attainment level possible in Literacy and Numeracy.
- 2.7 Improving Attainment for All (These highlights are supported by charts in Appendix 2).
- 2.7.1 This measure focuses on the average total tariff score of the candidates' latest and best qualifications. Tariff points are assigned to each unit or course achieved by learners. The information is presented as the average total tariff score per stage cohort and is broken down into the three categories of the lowest attaining 20%, the middle attaining 60% and the highest attaining 20%.
- 2.7.2 In S4, the average total tariff score of the lowest attaining 20% in North Ayrshire has been consistently in the 129-139 total tariff points per pupil range over the last four years, which is well above both the virtual comparator and the national performance. There has been a steady increase in the performance of our middle attaining 60% in S4, moving from an average of 336 tariff points in 2013 to 386 this year, a very slight dip from last year's performance. This group has remained above the virtual comparator over the last five years and has been above the national average figure for the past two years. For the highest attaining 20%, our performance has remained consistent over the last five years, while the figures for the virtual comparator and national cohort have declined. Although S4 performance in 2016 has shown a very small dip across the board, we can use the S4 performance as a foundation to build on to make further improvements in this measure in S5 and S6.
- 2.7.3 When analysing average tariff data against virtual comparator and national scores, it is important to note that there are still significant differences across the country in terms of the number of awards young people are being presented for. In North Ayrshire, we have moved from eight qualifications to seven for almost all S4 pupils. It is envisaged that at the end point of a young person's education at school the average total tariff score will be a more consistent measure and will therefore be more comparable. This information will be released for our 2016 leavers in February 2017. Therefore, the current snapshots of our separate cohorts need to be treated with some degree of caution.

- 2.7.4 In S5 and S6, our lowest attaining 20% continue to outperform both the virtual comparator and the national cohort. In 2016, the performance of our middle attaining 60% and highest attaining 20% have been **significantly better** than in previous years (except for the highest attaining 20% S6 group) exceeding the virtual comparator performance in all but one measure and the national performance in all S5 measures.
- 2.7.5 Although this is an encouraging interim result, that reflects the focus of our schools' efforts as declared in last year's report, the performance of the middle attaining 60% and the highest attaining 20% remains a key area for improvement, especially in S5 and S6. Continued work on the senior phase will include a focus on the design of broader curriculum choices, including partnerships with Ayrshire College, businesses and other providers, which will better meet the needs and raise the aspirations of all our young people.
- 2.8 Attainment versus Deprivation (These highlights are supported by charts in Appendix 3).
- 2.8.1 The INSIGHT measure aimed at tackling disadvantage presents the average total tariff score compared across the SIMD datazone deciles where the pupils reside. The charts referring to this measure shown in Appendix 3 are highlighting "bubbles" for which the centre is marking the average total tariff score of pupils in the respective decile and the size of the bubble suggests the proportion of the total cohort residing in the respective SIMD decile areas. The "lighter" bubbles represent North Ayrshire and the "darker" bubbles designate the national standing. The steeper the trendline through the bubbles, the more pronounced the disparity between the attainment of pupils residing in more deprived areas and that of pupils from less deprived areas.
- 2.8.2 Looking at the chart of attainment vs. deprivation for S4 pupils in 2016, it is worth noting that – in all SIMD deciles - North Ayrshire pupils have performed higher than that of the national establishment. Considering that 54% of the S4 pupils reside in SIMD deciles 1 to 3, this is an extremely encouraging picture. S4 pupils in SIMD deciles 1, 4 and 7 have performed significantly higher than the national establishment. The trendline on the S4 graph in Appendix 3a shows that, while there is still a long way to go, we are beginning to make progress in reducing the attainment gap between the most deprived and least deprived areas in North Ayrshire.
- 2.8.3 Looking at the cumulative attainment of S5 pupils (counted as the original S4 cohort last year), a similar positive picture can be seen. Building on the success of this cohort in S4 last year, the average total tariff score for young people in S5 in North Ayrshire this year is higher than the national average in every SIMD decile.

The performance of North Ayrshire S6 pupils is broadly in line with the national picture. Nevertheless, the average total tariff score for young people in S6 in SIMD 9 and 10 is slightly lower than the national establishment, indicating that further focused work is required in this area.

2.9 Breadth and Depth (These highlights are supported by tables in Appendix 4a and 4b).

2.9.1 The breadth and depth tables show the percentage of the cohort who have achieved any given number of awards at each SCQF level or better. In 2016, our S4 cohort maintained the very high performance levels achieved overall in 2015. Our young people in North Ayrshire outperformed the virtual comparator for 2016 in every measure. This is a very encouraging picture.

2.9.2 Our focus in session 2015-16 was to ensure we built on last year's S4 success and converted this performance into further and improved awards in S5. The 2016 spread of performance in S5 shows an improvement on our 2015 figures. A greater proportion of our S5 pupils than ever before has achieved success in Higher qualifications, with our results outstripping both the virtual comparator and our previous own North Ayrshire figures in almost all breadth and depth measures. This is encouraging and suggests that the work we are doing in the Senior Phase is already beginning to pay dividends.

2.10 Presentation Levels (These highlights are supported by Appendix 5).

2.10.1 There has been a significant drive to raise the level of challenge and aspiration for our young people. Appendix 5 shows that our presentation levels have been increasingly aspirational over the last three years and this has resulted in improved performance at both National 5 and Higher level.

2.11 Attainment of Looked After Children

2.11.1 The attainment of our looked after children in North Ayrshire for the last five years has been broadly in line with or better than the national average. Graphs illustrating the attainment of our looked after children are included at Appendix 6. When interpreting this data, we must recognise the relatively small numbers of looked after children at each stage (on average 58 pupils in S4, 35 pupils in S5 and 8 pupils in S6) and the fact that these numbers fluctuate from year to year. Nevertheless, our data shows a steady improvement in attainment for our looked after children. This is reflected in our most recent leavers data, which indicates that the average total tariff score of looked after school leavers has doubled in the last five years. We have also been successful in reducing the gap between the performance of our looked after children when compared with all young people in North Ayrshire. However, we recognise that, while the outcomes for our looked after children are improving, there is still significant work to do to bring their performances more into line with young people who are not recorded as looked after. This is a key focus of our quality improvement visits. In our schools, we have designated senior managers with specific responsibility for scrutinising the data and monitoring the outcomes for looked after children and a central support officer, whose role is to support schools as they try to reduce the outcomes gap for their young people in care.

3. **Proposals**

3.1 It is proposed that Cabinet agrees: (a) to note the content of the report and the achievements of the pupils in this year's examinations; and (b) that a further report will be submitted in the first quarter of 2017 which will comment on the overall performance of the 2016 leavers cohort in North Ayrshire as highlighted in the INSIGHT annual report.

4. Implications

Financial:	There are no financial implications.
Human Resources:	There are no human resource implications.
Legal:	There are no legal implications.
Equality:	There are no equality implications.
Environmental & Sustainability:	There are no environmental and sustainability implications.
Key Priorities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• NAC Council Plan 2015-2020: Priority 3 – “Ensuring people have the right skills for learning, life and work”• Education and Youth Employment Directorate Plan 2016-2019 : Priorities –<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Priority 2 – High quality learning and teaching is taking place in all our schools.○ Priority 4 – Levels of attainment and achievement are improving for all learners.○ Priority 5 – High numbers of our young people are entering positive and sustainable post-school destinations.
Community Benefits:	Benefits to our community include developing a more highly skilled, qualified and economically active young population.

5. Consultation

- 5.1 The Executive Director (Education and Youth Employment), the Head of Service (Schools), the Head of Service (Inclusion) and senior officers are currently visiting secondary schools to meet with head teachers and their senior management teams to discuss achievement results for 2016 to help and support all young people in meeting their full potential. Challenging discussions are taking place on how schools are using the analysis of their attainment as a mechanism to inform their targets, particularly on maximising attainment levels and reducing the poverty-related attainment gap. A particular emphasis is now being placed on the use of data to inform future practice to achieve this aim.



JOHN BUTCHER
Executive Director (Education and Youth Employment)

Reference : JB/AMcC

For further information please contact Andrew McClelland, Senior Manager (Education), on 01294 324467.

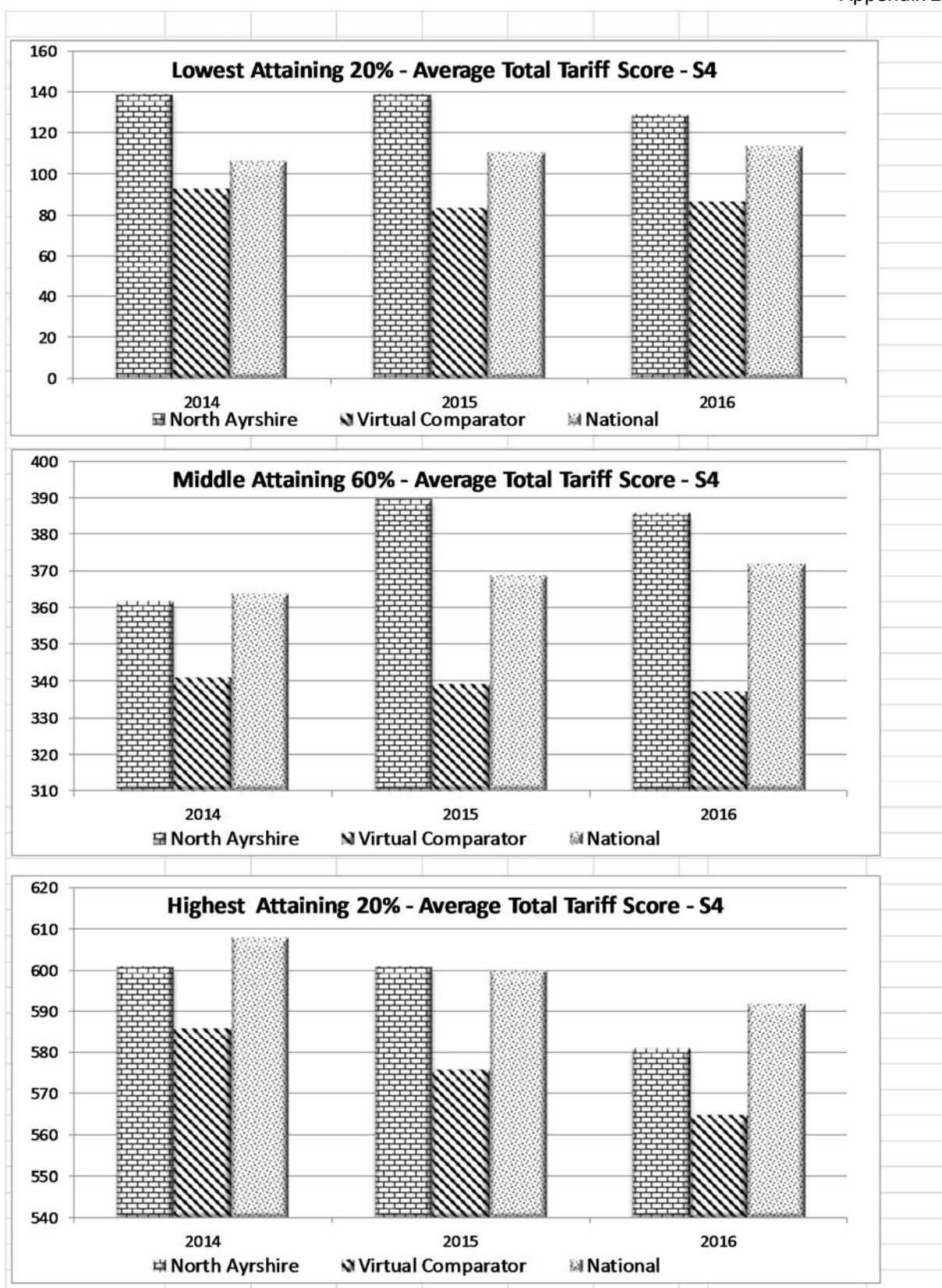
Background Papers

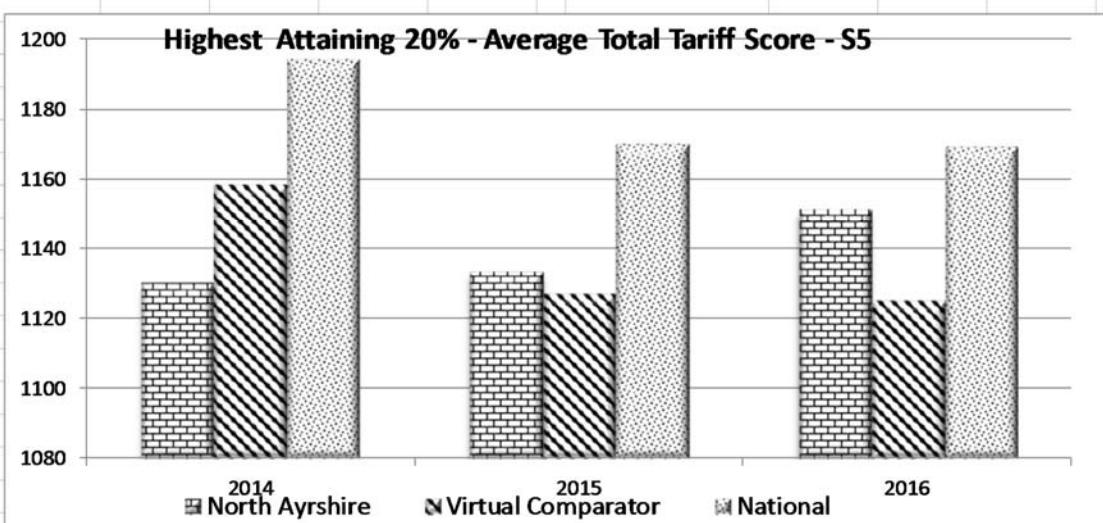
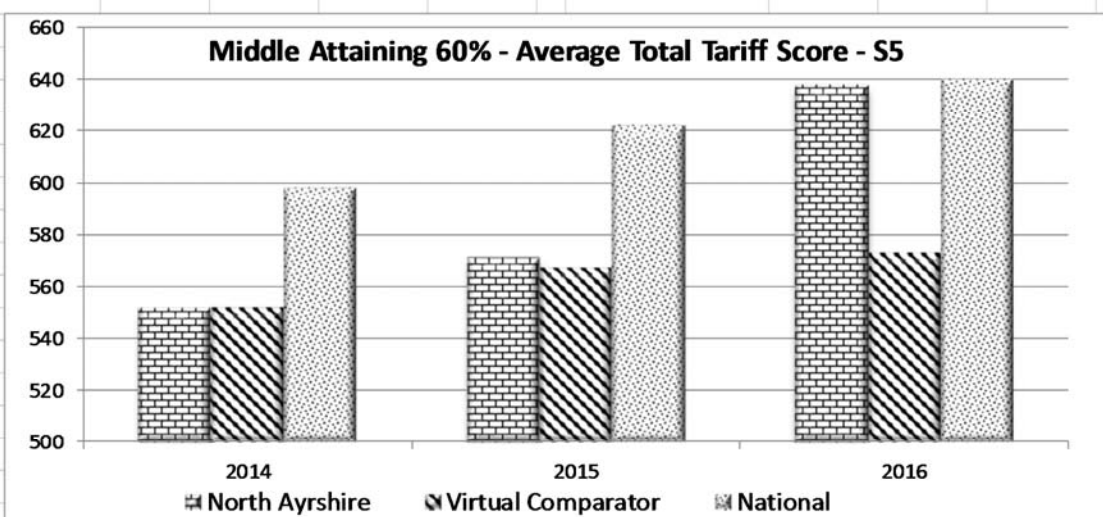
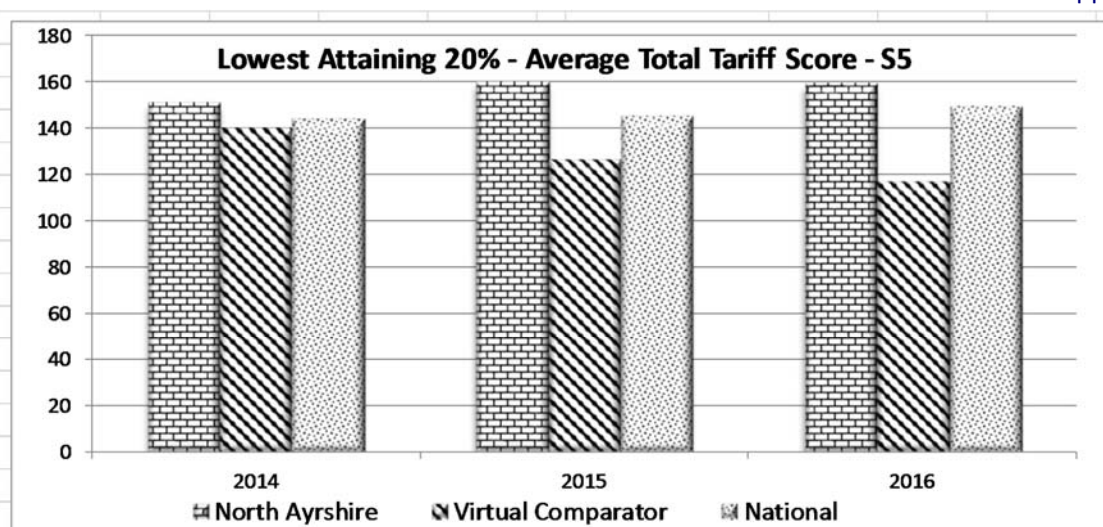
None

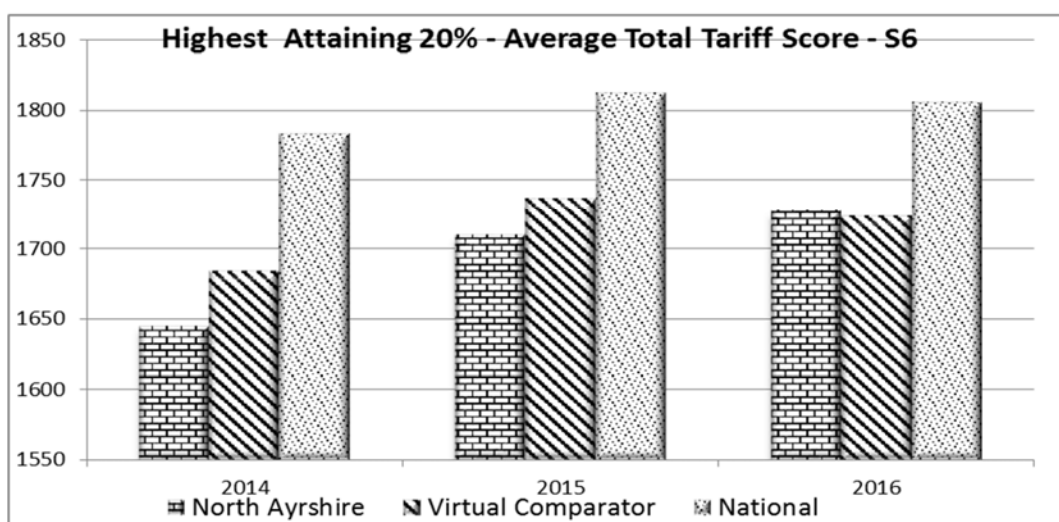
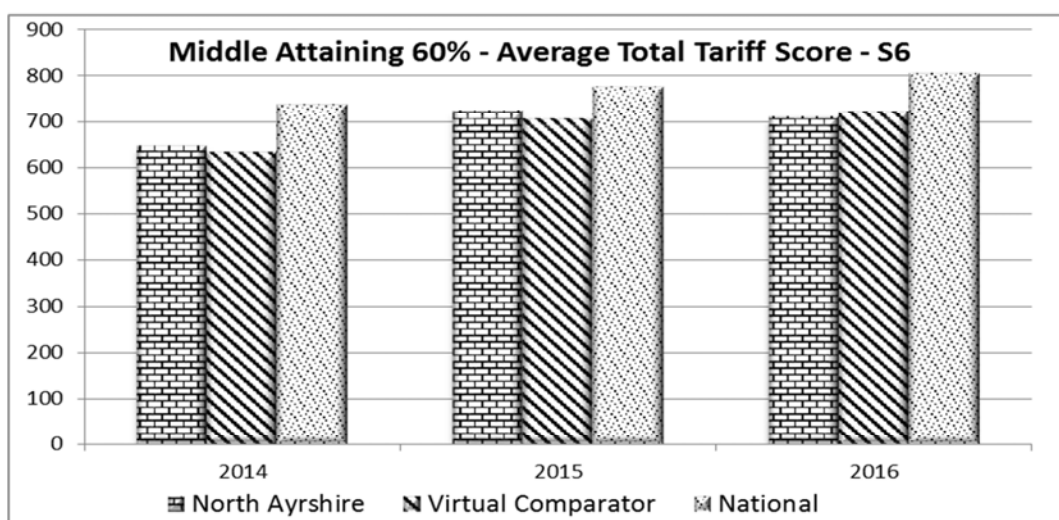
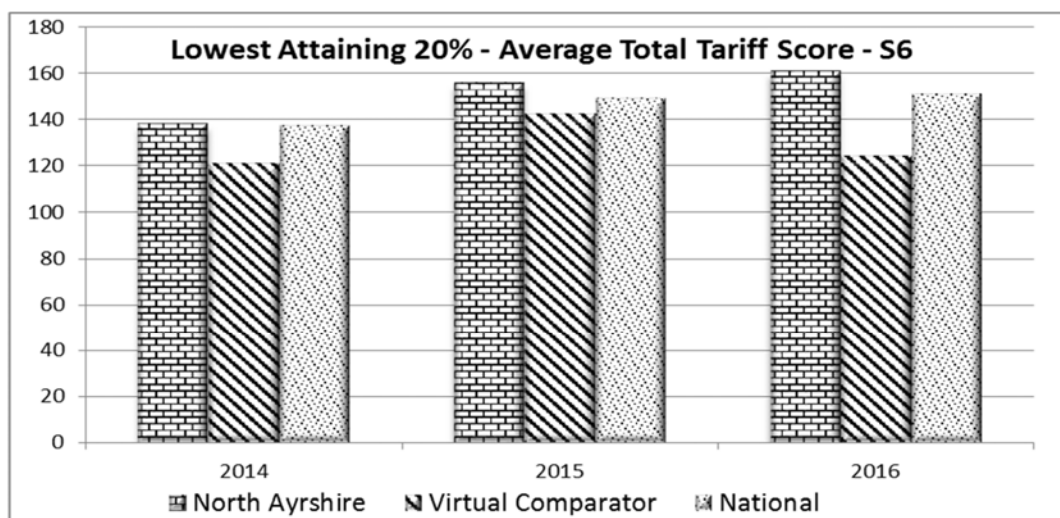
Appendix 1a (S4)

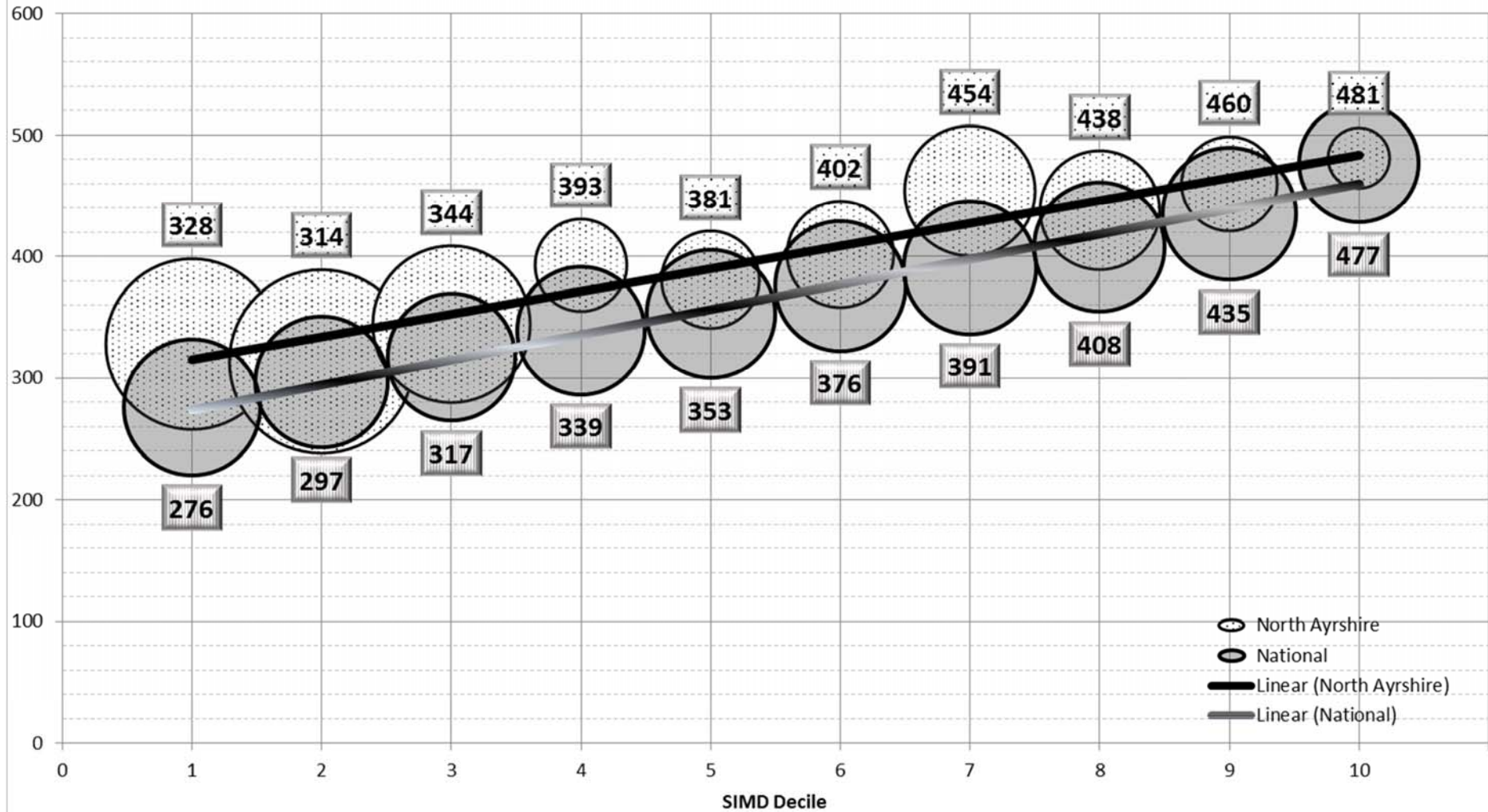
Establishment	Year	% Level 4 Literacy	% Level 5 Literacy	% Level 4 Numeracy	% Level 5 Numeracy	Number in Cohort
North Ayrshire	2011	86.16	36.22	62.85	27.74	1626
North Ayrshire	2012	84.22	35.02	70.78	26.63	1622
North Ayrshire	2013	87.79	42.14	71.82	31.62	1540
North Ayrshire	2014	92.76	55.05	80.68	50.07	1506
North Ayrshire	2015	93.85	60.54	84.01	51.33	1432
North Ayrshire	2016	91.06	68.51	82.12	52.86	1432
Establishment	Year	% Level 4 Literacy	% Level 5 Literacy	% Level 4 Numeracy	% Level 5 Numeracy	Number in Cohort
Virtual Comparator	2011	78.72	33.91	63.68	26.25	16260
Virtual Comparator	2012	81.47	34.9	63.75	26.79	16220
Virtual Comparator	2013	82.19	37.9	68.52	30.63	15400
Virtual Comparator	2014	86.67	50.08	78.13	39.12	15060
Virtual Comparator	2015	87.93	54.32	81.23	43.5	14320
Virtual Comparator	2016	88.28	58.77	82.07	45.01	14320
Establishment	Year	% Level 4 Literacy	% Level 5 Literacy	% Level 4 Numeracy	% Level 5 Numeracy	Number in Cohort
National	2011	79.54	37.56	66.3	29.95	56512
National	2012	82.05	39.97	67.73	31.72	55360
National	2013	82.06	41.18	70	33.98	54991
National	2014	88.06	54.68	80.05	43.7	53988
National	2015	90.73	59.98	84.76	49.6	52297
National	2016	90.77	65.6	86.04	52.51	51297

Establishment	Year	% Level 4 Literacy	% Level 5 Literacy	% Level 6 Literacy	% Level 4 Numeracy	% Level 5 Numeracy	% Level 6 Numeracy	Number in Cohort
North Ayrshire	2012	91.39	55.65	32.87	71.53	46.79	25.47	1637
North Ayrshire	2013	90.48	58.93	34.44	70.41	50.03	27.38	1629
North Ayrshire	2014	92	62.01	36.7	75.43	50.37	26.29	1624
North Ayrshire	2015	92.72	67.46	42.91	78.48	58.18	30.99	1552
North Ayrshire	2016	94.13	72.27	47.6	84.8	65.73	24.53	1500
Establishment	Year	% Level 4 Literacy	% Level 5 Literacy	% Level 6 Literacy	% Level 4 Numeracy	% Level 5 Numeracy	% Level 6 Numeracy	Number in Cohort
Virtual Comparator	2012	87.06	56.22	34.32	71.57	46.6	23.67	16370
Virtual Comparator	2013	88.28	60.21	37.13	74.22	49.88	24.41	16290
Virtual Comparator	2014	89.5	60.09	37.75	74.82	49.72	24.53	16240
Virtual Comparator	2015	91.43	65.24	42.33	79.21	54.36	26.89	15520
Virtual Comparator	2016	90.27	71.05	47.53	84.39	59.5	24.4	15000
Establishment	Year	% Level 4 Literacy	% Level 5 Literacy	% Level 6 Literacy	% Level 4 Numeracy	% Level 5 Numeracy	% Level 6 Numeracy	Number in Cohort
National	2012	88.3	60.68	39.45	74.14	51.01	27.64	58082
National	2013	89.2	63.49	41.26	76.41	53.16	28.01	57093
National	2014	90.64	65.35	43.49	77.98	55.13	29.54	56029
National	2015	91.36	67.93	45.88	80.23	57.32	30.47	55673
National	2016	91.94	75.03	51.92	86.4	63.92	28.59	54632



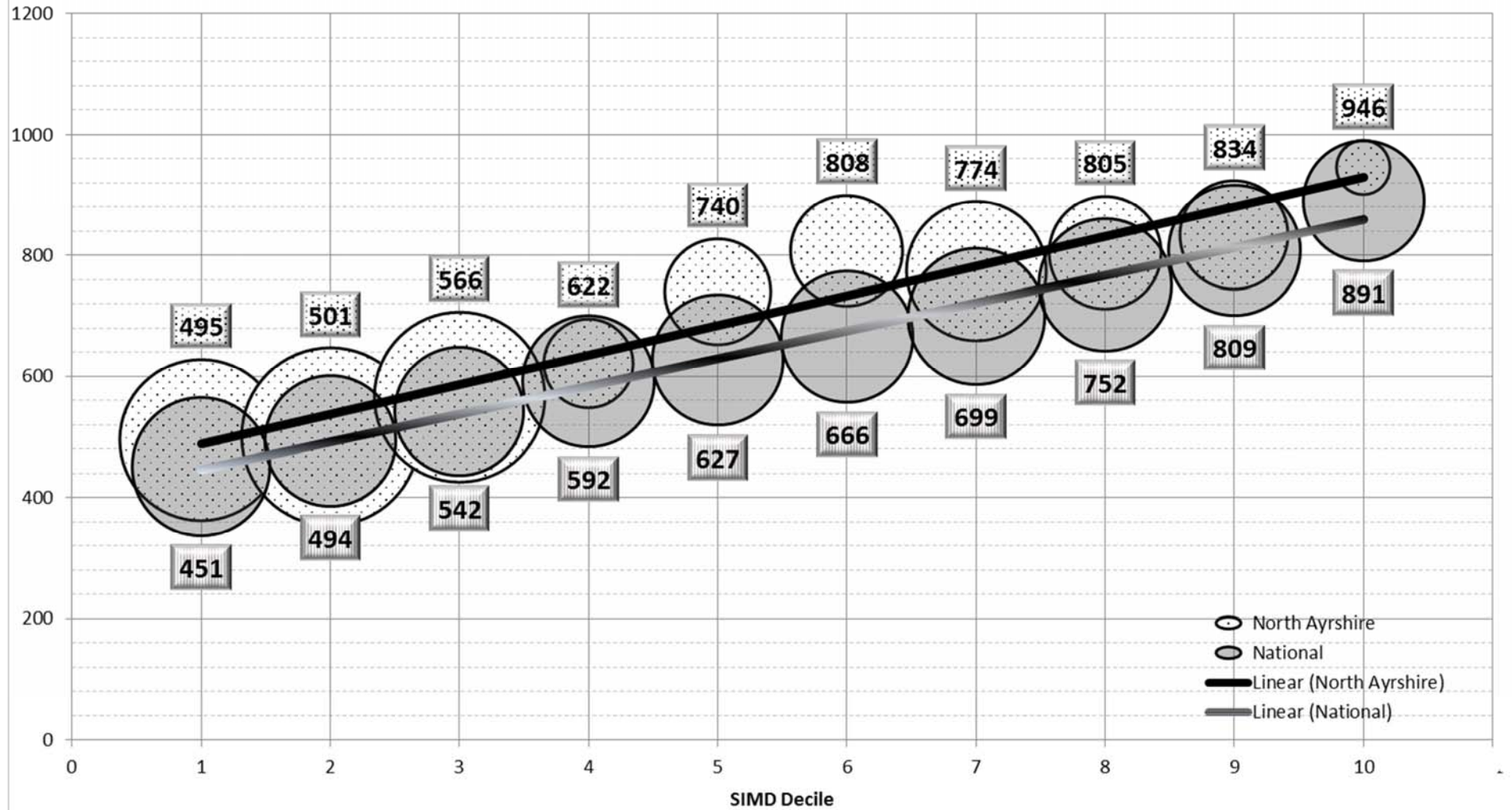




Average Total Tariff Score by SIMD decile - 2016**S4**

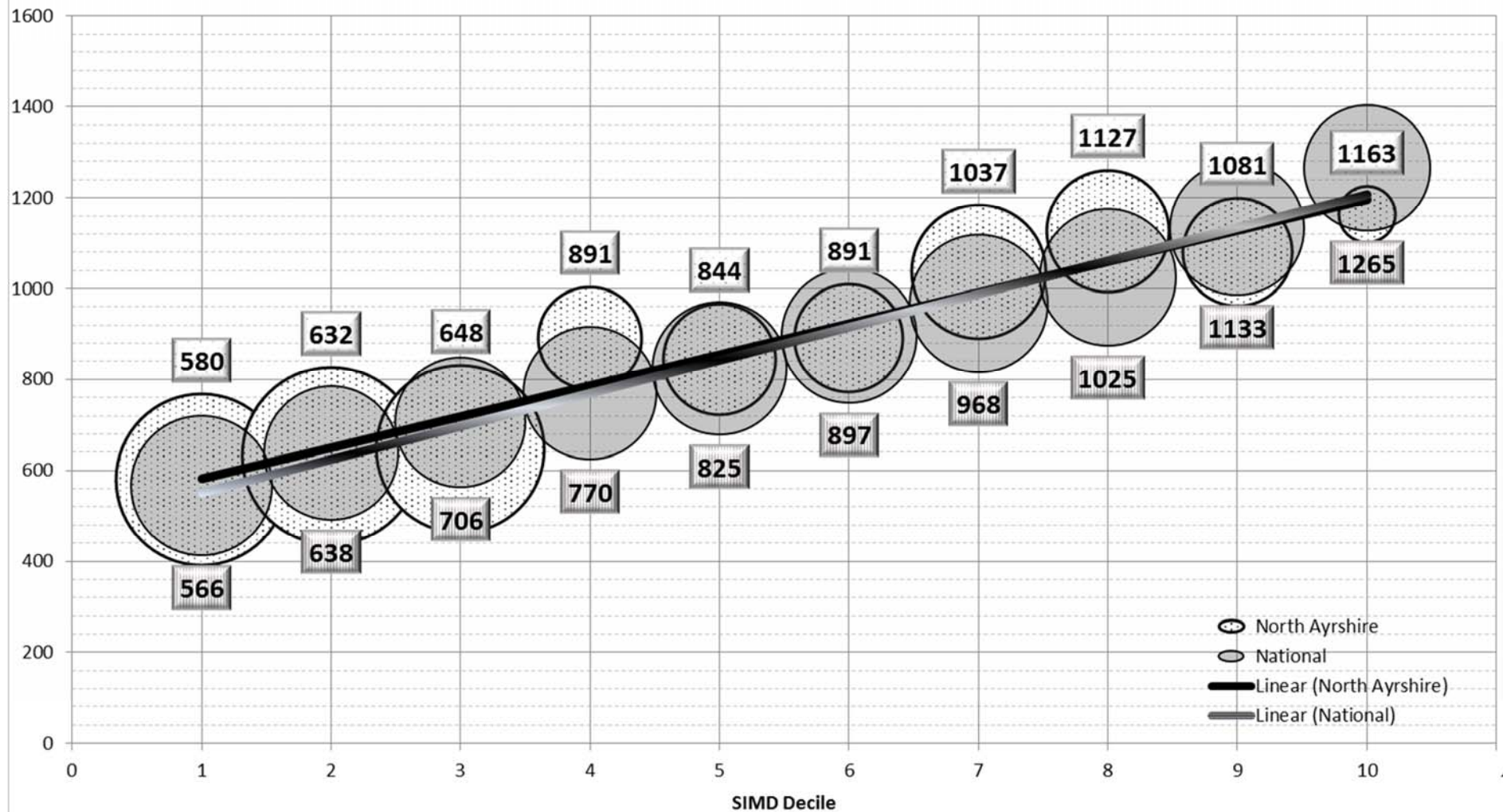
Average Total Tariff Score by SIMD decile - 2016

S5



Average Total Tariff Score by SIMD decile - 2016

S6



S4 2016 NAC

Awards	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5 (A-C)	Number in Cohort
1 or more	96.72%	96.72%	96.65%	95.18%	75.28%	1432
2 or more	95.25%	95.25%	95.18%	92.53%	63.20%	1432
3 or more	92.74%	92.74%	92.67%	90.50%	53.91%	1432
4 or more	89.87%	89.87%	89.87%	86.17%	44.34%	1432
5 or more	84.29%	84.29%	84.22%	79.75%	36.73%	1432
6 or more	74.37%	74.37%	74.23%	68.30%	26.96%	1432
7 or more	55.03%	55.03%	55.03%	49.65%	18.85%	1432

S4 2016 Virtual Comparator

Awards	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5 (A-C)	Number in Cohort
1 or more	96.14%	95.96%	95.59%	92.96%	73.28%	14320
2 or more	93.67%	93.52%	93.05%	89.00%	60.17%	14320
3 or more	90.63%	90.46%	89.94%	85.55%	49.70%	14320
4 or more	86.66%	86.48%	86.12%	80.45%	40.94%	14320
5 or more	79.02%	78.95%	78.55%	72.09%	31.89%	14320
6 or more	62.86%	62.74%	62.50%	56.16%	23.25%	14320
7 or more	31.81%	31.66%	31.45%	27.53%	10.73%	14320

S4 2015 NAC

Awards	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5 (A-C)	Number in Cohort
1 or more	97.91%	97.91%	97.91%	95.95%	75.00%	1432
2 or more	97.07%	97.07%	97.07%	93.65%	63.41%	1432
3 or more	95.25%	95.25%	95.25%	91.90%	53.28%	1432
4 or more	93.72%	93.72%	93.58%	88.97%	45.32%	1432
5 or more	90.15%	90.15%	90.08%	84.29%	36.31%	1432
6 or more	84.22%	84.22%	83.80%	76.54%	28.84%	1432
7 or more	66.20%	66.20%	66.06%	59.36%	20.53%	1432

S5 based on S4 roll

NAC - 2016

Awards	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5 (A-C)	Level 6 (A-C)	Number in Cohort
1 or more	97.85%	97.85%	97.85%	96.05%	80.46%	52.11%	1443
2 or more	97.02%	97.02%	97.02%	94.18%	72.14%	40.33%	1443
3 or more	95.22%	95.22%	95.22%	92.24%	65.00%	32.22%	1443
4 or more	93.83%	93.83%	93.69%	89.74%	58.07%	22.80%	1443
5 or more	91.34%	91.34%	91.27%	86.69%	48.02%	14.35%	1443

S5 based on S4 roll

Virtual Comparator - 2016

Awards	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5 (A-C)	Level 6 (A-C)	Number in Cohort
1 or more	96.79%	96.60%	96.20%	93.58%	80.10%	49.60%	14430
2 or more	95.09%	94.82%	94.41%	91.03%	70.67%	37.36%	14430
3 or more	92.95%	92.70%	92.22%	88.66%	62.27%	28.49%	14430
4 or more	90.30%	90.15%	89.72%	85.66%	53.83%	19.72%	14430
5 or more	86.63%	86.46%	86.06%	81.30%	43.80%	11.84%	14430

S5 based on S4 roll

NAC - 2015

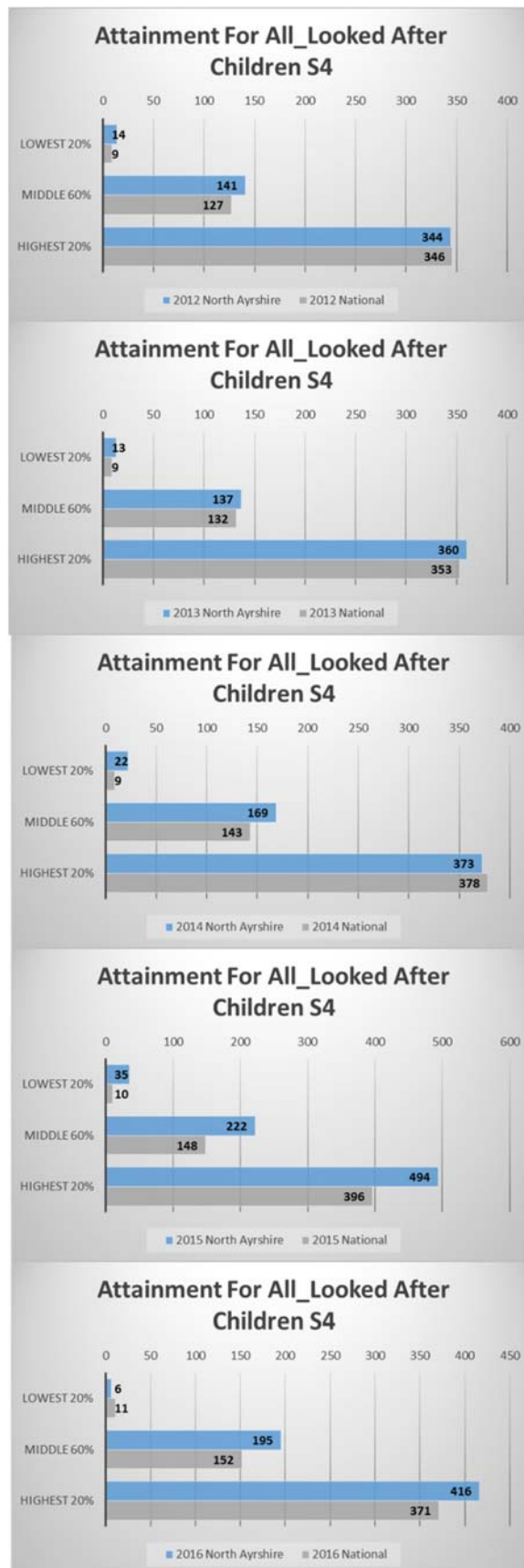
Awards	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5 (A-C)	Level 6 (A-C)	Number in Cohort
1 or more	99.07%	99.07%	98.93%	97.67%	79.68%	48.63%	1501
2 or more	98.53%	98.53%	98.33%	95.47%	69.89%	34.98%	1501
3 or more	97.53%	97.47%	97.34%	92.80%	61.16%	25.32%	1501
4 or more	96.14%	96.07%	95.87%	89.67%	49.97%	17.85%	1501
5 or more	93.00%	92.94%	92.87%	86.34%	39.64%	10.66%	1501

NAC – 2016 – S4 performance at National 5

National rate of National 5 presentations per pupil	3.08
Potential presentations in NAC under the national rate of National 5 presentations	4308
National pass rate ¹ (A-C)	79.4%
Potential passes under the national pass rate	3420

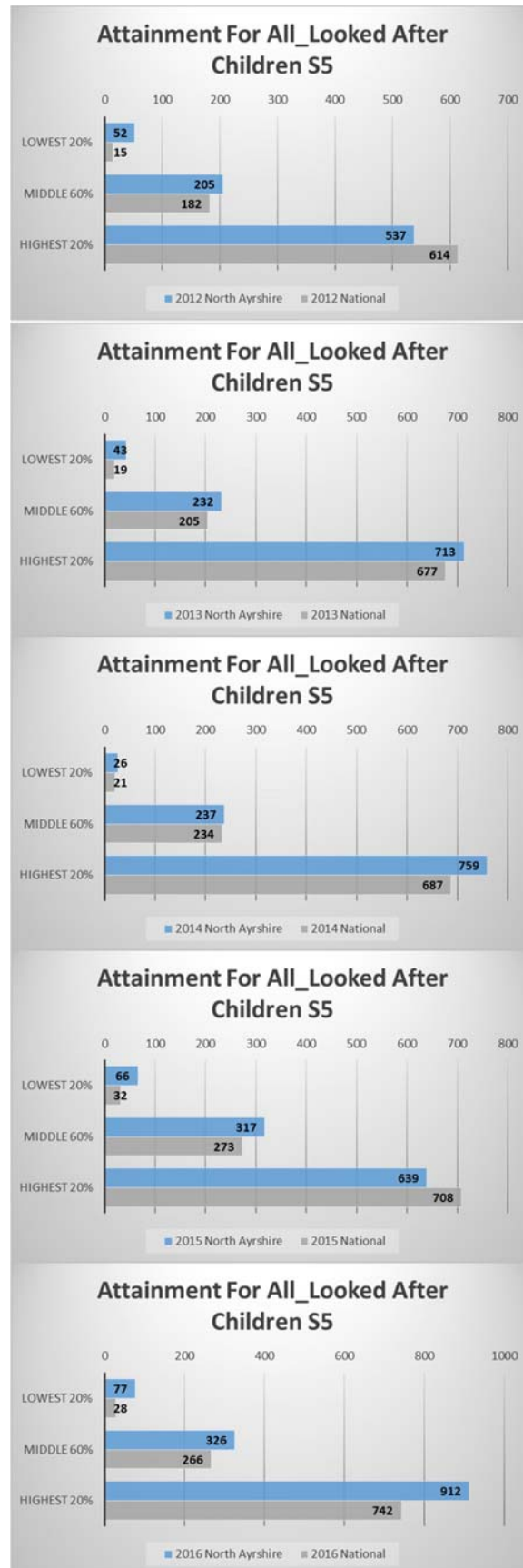
NAC rate of National 5 presentations per pupil	4.30
Actual National 5 presentations in NAC	6013
NAC pass rate (A-C)	76%
NAC actual passes (A-C) out of actual presentations 2016	4565

¹ National pass rate presented for all NAT5 pupils S4-S6

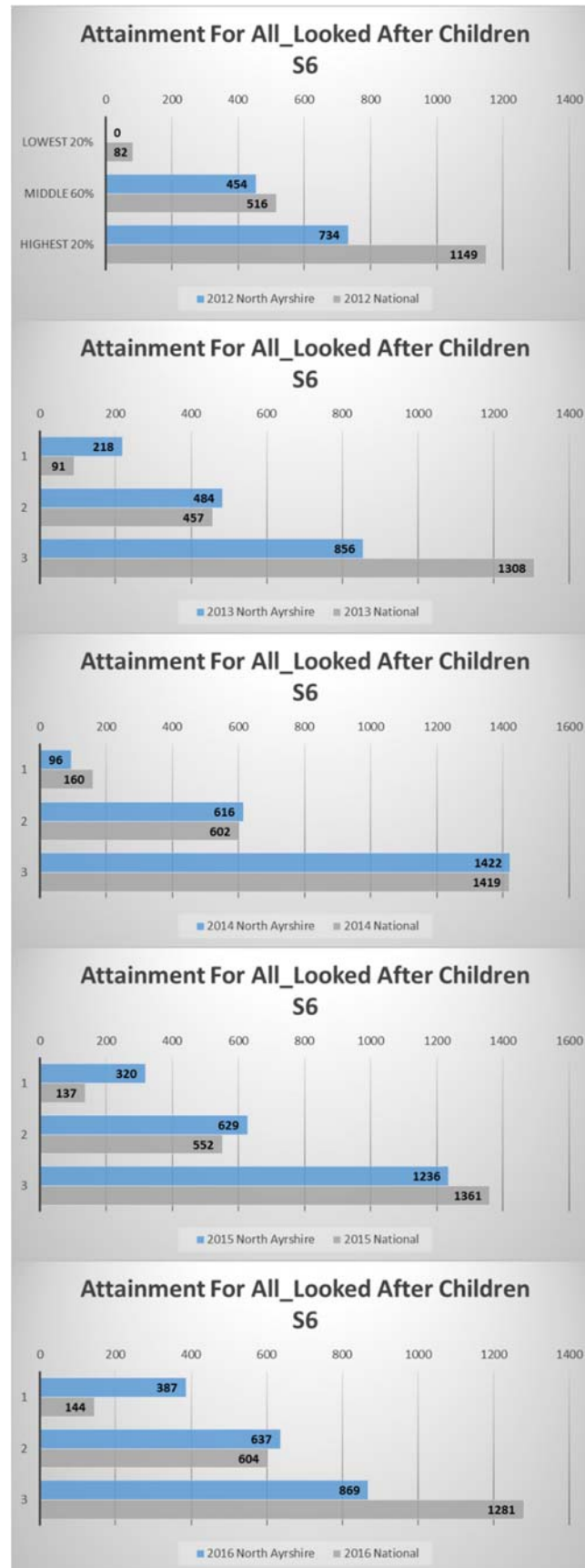


Please note that S4 attainment statistics refers to an average of 58 LAC pupils every year for North Ayrshire

Appendix 6



Please note that S5 attainment statistics refers to an average of 35 LAC pupils every year for North Ayrshire



Please note that S6 attainment statistics refers to an average of 8 LAC pupils every year for North Ayrshire

NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

Agenda Item 4

25 October 2016

Cabinet

Title: **Annual Participation Measure for 16-19 year olds**

Purpose: To report on the progress being made with the introduction of this annual measure. To report on the data available for North Ayrshire and Scotland.

Recommendation: To note the data (with the proviso that this is still an experimental set of statistics) and agree the proposed actions set out in section 3 of this paper.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The release of the 2nd Annual participation Measure by Skills Development Scotland (SDS) is a response to the Scottish Government's commitment (Opportunities For All) to offer a place in learning or training to every 16-19 year old who is not currently in employment, education or training.
- 1.2 This measure is still classed as "experimental statistics: data being developed" as it is based on a new and developing data source. Although we must treat this experimental data with a degree of caution, it is providing a useful indication of the participation levels of this age group over a period of time. The data will help shape future policy and better inform targeted interventions by the Council and its partners.
- 1.3 This paper will provide an overview of the background context, the national and local statistics and the actions proposed which are informed by this data.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Scottish Government has historically released an annual set of statistics – School Leaver Destination Report (SLDR) which measures the first post-school destination of leavers from all secondary schools.

- 2.2 In North Ayrshire, we have had particular success in improving the numbers of our school leavers who move into a first positive destination. Our schools and their partners work well to ensure that pupils have access to information, advice and guidance that supports their transition from school. Further information on the SLDR is available in Cabinet Paper 16th February 2016 (Appendix 1).
- 2.3 The Participation Measure does not identify Looked After young people as a discrete cohort. However, we do know from our School Leaver statistics that in North Ayrshire, first positive destinations for this group are consistently better than the national average. For the school year 14/15, 83% of Looked After young people moved into a positive destination against a national figure of 74.6%. A degree of caution has to be exercised when drawing comparisons as numbers fluctuate from year to year and our analysis is based on those who were Looked After at the time of the school census exercise. Our schools have a particular focus on this group of young people and together with colleagues in Social Services, we ensure that these young people have the best possible support at (and beyond) this transition stage.
- 2.4 It has been recognised for some time, both locally and nationally, that whilst the SLDR provides a robust measure of young people's first transition from school, it does not tell us about their subsequent journey. Given the fact that our SLDR reflects a very positive picture (at the last count, 3rd best local authority area in Scotland), youth unemployment in the area remains relatively high. Therefore, the Participation Measure and the data it provides is of particular use to us in understanding why this is the case.
- 2.5 This "experimental" Participation Measure (16-19) dataset has some key results that are of particular note:
- 2.6 Across Scotland, 90.4% of 16-19 year olds are participating in education, training and employment. The figure for North Ayrshire is 89.9%. This statistic is a measure over time, not just a snapshot on a particular day.
- 2.7 A breakdown by age is reported. Across Scotland, 98.7% of young people – aged 16 - are participating in education, training and employment, the figure for North Ayrshire is 98.8%. (This includes young people at school). However, for those aged 19, this level of participation falls considerably - across Scotland 81.7% are participating – 80.6% in North Ayrshire.
- 2.8 Those living in the most deprived SIMD decile areas are less likely to be participating. Across the whole 16-19 cohort in Scotland, 78.8% of those in decile 1 are participating with 96.2% of those in decile 10. A gap of 17.4%.

- 2.9 It is important to note that by the age of 19, a relatively high percentage of young people are recorded as having an “unconfirmed” status – 12.6% across Scotland, 15% in North Ayrshire. Many of those recorded as unconfirmed could be in employment but current data sources on this are not robust – work is taking place nationally with HMRC with a view to obtaining more comprehensive data on those in employment.

3. Proposals

(Can the Cabinet note the following activities)

- 3.1 Education & Youth Employment who support school leavers and Economies & Communities who procure programmes to support unemployed people, will use this data to inform future actions. This will be a co-ordinated approach to ensure that the service to the right young people is improved.
- 3.2 We have worked with Skills Development Scotland nationally to support the development of this experimental dataset and will continue to work with them to further improve the quality of this data.
- 3.3 Through further development of the Senior Phase curriculum in our Secondary schools we will ensure that as well as an increasing range of vocational and personal development options are on offer. The skills young people need are developed to enable them to enter the employment market. This will be aligned with local labour market information.
- 3.4 A small group of the most vulnerable young people are offered additional targeted support. We are in the process of fully evaluating & refreshing the delivery model with a view to more robust early identification of potential participants whilst still at school. A transition programme will be added to the model. Further, closer alignment with the employability pipeline provision co-ordinated by Economies & Communities should result in more onward progressions leading to employment outcomes for participants.
- 3.5 We are working with Ayrshire College to identify the reasons for the level of drop-out from their full-time courses. Around a third of school leavers from North Ayrshire schools progress to this College and therefore any level of drop-out from there has an impact on the participation measure.

- 3.6 We have had early discussions with the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) locally with a view to carrying out a short piece of research with new young benefit claimants. Through this exercise we will identify the “journey” of those young people since leaving school. It is hoped that this will help us understand the reasons for the “mismatch” between our good SLDR statistic and the level of youth unemployment in the area and ensure we take action to support and develop initiatives to reduce the levels of youth unemployment in the area. We will be able to identify if there are common reasons for young people not making subsequent successful transitions and this will help inform Council Services and our other partners in our efforts to support all of our young people.

4. Implications

Financial:	There will be the cost of a small scale research project which will be funded from existing resources.
Human Resources:	There are no human resource implications arising from this report.
Legal:	We will ensure that any data sharing implications will be taken into account when working with external agencies.
Equality:	This work will have a positive impact on the most disadvantaged young people as we will have a particular focus on reducing the gaps.
Environmental & Sustainability:	There are no environmental or sustainability implications arising directly from this report.
Key Priorities:	Directly impacts on Council priorities: 1) Growing our economy, increasing employment & regenerating towns 2) Ensuring people have the right skills for learning, life & work.
Community Benefits:	

5. Consultation

- 5.1 We have had discussions with SDS, Ayrshire College and DWP in relation to the proposed actions contained in this report and we have their agreement and full support to work in partnership to further improve employment and economic outcomes for young people in North Ayrshire.



JOHN BUTCHER
Executive Director (Education and Youth Employment)

Reference : JB/LC/GR/EMcW

For further information please contact Laura Cook, (Education & Youth Employment), on 01294 324454 or Greig Robson, (Economies & Communities), on 01294 324951

Background Papers

Annual Participation Measures for 16-19 Year Olds in Scotland

NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL
Agenda Item 7
16 February 2016
Cabinet

Title:	School Leaver Destinations 2014/2015
Purpose:	To inform Cabinet of the latest statistical information about North Ayrshire school leavers from the School Leaver Destination Return and the ongoing monitoring and tracking of the destinations and participation of young people after leaving school.
Recommendation:	That the Cabinet agrees to note (i) the information set out in the School Leaver Destination Report and the continued improvement in the post-school outcomes for young people; and (ii) the development of the Data Hub and its related statistical information and to agree to the ongoing development work to enhance outcomes for young people that will result in initial positive destinations being sustained.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The School Leaver Destination Report (SLDR) is produced as a result of work undertaken each year by Skills Development Scotland (SDS) on behalf of the Scottish Government. The information is based on the status of each leaver from publicly funded Secondary Schools as at 5 October 2015 and therefore only represents a snapshot in time.
- 1.2 There has long been recognition that whilst the SLDR provides very useful data on the initial progressions of school leavers across Scotland, the monitoring and tracking of young people's ongoing, longer term participation, required further improvements. There are extensive ongoing national developments, led by SDS, which will improve the ability of all partners to better support young people beyond school and ensure that positive destinations are sustained.

- 1.3 In addition to informing Cabinet of this year's statistical information, this paper will outline some of the latest key developments and the potential impact they have to enhance our work to improve young people's longer term outcomes in the future.

2. Background

- 2.1 The information contained in the SLDR is used by Scottish Government to report on the National Performance Indicator "Increase the proportion of young people in learning, training or work".
- 2.2 The Council uses the information to inform initiatives and programmes developed as part of our approach to our Youth Employment Strategy and recent developments in relation to "Developing Scotland's Young Workforce". The data provides evidence that our schools continue to ensure that young people are developing Skills for Learning, Life and Work and that the transition from school to post-school is being effectively supported.
- 2.3 Other agencies and partners use the information to inform their programmes and initiatives, for example, SDS use the "person level" data to identify individuals who have not moved into a positive destination. They are then able to offer their advice and guidance to support them into a future positive destination. Universities working on widening access programmes are able to use the statistical information to identify the geographical areas most needing their support. Colleges, training providers and central Government Departments are further examples of organisations using this data to further enhance the work they are doing to improve outcomes for young people.
- 2.4 The report provides information on a school by school basis. It highlights the number and percentages of the initial destination for school leavers.

The table highlighting this summary information is attached at Appendix 1.

The key findings from the report for 2014-2015 are as follows:

- In North Ayrshire there was a total of 1529 leavers from our secondary schools. (up 48 from last year's total of 1481).
- Overall the percentage of leavers entering a positive destination from North Ayrshire secondary schools is **96.1% - an increase of 2% from the previous year. This is 3.2% above the national average of 92.9% - North Ayrshire Council being 3rd out of 32 local authorities.**

- The percentage of leavers entering Higher Education (classed as HNC or above) is **36.4%**, a **rise of 0.9%** from last year, but 1.9% lower than the national average.
- The percentage of leavers entering Further Education is also **36.4%**, a **rise of 1% from last year and 8.6% higher than the national average**.
- The percentage of leavers **entering Employment is 20.2%**, a **rise of 1.6%** now 1.5% below national average. **This represents 33 more leavers moving directly into employment than last year and 87 more than 2 years ago.**
- The percentage of leavers not moving into an initial positive destination is 3.9%. This statistic is broken down further into those who are “unemployed, seeking” - 3%, those who are “unemployed, not seeking” - 0.8% and one school leaver recorded as “unconfirmed”.

2.5 In addition to the high level statistical data we receive, individual pupil data enables us to work with our partners to provide appropriate post school interventions. We have already established that since the date of the formal measure, **a further 8 pupils** have moved into education, employment or training. SDS case officers provide support to the young people who are under 18 and unemployed. Those who are 18+, secure additional support from Job Centre Plus.

2.6 SDS, on behalf of the Scottish Government published an “experimental” dataset in 2015 known as the “Participation Measure”. This is designed to provide statistical information about the 16-19 year old cohort as a whole. Although experimental at this stage, this data appears to confirm what has been evident to us over the past few years - our schools have made real improvement in their support for leavers, but that making subsequent progressions is not as successful, leading in some cases to unemployment. We outline in our development priorities how we propose to collaborate with post school partners to ensure that our very positive post-school progressions lead to long term sustained outcomes for young people.

3. Proposals

3.1 It is proposed that we focus our future work in two distinct areas:

- Those which affect young people while still at school; and
- Those where we can work with our post-school partners to shape practice that will result in longer term sustainable outcomes for our school leavers.

3.2 Priority 1

We propose to build on the excellent practice our schools have established by:

Further developing links with Further & Higher Education providers to ensure that all school leavers are aware of the range of options open to them. We have regular partnership dialogue with Ayrshire College and Scottish Universities, particularly on their Widening Access programmes.

Further developing links with local employers to make sure that our schools have a good awareness of the local labour market. This will ensure employers become better informed and engaged in the work being carried out in schools to prepare young people for the world of work.

Ensure that school staff have the knowledge and expertise required to better prepare school leavers for the world of work. This work includes the full implementation of the recommendations contained in "Scotland's Youth Employment Strategy", which built on the "Developing Scotland's Young Workforce Report" (DYW). These include the introduction of national standards for Work Experience and Career Education together with offering pupils the opportunity to work towards "Foundation Apprenticeships" as part of their school curriculum. A Principal Teacher in each Secondary School, plus an ASN lead Principal Teacher, will take forward the recommendations in DYW.

3.3 Priority 2

We propose to build on existing work with our post-school partners to ensure that young people are not only achieving a first positive destination, but that those positive progressions are either (a) sustained in the long-term or (b) lead to further positive destinations.

We will continue to build on:

- Work with Skills Development Scotland (SDS) both nationally and locally to make best use of the data that is becoming available through the data hub. This is now being populated by all Scottish post-school partners (except employers) providing an effective tool to monitor and track young people 16-19 (and potentially beyond). It allows us to identify when a young person has dropped out of, or completed a short college or university course, as well as training courses administered by SDS. This means that partners can now take prompt action to work with young people and move them into a subsequent positive destination.

- Work with colleagues in East & South Ayrshire Councils, Ayrshire College and SDS to establish a protocol that identifies roles and responsibilities for partners, when young people drop out of or complete college courses.
- Work with Ayrshire College to improve aspects of school to college transition planning for school leavers. This will ensure that the college has the best possible information to help them support school leavers. This should improve the support available to more vulnerable groups. It will enable the college to intervene quickly when students face barriers and challenges that might affect their ability to sustain a college place.
- To share good practice that exists across all our schools. In particular how we support school leavers and encourage post-school partners to take learning from our practice, ensuring progression to a positive outcome remains everyone's priority.

4. Implications

Financial:	Funding available from Scottish Government will fund the temporary responsibility payment for the Principal Teachers in our schools to ensure that DYW is implemented in full. This is in line with the recommendation in the report that a "senior staff resource" should be allocated to this.
Human Resources:	There are no HR implications arising from this report.
Legal:	The sharing of data is subject to a data sharing agreement with SDS which was approved by Legal Services.
Equality:	Our proposals will further improve outcomes for disadvantaged groups - there are specific recommendations in relation to this in DYW and our local implementation plan.
Environmental & Sustainability:	There are no Environmental and Sustainability implications arising from this report.
Key Priorities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Priority - "Increase the proportion of young people in learning, training or work". • North Ayrshire Council's Priority 3 - "Ensuring people have the right skills for learning, life & work". • Education & Youth Employment's Priority 5 - "High numbers of our young people are entering positive and sustained post-school destinations".
Community Benefits:	N/A

5. Consultation

- 5.1 No specific consultation was undertaken as part of this report, however there is extensive ongoing partnership with all schools, Skills Development Scotland and Ayrshire College.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'JB' followed by a stylized flourish.

JOHN BUTCHER
Executive Director (Education and Youth Employment)

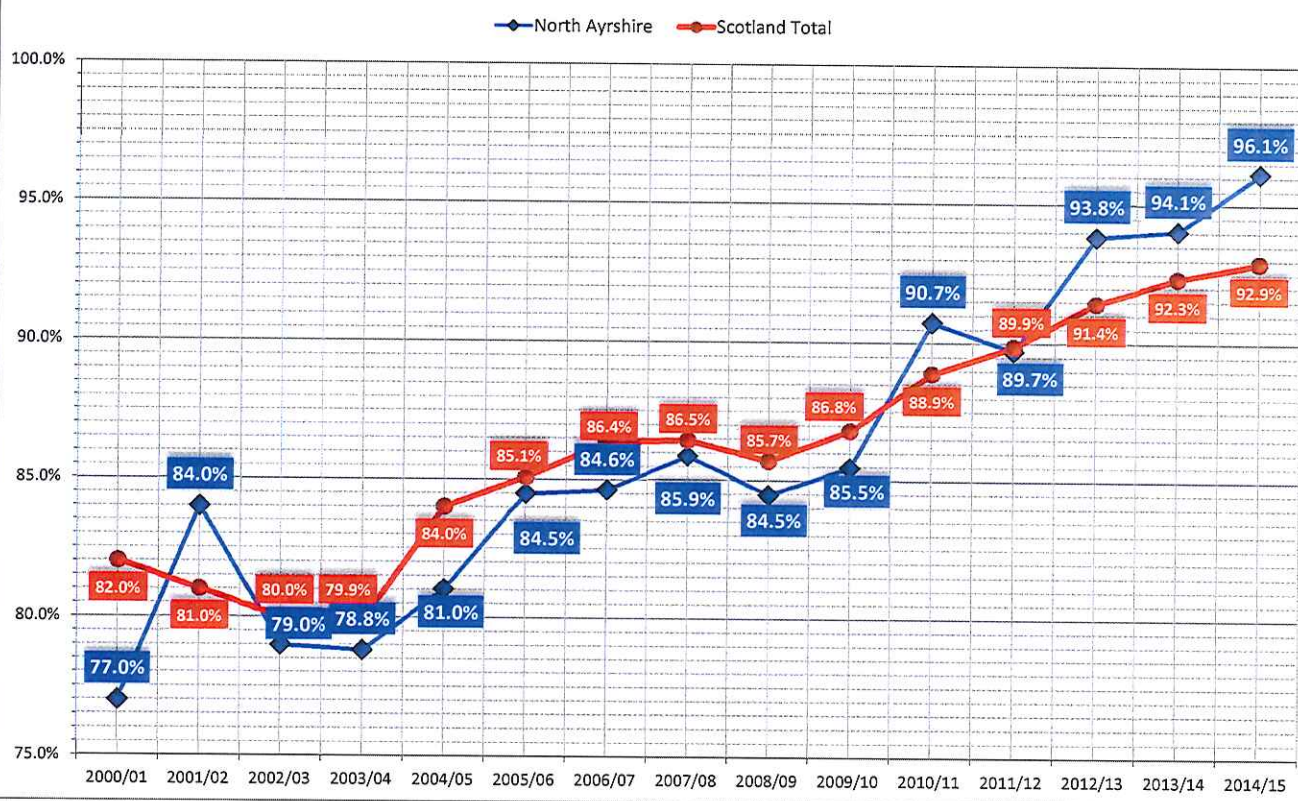
Reference : JB/LC/JN

For further information please contact John Butcher, Executive Director on 01294 324411

Background Papers

-

% school leavers into positive destinations 2001-2015



NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

Agenda Item 5

25 October 2016

Cabinet

Title: **Education Scotland Validated Self-Evaluation of Psychological Services**

Purpose: To inform Cabinet of outcomes from the Education Scotland Validated Self-Evaluation of Psychological Service.

Recommendation: Agree to support the next stage of service development, which involves piloting a new service delivery model.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This paper outlines the main points and actions arising from the Validated Self-Evaluation (VSE) of North Ayrshire Psychological Services carried out in collaboration with Education Scotland in May 2016. Education Scotland validated the service's self-evaluation, and noted the progress made since the inspection in 2009. A strong commitment to self-evaluation was noted. Stakeholders and partners clearly valued the service provided by North Ayrshire Educational Psychology Service, and demonstrated strong and positive relationships with the team. It was felt there was a strengthening synergy between the service's work and the educational priorities of the council. The leadership of the new Principal Educational Psychologist and his senior leadership team was felt to be impacting positively on the quality of the service delivered to children, young people and their families. In terms of action planning, it was felt that the service clearly recognises its strengths and areas for improvement, and has a strong service commitment and authority support to deliver the agreed improvements. The VSE has informed the next stage of service improvement planning, a clear action plan is being implemented and ongoing consultation, with key stakeholders, will drive improved outcomes.

2. Background

- 2.1 The maintenance of a Psychological Service is a statutory duty for all education authorities as prescribed in section 4 of the Education (Scotland) Act 1980, with subsequent amendments (see appendix 1).

- 2.2 The main functions of a psychological service are consultation, assessment, intervention, training and development and research. The service works at 3 different levels, the child and family, school and establishment and at the authority level, offering strategic advice and consultation on a range of matters.
- 2.3 Recent evaluation in North Ayrshire demonstrates that the service is involved in a range of work, which is, more likely, than other services to be involved at whole authority level, influencing policy development. Traditionally the role of individual work has been around additional support needs, and in North Ayrshire this is no different, reflecting the higher than average levels of Additional Support Needs (ASN) in North Ayrshire schools. Increasingly, a higher percentage of work is to do with wellbeing concerns and mental health issues, reflecting a national trend.
- 2.4 The ongoing high demand for the services of Educational Psychologists has been reflected in Scottish Attainment Challenge bids- almost all Attainment Challenge authorities, including North Ayrshire, have sought an additional Educational Psychologist at part of their bid to help drive the efforts to narrow the attainment gap.
- 2.5 The Validated Self-Evaluation, (VSE) comes at a time of significant change in Scottish Education, with the Attainment Challenge, National Improvement Framework, Children and Young People's Act 2014, and possible changes in governance. Given these change drivers, it has been acknowledged nationally that maintaining the status quo is not an option.
- 2.6 Validated self-evaluation is an activity which supports and challenges the work of Educational Psychology Services (EPS). For North Ayrshire, this involved the EPS bringing together a wide range of partners and stakeholders across 4 days. Senior Education Officers, early years staff, primary, secondary and special provision Head Teachers, young people, health practitioners, children and families representatives as well as colleagues from other educational psychology services were engaged in this process. All these parties contributed to the evaluation led by Education Scotland.
- 2.7 Self-evaluation in EPS is expected to be continuous, embedded, proportionate and to be focused on service users. The service gathers a wide range of views and data on an ongoing basis to self-evaluate including those of parents, children, schools and other professionals.

- 2.8 During the 4 day self-evaluation period, Education Scotland inspectors oversaw a series of highly structured and planned self-evaluation activities. The process is different from an inspection, with the focus on the service demonstrating a clear understanding of where it is at and what it needs to improve. The process involved robust conversation to challenge the service further.
- 2.9 The VSE focused on the contribution of the service in two main areas, Learning and Teaching and Partnership working. Both themes reflected the Scottish Government's national priorities and related to the contributions made by the EPS in raising attainment, addressing disadvantage and supporting and implementing, *Getting it Right For Every Child*.
- 2.10 Following the Strategic Review of Education 2014-15, it was proposed that the service refocus its delivery to reflect the changing context of need in North Ayrshire, and Council Strategic Priorities. In particular, it was proposed that the future direction for the service involve:
- Placing greater emphasis on capacity building and professional development for staff to meet the needs of a changing teaching profession, and widen impact for *all* learners
 - Developing an enhanced role supporting high quality learning and teaching in the authority, including supporting the professional learning academy
 - Promoting evidence based practices in terms of numeracy, literacy, wider pedagogy and the promotion of positive relationships
 - Using the service research function in the context of raising attainment and achievement
 - More integrated working at Directorate level, with a greater emphasis on high quality advice and consultation on policy and strategy and
 - Continuing focus on being an accessible service to offer the right support at the right time for the most vulnerable children and young people across North Ayrshire, through consultation, assessment and intervention advice
- 2.11 The VSE process concluded that, in relation to learning and teaching, the service was engaged in a wide range of evidence based initiatives to embed the health and wellbeing agenda, and that this was a well-established area of practice.

The partnership working theme focused on reviewing the service multiagency models of practice within early years settings, and primary and secondary school contexts.

Across the themes, the service was able to draw on self evaluation evidence that suggested a number of key strengths:

- Highly motivated and creative psychologists who have embraced and responded to a number of recent changes and are actively engaged in shaping a future service delivery model
- Strong relationships with schools
- The service's contribution to policy and strategic development within the authority, for example:

It has contributed effectively to the implementation of the core components of GIRFEC, as evidenced by leading authority practice in Scottish Mental Health First Aid and leading the design and delivery of nurturing and restorative approaches work in partnership with Education Scotland.

Working collaboratively with the Pupil Support Service Extended Outreach Team, and independent school partners, the service has contributed to the placing of some of the most vulnerable young people into positive destinations on leaving school.

The service is increasingly using its research skills effectively to help design in a local context, implement and evaluate robustly a broad range of interventions that have the potential to make a real difference to the lives of children and young people in North Ayrshire. For example Stop Now and Plan (SNAP), Chatty Numbers, and Strathclyde Higher Order Reading Skills (SHORS).

The service has delivered interventions aimed at benefitting a wider group of pupils.

Highly effective nurture training at the secondary level, that is already impacting positively on schools culture, ethos and practice.

3. Proposals

- 3.1 A full action plan has been developed to operationalise all the key recommendations of the service and Education Scotland following the VSE. Actions have included revising the service delivery model to schools and changing to a cluster model, revising the allocation of work to more closely match the strategic priorities of the council, reviewing the service leadership structure, and altering the balance of work done to ensure that the service can have maximum impact on a broader range of young people.

4. Implications

Financial:	There are no financial implications resulting directly from VSE.
Human Resources:	There are no human resource implications arising directly from VSE.
Legal:	There are no legal implications.
Equality:	There are no equality implications.
Environmental & Sustainability:	There are no environmental and sustainability implications.
Key Priorities:	<p>Education and Youth Employment Directorate Plan 2015-2018 : Priorities –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Priority 1 – We are reducing inequalities and delivering improved outcomes for children and young people● Priority 2 – High quality learning and teaching is taking place in all our schools.● Priority 3 – Self-evaluation and performance improvement are embedded throughout our schools and central support teams● Priority 4 – Levels of attainment and achievement are improving for all learners.● Priority 5 – High numbers of our young people are entering positive and sustainable post-school destinations.
Community Benefits:	Benefits to our community include a more focused contribution to the above priorities, offering a service that benefits <i>all</i> learners, whilst maintaining support for the most vulnerable children and young people and families.

5. Consultation

- 5.1 VSE is essentially a structured and intense consultative process, building on ongoing self-evaluation. Additionally, further consultation on the changes being piloted this year has been planned. To date this has involved cluster Head Teacher meetings, and an initial session with parents and young people. A series of in depth focus group sessions are planned with Head Teachers. Across agency discussion is ongoing. It is anticipated that the service delivery will be further reviewed in the light of this feedback.
- 5.2 The service will continue to maintain an outwards looking focus, scoping innovative practice in other services, to ensure children and families in North Ayrshire received the best quality Educational Psychological Services.



JOHN BUTCHER
Executive Director (Education and Youth Employment)

Reference : JB/SM/KB

For further information please contact John Butcher on 01294 324411

Background Papers

Education Scotland VSE Report

Validated self-evaluation

**North Ayrshire Council Educational
Psychology Services**

August 2016

	Contents	Page
1.	What is validated self-evaluation in Educational Psychology Services?	1
2.	What was validated self-evaluation in North Ayrshire Council's Educational Psychology Service?	1
3.	What did HM Inspectors learn about the quality of self-evaluation in North Ayrshire Council's Educational Psychology Service?	2
4.	What does the Educational Psychology Service plan to do next?	3
5.	What is North Ayrshire Council's Educational Psychology Service's capacity for improvement?	4

1. What is validated self-evaluation in Educational Psychology Services?

Validated self-evaluation (VSE) is an evaluative activity which supports and challenges the work of Educational Psychology Services (EPS) by working collaboratively. It involves a partnership between the education authority, EPS and HM Inspectors, Education Scotland. In EPS the VSE focuses on two key themes.

- Learning and Teaching.
- Partnership Working.

The themes reflect the Scottish Government's national priorities and relate to the contributions made by EPS to raising attainment, addressing disadvantage and supporting and implementing, *Getting it Right For Every Child*. Both themes also allow EPS to evidence the impact and outcomes of early intervention and prevention across the full range of their service delivery.

In addition to the core themes, services can choose an additional one to reflect their own context. An additional area may relate to the core themes or reflect other quality indicators which impact on the service's ability to improve outcomes for its stakeholders. For example, leadership, or the delivery of the five Currie (2002)¹ functions of consultation and advice, assessment, intervention, professional development and research and development.

2. What was validated self-evaluation in North Ayrshire Council's Educational Psychology Service?

North Ayrshire Educational Psychology Service (NAEPS), working closely with the education authority to deliver their vision, *Focus, Passion and Inspiration*, used the VSE process to extend and develop their knowledge of their strengths and areas for development across a focused range of service functions. Using the findings from their self-evaluation, they identified two main themes they wanted to consider in more depth.

- How does the work of the EPS with our partners influence our future service delivery?
- How effective is the EPS in embedding 'health and wellbeing across learning' as the responsibility for all?

NAEPS has gone through a period of rapid change at service and education authority levels, and was keen to use the VSE to take stock of their practice and service delivery identifying areas where they were making the most impact and should prioritise in the future. For the VSE process, NAEPS selected two areas of work at different stages in the self-evaluation cycle. For the Learning and Teaching theme, they wanted to consider the range of work they delivered to support and embed the health and wellbeing (HWB) agenda. This was a well-established area of service practice, and psychologists had routinely undertaken evaluation and review activity of specific

¹ Currie (2002), Review of Provision of Educational Psychology Services in Scotland. Scottish Executive.

projects and interventions. They chose to focus on a wide range of evidence-based interventions, including nurturing and restorative approaches, Change and Loss and Scottish Mental Health First Aid. The service wanted to scrutinise their work across the wide HWB agenda, particularly in relation to promoting the 'responsibilities of all' priority within Curriculum for Excellence, and to look more closely at the impact and outcomes which had been achieved as a result of their interventions.

NAEPS partnership theme, was at an earlier stage of development and focused on reviewing their multiagency models of practice within early years settings, and primary and secondary school contexts. The service was keen to explore different models of capacity building and sustainability to guide the development of future service initiatives, recognising, as stated by the Principal Educational Psychologist (PEP), that in North Ayrshire maintaining the 'status quo is not an option' in relation to service delivery.

A good range of partners and stakeholders had been brought together to support the services' self-evaluation. For example, senior education officers, early years staff, primary, secondary and special provision headteachers, health practitioners, children and families representatives and colleagues from other educational psychology services. The service recognised that increasing the range of stakeholder views, and in particular that of parents, children and young people, would have further strengthened and enhanced their self-evaluation. Each themed activity was supported by three members of NAEPS, a chair, co-chair and scribe allowing all service staff to play an active part in the VSE process. Prior to Education Scotland joining the themed groups, the service had developed activity briefings which were used to focus discussion during the VSE week. NAEPS put in place a helpful programme of activities to support the VSE process. Activities included focus groups, themed workshops and meetings with learners. The theme leaders effectively used a range of solution-focused and graphic communication approaches to gather the views of the groups. After each activity, the theme groups met to reflect on what they had learnt, and to begin to identify strengths and areas for improvement. The service brought together the core theme group members on a regular basis across the VSE process to share their findings related to both themes. In this way, themed group members were able to see emerging strengths and areas for further development across and within each theme. This enhanced the service wide self-evaluation process. Through such joint evaluative activity, Education Scotland staff were able to assess the rigour of the NAEPS's self-evaluation processes and the robustness of the evidence used to evaluate performance and service delivery.

3. What did HM Inspectors learn about the quality of self-evaluation in North Ayrshire Council's Educational Psychology Service?

NAEPS has built effectively on their positive inspection of 2009. The service is working very well to add value to the education authority's work in capacity building and partnership working. There is a strong commitment to self-evaluation for improvement across the service, staff are thoughtful and reflective. As the VSE process progressed, the service engaged in honest and challenging dialogue with their stakeholders and partners, and with the Education Scotland team. The overall self-evaluation, thematic reports and activities chosen for further exploration were well defined demonstrating high quality thinking. The VSE activities helped the service to validate its self-evaluation and identify higher order strengths and areas

for improvement. There was a developing appreciation during the VSE week of the value that robust evaluative data can make to improving outcomes. Both themed groups identified the need to continue to strengthen their data gathering and analysis. In particular, the professional discussion at the end of each activity highlighted that the service could make a greater contribution to the measurement of impact using their knowledge of psychology to better inform the choice of measurement tools. For example, rolling out their early work on adapting Kirkpatrick's Four Level Training Evaluation Model² more widely to evaluate service capacity by building professional learning. By applying their knowledge of psychology the service will be able to formulate clearer predictions and measures of expected outcomes than are currently obtained from self-reports, questionnaires and other more subjective data. HM Inspectors agreed that the self-evaluation approach applied by the service during VSE provided a robust methodology for focused self-evaluation in the future.

The Educational Psychologists (EPs) created a supportive ethos for stakeholders and partners to open up and explore areas for improvement. Theme leads and EPs asked insightful questions, listened and responded respectfully to the contributions of stakeholders and partners. Stakeholders and partners clearly valued the service provided by NAEPS, and demonstrated strong and positive relationships with the team. While an ethos of mutual support was clear, some partners were less open to challenge than others, but the EPs managed this well, and a few found it easier to challenge in the formal focus group than they did in day-to-day partnership working contexts. The involvement of EPs from other services was effective in providing NAEPS with possible solutions to issues arising from stakeholders questioning. It also provided the potential to build capacity and create sustainable networks to support future service improvement.

NAEPS valued the ongoing feedback provided by Education Scotland as part of the VSE process. For example, NAEPS recognise that in going forward it is important they develop models of service delivery which reduce over reliance and dependency, and instead, enable practice to be more fully embedded and owned by the wider education community.

Overall, the VSE was successful in helping NAEPS to identify next steps for each of the themes and to think more widely about models of service delivery going forward.

4. What does the Educational Psychology Service plan to do next?

NAEPS identified a number of key strengths and areas for development both in relation to the themes and their overall quality improvement process. These can be seen in detail in the service's report <http://www.north-ayrshire.gov.uk/resident/education-and-learning/additional-learning-support-services/educational-psychology-services.aspx>.

² Kirkpatrick Donald Four Level Training Evaluation Model (1994).

Education Scotland identified a number of areas which will make a substantial difference to the value added by the service.

- Be clear and focused about what the service does well and use these strengths to build capacity in others, thereby releasing time to innovate and create. NAEPS are open to making changes to reduce the dependency of others on specific services and interventions by strengthening the capacity of stakeholders and partners to more directly improve outcomes for children and families.
- Extend their existing sources of data at school, education authority and council levels to help them improve their outcome evidence base, for example, the use of Insight, information from inspections and importantly, the National Improvement Framework.
- Utilise the psychological knowledge and expertise of the service to make a strong strategic contribution to national policy initiatives, including Scotland's Attainment Challenge, particularly in relation to health and wellbeing.

5. What is North Ayrshire Council's Educational Psychology Service's capacity for improvement?

Education Scotland validated NAEPS self-evaluation, we are confident that NAEPS has a strong capacity for service improvement. There is strengthening synergy between the service's work and the educational priorities of the council. The service receives strong support and challenge from the Executive Director of Education and Youth Employment, and his senior leadership team. In turn, the leadership of the new PEP and his senior leadership team is impacting positively on the quality of the service delivered to children, young people and their families. NAEPS clearly recognises its strengths and areas for improvement, and has strong service commitment and authority support to make the agreed improvements.

Anna Boni
HM Inspector
26 August 2016

Further information about the EPS VSE reports and self-evaluation can be found on the Service's website <http://www.north-ayrshire.gov.uk/resident/education-and-learning/additional-learning-support-services/educational-psychology-services.aspx>.

Education Scotland

Denholm House
Almondvale Business Park
Almondvale Way
Livingston EH54 6GA

T +44 (0)131 244 4330

E enquiries@educationscotland.gov.uk

www.educationscotland.gov.uk

NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

Agenda Item 6

25 October 2016

Cabinet

Title: **Children and Young People Support Review**

Purpose: To inform Cabinet of the progress made by the Children and Young People Support Review Board and to seek direction on the implications of some of the planned service improvements.

Recommendation: That Cabinet notes the progress made by each of the 9 workstreams; and agrees to receive a further paper for approval, detailing the plan for the consultation on proposed service changes and improvements.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 In March 2016, Cabinet approved the establishment of the Children and Young People Support Review Board to review the range of universal and specialist support that is available to children and young people across North Ayrshire.
- 1.2 The Board brings together senior officers from the Directorate of Education and Youth Employment and the Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) and is jointly chaired by the Head of Service (Children, Families and Criminal Justice) and the Head of Service (Inclusion).
- 1.3 The role of the Review Board supports the aims and objectives of the Children's Services Plan by sharing the resources and expertise of the HSCP and the Directorate of Education and Youth Employment, across many of the change projects that are underway as a result of the Children's Services Plan.
- 1.4 The Children and Young People Support Review Board identified the following objectives:

- To meet the needs of children and young within their local school and community settings except where there are extraordinary circumstances
- To improve attainment and achievement for all children and young people and enable them to move on to positive and sustained post school destinations
- To deliver more effective and efficient support services for all children and young people through service improvements that are in line with most recent legislation and the Children's Service Plan, and engage with parents, children and young people and staff throughout the process of the Review
- To develop a new structure for service delivery that distributes resources efficiently, equally and effectively
- To develop staff capacity to respond effectively to the needs of all children and young people and
- To re-align expenditure within budget.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Board established nine workstreams to carry out its work and their progress is detailed below:

Review of Partnership Forums

Partnership Forums were set up in 2008 to receive requests and, if appropriate, provide funding for services and support for children and families that could not be secured through a single agency provision. In line with the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 and the expectation that Named Persons or Lead Professionals and Teams Around the Child will co-ordinate requests for service and support as they arise, there was a need to review the role of Partnership Forums. On 28 Oct 2016, Partnership Forums will cease to exist. Interim arrangements for requesting resources have been put in place which will ensure that children, young people and families get the support they need at the time they need it.

Introduction of Teams Around the Child

The Children's Services Plan contains a commitment to create multi-agency teams to support the Named Person to get support for a young person at the time it is needed. This involves staff from Health and Social Care, Educational Psychology, Youth Services and other agencies. A pathfinder project has been established in the Three Towns to produce guidelines for joint working and to develop processes that will ensure the new team is able to work in a flexible and responsive way. The work of this pathfinder project is scheduled to be complete in December 2016 and the outcomes of the work will inform the formation of Teams Around the Child in the remaining five localities.

Introduction of a Concerns Hub

The Concerns Hub is now established, and the work stream completed, with staff from North in situ and staff from East and South about to join. The Concerns Hub will deal with Police Child Concerns and will be the means for us to screen and assess Child concerns by Social Workers who will then make a decision about the next action, if any, that are required. There are now clear protocols established between the Health and Social Care Partnership, Scottish Children's Reporter Authority and Police, this will enable the Hub to be the means of screening and assessing Police Child Concerns, referring only those concerns on to the Children's reporter that require consideration for compulsory measures of Supervision rather than all concerns going to the reporter automatically. It is envisaged that this will result in a significant reduction in referrals and report requests to Social Services.

Review of Services for Children with Disabilities

The Children with Disabilities project was developed to address the increasing demand on services as a result of the growth in numbers of children with complex needs. The review is focussed on 4 key areas:

- Self-Directed Support – an examination of how effectively this is working and an evaluation of its impact is underway
- Charging Policy – this has been examined and will not be progressed at this time
- Tender Framework – a review of the effectiveness of current tender processes is underway

- ASN School provision and Teams around the Child – a relocation of some HSCP staff to the new campus developments in Garnock and Largs and an exploration of the provision of a proposed new healthcare, residential and respite specialist provision as part of the new ASN school development. This will be subject to approval following Statutory Public Consultation, and additional funding being made available.

Introduction of the Named Person Service

The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 provides for a Named Person to act as a single point of contact for children and young people, up to age 18, for advice, information and support. In North Ayrshire a Named Person Team has been formed to prepare the foundations and framework for this new service. However, in July 2016, the Supreme Court ruled that Scottish Government Ministers are required to provide greater clarity on how teachers, health visitors and other professionals share information on children and families, in their role as Named Persons. This has resulted in a pause in the implementation of the Named Person Service during which, the Named Person Team will support the development of Teams Around the Child, as well as continuing its work to prepare for the introduction of the Named Person Service.

Review of Educational Psychology

Re-configuration to build a modern 'fit for future' service model was the starting point for this workstream. The service has been re-aligned to fit the geographic cluster model of North Ayrshire's schools and has embarked on a process of continuous self-evaluation that will demonstrate the impact of the revised model. This evolved from the recent successful VSE led by Education Scotland. The workstream is also involved in supporting the outputs of the other current reviews of Extended Outreach Services, ASN support in Primary Schools and Pastoral Care in Secondary Schools.

Review of Educational Extended Outreach Services

This workstream has been established to carry out a review of educational extended outreach services and peripatetic provision, including day and residential external provision. Engagement has taken place with groups of pupils, parents and staff to gather an understanding of areas of good practice and to support the development of an improvement plan. The workstream group are now working on service remodelling that aims to ensure that more children are being educated within their home communities, within mainstream settings and are receiving specialist support where and when it is required. Effective and efficient resource allocation is also at the heart of this work.

Review of ASN Pupil Support in Primary Schools

This workstream was established to focus on the quality and effectiveness of the range of supports that are in place for pupils who have additional support needs in primary schools. A series of meetings have been held with small groups of children, parents and staff to consider current delivery and make recommendations on quality improvements that will have greatest impact on outcomes for children and young people.

Current and future staffing and budgetary allocation is also a focus of this workstream in order to manage expenditure within budget. An action plan has been developed which is aligned to HGIOS 4 Quality Indicators, and will establish: greater equity in how support is allocated across schools; enhanced training and development programmes for all teaching and non-teaching staff involved in pupil support; greater definition and alignment of the roles of classroom assistants to the tasks associated with providing pupil support. Once confirmed, this action plan will form the basis for wider formal consultation with pupils, staff and parents in early 2017.

Review of Pastoral Care in Secondary Schools

This workstream was established because the roles of guidance and pupil support teachers have changed significantly since they were introduced a number of years ago. The introduction of Curriculum for Excellence and the entitlement to personal support has shifted the focus towards raising attainment and achievement. Therefore, the focus of this workstream is to identify existing good practice and areas where improvements are required, to bring support into line with pupil and curricular requirements. Research has been undertaken by Glasgow Universities Robert Owen Centre to examine current patterns of support provision across three secondary schools. This along with a series of consultation meetings with guidance staff and pupils across all 9 secondary schools has supported the development of an action plan that will establish: a redefinition and clarification of the roles and remits of guidance and pupil support staff; greater use of data to evidence the impact of pastoral support in schools; a development programme to increase the capacity of all staff to support pupils better; and a review of the Health and Wellbeing (HWB) curriculum and the infrastructure that supports its delivery.

- 2.2 In August 2016, the Children and Young People Support Review took the decision to introduce a further strand of work to its programme: to review the approaches to supporting Child and Adolescent Mental Health. There are continuing challenges in meeting the increasing demand on these services. This is causing difficulties with waiting lists for children and young people who are experiencing a delay in receiving specialist support when it is most urgently needed. The workstream group has been set up and held its first meeting on 7 October to establish the outputs and outcomes of this group. As a result of this, the group will consider a standalone review of all approaches to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of young people across the authority, given the increasing prominence of this piece of work.

2.3 Next Steps

- 2.3.1 Children, young people, and their parents and the staff that support them, have been at the heart of the work of this review. Their views and opinions have helped to shape the proposals for the service reform.

As the workstream groups move closer to confirming their proposed action plans, there is a need to consult with a wider group of children, young people, parents and staff. A request to move to formal consultation will be the subject of a Cabinet paper in December 2016.

- 2.3.2 Delivering service improvement alongside managing service delivery within a confined budget is proving to be a significant challenge for this Review. This is most notable within the budget that provides non teaching support to children and young people in our schools. It is clear that there is a need to reduce the ongoing budget pressure which exists within the staff resource allocation budget.
- 2.3.3 The Children and Young People's Support Review Board now seeks support from Cabinet on the delivery of the aims and objectives of the review.
- 2.3.4 It is intended that the programme of improved services in schools will be incrementally implemented from August 2017.

3. Proposals

- 3.1 That Cabinet notes the content of this paper and the progress of Children and Young People's Support Review.
- 3.2 That Cabinet provides supports to the Board on budgetary and service alignment with the objectives of the Review.

4. Implications

Financial:	There are no financial implications arising directly from this report
Human Resources:	There are no human rights implications arising directly from this report.
Legal:	There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.
Equality:	An equality impact assessment will be carried out once proposals are further developed
Environmental & Sustainability:	There are no environmental or sustainability implications arising directly from this report.
Key Priorities:	These proposals will have implications for the SOA high level outcome: "Children's health and wellbeing is improved through breaking the cycle of poverty, inequality and poor outcomes.
Community Benefits:	-

5. Consultation

- 5.1 A full consultation with children and young people, parents and carers and staff, is planned for early 2017 and will be the subject of a paper to seek Cabinet approval in December 2016.



JOHN BUTCHER
Executive Director (Education and Youth Employment)

Reference : JB/CA

For further information please contact Caroline Amos, Head of Service (Inclusion), on 01294 324416 or Stephen Brown, Head of Service (Children, Families and Criminal Justice), on 01294 317804.

Background Papers

None

NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

Agenda Item 7

25 October 2016

Cabinet

Title: Social Impact Pledge

Purpose: The purpose of the paper is to gain approval for the production of a North Ayrshire Council Social Impact pledge.

Recommendation: **Agree** that North Ayrshire Council produces a Social Impact Pledge
Agree to the proposed **three** pledges to take forward for the next six months.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report seeks approval for the production of a North Ayrshire Council Social Impact Pledge. It also seeks endorsement for the first three pledges as proposed in this report.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Social Impact Pledge (the Pledge) is a Scottish Government initiative aimed at increasing the social impact of public sector organisations across Scotland. The Pledge asks public sector organisations to commit to increasing their social impact by making a public commitment to changing **three** aspects of their current operations or policies. In this context, social impact is about the positive contribution that public sector organisations can make to the local communities in which they operate. Pledges are focussed on what the organisation will do over the **next six months** and should be three things that they are not doing currently and haven't done before. Appendix one shows what a draft North Ayrshire Pledge would look like.

3. Proposals

- 3.1 North Ayrshire Council proposes to produce its first Social Impact Pledge. We are proposing that the first pledge contains the following:

Pledge	Include?
The development of a Social Enterprise Partnership with Cuninghame Housing Association to create employment and training opportunities at Hazeldene Horticultural Initiative.	Yes No
Implementation of a buddy system to support our Modern Apprentices.	Yes No
We will create a new 'Get Connected' Plan, to expand our corporate volunteering activities in the coming year.	Yes No

4. Implications

Financial:	None
Human Resources:	None
Legal:	None
Equality:	The pledge will support our equalities commitments
Environmental & Sustainability:	None
Key Priorities:	Pledges can support all Council priorities
Community Benefits:	Not applicable

5. Consultation

- 5.1 The pledge was discussed with the executive leadership team and they provided the suggested pledges.



ELMA MURRAY
Chief Executive

Reference :
For further information please contact on

Background Papers
Appendix One - Draft Pledge

North Ayrshire Council Pledge to

Challenge ourselves to increase the positive impact we make on our local community and make better use of our assets – our buildings/grounds and our people.

In the next six months we will do at least three things that we don't do at the moment to improve our social impact.

Signed by CEO or Chair: _____

1st Commitment

The development of a Social Enterprise Partnership with Cunninghame Housing Association to create employment and training opportunities at Hazeldene Horticultural Initiative.

Geographical location of impact

North Ayrshire Wide

Contact details

Karen Yeomans, Director, Economy and Communities

2nd Commitment

Implementation of a buddy system to support our Modern Apprentices

Geographical location of impact

North Ayrshire Wide

Contact details

Karen Yeomans, Director, Economy and Communities

3rd Commitment

We will create a new 'Get Connected' Plan, to expand our corporate volunteering activities in the coming year.

Geographical location of impact

North Ayrshire Wide

Contact details

Gavin McGregor, Head of People and Transformation

NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

Agenda Item 8

25 October 2016

Cabinet

Title: Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) 2014/15

Purpose: To advise Cabinet of the Directorates' priorities identified following the publication of the latest LGBF report.

Recommendation: That Cabinet agrees (a) the LGBF priorities identified by Directorates; b) that further work will be undertaken within Directorates to identify improvement activity in the priority areas;
c) that further use of the Framework will be used as the Improvement Service develop the Framework, and
(d) to submit the report to the Audit and Scrutiny Committee.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report presents the Directorates' **priorities** identified through work undertaken within Directorates following the publication of the latest LGBF report.
- 1.2 The report also highlights the Improvement Service's areas for development that will enable us to make further use of the Framework.

2. Background

- 2.1 During the past five years, North Ayrshire Council has been working with other Scottish councils and the Improvement Service to develop and improve the Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF).
- 2.2 A performance update on the latest LGBF report was circulated to Elected Members in June 2016 through North Ayrshire News. Analysis of the national data highlights that we are sustaining high performance and maintaining our position in the top quartile.

- 2.3 The LGBF brings together a wide range of information about how all Scottish councils perform in delivering services to local communities. The purposes of the LGBF are to:
- help councils better understand why they achieve their current performance levels
 - build our understanding of where council performance varies
 - build our understanding of why council performance varies
 - help identify and share good practice across councils
- 2.4 The LGBF forms part of our performance management arrangements in terms of driving improvements in key areas.
- 2.5 The improvement Service will continue to work to broaden the range of indicators being deployed to support benchmarking. Their current priority is on improving benchmarks for pre-school and school provision and for social care.

3. Proposals

- 3.1 Following the publication of the LGBF data work has been undertaken with Directorates to highlight key measures where we want to drive improvements. The identified priorities and other measures are highlighted in **Appendix 1**.
- 3.2 Appendix 1 provides an explanation and details of improvement activity in terms of the LGBF measures focusing in particular on the priority measures. Directorates will continue to identify improvement activity in these areas including leading and participating in Family Groups.
- 3.3 We have indicated to the Improvement Service that we would like to see further work around the development of economic indicators.
- 3.4 There is currently only one Economic Development indicator. The data for this measure is sourced from councils' annual Scottish Local Authorities Economic Development group (SLAED) return. On its own, this measure does not fully reflect the performance by councils in this important area.
- 3.5 Work will also focus on the measures of attainment at secondary level which are currently academically focused and take no account of the wider achievements of pupils. The current LGBF Education indicators are legacy measures. New measures will build on the Curriculum for Excellence, reflecting developments within the National Framework for Education.

- 3.6 The above development activity will assist the Council to more effectively use the Framework to drive improvement.
- 3.7 Specific improvement areas and activities to be highlighted in the Annual Performance Report 15/16 include:
- Developing **partnership links** and collaborative arrangements with the Further Education (FE) sector
 - The **review of our Care at Home** services which will inform the redesign of care at home services
 - Leading the **LGBF Council Tax Family Group**. The group's focus has been on improving collections for low banded properties. There is evidence that councils with a larger proportion of higher banded properties have higher collection levels than councils with a higher proportion of lower banded properties. North Ayrshire Council has around 80% of its properties in bands A to D. Collection performance across the eight councils varies and the group has looked at direct debit initiatives, methods of payment and the number of monthly instalments and improving recovery procedures. The group has also concentrated on cost reduction initiatives like e-billing and data capture technology.
 - Improving our performance on the **payment of invoices** within 30 days. Visits have been made to Renfrewshire and East Renfrewshire to learn about their success in this area. Following these meetings invoice payment processes have been revised and improvements will be implemented during 2016/17.
 - Leading the **LGBF Museums Family Group** of ten local authorities and trusts, which is a helpful platform for benchmarking and sharing good practice.
 - A comprehensive review aimed firstly at further improving performance, value for money, efficiency and effectiveness of the **Roads Service** and secondly to identify the most appropriate opportunities for integration and establishment of a modern **Streetscene and Roads** service model. The resulting report identified a number of strategic issues and opportunities for consideration and improvement. These have been developed into the Roads and Streetscene Strategic Change Programme which commenced implementation in January 2016.

- 3.8 It is proposed that Cabinet agrees (a) the LGBF priorities identified by Directorates; b) that further work will be undertaken within Directorates to identify improvement activity in the priority areas; c) that further use of the Framework will be used as the Improvement Service develop the Framework, and (d) to submit the report to the Audit and Scrutiny Committee.

4. Implications

Financial:	The aim of benchmarking activity is to learn from best practice. In many cases this will enable an improved service to be delivered at the same cost, or the same level of service to be delivered at lower cost.
Human Resources:	Some of the indicators detailed in the LGBF, such as that on absence levels, deal specifically with matters relating to Human Resources.
Legal:	Effective benchmarking can be seen not only as a means of improving performance or lowering cost, but of complying with the Council's legal obligation to deliver Best Value.
Equality:	Some of the indicators detailed in the LGBF, such as that relating to the % of the highest paid 5% of employees who are women and gender pay gap, deal specifically with equality. Others show a clear link between performance and deprivation and equality in its wider sense.
Environmental & Sustainability:	Numerous indicators relate to environmental issues.
Key Priorities:	Implementation of effective benchmarking practices across the Council will help support the Council's strategic priorities and our journey from Good to Great.
Community Benefits:	There are no community benefit implications.

5. Consultation

- 5.1 The Executive Leadership Team discussed this report on the 31 August 2016.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Elma Murray' in a cursive script.

ELMA MURRAY
Chief Executive

Reference :

For further information please contact Anne Todd, Senior Policy and Performance Officer on 01294 324140

Background Papers

None

Appendix 1 - North Ayrshire Council LGBF Indicators

Health and Social Care Partnership

Ref	Description	LGBF key priority areas for development
CHN9	% of children being looked after in the community	This is a priority area for the H&SCP. The current target is to maintain 90% of young people looked after in the community, this will be achieved through the expansion of services that provide early intervention support to children and families, including the new Contact Centre.
SW1	Home care costs per hour for people aged 65+	We have reviewed Care at Home. The review will inform the redesign of care at home services. Costs in this area are decreasing.
SW2	SDS spend on adults 18+ as a % of total social work spend on adults 18+	Personalisation of social services has now been in place for over a year, with a growing number of users choosing direct payments. An evaluation of the personalisation outcome focus is underway.
SW3	Percentage of people aged 65+ with intensive needs receiving care at home	We have made improvements in this area over the past years through enhanced provision of telecare units to service users, supporting users to remain independent in their own homes. In addition, Care at Home staff have been trained in medication handling and now distribute medication to service users. Looking forward a Redesign of Care at Home Services and the restructure of Pavilion 3 at Ayrshire Central into a rehabilitation Hub will drive further improvements.
SW5	Residential costs per week of resident for people aged 65+	Our costs of £344.5 are significantly lower than the Scottish average of £372.1. We maintain robust gatekeeping procedures for applications to care. We also use wide data sources to map trends and inform future planning. As part of the ongoing integration of services for the H&SCP, a series of improvement projects have been undertaken. Among these projects are the 'Redesign of Care at Home services' and the restructure of Pavilion 3 at Ayrshire Central into a Rehabilitation and Reablement Hub. These activities should have an impact on reducing the number of people admitted to care homes and therefore reduce overall costs.
Ref	Description	Other LGBF Indicators
CHN8a	The gross cost of children looked after in residential services per child per week	There are no formal targets set for these measures, although we are aiming to reduce the amount of spend on these services. The HSCP has provided greater resource into early intervention and family support services. Through these services the aim is to support families before they enter crisis and prevent the children coming into care.
CHN8b	The gross cost of children looked after in a community setting per child per week	In addition, the service has seen a steady reduction in the number of young people being cared for in Secure Accommodation and residential schools. These residential placements are extremely costly. By placing young people in community placements (Foster/Kinship Care) or in a Local Authority Home, the cost of residential placements will come down.
SW4	% of adults satisfied with social care services	Information is collected through the GP experience survey which provides more valuable information than this measure which is sourced from the Scottish Household Survey. As part of the development of performance frameworks for the H&SCP, particular importance is placed on the gathering of meaningful personal outcomes information for service users. Discussions are ongoing to identify the best way possible to gather meaningful feedback from H&SCP service users.

Education and Youth Employment

Ref	Description	LGBF key priority areas for development
CHN11	Proportion of pupils entering positive destinations	A key priority is to ensure that high numbers of our young people are entering positive and sustainable post-school destinations. We are developing partnership links and collaborative arrangements with the FE sector, developing the curriculum to maximise learners' access to further and higher education, training experiences and employment, and supporting young people with additional support needs to secure a sustainable destination that meets their needs. We are aware of the challenges that we have to continue improving results in terms of young people in positive destinations. However our aim is to ensure that we maintain our position within the top quartile. Our 2015 figure is 96.1% up from 94.1% in 2014. We are currently ranked third in Scotland.
Ref	Description	Other LGBF Indicators
CHN1	Cost per primary school pupil	We do not set targets for these measures. They provide limited value in determining progress against our key priorities as there are too many variables involved.
CHN2	Cost per secondary school pupil	
CHN3	Cost pre-school education place	
CHN4	% of pupils gaining 5+ awards at Level 5	Increasing the attainment and achievement of young people in North Ayrshire schools is a core priority. However, these are legacy measures, based on the previous SQA framework of exams and qualifications. These are not compatible with new INSIGHT measures as the number of exams pupils sit, the curricular framework and the method for measuring attainment national has changed. The key indicators that are now in place to evaluate attainment performance are derived from the national benchmarking tool INSIGHT. Raising the attainment and achievement of young people in North Ayrshire Schools is priority. Work is ongoing with the Improvement Service to build on the Curriculum for Excellence and reflect developments within the National Framework for Education.
CHN5	% of pupils in S6 achieving 5 or more awards at Level 6	
CHN6	Percentage of pupils from deprived areas gaining 5+ awards at level 5	Narrowing the outcomes gap between pupils from advantaged and disadvantaged backgrounds is a key priority. However, the current LGBF indicators are viewed as legacy measures based on the previous SQA framework. These measures are not compatible with the new INSIGHT measures. We currently use the following indicators to track progress in closing the attainment gap: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Average total tariff score of pupils in the most deprived areas • % gap in average total tariff score of school leavers resident in the most deprived areas. In the spirit of the Curriculum for Excellence strategy, we would aim to tailor curricular choices to suit learners' abilities and aspirations. We seek to encourage and reflect wider achievement as well as more ambitious academic achievement in our measures. We have secured 'Attainment Challenge' funding from the Scottish Government. This funding will be used over the next four years to ensure children and young people from lower-income households do significantly better at all levels of the education system. The key strands of work which will be undertaken as part of this initiative will include the development of a professional learning academy for teaching staff, development of North Ayrshire Council into a 'Nurturing Authority', provision of enhanced levels of support for young people with complex mental health issues and enhanced levels of support and engagement to promote parental involvement in their child's learning.
CHN7	Percentage of pupils living in the 20% more deprived areas gaining 5+ awards at level 6	
CHN10	Percentage of adults satisfied with local schools	A key area of action for the Education and Youth Employment Directorate is a continued focus on increasing our levels of parental engagement with our schools. We have established a key action to encourage and support active collaboration and engagement with parents in supporting their child's learning. We are aware of the importance of this measure and aim to perform well in this area.

Finance and Corporate Support

Ref	Description	LGBF key priority areas for development
CORP4	The cost per dwelling of collecting council tax	Customers can now register to gain access to their council tax account online at The Hub. We successfully introduced e-billing for a small number of households and will extend this service further to improve customer service and reduce costs. A new Sherriff Officer contract has been awarded and this will reduce the cost of commission paid for the recovery of unpaid council tax. A debt recovery strategy is also being developed to improve collection levels.
CORP7	Percentage of income due from Council tax received by the end of the year	The Council Tax Service has a dedicated debt recovery team. The team support customers who have difficulty paying their Council Tax. Benchmarking is carried out to enable us to make enhancements to our Council Tax performance against other Councils. This allows us to identify good practice and innovative ways of improving collection levels.
CORP6a	Sickness absence days per employee (teacher)	We have done a number of things to manage sickness absence including: new analytic reports; a new occupational health contract; flu vaccines offered to staff; manager training and briefings; a focus on wellbeing and health testing; a revamp of Healthy Working Lives, etc. The Council was in the top quartile for both indicators. A stress survey is being rolled out during Quarter One 2016/17, once analysed an action plan will be developed.
CORP6b	Sickness absence days per employee (non-teacher)	
CORP8	Percentage of invoices sampled that were paid within 30 days	We are aiming to improve our position in this indicator and move into the top quartile. We have visited Renfrewshire and East Renfrewshire Councils to learn about their success in this area. Invoice payments times are being improved by the use of technology such as procurement cards, and The Professional Electronic Commerce Ordering System (PECOS) are also being utilised. Invoice payment processes have been revised and improvements will be implemented during Quarter one 2016/17.
Ref	Description	Other LGBF Indicators
CORP1	Support services as a % of total gross expenditure	We seek to deliver cost effective support services. We are currently top performer showing that the council is continuing to minimise 'back office' services.
CORP3b	The percentage of the highest paid 5% of employees who are women	We continue to apply fair and non-discriminatory recruitment practices. Equalities data is analysed, reviewed and reported to Council committees with appropriate actions as required. North Ayrshire Council is committed to ensuring that it is an equal opportunities employer. The council continues to remain in the top quartile.

Place

Ref	Description	LGBF key priority areas for development
-----	-------------	---

C&L5b	Percentage of adults satisfied with parks and open spaces	Satisfaction with Council services remains a key measure. Key work in this area will be engagement, enforcement, community transfer/responsibility and a strategic approach in respect of maintenance. A rationalisation of the number of play parks may have a negative impact on this score. The enforcement pilot has been well received by the public and demonstrates shows the Council is committed to dealing with people who commit environmental crime.
ENV3a	Net cost of street cleaning per 1,000 population	This is a key measure in respect of measuring efficiency and best value. This can be, and will be, benchmarked against other Local Authorities Technology such as the Webaspx scheduling system will help reduce costs. The LEAMS score will also be used to inform scheduling.
ENV3b	Street cleanliness score	Well maintained public spaces support key Council objectives in respect of safe communities, economic growth, regeneration & a well maintained environment. Key strategic documents include the 'Open Space Strategy' and the 'Litter, Dog Fouling and Fly-tipping Prevention Strategy'.
ENV7b	Percentage of adults satisfied with street cleaning	Key work in this area will be engagement, enforcement and a strategic approach in respect of maintenance. The Webaspx scheduling system will help with this score. The creation of a dedicated Asset Officer for Streetscene will also help.
ENV6	Percentage of total waste arising that is recycled	This directly supports our key strategic priorities of protecting the environment. The Council's Waste Strategy sets out the actions required to maintain our ranking position. The service is currently ranked 2nd for this indicator with a recycling rate of 56.5%.
ENV7a	Percentage of adults satisfied with refuse collection	An end to end service review has been completed to reduce 'failure demand' and complaints. The services in place were designed through public engagement and a review of national best practice. They are simple and easy to use, encouraging take up and high satisfaction.
HSN1	Gross rent arrears as at 31 March as a % of rent due for the reporting year	Welfare reform – particularly the ongoing roll out of Universal Credit and the reduction in the Benefit Cap – will impact on rent collection and arrears levels. A cross service team is in place and working to mitigate the impact. Housing Services continues to perform well despite the challenges, regularly monitoring the rent collection performance of other social landlords to identify any opportunities for improvement.
HSN2	% of rent due in the year that was lost due to voids	This activity directly supports our key priority to ensure people are healthy, safe and secure by reducing the time council houses are vacant. We are currently ranked number one in Scotland and aim to remain in the top quartile.
HSN3	% of council dwellings meeting Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS)	The Council's 30 year business plan sets out the approach to maintaining the housing stock, enabling us to maintain an upper quartile position. 99.1% of the stock met the SHQS at 31 March 2016, with 100% targeted by 31 March 2017. In April 2015, the Scottish Government introduced a new minimum Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing in Scotland (ESSH) to replace the energy efficiency requirements previously contained within the Scottish Housing Quality Standard. All social housing must be compliant with the new standard by December 2020. A data collection exercise has been undertaken to identify how the energy efficiency of our housing stock compares with the new energy efficiency standard. The information has been analysed and confirms that approximately 90% of the stock pass the standard. Further work is now being undertaken to identify the energy improvements required for the remaining 10% of properties. A delivery plan will be developed and implemented to ensure that all of our stock are compliant by the due date.
HSN5	% of council dwellings that are energy efficient	
HSN4	Average length of time taken to complete non-emergency repairs	This indicator can influence overall tenant satisfaction. During 2015/16 non-emergency repairs were completed on average in 8.91 days. A best practice review of end to end processes is underway to eliminate duplication, improve process efficiency and reduce the average response time to 7.0 days.
Corp Asset1	Proportion of operation buildings suitable for their current use	These indicators help us to challenge asset performance in terms of need, utilisation and cost and also assist us to rationalise the property estate where it is appropriate to do so. Suitability assessments have been undertaken for all of our operational properties and the information confirms that at 31 March 2016, 90% of our buildings were suitable for their current use. This information is used to inform decisions on property asset management and rationalisation. We have assessed the condition of our operational properties, including our new PPP schools. The survey information confirms that at 31 March 2016, 99.5% of the internal floor area for these properties are in satisfactory condition and are performing well. Performance has improved due to targeting of investment and property rationalisation.
Corp Asset2	Proportion of internal floor area of operational buildings in satisfactory condition	

		We recognise that it is important to monitor and compare our property portfolio performance with other local authorities. In early 2016 we joined the National Best Value Benchmarking Scheme (NBVBS), which is a property benchmarking scheme set up by property professional societies in conjunction with CIPFA. This provides us with regular updates on public sector asset management issues, topics and best practice guides.
Ref	Description	Other LGBF Indicators
C&L4	Cost of parks and open spaces per 1,000 population	This is not an accurate measure as it takes no account of the extent or type of land maintained. Our relative improvement in this indicator is likely to improve when we calculate the costs in line with how other authorities do so. Work is ongoing with Finance in respect of this.
ENV1	Net cost of waste collection per premise	As a Council with one of the highest recycling levels our relative costs of collection and disposal are higher than Councils with low recycle measures. This is therefore, not a useful comparison indicator.
ENV2	Net cost per waste disposal per premise	
ENV4a	Cost of maintenance per kilometre of roads	This measures total investment in the road network. It does not measure the efficiency of the roads service and is therefore of limited value
ENV4b	Percentage of A class roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment	The additional investment required to achieve upper quartile performance cannot be accommodated within the Council's available capital funds when compared with other projects, such as the school estate, to support our strategic priorities. Our approach to asset management has allowed us to better target our investment in this area, realising an improvement in performance. Work is underway to develop longer term investment plans, improved working practices and more efficient procurement practices to mitigate the impact of reduced investment and maintain current performance levels.
ENV4c	Percentage of B class roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment	
ENV4d	Percentage of C class roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment	
ENV4e	Percentage of U class roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment	

Democratic Services

Ref	Description	LGBF key priority areas for development
CORP2	Cost of democratic core per 1,000 population	Councils interpret and measure this indicator in different ways, making comparisons hard, and meaning the indicator has little relevance. We have undertaken a check of the costs we attribute to the democratic core and a number of costs have been removed.

Economy and Communities

Ref	Description	Other LGBF Indicators
CORP5b 2	Domestic noise response time	Our response to domestic noise complaints are monitored closely and any corresponding actions required to maximise effectiveness are implemented.
C&L1	Cost per attendance at sports facilities	

C&L5d	Percentage of adults satisfied with leisure facilities	A revised KA Leisure operating agreement will assist in improving performance in this area. Work is underway with a new LGBF group to develop a new suite of indicators to support improvements in this area. Whilst these measures are important to note our directorate priorities are in driving economic growth and community resilience.
C&L2	Cost per library visit	We aim to minimise costs and maximise satisfaction and remain in the top quartile for performance in each of these indicators. After an extensive public consultation new library opening hours, that are better aligned to customer patterns of use, have been introduced. We have invested in digital services, such as the library app , to increase convenience for customers. Library channel shift received a COSLA Excellence Bronze Award and the UK Libraries Change Lives Award in 2015. A new library management system and public catalogue will be introduced in summer 2016. We meet regularly and share good practice with seven other councils. Participation in the LGBF Family Group for Libraries, to identify and introduce more good practice, will start in 2016.
C&L5a	Percentage of adults satisfied with libraries	
C&L3	Cost of museums per visit	We have the second lowest costs in Scotland for this indicator and will continue to minimise costs.
C&L5c	Percentage of adults satisfied with museums and galleries	We aim to maximise satisfaction levels. We lead the LBGF Museums Family Group of 10 local authorities and trusts, which is a helpful platform for benchmarking and sharing good practice. Staff digital skills are being developed to enhance our online and social media offer throughout the year. Planning is also underway for new heritage services for the refurbished Irvine Townhouse due to open in 2017.
ENV5a	Cost of trading standards per 1,000 population	Service delivery methods and models are constantly under review to maximise effectiveness and ensure best value.
ENV5b	Cost of environmental health per 1,000 population	
Econ1	% unemployed people assisted into work from council employability programmes	<p>This performance indicator contributes to the Council's Strategic Priorities 1 and 3. The percentage of unemployed people assisted into work from council operated/funded employability programmes decreased from 19.5% to 16% between 2013/14 and 2014/15 but is still above the Scottish average of 14.2%. We are currently in the top quartile. Our employability programmes continue to have a substantial impact in reducing North Ayrshire's unemployment rate with 962 jobs created through council sponsored initiatives. This has been enhanced through the development of a strong partnership at an Employability Hub in Stevenston Library to help deliver targeted employability skills support. Whilst employability is a priority this is not a useful measure as :-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • it is dependent upon the continued availability of EU funding. With delays in EU funding approval our performance in this area is likely to drop further when 15/16 figures are released. • It measures how many people are supported into work, not how sustainable those jobs are or whether services have been targeted appropriately. <p>We will attempt to make representations to SLAED around developing better measures of success in employability. Locally we are recording our performance in more detail:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of unemployed people registered with Employability Hub • Number of Modern Apprentices on North Ayrshire Council programme <p>And our cross-team working through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of clients entering employment through Economic Growth sponsored initiatives.

NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

Agenda Item 9

25 October 2016

Cabinet

Title: **Public Performance Reporting 2015/16**

Purpose: To advise Cabinet on public performance reporting and the draft Annual Performance Report 2015/16.

Recommendation: That Cabinet (a) agrees to note the status of the Council's performance indicators at Appendices 1 and 2; (b) agrees the draft Annual Performance Report 2015/16 set out at Appendix 3; and (c) notes that this report will be referred to the Audit and Scrutiny Committee for further consideration.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 Public performance reporting is a statutory requirement on the Council. It can be an effective management tool in driving improvements. It also provides transparency to our key stakeholders, in particular North Ayrshire residents.
- 1.2 This report details the performance of the range of Performance Indicators that will be used to inform our public performance reporting for 2015/16.
- 1.3 The report also details the content for the Annual Performance Report which will be published on the Council's website.
- 1.4 Our external auditors will continue to work closely with us to further develop our approach to public performance reporting.

2. Background

- 2.1 Public performance reporting underpins the development of a culture of continuous improvement and is a key component of the Council's Performance Management Strategy. The performance section on the Council's website, provides a range of information including a full set of Performance Indicators; the Performance Management Strategy; Financial Information; and Directorate Plans.

- 2.2 The use of the Covalent web publishing module allows the Council to publishes its public performance reporting performance data direct from within the Covalent application onto the web. Each indicator on the *North Ayrshire Performs* portal on the website has notes to explain to the public what the indicator is about, why we measure it, current performance against target, what can affect performance, how our performance compares to others and any action we are taking to improve performance.
- 2.3 The Account Commission's **2014 Direction** covering 2015/16 retains **three statutory performance indicators** – in relation to corporate characteristics, service performance and reporting through the Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF).
- 2.4 **139** indicators including the Council Plan and the LGBF indicators have been identified as being appropriate for demonstrating our performance against the strategic priorities and enablers:
- Growing our economy, increasing employment and regenerating towns
 - Working together to develop stronger communities
 - Ensuring people have the right skills for learning, life and work
 - Supporting all of our people to stay safe, healthy and active
 - Protecting and enhancing the environment for future generations
- 2.5 The information to be included in the Council's public performance reporting arrangements is subject to internal and external audit. This seeks to provide assurance that:
- services have adequate written procedures in place to collate the performance indicators
 - the controls surrounding the indicators are robust
 - the information recorded and published is accurate and reliable.

3. Proposals

Performance Indicators

- 3.1 Appendix 1 details the full set of indicators to be publicly reported, showing (where available) three years of performance trends, along with the target level of performance and a traffic light (Red, Amber Green) symbol to show whether the target level of performance has been achieved (Green), is slightly adrift of target (Amber) or is significantly adrift of target (Red).

- 3.2 Analysis of the indicators which have targets is outlined in Table 1.

Table 1

2015/16 Summary of Traffic Light Status	
Indicators	Traffic Light
67%	Green (<i>met target</i>)
12%	Amber (<i>slightly adrift of target</i>)
21%	Red (<i>significantly adrift of target</i>)

Data for 39 indicators is currently not available. 25 of them are LGBF indicators and 2015/16 data will not be available until early 2017. Data for 10 Education indicators will be available in February 2017. Data for the remainder will be available later in the year.

- 3.3 Appendix 2 lists the 28 Red/Amber indicators along with management commentary from the relevant Directorate.
- 3.4 Comparison of 2015/16 performance with 2013/14 performance and 2012/13 performance is noted in Table 2. Performance improved in 55% of indicators with trend information over the one year period and in 61% over the three year period.

Table 2

2015/16 Summary of short term/long term trends		
	Short Term	Long Term
Improved	55%	61%
Declined	37%	37%
No change	8%	2%

Public Performance Report

- 3.5 To meet the various requirements for Public Performance Reporting a draft Annual Council Performance Report 2015/16 has been produced which is attached in Appendix 3.
- 3.6 The Report includes information on:-
- Successes and challenges
 - Performance in achieving the strategic priorities in the Council Plan 2015/20
 - Case Studies, quotes and infographs
 - Benchmarking including analysis of the latest LGBF data
 - Financial Spending

- 3.7 The Report will be made available primarily as an electronic document downloadable from the Council's website with a limited number of summary hard copies being made available at the Council's main public buildings. Greater use of infographs will be used in the summary document to improve the accessibility of performance information.
- 3.8 It is proposed that Cabinet (a) agrees to note the status of the Council's performance indicators at Appendices 1 and 2; (b) agrees the draft Annual Performance Report 2015/16 set out at Appendix 3; and (c) notes that this report will be referred to the Audit and Scrutiny Committee for further consideration.

4. Implications

Financial:	The cost of design and print run of summary hard copies can be met from the Policy and Performance revenue budget.
Human Resources:	There are no human resource implications.
Legal:	Reporting requirements specified in the Accounts Commission 2008 Direction and subsequent Directions represented a major departure from the previously tightly specified list of Statutory Performance Indicators (SPIs). It introduced scope for Councils to choose their own Performance Indicators (PIs) to fulfil the Best Value obligations arising from the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003. This report confirms the arrangements for the Council's compliance with its duties under the Local Government Act 1992 and the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 and commitment to improving public performance reporting.
Equality:	There are no equality implications.
Environmental & Sustainability:	There are no environmental and sustainability implications.
Key Priorities:	The Report helps to demonstrate the Council's delivery of its strategic priorities.
Community Benefits:	There are no community benefit implications.

5. Consultation

- 5.1 The Executive Leadership Team discussed this report on the 31 August 2016 and 14 September 2016.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Elma Murray". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

ELMA MURRAY
Chief Executive

Reference :












For further information please contact Anne Todd, Senior Policy and Performance Officer on 01294 324140

Background Papers



























Council Plan 2015/20

Directorate Plans 2015/18

Copy of North Ayrshire Performs - Committee Report

PI Status		Long Term Trends		Short Term Trends	
	Alert		Improving		Improving
	Warning		No Change		No Change
	OK		Getting Worse		Getting Worse
	Unknown				
	Data Only				

1. Growing our economy, increasing employment and regenerating towns 1. Council Plan - corporate

Performance Indicator	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2015/16			
	Value	Value	Value	Value	Short Trend	Long Trend	Target	Status
Number of Modern Apprentices supported through North Ayrshire sponsored initiatives		285	267	220				
Gross weekly earnings – Workforce based	£453.70	£484.30	£507.40	£479.80			£481.50	
Town Centre footfall has increased				6,814,037				
Leverage of External Funding				2.03				
Business Gateway Start-Ups	202	238	234	64				
Number of unemployed people who have progressed to employment through participation in NAC funded or operated employability activities				428				
Gross value added	£44,392.00	£45,767.00					£47,518.00	
Percentage of working age population in employment	62.2%	60.1%	70.5%				64.7%	
Youth employment rate			52.2%				53.9%	

1. Growing our economy, increasing employment and regenerating towns

2. Service performance

Performance Indicator	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2015/16			
	Value	Value	Value	Value	Short Trend	Long Trend	Target	Status
Number of apprenticeships/jobs created through community benefit clauses		19	35	40	↑	↑	33	✓
No of businesses supported by Council Economic Growth activity				388	?	?		?
% Procurement spend with local suppliers	17%	20%	22%	19.4%	↓	↓		📈

1. Growing our economy, increasing employment and regenerating towns

3. LGBF

Performance Indicator	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2015/16			
	Value	Value	Value	Value	Short Trend	Long Trend	Target	Status
% Unemployed People Assisted into work from Council operated / funded Employability Programmes	13.41%	19.46%	16.03%		?	?		📈

2. Working together to develop stronger communities

1. Council Plan - corporate

Performance Indicator	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2015/16			
	Value	Value	Value	Value	Short Trend	Long Trend	Target	Status
The number of adult learning opportunities accessed provided by Connected Communities			63,588	72,746	↑	↑	12,375	✓
The number of volunteers who are active in Connected Communities and Third Sector Interface activities			7,585	7,633	↑	↑	8,000	⚠
Resident confidence about the future wellbeing and economic prospects of local area	33	32		31	?	↓	31	✓

Tourism visitor numbers				1,661,870	?	?	1,171,333	✓
Number of Active volunteers who have participated in training delivered by Connected Communities	1,389	216	4,875	11,285	↑	↑	2,000	✓
Number of Groups who have participated in training delivered by Connected Communities	74	36	8,217	2,669	↓	↓	4,000	✗
Number of groups accessing support and guidance by Connected Communities	596	1,383	588	600	↑	↓	600	✓

2. Working together to develop stronger communities

2. Service performance

Performance Indicator	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2015/16			
	Value	Value	Value	Value	Short Trend	Long Trend	Target	Status
Percentage of food poisoning investigations within two days of inquiry (EH) formerly known as SP1213LP_P_A04	100%	100%	100%	100%	▬	▬	100%	✓
Percentage of high priority pest control requests responded to within working one day of enquiry (EH) formerly known as SP1213LP_P_A05	94%	95%	95.7%	97%	↑	↑	95%	✓
Average time between time of noise complaint and attendance on site (hours)	0.6	0.66	0.62	0.53	↑	↑	0.8	✓
% growth in NA tourist numbers since season last	1.11%	1.5%	2.3%	2.35%	↑	↑	2%	✓
Percentage of high priority public health complaints responded to within 1 working day of receipt (EH) formerly known as SP1213LP_P_A03	98%	98%	99.7%	99%	↓	↑	95%	✓
Number of visits to/usages of council funded or part funded museums per 1000 population	889	1,745	1,813	1,951	↑	↑	1,200	✓
Number of library visits per 1000 population	8,265	13,096	13,103	12,061	↓	↑	6,500	✓
The average time (weeks) to deal with major and local planning applications determined during the year: Major developments - Average time (weeks) to deal with applications	30.9	21.5	12.6	26.7	↓	↓	18	✗
The average time (weeks) to deal with major and local planning applications determined during the year: Local developments - Average time (weeks) to deal with applications	8.7	6.8	6.2	5.3	↑	↑	9	✓

2. Working together to develop stronger communities

3. LGBF

Performance Indicator	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2015/16			
	Value	Value	Value	Value	Short Trend	Long Trend	Target	Status
Cost of trading standards per 1,000 population £	£5,968.30	£5,433.83	£5,027.48					
Cost of environmental health per 1,000 population £	£13,739.46	£13,862.11	£11,835.84					
Cost per attendance at sports facilities £	£2.79	£2.28	£2.15					
Cost per library visit £	£2.55	£1.57	£1.52					
Cost per museum visit £	£0.59	£0.16	£0.38					

3. Ensuring people have the right skills for learning, life and work

1. Council Plan - corporate

Performance Indicator	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2015/16			
	Value	Value	Value	Value	Short Trend	Long Trend	Target	Status
The percentage of participants accessing learning opportunities whose confidence, knowledge and skills has improved as a result				96.5%	?	?	95%	✓
% of children achieving their developmental milestones at the time the child starts primary school		69%	71%	72%	↑	↑		📈
% of leavers attaining literacy at National 4 (SCQF Level 4)	94.78%	93.72%	95.79%		?	?	96%	?
% of leavers attaining literacy at National 5 (SCQF Level 5)	66.47%	67.62%	74.14%		?	?	70%	?
% of leavers attaining numeracy at National 4 (SCQF Level 4)	79.06%	78.83%	86.05%		?	?	80.75%	?
% of leavers attaining numeracy at National 5 (SCQF Level 5)	56.18%	56.63%	64.87%		?	?	58.5%	?
Average tariff score: All Leavers	829.8	785.2	834.5		?	?	810	?
Average tariff score: LAC Leavers	269.9	273.3	357.9		?	?	290	?
% of school leavers entering positive destinations	93.8%	94.1%	96.1%		?	?	94.8%	?

3. Ensuring people have the right skills for learning, life and work

2. Service performance

Performance Indicator	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2015/16			
	Value	Value	Value	Value	Short Trend	Long Trend	Target	Status
Average total tariff score of the lowest 20% attainment cohort	169	160	186		?	?	152	
Average total tariff score of the middle 60% attainment cohort	745	708	756		?	?	802	?
Average total tariff score of the highest 20% attainment cohort	1,744	1,691	1,719		?	?	1,788	?
% of young people choosing to stay onto S5 (as % of S4 roll at September previous year)	73.6	80.1	78.1	79.16	↑	↑	80	⚠
% of participants (on completion of parenting programmes) who report an increase in their confidence levels as a parent			78	100	↑	↑	83	✓
% of participants (on completion of parenting programmes) who report an increase in their levels of interaction with their children			90	100	↑	↑	95	✓
% gap in attainment of Looked After Children	101.8%	96.7%	79.9%		?	?	96%	?

3. Ensuring people have the right skills for learning, life and work

3. LGBF

Performance Indicator	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2015/16			
	Value	Value	Value	Value	Short Trend	Long Trend	Target	Status
Cost per primary school pupil £	£5,117.10	£4,816.00	£4,624.00		?	?		
Cost per secondary school pupil £	£6,572.30	£6,684.70	£6,859.00		?	?		
Cost per pre-school place £	£3,477.60	£3,102.50	£4,047.00		?	?		

4. Supporting all our people to stay safe, healthy and active

1. Council Plan - corporate

Performance Indicator	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2015/16			
	Value	Value	Value	Value	Short Trend	Long Trend	Target	Status
Number of new build Council housing units reaching completion on a yearly basis	0	12	122	56	↓	↑	50	✓
Money Matters – income generation for service users (£)	£4,907,473.00	£5,801,602.44	£7,549,196.20	£7,614,139.00	↑	↑	£7,513,000.00	✓
ASP Inquiries			42.9%	51.9%	↑	↑	80%	✗
Patients whose discharge is delayed > 4 weeks	3		0	0	–	–	0	✓
% of formerly looked after young people entitled to aftercare in employment, education or training	36.99%	32.05%	55.81%	36.59%	↓	↓	38%	✓
Percentage of service users indicating an improvement in their recovery capital following the introduction of the Recovery Capital Questionnaire			7.93%	61.22%	↑	↑		?
Percentage residents within North Ayrshire who feel unsafe walking in their neighbourhood after dark	30%	30%		29%	?	↑	30%	✓
% of people aged 65 or over with intensive needs receiving care at home	38.2%	40.25%	41%	39.17%	↓	↓	34%	✓
Number of attendances per 1,000 population for indoor sports and leisure facilities	7,689	8,931	10,338	11,193	↑	↑	10,000	✓
Percentage of learning disability service users accessing employment support activities	27.02%	27.93%	27.05%	28.13%	↑	↑	30%	✗
Number of Carers assessments completed			61	34	↓	↓		?

4. Supporting all our people to stay safe, healthy and active

2. Service performance

Performance Indicator	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2015/16			
	Value	Value	Value	Value	Short Trend	Long Trend	Target	Status
Homelessness: Number of presentations	656	724	776	744	?	?		📊
% of lets to homeless	28.7%	25.2%	25.5%	24.8%	↓	↓	25%	✓

Average length of time taken to re-let properties in the last year (days)		14.4	14.32	16.07	↓	↓	16	✓
Percentage of individuals subject to level 1 Community Payback Order Unpaid Work completed within three months	54.63%	89.86%	88.81%	90.32%	↑	↑	57%	✓
Percentage of fostered LAAC who are fostered by an in-house placement	80.33%	83.45%	78.98%	82.49%	↑	↑	80%	✓
Percentage of children in a kinship care placement subject to residence order	21.92%	32.26%	38.43%	33.8%	↓	↑	15%	✓
Number of service users (65+) with a community alarm package (Previously SPSS_P_A05)	3,230	2,997	3,109	3,063	↓	↓	2,800	✓
Number of service users with an enhanced telecare package	451	525	2,074	622	↓	↓	600	✓
Percentage of families previously registered on the Child Protection Register who have been re-registered following a period of less than one year	2.0%	5.0%	2.5%	6.3%	↓	↓	5.0%	✗
Percentage of individuals subject to level 2 Community Payback Order Unpaid Work completed within six months	61.31%	74.58%	82.53%	92.45%	↑	↑	67%	✓

4. Supporting all our people to stay safe, healthy and active

3. LGBF

Performance Indicator	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2015/16			
	Value	Value	Value	Value	Short Trend	Long Trend	Target	Status
Gross rent arrears (all tenants) as at 31 March each year as a percentage of rent due for the reporting year		3.2%	3.75%	3.23%	↑	↑	3%	⚠
(Charter 12) Average time taken to complete non-emergency repairs		9.03	9.18	8.91	↑	↑	9	✓
The gross cost of "children looked after" in residential based services per child per week £	£2,954.00	£3,704.62	£3,256.74		?	?	£3,995.18	
The gross cost of "children looked after" in a community setting per child per week £	£215.00	£228.95	£242.01		?	?	£239.00	
Balance of Care for looked after children: % of children being looked after in the Community (Previously SPSS_P_B08)	90.38%	91.11%	90.25%	91.53%	↑	↑	90%	✓
% of rent due in year that was lost due to voids	0.3%	0.38%	0.38%	0.33%	↑	↑	0.6%	✓
% of Council dwellings that meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard	90.5%	96.32%	98.22%	99.07%	↑	↑	90%	✓

Percentage of council properties at or above the appropriate NHER or SAP ratings sepeified in element 35 of the SHQS, as at 31 March each year.	96.3%	98.17%	99.26%	99.69%	↑	↑	90%	✓
Home care costs for people aged 65 or over per hour £	£19.66	£18.93	£17.94		?	?	£20.82	?
Self-directed support spend for people aged over 18 as a % of total social work spend on adults	1.88%	1.94%	2.05%		?	?	2.4%	
Net residential costs per capita per week for older adults (65+)	£359.44	£337.66	£344.52		?	?		?

5. Protecting and enhancing the environment for future generations

1. Council Plan - corporate

Performance Indicator	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2015/16			
	Value	Value	Value	Value	Short Trend	Long Trend	Target	Status
Overall carbon emissions (tonnes)	57,208	57,142	55,000	50,709	↑	↑	55,962	✓
Street Cleanliness Index - % Clean	95.3	96.9	92.31	95.8	↑	↑	96.5	✓
% of Class A roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment	36.3%	35.5%	34.87%	35.6%	↓	↓	34.5%	⚠
% of Class B roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment	38.8%	39.8%	34.75%	33.6%	↑	↑	34.5%	✓
% of Class C roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment	49.7%	51.2%	51.08%	48.7%	↑	↑	51.1%	✓
% of unclassified roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment	42.3%	38.2%	36.67%	35.4%	↑	↑	36.5%	✓
% of total household waste that is recycled (calendar year as per SEPA)	51.9%	56%	56.5%	56%	↓	↑	57%	✓

5. Protecting and enhancing the environment for future generations

2. LGBF

Performance Indicator	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2015/16			
	Value	Value	Value	Value	Short Trend	Long Trend	Target	Status
Net waste collection cost per premises	£50.35	£55.36	£52.25		?	?	£60.81	

Net waste disposal cost per premises	£88.97	£82.10	£99.53		?	?	£88.77	
Cost of parks and open spaces per 1,000 population £	£40,331.49	£44,777.97	£33,770.61		?	?	£46,366.00	
% of adults satisfied with parks and open spaces	90%	91%	88%		?	?	90%	?
Proportion of operational buildings that are suitable for their current use	87.54%	88.6%	90.26%	89.8%	↓	↑	91%	⚠
Proportion of internal floor area of operational buildings in satisfactory condition	80%	99.4%	99.5%	99.5%	▬	↑	100%	✓
Net cost of street cleaning per 1,000 population £	£14,292.00	£15,739.12	£14,921.22		?	?	£16,783.00	
Road cost per kilometre £	£7,377.05	£9,165.54	£7,567.67		?	?	£6,920.00	?
% of adults satisfied with refuse collection	90%	90%	82%		?	?	90%	?
% of adults satisfied with street cleaning	76%	80%	78%		?	?	80%	?
Overall percentage of road network that should be considered for maintenance treatment	42.7%	40.8%	39.1%	37.8%	↑	↑	39%	✓

6. Underpinning Delivery

1. Council Plan - corporate

Performance Indicator	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2015/16			
	Value	Value	Value	Value	Short Trend	Long Trend	Target	Status
Capital Expenditure - General Fund - Actual expenditure as a percentage of budgeted expenditure			51.13%	90.18%	↑	↑	100%	⛔
Capital Expenditure - Housing Revenue Account (HRA) - Actual expenditure as a percentage of budgeted expenditure			78.61%	69.83%	↓	↓	100%	⛔
Staff Engagement Level - Council wide	55%		65%	69.6%	↑	↑	65%	✓
% of Council-Wide Stage One (Frontline Resolution) Complaints Handled on Time		89%	87%	91%	↑	↑	85%	✓
Revenue Expenditure – General Fund - Actual expenditure as a percentage of budgeted expenditure		99.9%	98.2%	98.4%	↑	↓	100%	⚠
Revenue Expenditure - Housing Revenue Account - Actual expenditure as a		95.5%	94%	95.47%	↑	↑	100%	⚠

percentage of budgeted expenditure								
Percentage of Capital Projects completed on time		70.37%	67.44%	72.97%	↑	↑	95%	⛔
Percentage of Capital Projects completed within budget		92.59%	95.35%	100%	↑	↑	90%	✅
% of Council-Wide Stage Two (Investigations) Complaints Handled on Time		93%	90%	90%	▬	↓	95%	⛔
Sickness absence days per teacher	6.6	5.7	3.64	6.03	↓	↓	6.4	✅
Sickness Absence Days per Employee (excluding teachers)	10.3	10	9.5	9.9	↓	↑	8	⛔
Percentage of invoices sampled that were paid within 30 days	81.57%	90.66%	93.64%	92.5%	↓	↑	95%	⚠️
Freedom of Information requests responded to in 20 working days (%)	95%	88%	93%	88%	↓	↓	94%	⛔

6. Underpinning Delivery

2. Service performance

Performance Indicator	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2015/16			
	Value	Value	Value	Value	Short Trend	Long Trend	Target	Status
Society of Information Technology Management (SOCITM) Better Connected Rating for website (Star Rating)	1	4	4	4	▬	↑	4	✅
Level of satisfaction with public sector partners - North Ayrshire Council	55	55						
Speed of processing Housing Benefit (New Claims) days	20	20.3	26.27	23.11	↑	↓	20.2	⛔
Speed of processing Housing Benefit (Change of circumstances) days	8.8	11.7	15.73	16.3	↓	↓	11.7	⛔
Speed of Processing (Council Tax Reduction) new claims (days)		23.2	31.25	28.99	↑	↓	23.2	⛔
Speed of processing (Council Tax Reduction) changes of circumstances (days)		7.3	9.88	5.97	↑	↑	7.3	✅
Percentage of Customers delighted with the overall Customer Service			74%	69%	↓	↓	77%	⛔
Procurement Capability Assessment (%)	51%	61%	72%	72%	▬	↑	67%	✅
Gross administration cost per Housing Benefit/Council Tax Benefit case (£)	£40.36	£40.28	£41.49	£41.42	↑	↓	£40.14	⚠️












Number of Reportable Incidents (RIDDOR) per 100,000 employees	472.53	366.1	329.3	493	↓	↓	350	🛑
Staff turnover - all employees	9.27%	8.2%	8.58%	9.1%	↓	↓		📈
Council-wide staffing numbers for North Ayrshire Council full-time equivalent (FTE)	5,644	5,542	5,689.7	5,674.5	↑	↓		📈
Total cost of the HR function per 1000 (FTE) employee	£430,000.00	£497,000.00	£495,000.00	£505,820.00	↓	↓	£500,000.00	⚠️
Number of customer complaints	839	2,031	2,139	1,461	↑	↑		📈
Percentage of public service buildings that are suitable and accessible to disabled people	52.5%	56%	61%	62%	↑	↑	60%	✅
Percentage of North Ayrshire Council employees who have recorded as having a disability	1.49%	1.21%	2.11%	2.3%	↑	↑	0%	✅
Percentage of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) North Ayrshire Council employees	0.64%	0.63%	0.7%	0.7%	→	↑	0%	✅
Percentage of Council staff who have had a Performance and Personal Development (PPD) discussion in the last 12 months	95%	90%	96%	89%	↓	↓	95%	🛑

6. Underpinning Delivery

3. LGBF










Performance Indicator	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2015/16			
	Value	Value	Value	Value	Short Trend	Long Trend	Target	Status
Support services as a percentage of total gross expenditure	2.2%	2.2%	2.46%		?	?	2.2%	
Corporate and democratic core costs per 1,000 population	£29,827.00	£31,485.50	£30,545.99		?	?	£31,000.00	
The percentage of the highest paid 5% employees who are women	53%	53.8%	55.6%	53.7%	↓	↓	50%	✅
Cost of collecting council tax per dwelling £	£11.05	£9.93	£10.19	£10.43	↓	↓	£9.75	🛑
Percentage of income due from Council Tax received by the end of the year %	93.5%	94.75%	94.63%	94.7%	↑	↑	94.8%	✅

Copy of North Ayrshire Performs - Exception Report

PI Status		Long Term Trends		Short Term Trends	
	Alert		Improving		Improving
	Warning		No Change		No Change
	OK		Getting Worse		Getting Worse
	Unknown				
	Data Only				

Traffic Light	
Red	18
Amber	10

2. Working together to develop stronger communities

Performance Indicator	Latest Note	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2015/16			
		Value	Value	Value	Value	Short Trend	Long Trend	Target	Status
Number of Groups who have participated in training delivered by Connected Communities	2015/16 - Quarter Four Update: The Third Sector Interface provide support to the Community and Voluntary sector and deliver a wide range of training previously offered by the Council e.g. grants, data protection, governance arrangements. We also reduced our staffing complement by 4.5 FTE as more emphasis was placed upon community engagement and locality planning.	74	36	8,217	2,669			4,000	
The average time (weeks) to deal with major & local planning applications determined during the year	2015/16 - Quarter Four Update: Exceeded target due to older case files being cleared throughout the year.	30.9	21.5	12.6	26.7			18	
The number of volunteers who are active in Connected Communities and Third Sector Interface activities	2015/16 - Quarter Four Update: Although the target was not met, the trend remains positive. Work across the Ayrshire Community Trust and Connected Communities provides volunteering opportunities and support for individuals and communities. We are funded by the Macmillan Cancer Information Service to co-ordinate and deliver training to volunteers at Saltcoats Library and its outreach services as a new business model. (Total amended from incorrect total of 8,602 at 12th September 2016.)			7,585	7,633			8,000	

3. Ensuring people have the right skills for learning, life and work

Performance Indicator	Latest Note	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2015/16			
		Value	Value	Value	Value	Short Trend	Long Trend	Target	Status
Percentage of young people choosing to stay onto S5 (as percentage of S4 roll at September previous year)	2015/16 - Quarter Four Update: 2015/16 witnessed a slight reduction in our stay on rate compared with the 2013/14, and we were slightly adrift of our target. However, we have seen an improvement since 2010/11. The trend over the last four years has also been reflected nationally.	73.6	80.1	78.1	79.16	↑	↑	80	⚠

4. Supporting all our people to stay safe, healthy and active

Performance Indicator	Latest Note	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2015/16			
		Value	Value	Value	Value	Short Trend	Long Trend	Target	Status
ASP Inquiries	2015/16 - Quarter Four Update: Although there has been an increase in the number of ASP referrals completed within 5 working days during the year, we did not achieve our target. ASP Senior Officer is working on an action plan to increase performance.			42.9%	51.9%	↑	↑	80%	⛔
Gross rent arrears (all tenants) as at 31 March each year as a percentage of rent due for the reporting year	2015/16 - Quarter Four Update: Welfare Reform has had an overall impact on this result and we did not meet our target. However, this performance compares favourably with the Scottish Housing Regulator 2015/16 Scottish Average of 5.26 percent.		3.2%	3.75%	3.23%	↑	↑	3%	⚠
Percentage of families previously registered on the Child Protection Register who have been re-registered following a period of less than one year	2015/16 - Quarter Four Update: In total, 6 families were re-registered accounting for 6.3 percent of all registered families between April 15 and March 2016. Whilst we did not achieve our target performance, it should be noted that the overall number of families registered throughout the reporting period was 96, less than the 116 registered in the previous year. This can be viewed as a positive trend.	2.0%	5.0%	2.5%	6.3%	↓	↓	5.0%	⛔
Percentage of learning disability service users accessing employment support activities	2015/16 - Quarter Four Update: Whilst we have improved our performance we did not meet our target. Whilst there has been a 6.7 percent increase in the number of service users accessing employment support activities, there has also been a similar increase in those accessing LD services leading to only a modest rise in percentage terms.	27.02%	27.93%	27.05%	28.13%	↑	↑	30%	⛔

5. Protecting and enhancing the environment for future generations

Performance Indicator	Latest Note	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2015/16			
		Value	Value	Value	Value	Short Trend	Long Trend	Target	Status
% of Class A roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment	2015/16 - Quarter Four Update: There has been a slight increase in the Road Condition Indicator (RCI) for A Class Roads from 2014/15, overall RCI has improved by 1.3%. This is a result of the strategic road maintenance plan targeting overall RCI rather than individual road classes.	36.3%	35.5%	34.87%	35.6%	↓	↓	34.5%	⚠
Proportion of operational buildings that are suitable for their current use	2015/16 - Quarter Four Update: The change in the percentage suitability score is linked to the property rationalisation programme, several assets meeting the standard are now surplus, causing a slight fall.	87.54%	88.6%	90.26%	89.8%	↓	↑	91%	⚠

6. Underpinning Delivery

Performance Indicator	Latest Note	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2015/16			
		Value	Value	Value	Value	Short Trend	Long Trend	Target	Status
% of Council-Wide Stage Two (Investigations) Complaints Handled on Time	2015/16 - Quarter Four Update: Of the 128 complaints handled at Investigation (Stage Two) 115 (90 percent) were closed on time. This has fallen short of the set target. Those that did not meet the timescale was due to the complexity of the complaints and the involvement of multiple Services/parties in the investigations. The Improvement Service reviewed complaints data for all 32 Scottish Local Authorities. National averages were calculated for complaints closed on time for Stage One and Stage Two to create benchmarks. The Scottish average for Stage Two complaints is 85 percent. During 2015/16 the Council exceeded the Scottish average by 5 percent. The Complaint and Feedback Manager is participating in benchmarking with others to learn from best practice.		93%	90%	90%	▬	↓	95%	⛔
Capital Expenditure - General Fund - Actual expenditure as a percentage of budgeted expenditure	2015/16 - Quarter Four Update: There was a significant improvement in this indicator compared to the previous year. This demonstrates that the initial capital budget and projection were more accurate. The 10 percent underspend relates to slippage in some major projects such as LD Day Centre, Early Learning and Childcare, Cemetery Walls and a reprofiling of expenditure in respect of Largs Academy. Financial Management will continue to work with services to ensure the originally approved budgets are accurate.			51.13%	90.18%	↑	↑	100%	⛔

Performance Indicator	Latest Note	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2015/16			
		Value	Value	Value	Value	Short Trend	Long Trend	Target	Status
Capital Expenditure - Housing Revenue Account (HRA) - Actual expenditure as a percentage of budgeted expenditure	2015/16 - Quarter Four Update: The 30 percent underspend can primarily be attributed to delays on the Fencedyke and Montgomery Court development projects and energy efficiency measures. Financial Management will continue to work closely with Services to ensure more accurate budgeting and progress with the Capital programme.			78.61%	69.83%	↓	↓	100%	⬮
Cost of collecting council tax per dwelling £	2015/16- Quarter Four Update: The small increase in collection cost is due to pay uplift and use of central support services.	£11.05	£9.93	£10.19	£10.43	↓	↓	£9.75	⬮
Freedom of Information requests responded to in 20 working days (%)	2015/16 - Quarter Four Update: The Information Governance Manager left the Council in Oct 2015, a new post-holder was appointed in mid-Dec 2015, creating another vacancy within the team. These personnel changes combined with a 15 percent increase in requests received during Q4 compared to Q3, negatively impacted performance against targets. A number of issues have been identified with the co-ordination and processing of FOI requests. These will be addressed in June when the Change team will conduct a review of all FOI processes using LEAN methodologies to identify improvements and efficiencies.	95%	88%	93%	88%	↓	↓	94%	⬮
Gross administration cost per Housing Benefit/Council Tax Benefit case (£)	2015/16 - Quarter Four Update Although the cost has come down from the previous year, it was outside the target of £40.14.	£40.36	£40.28	£41.49	£41.42	↑	↓	£40.14	⚠
Number of Reportable Incidents (RIDDOR) per 100,000 employees	2015/16 - Quarter Four Update: We did not meet the target of 350. Following review, it has been agreed that the target which was set previously to reduce from 500 to 350 was not realistic and was too ambitious to achieve within a 12 month period. However, all directorates will be proposing actions which will drive safety performance improvement across council operations in the in-coming year. These actions will be agreed and implemented within the services health and safety planning group meetings and then reported to the Corporate Health and Safety Group each quarter.	472.53	366.1	329.3	493	↓	↓	350	⬮
Percentage of Capital Projects completed on time	2015/16 - Quarter Four Update: We set targets for completion of capital projects. Although 27 percent of projects did not complete on time, they did complete during the year. Even though this indicator remains below target, the result is an improvement on the previous year. Work continues to improve the delivery of timescales for capital projects.		70.37%	67.44%	72.97%	↑	↑	95%	⬮

Performance Indicator	Latest Note	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2015/16			
		Value	Value	Value	Value	Short Trend	Long Trend	Target	Status
Percentage of Council staff who have had a Performance and Personal Development (PPD) discussion in the last 12 months	2015/16 - Quarter Four Update: During 2015/16, 5569 out of a possible 6224 employees had a PPD discussion with their line manager. The main reason the target was not achieved was due to restructures - it was felt that it was not appropriate to conduct PPDs until these were complete.	95%	90%	96%	89%	↓	↓	95%	⬮
Percentage of Customers delighted with the overall Customer Service	2015/16 - Quarter Four Update: During the year three out of seven services achieved the performance target. Action plans are in place to implement improvements for services in 2016/17.			74%	69%	↓	↓	77%	⬮
Percentage of invoices sampled that were paid within 30 days	2015/16 - Quarter Four Update: The number of invoices paid within 30 days fell short of target, however, the process has been reviewed and the revised process will be rolled out during April 2016. It is envisaged that the invoice payments times will show an improvement by the end of Quarter One 2016/17.	81.57%	90.66%	93.64%	92.5%	↓	↑	95%	⚠
Revenue Expenditure – General Fund - Actual expenditure as a percentage of budgeted expenditure	2015/16 - Quarter Four Update: The underspend is a result of funding set aside for Discretionary Housing Payment, Council Tax Reduction Scheme and the implementation of Universal Credit, which were not required. General inflationary assumptions have also been less than expected and underspends have been generated from vacancy management. This has been partially offset by an overspend within the Health and Social Care Partnership due to demand pressures.		99.9%	98.2%	98.4%	↑	↓	100%	⚠
Revenue Expenditure - Housing Revenue Account - Actual expenditure as a percentage of budgeted expenditure	2015/16 - Quarter Four Update: The target was not met due to a saving in loan charges, an underspend in repairs and maintenance and a reduction in rent arrears written off. All underspend has been carried forward to meet expenditure commitments in 2016/17.		95.5%	94%	95.47%	↑	↑	100%	⚠
Sickness Absence Days per Employee (excluding teachers)	2015/16 - Quarter Four Update: Overall the Council failed to achieve the target. Sickness absence continues to be closely monitored and managed in accordance with the Maximising Attendance Policy and Procedures, and this, coupled with support through Occupational Health referral, is expected to reduce sickness absence levels going forward.	10.3	10	9.5	9.9	↓	↑	8	⬮
Speed of Processing (Council Tax Reduction) new claims (days)	2015/16 - Quarter Four Update: The annual performance was outside the target but an improvement on the previous year. 2015/16 has been a year of further challenges for the service including the introduction of Universal Credit in April 2015. To further improve performance within 2016/17 the service will:		23.2	31.25	28.99	↑	↓	23.2	⬮

Performance Indicator	Latest Note	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2015/16			
		Value	Value	Value	Value	Short Trend	Long Trend	Target	Status
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> introduce an integrated electronic claim form complete the review of the new claims process using Lean Six Sigma principles 								
Speed of processing Housing Benefit (Change of circumstances) days	2015/16 - Quarter Four Update: Although the target was not met for the year, the performance for Quarter 4 was 11.67 days which was an improvement and just within the target. 2015/16 has been a year of further challenges for the service including the introduction of Universal Credit in April 2015. The service continues to address the workload, to improve performance and the service to our customers.	8.8	11.7	15.73	16.3	↓	↓	11.7	🛑
Speed of processing Housing Benefit (New Claims) days	2015/16 - Quarter Four Update: The performance for the year was outside the target but an improvement on the previous year. 2015/16 has been a year of further challenges for the service including the introduction of Universal Credit in April 2015. To further improve performance within 2016/17 the service will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> introduce an integrated electronic claim form complete the review of the new claims process using Lean Six Sigma principles 	20	20.3	26.27	23.11	↑	↓	20.2	🛑
Total cost of the HR function per 1000 (FTE) employee	2015/16 - Quarter Four Update: In 2015/16 the total cost of the Human Resource function per 1000 (FTE) employees was 2% higher than 2014/15, due to pay uplift and additional investment to support change/improvement projects.	£430,000.00	£497,000.00	£495,000.00	£505,820.00	↓	↓	£500,000.00	⚠️

DRAFT

North Ayrshire Council
Annual Performance Report
2015-16



North Ayrshire Council
Comhairle Siorrachd Àir a Tuath

Contents

3	Foreword
4	Introduction
6	Growing our economy, increasing employment and regenerating towns
14	Working together to develop stronger communities
18	Ensuring people have the right skills for learning, life and work
26	Supporting all our people to stay safe, healthy and active
32	Protecting and enhancing the environment for future generations
38	Underpinning Delivery
44	Comparing Performance
50	Finance
55	2015-16 Performance Indicators
56	What do you think?

Foreword

If there is one thing that remains constant, it is our drive for change. Not change simply for the sake of change, but real, tangible and ambitious change which improves the lives of our residents, grows our economy and regenerates our towns and villages.

Our Annual Performance Report for 2015-16 lays out how we have adapted to a shifting landscape over the past 12 months.

It has been a time of challenge as well as change but we emerge with vigour and a determination to be a great Council, delivering top quality services and ensuring that our communities remain at the heart of everything we do.

The past year has seen the introduction of Locality Planning across North Ayrshire, bringing a new era of grassroots democracy to our local communities and giving people an even bigger say on the issues that matter most to them.

We continue to invest in our young people through a £140 million capital investment programme to improve our school estate, while we have also put together a £28 million package to grow North Ayrshire's economy, including £17million to support regeneration through the Ayrshire Growth Deal - a major part of our transformation process.

There has also been a change in our administration and communities across North Ayrshire can be assured that our key focus will be to improve equity. This will form the backbone of everything we do as we work together to build on our position as a sector-leading Council.

As ever, we also welcome your thoughts on how we are performing and what we can do to improve our services. Please take some time to feedback on our report and let us know how we can continue to change for the better.



Councillor
Joe Cullinane
**Leader
of the Council**



Elma
Murray
**Chief
Executive**

Introduction

Our vision is to be a leading organisation defined by excellent and innovative services. Our 'Good to Great' improvement journey includes service modernisation and transformation and cultural change. The journey focuses on five themes – communities, places, partnerships, processes and people. We have plenty of evidence which shows that we are regularly recognised as being a great Council and some of this is noted in our successes section below.

Audit Scotland's most recent audit of the Council highlights that our 'Good to Great' journey underpins our updated Performance Management Strategy. This is also incorporated within each of our Directorate Plans and appropriate performance management arrangements are in place.

Successes

We enjoyed significant success throughout the year. A number of our awards are noted below:

- › European Customer Contact and Customer Service Award for Best Improvement Strategy and Silver Award for Best Complaints Team
- › National Education Award - Raising Attainment category - Kilwinning Early Years Centre
- › HR Network Awards for Best Workplace of the Year and Employee Engagement
- › Scotland's first 'Flushed for Success' award for our school toilet provision
- › Tenant Participation Gold Accreditation.
- › Investors in People Gold Accreditation retained by Housing Services
- › Customer Service Excellence retained by the Revenues and Benefits Team
- › Scottish Business Excellence Award for Lean Six Sigma
- › SOCITM Customer Satisfaction – Best Performing

- › Contact Centre Excellence Gold Award winners for Innovation in Digital Transformation
- › Personnel Today Award for Excellence in Public Service HR
- › Consultation Institute National Best Practice Award for our Locality Planning process for co-designing the governance of locality partnerships
- › Herald Society Team of the Year Award - Facilities Management
- › Association of Public Sector Excellence Best Service Team of the Year - Catering Services
- › APSE Most Improved Performer award - Building Cleaning Services
- › Best Awards Scheme at the Scottish Events Awards for the Provost's Civic Pride Awards
- › 5 star rating for activity accommodation by Visit Scotland for the Arran Outdoor Education Centre which is now a Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) Approved Delivery Centre

Challenges

In spite of our many successes, we continue to operate in a highly challenging environment. Some of the main challenges we face are outlined below:

- › We have worked and will continue to attract more businesses to the area. Last year we assisted 388 firms which created 350 new jobs
- › We were successful in securing Attainment Challenge funding from the Scottish Government. This money will support our ongoing work to tackle the relationship between low educational attainment and deprivation
- › We continue to make smart and innovative use of our resources and be creative in how we develop and deploy our services. This has helped us to respond well to the significant financial challenges faced by local government
- › Our Housing Service's Welfare Reform Advice Team provides intensive support and advice to council tenants affected by welfare reform

Growing our economy, increasing employment and regenerating towns

We are creating a growing, innovative, smart, more productive and inclusive economy. Over the year we focussed on the Ayrshire Growth Deal, the refresh of the North Ayrshire Economic Development and Regeneration Strategy (EDR), the roll-out of Employability Hubs and the skills pipeline as well as our Social Enterprise Strategy.

We progressed the **Ayrshire Growth Deal** with the Scottish and UK governments, in partnership with East and South Ayrshire Councils. The growth deal is an ambitious, cohesive plan to bring new funding into the region to support growth and future prosperity.

Inclusive Growth is one of four national economic priorities for the Scottish Government. It is also a clear focus within our new EDR strategy. We are working with the Scottish Government as one of five pilots. The pilot will identify the barriers to shared growth in North Ayrshire, and identify ways to bring about long term sustainable change within some of our poorest communities.

We continue to roll out and implement our employability programme. For example our **Skills for Life** provides training and work experience over a 26 week period. By the last week of the programme 17 of the 24 people who had started the programme had been supported into work or education. In addition programme participants achieved a 90 percent completion rate in their SQA units. In spite of delays in securing European Funding to support this work we continued to support those not in employment. These results are transforming lives and making a difference in our communities.

Team North Ayrshire brings all business support providers together to increase business competitiveness. The Team was identified as best practice in the Scottish Government's Economic Strategy and was shortlisted for an APSE Award. Last year they supported 230 account managed firms. A Team North Ayrshire Business Conference in March 2016 attracted over **200** local businesses. The event marked two years since the Team North Ayrshire initiative started and gave local companies a chance to network and reflect on achievements.



Team North Ayrshire have been phenomenal. They have given us the ability to win ISO9001, we are only one of six call centres in the UK to be given that. They have mentored us throughout, they have supported us with a graduate programme, they are supporting us with Modern Apprenticeships and they are helping us to relocate in Irvine. It's only by working in partnership with Team North Ayrshire that we'll be able to deliver our goals for this year.



Victoria Edwards, Managing Director,
VOCA Telemarketing Ltd





Some of our highlights

- › **Saltcoats Town Hall** was re-opened by the First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon following its £3.77 million transformation. We already have weddings booked in.
- › We agreed to support **250 Modern Apprentices** within the Council over the next three years.
- › We opened the **Employability Hub** at Stevenston Library and have 20 partners providing services there. A further roll-out of hubs is planned.
- › We have assisted **388** businesses through our Economic Growth services, a 63 percent increase from the previous year.
- › Our business support activity has increased the number of jobs created year on year as follows:
2013-14 - 250 jobs
2014-15 - 269 jobs
2015-16 - 350 jobs
- › We have secured an additional **£5.7 million** funding the European Union, Scottish Government and national agencies to support employability, transport, regeneration and Active Travel projects.
- › We have supported **428** unemployed people into work.
- › **Community benefit** requirements in contracts has created **40 new job opportunities** and a commitment from contractors to provide **64 work experience placements. Along with 11 Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) workshops** and other workshops and mock interviews, we are helping young people improve their interview and employability skills.
- › Formation of the **Arran Economic Group** to identify opportunities from the harbour redevelopment.
- › **Irvine** was **shortlisted** for the **Most Improved Town SURF Award** and **Irvine Harbourside** was a finalist in the **Academy of Urbanism Great Place Award**.
- › **Five** Modern Apprentices have been working with the **Countryside Ranger Service** – a national **‘first’**.
- › **The Building Standards Team** processed applications for construction projects **valued at over £136 million** an increase of £120 million from last year.

Case Study

Rebecca is a shining example of how a **Modern Apprenticeship** can set someone up for life. The 19-year old has spent just over 18 months as a Modern Apprentice working at Dalry Library. She joined the Council in the summer of 2014 after carrying out voluntary work but had no clear idea of what she wanted to do.



The MA scheme has been brilliant for me - I can't recommend it enough. I didn't really know what I wanted to do a couple of years ago - but the MA has given me a real vision. I'd love to go to university to become a librarian. It was better for me than going to college - it allowed me to learn and work at the same time. It wasn't just my work at the library, the job has allowed me to visit loads of other services and buildings, gaining lots of experience along the way. All I can say is that it's been really, really positive for me and I'd urge anyone to jump at the chance to join the Modern Apprenticeship scheme.



Case Study



Saltcoats Town Hall is arguably the most significant building in the historical streetscape and history of the town. The building has, over its lifetime, been the focus for a range of community and civic functions including council chambers and for some time as a cinema. Over the previous ten years the condition and use of the building had declined significantly. The historical layout of the building including three retail units had made the operation of the building challenging with little market demand for either the commercial or public space. The building subsequently closed to public use and became uninhabitable.

The restoration has provided a major opportunity to reverse this decline. In addition to the physical restoration of this important local building a key outcome of this project was the creation of a new Hub for local Council services. This involved bringing together existing services that were spread across the local area. This has provided a central point for the public to access Council services.

This project has resulted in the re-establishment of the building as the main civic and community building for the town. It also provides a venue for community and social events seven days a week. The completed project anticipates servicing 300 customers a week and hosting over 5,000 other visitors annually.

40

**new apprenticeships/
jobs created through
community benefit
clauses in procurement**

350

**jobs created
up from 269 in
2014-15**

388

**businesses supported
up from 237 in
2014-15**

428

**unemployed people
supported into work
(including via the Council's
Modern Apprenticeship
programme, Skills for
Life, Employability Hubs
and other sector based
initiatives)**

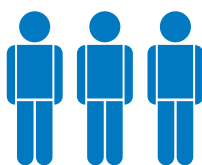


The Quarry Road, Irvine proposals have attracted £1 million Scottish Government Capital Regeneration funding.

Approvals have been secured for £5 million of European Social Fund.

£1.43 million Scottish Government Vacant and Derelict Land Funding for expenditure in 2016-17 has been secured as well as additional money until 2019-20.

A total of £5.7 million of external funding has been generated from across the European Union, Scottish Government and national agencies to support in the main employability, transport, regeneration and Active Travel projects.



Unemployment has fallen. The numbers claiming main out of work benefits reducing from 9.7 percent to 9.2 percent.

We have agreed a three year target to provide 250 Modern Apprenticeship opportunities within the Council.



Over 500 Team North Ayrshire interactions with businesses.

27 percent increase in Scottish Enterprise account managed businesses.

More than 80 businesses referred for Scottish Enterprise Innovation Product Support.



Working together to develop stronger communities

Having strong and vibrant communities is important to us. We are creating Locality Partnerships, to help our communities work with us to identify local priorities. As a trailblazing Council in this area, we have attracted the interest of the Scottish Government and other local authorities.

We hosted the first of six pilot Participatory Budgeting events in Kilwinning in March 2016.

Participatory Budgeting aims to:

- › Improve community confidence to work with agencies to improve local services
- › Bring people together to share the work of their organisations, identify new partners and pool knowledge and experience to address local key issues
- › Give organisations a platform to promote themselves
- › Improve inter-generational working
- › Give local people an understanding of the complexities of making decisions on funding

The event attracted applications from 52 community groups competing for a share of £12,000 of investment for local projects. The funding decisions were made by popular vote on the day. The events also attracted the interest of the Scottish Government and the Big Lottery.





Some of our highlights

- › We won a **Consultation Institute National Best Practice Award** for the design of the governance arrangements for our locality partnerships.
- › We established the **North Ayrshire Tourism Team**.
- › North Ayrshire has one of the fastest growing **Duke of Edinburgh** cohorts in Scotland with 103 Bronze, 32 Silver and 25 Gold awards during the year.
- › Through our new Events Forum we secured the **Scottish Ladies Open Golf** and the **Men's Scottish Open** for **Dundonald Links**.
- › **Partnership working with sportscotland** is seeing the unique development of the Largs Campus, providing world class educational and accessible sports facilities.
- › We were excited to be invited by the Scotland's Children's Commissioner to participate in a **UNICEF Conference** in Tajikistan. This came about from a DVD we made which supported the UNICEF Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Conference. Education Scotland will now capture this work in a case study for children's rights training.
- › We have been commissioned by the **Scottish Government** to deliver the **Scottish roll-out of Appiness**, our digital skills programme for early years in libraries and winner of the 2015 UK Libraries Change Lives Award.
- › Our **Trading Standards Team** has managed a number of successful campaigns. These include the **Mail Marshal** initiatives and **'Find a Builder' web page** (to help protect vulnerable members of our community). They also hosted the first Scottish event in a local night club **highlighting the dangers of legal highs**.
- › The successful **Mind Your Health Consultation** was developed by **our Members of the Scottish Youth Parliament** (MSYPs). Our Youth Services Team led the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex (LGBTI) Youth Group who received national recognition by being **shortlisted for the Scottish LGBTI Awards**.

Case Studies

During 2015 approximately 4,000 baby and toddler Bookbug Packs were distributed to families in North Ayrshire through Health Visitors. Bookbug is a Scottish book-gifting scheme which develops early literacy and family bonding through sharing stories, songs and rhymes in local libraries.

Research has shown that giving books to families increases the amount of time families spend reading together. There is also strong evidence to show that reading to young children improves their mental ability.



Nuisance calls can have a real impact on people's lives, particularly for our vulnerable residents. **Trading Standards** have installed '**call blockers**' in a number of residents' homes. These offer protection by stopping nuisance calls **before the phone even rings**, ensuring only trusted sources can get through. This initiative has had a significant impact with thousands of nuisance calls blocked from reaching those most at risk.

One organisation which has benefitted from the transfer of land from North Ayrshire Council, has been Fullarton Community Association. This local community group has used the ownership of the land and its long standing credibility as a representative community body, to attract approximately £2 million in Lottery and other partnership funding. The funding will be used to build a **new Community Hub** and appoint staff to manage the new facility.

73,500

adult learning opportunities have been provided by Connected Communities

600

groups accessed support and guidance from the Council

1,356

Trading Standards visits have been made to businesses and traders

4,000

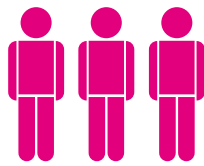
baby and toddler Bookbug Packs were distributed to families in North Ayrshire

7,633

volunteers are active in Connected Communities and Third Sector Interface activities



We have received £48,000 from the Scottish Government's Public Wireless Programme for wifi installation in libraries, Council and community facilities, including the Redburn Travellers' site.



To date hundreds of people have attended the local Participatory Budgeting events and more than 60 groups have received £38,000 to spend on projects, organisations and events.

We have recorded one of the highest numbers in Scotland for first time voter registrations, as a result of the 'your vote your voice' workshops which took place in all secondary schools. 297 young people participated in the programme.



Our Dog Warden Service Facebook page is proving very popular and effective. Designed to help reunite stray dogs with their owners - 74 stray dogs reunited in 2015 - as well as to publicise information, such as the legal requirement to have dogs microchipped, it boasts a strong following of 718 on Social Media.



We have seen a 2.3 percent growth in tourism numbers.

Ensuring people have the right skills for learning, life and work

Our vision is to be the best Education Authority in Scotland where all our young people receive the highest quality learning and teaching.

Our young people are an important and valued part of our communities. Our education focus has been on improving the quality of learning and teaching and providing opportunities for our young people to maximise their attainment and achievement.

Early analysis of 2015-16 exam results is very encouraging, showing our commitment to improving outcomes for our children and young people in North Ayrshire is paying off. Last year, there was a significant increase in attainment of National 5 qualifications by our S4 pupils. This level of achievement has been sustained for 2016. Our S5 pupils have performed significantly better than in previous years and more of our young people than ever before are achieving Higher qualifications. We have also seen improvements in Advanced Higher achievements by our S6 pupils.

Targeted literacy and numeracy work across all sectors is being delivered by a core staff team at our **Professional Learning Academy**.

A number of initiatives continue to address the attainment gap for children and young people from disadvantaged groups.

This includes:

- › Development of a Communications and Languages Strategy
- › Partnership working with the Robert Owen Centre to develop our approach to parental engagement in learning
- › Design of a high quality training programme to support improvements in numeracy and literacy
- › Delivery of a parenting programme which aims to support parents to help improve the behaviour of their three and four year olds.

Parents' comments at the end of the parent workshops included:

- › "I really enjoyed the course and it was good to meet other parents who are going through the same things."
- › "This is a fantastic course with a lot of useful information."
- › "The strategies have made a big difference."
- › "Life is less stressful."
- › "I have better communication with my children and a lot more patience."



Over the duration of the workshops staff observed positive changes in the interactions between parents and their children. During discussions with individual parents they spoke confidently about the strategies they were using with their child and the impact it was having. Staff felt well supported by the North Ayrshire team and it was great to see staff and parents using the same approaches.



Depute Head
Castlepark Early Years Centre

Child Protection remains a high priority in our schools and centres. All centres and schools have clear, appropriate and up-to-date policies and procedures in place to ensure the safeguarding of children and young people. Our Child Protection Co-ordinators' meetings ensure that training and practice remains current. All our staff take part in regular professional learning and are confident in responding to any child protection or safeguarding issue.

Our schools continued to ensure that our young people are prepared for life after school. Once again we built on our success in supporting pupils into post-school destinations with 96.1 percent of our school leavers moving into Further/Higher Education, training or work. We currently have the third best performance for positive destinations in Scotland.

We have been working with local businesses and the Chamber of Commerce to increase the job experience placements on offer to our students. We are also working to secure more places for children with Additional Support Needs. The continuing development of Activity Agreements with the third sector aims to provide increased opportunities for vulnerable young people with significant barriers to employment.

There is a focus on the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) agenda through the Scottish Schools Education Research Centre. The centre is currently working with two school clusters.

Schools continue to offer more opportunities for senior pupils to work towards wider achievements. The senior timetables in all of the secondary schools now offer a wider range of courses including Duke of Edinburgh, John Muir Award, Wellbeing Award, Young Applicants in Schools Scheme, Personal Development Award, Saltire Award, Uniformed Services, Leadership Award, Volunteering Award, Skills for Work Sports and Recreation, and mentoring and community events. A number of these options are being run in partnership with community learning and development, volunteers, community groups and employers. Schools have a member of staff who has overall responsibility for wider achievement.



In 2015 pupils who were sitting mainly National 4 exams were given the chance to participate in a wide variety of careers and volunteering experiences to increase their knowledge and skills for life, work and learning. This also led to them gaining units and awards in a variety of areas including Barista (City & Guilds, level 1), Uniformed Services (Level 4), Employability (Level 4) and the John Muir Award.

Attendance continues to be strong across all schools with sound arrangements in place to monitor and track those young people who have attendance issues. Exclusions are rare as schools continue to engage and provide appropriate support and curriculum options to meet young people's needs.

We continue to engage with parents and are looking at a number of programmes designed to help parents support their children's learning at home with a focus on literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing.



Some of our highlights

- › Irvine Royal Academy is being developed as a **Centre of Excellence** for vocational education. Through our partnership with Ayrshire College, Scottish Funding Council, Skills Development Scotland and others, we are delivering courses in tourism, sport and hospitality. Engineering courses are also being developed.
- › We continue to develop and support the implementation of the 1+2 model for modern languages. This is aimed at ensuring that every child has the opportunity to learn a modern language from P1 onwards. All of our schools have a designated 1+2 co-ordinator to take this priority forward.
- › We have **improved attainment** in literacy and numeracy at Level 5.
- › Our **Music Service** continues to go from strength to strength. We currently have 1,400 pupils in receipt of music tuition. We have won national awards including the **Gold Award at the National Concert Band Festival**.
- › We have established and trained **Pupil Support Teachers** to better support our students.
- › We have created **Nurture Bases** in 15 primary schools. The bases will provide additional support to young people who are experiencing social and emotional problems.
- › Our **Autistic Spectrum Disorder** (ASD) Strategy has been developed. The aim is to provide an integrated approach to support local children with autism through good joint working arrangements.
- › We completed our **Accessibility Strategy**. The Strategy details how we will deliver an accessible curriculum to all learners.
- › We have established a **Creative Learning Network** (CLN) to focus on the progress of creativity and innovation in teaching and the development of creative thinking skills.
- › Further support has been given to schools on the full implementation of **Getting It Right For Every Child** (GIRFEC). This has included training days for Head Teachers and pastoral care staff, regular newsletters and updates and ongoing support from key staff. GIRFEC is the national approach to improve outcomes and support the wellbeing of our children and young people.
- › **Place2Be** is a national charity providing emotional support to children in schools. They are working in six of our primary schools, setting up a counselling service for young people.
- › We currently have the **third best** performance in Scotland for **positive destinations** for our school leavers.
- › We established the **Professional Learning Academy** to focus on improving literacy and numeracy. The Academy will enable teachers to enhance their teaching expertise by developing and sharing good practice.

Case Study

Kilwinning Early Years Centre Raising Attainment in Numeracy

At Kilwinning Early Years Centre we have always had a focus on numeracy. However an opportunity arose for a staff member to attend Maths Recovery training. This training is usually delivered to teachers and usually targets children in primary two and three who are struggling with their maths.

The staff member who attended the training began to share her learning with other staff and we gradually started to implement new ideas across the centre. A snap shot of some of the different experiences include:

- › At our snack area when the children are washing their hands they are encouraged to count to ten This ensures they spend enough time washing their hands and practise their counting
- › At snack time we now have number signs and encourage the children to count out their own snacks e.g. 3 carrot slices, 1 banana, 2 breadsticks
- › At our baking area the children measure quantities and count amounts
- › We encourage children to explore number patterns in a range of resources including dominoes, large dice and playing cards

To involve our parents/carers we have offered workshops and shared the ideas and information on how to ensure children have a sound understanding of numbers. We have created fun interactive home learning packs and many parents have taken these home to use with their children. We are also sharing the learning with other centres.

Our children now have a breadth of numeracy experiences using a fun play based approach. Children are being challenged to ensure they reach their full potential and have a sound basis to build their numeracy skills on. Almost all our children are making progress in numeracy due to the new approaches used.

Case Study

Ardrossan Academy

We are developing staff capability and leadership capacity to support a positive culture of learning in our schools. Our school leadership teams are dedicated to improving teaching and learning through their influence on staff and pupil motivation and commitment.

Ardrossan Academy is a secondary school serving the towns of Ardrossan, Saltcoats and West Kilbride. The school vision is to 'improve performance for the benefit of all young people, involving all stakeholders'. The culture at Ardrossan Academy is outward looking, focusing on developing strong interpersonal skills in order to engage effectively with young people, staff, and parents.

The school was visited by Education Scotland in February 2016. The inspectors praised the 'strong, aspirational vision for improving the school which is shared by young people, parents, staff and partners'.

Underpinning this success is the strong leadership of Head Teacher Lisa Chalmers and her senior team. Lisa has a strong, aspirational vision for improving the school, with a clear focus on the school values of ambition, respect and excellence. All staff are committed to improving outcomes for young people. Across the school, relationships between young people and their teachers are very positive, resulting in a purposeful learning environment.



Positive relationships are vital if we are going to create the best learning environment possible. Staff work hard to ensure learners receive regular feedback, and our learners are always encouraged to interact and participate in classroom and extra-curricular activities. I'm delighted that Education Scotland recognised how confident and motivated our learners are. Ultimately we want to give our learners the best possible chance of achieving both academically and personally. We are hugely ambitious for our young people and firmly believe that there should be no poverty of aspiration, ambition or opportunity. That is certainly the case at Ardrossan Academy.



Lisa Chalmers
Head Teacher

74%

of leavers attained literacy at SCQF Level 5, up from 68% in the previous year

65%

of leavers attained numeracy at SCQF Level 5, up from 57% in the previous year

57%

of our young people left school with five qualifications or more at SCQF Level 5, up from 53% in the previous year

40%

of our young people left school with three Highers or more, up from 38% in the previous year

72%

of children met the expected pre-school milestones, up from 71% in 2015

247

early years places were provided for entitled 2 year-olds, up from 218 in the previous year



80% of our Early Years Establishments have an active communication champion who promotes good practice in listening and talking in the playroom and with parents.

Nurture bases have been created in 15 Primary Schools and are focused on supporting some of our most vulnerable children.

Over 70% of all primary aged children have achieved nationally expected levels in numeracy and reading.

Kilwinning Early Years Centre won the 'Raising Attainment in Numeracy' award at the Scottish Education Awards.



Greenwood Academy were finalists in the category 'Raising Attainment in Literacy' award at the Scottish Education Awards.

We have 92% attendance levels in our schools.

There has been a 35% increase in the number of wider achievement courses that are running across the senior phase in our secondary schools compared with the previous year.



Over 450 parents participated in a parenting programme.

100% of participants who completed our parenting programmes reported an increase in their levels of interaction with their children.

We supported leadership development in our staff with 18 senior leaders participating in a leadership coaching programme and a further 44 teachers completing a programme for aspiring leaders.



96.1% of our school leavers entered a positive post school destination, the third highest in Scotland.

A series of employment workshops resulted in 509 applications being received by our HR section from school leavers increasing employment opportunities of North Ayrshire's young people.

Supporting all our people to stay safe, healthy and active

We continue to work with partners to provide a co-ordinated response to the health, social and emotional needs of all children, young people and adults in North Ayrshire. Our first year as an integrated Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) has been both challenging and rewarding. We have begun to see some of the benefits of the integrated system working, for example in supporting older people to remain at home or get home from hospital as soon as possible. A key partner is our housing services through providing high quality homes and consulting tenants.

An Annual Performance Report has been published by the partnership which shows what has been achieved and the impact it is having to ensure:



All people who live in North Ayrshire are able to have a safe, healthy and active life.



Details of the HSCP 2015-16 Annual Performance Report can be found on our website at:

www.north-ayrshire.gov.uk/HSCPannualreport

Staying active

We continue to identify and develop opportunities for people to take part in physical activity, sports and volunteering. A number of these are outlined below.



Some of our highlights

- › We are working with our partners including KA Leisure, sportscotland, Maximum Potential and community sports clubs to deliver a wide range of activity programmes.
- › Participation figures have increased on an annual basis and along with our partners we are in the top five of our benchmarking family with targeted programmes engaging early years, GP referrals and health and wellbeing.
- › Our work with communities and sports clubs has led to some notable achievements including - **North Ayrshire Athletics Club** being named **Impact Club of the Year** at the Scottish Athletics Annual Awards, the launch of the **Ayrshire Tornadoes** basketball club, new **Tennis Facilities** at **West Kilbride Sports Club** and a Big Lottery award of over £1 million to the **Fullarton Community Association** for a new health and community hub.
- › **Active North Ayrshire**, a new mind and be active programme secured £70,000 from the Legacy 2014 Fund for a 12 month pilot programme. Early indicators are positive from this initiative.
- › Our **Active Schools Team** continue to deliver activity sessions to primary and secondary pupils along with local clubs and volunteers. **School of Sport** programmes now operate out of seven secondary schools and associated primary schools.
- › The **Nurturing Excellence Programme** in Sport has supported 210 local young athletes participating in 23 Olympic, Paralympic and Commonwealth sports since 2012 to achieve their maximum potential up to and including representation at the 2016 RIO Paralympic Games.



- › Our **Arran Outdoor Education Centre** offers residential outdoor learning and leadership training for both primary and secondary pupils which contributes to improved health, wellbeing and physical activity levels of all participants.
- › Our **Country Parks Team** provides a range of healthy and active educational and recreational activities targeting all ages. Our Acorn Club, Junior Ranger Programme, the Breaking Ground Health Referral Project and Friends of Eglinton, Ardeer and Spiers Volunteer Groups provide a range of conservation based activities for all ages and abilities demonstrating safe

access to the countryside in ways that do not spoil the landscape and heritage but do increase children's and adults' sense of exploration and adventure. Partner organisations such as Parkrun provide a running programme with an average of 150 runners of all abilities attending every weekend, whilst other informal running groups, dog exercise, equestrian and angling groups have boosted the number of overall active pursuits at Eglinton and the wider district this year.

- › **Youth work** in schools and community settings contributes to a range, of positive outcomes including health and wellbeing, positive life choices and community safety. Much of this work is delivered in partnership with other public sector bodies and community organisations. Our young people are also involved in the development and co-design of a youth work provision across all six localities that is based on needs and aspirations.
- › Our **Planning Services** investigate breaches of planning in line with the Council's Planning Enforcement Charter. Public amenity has an impact on peoples' health, their perception of safety and their ability to be active.



Housing

We continue to implement the **Strategic Housing Investment Plan** (SHIP). Since the start of the Plan to the end of March 253 new homes have been completed by the Council.

Research informing the North Ayrshire Council Older People Strategy 2013-16 identified that bed-sit accommodation is no longer desirable, resulting in lower demand for this type of housing. In response, we are currently delivering a Sheltered Housing Redevelopment programme which will provide modern, innovative homes to fully support our tenants to live independently. The homes are being designed to be energy efficient and flexible enough to allow them to evolve to meet the needs of both current and future residents.

Some of our highlights

- › **Montgomery Court, Kilbirnie** - The first phase of the construction works comprising three amenity bungalows and nine sheltered flats was completed on 8 February. The residents of the original sheltered housing unit have now settled into their new homes. The final phase of the development, comprising seven sheltered flats and five amenity bungalows is scheduled for completion in November 2016.
- › **Vennel Gardens, East Road, Irvine** - The new purpose built sheltered housing development was completed on 4 November 2015. The building incorporates 16 one bedroom modern, energy efficient homes as well as a Community Hub.
- › From the results of satisfaction surveys 100 percent of tenants would rate their home as an excellent or good place to live.

One resident stated:



Before moving here I had not been over the door for two years and if it was not for family members I would never have seen anyone. That has all changed since moving here and it has given me my independence back.



95.1%

of antisocial behaviour cases were resolved within locally agreed targets

588

youth work sessions with 64,765 participant attendances

124

qualified adult volunteers

55

secondary pupil volunteers

742

homeless presentations



86% uptake of free school meals in P1 to P3.

Overall free school meals uptake achieved **85%** (10% above Scottish target).



99.07% of Council dwellings met the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS).

99.69% of Council homes met/exceeded Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing.

Council House Building - **56** homes completed in 2015.

96% of all homeless decisions were notified within 28 days.

57% of people assessed as homeless housed into permanent accommodation.



1,184 pupils attended the Arran Outdoor Centre spending **176,732** bed nights at the centre in order to participate in **526,446** sessions of learning and outdoor activity.

210 Nurturing Excellence Programme athletes since 2012 including:

1 World Record Holder

1 Paralympian

6 Olympic and Commonwealth trialists

31 Olympic, commonwealth and para sports

93,315 participant attendances for Active Schools.



Protecting and enhancing the environment for future generations

We have made significant progress implementing our Environmental Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy. A new Energy and Sustainability Service was established in August 2015 to provide a sharper focus to the energy and sustainability agenda by driving forward renewable energy projects, energy efficiency projects, and sustainable behaviour change.

Some of our highlights

- › **CO2 emissions** have reduced from 55,000 tonnes to **50,709** tonnes. We are on target for a 40 percent reduction by 2030.
- › Completion of **solar panel and biomass installations** on a total of **24** Council properties.
- › Ongoing **installation of external wall insulation improvements** to housing stock - **626** mixed tenure properties completed.
- › Implementation of a **new low emission vehicle pool car scheme** for business travel to reduce carbon emissions and business travel costs.



- › Installation of **energy efficient street lighting** to reduce carbon emissions and energy costs.
- › Installation of new energy efficient lighting systems in some Council properties.
- › Increase in the uptake of schools with **Fairtrade** status.
- › Approval of a new **Local Biodiversity Action Plan**.
- › New Renewable Energy Strategy (RES) approved in September 2015.
- › **Implementation of a scheme of works** to improve the household waste recycling centre provision at the Brodick Waste Transfer Station supported by Zero Waste Scotland funding.
- › Working with the community organisation **Eco Savvy** to progress further improvements to sustainable waste management on Arran, including the preparation of a business case for green waste composting on the island.
- › Successful roll out of our **WARP-IT** (Waste Action Reuse Portal) across Council services. We now have 178 registered users, resulting in the avoided landfill of 7.6 tonnes of furniture (19 tonnes of carbon dioxide).
- › Continuing to focus on **improving recycling scheme performance** through targeting our lowest performing areas. We work to encourage residents to participate in the recycling systems and to reduce contamination. A waste awareness communication campaign called **"Right Stuff Right Bin"** was launched in November 2015.
- › Continued development and management of **Shewalton Landfill Site** resulting in the site receiving an **'Excellent'** rating from SEPA under their Compliance Assessment Scheme. We continue to reuse the landfill gas generated for electricity supplied to the National Grid.
- › Continued support to our schools in their endeavours related to learning for sustainability. This includes a number of our schools engaging in initiatives such as the John Muir award, Forest schools award and links to the Food for Life Scotland and their Grow! Cook! Eat! Programme.

Case Study



Our £2.5 million Dickson Drive, Irvine project was a mixed development creating new housing and improving existing shop units. The project has rejuvenated and enhanced the local area, making it a more desirable place to live.

The Dickson Drive development replaced poor-quality, low demand housing with modern, affordable homes in which people are proud to live. The project provided eight modern, fit-for-purpose homes, two of which are amenity standard bungalows designed specifically to meet the needs of older people.

The project included the removal of flats above the existing shop units. This has created a more welcoming retail environment. In addition, a new service yard has been installed to the rear of the buildings. The regeneration of the commercial units has enhanced the area and the introduction of a new road, Dickson Way, has improved connections with the local community. Safety for both the residents and commercial units has been enhanced.

We place a strong focus on sustainability. Not only are the new homes energy efficient and affordable to heat, the overall regeneration of the area aims to create a sustainable community which meets the diverse needs of existing and future residents.

The project was also designed in accordance with the Scottish Government 'Designing Streets' guidance. The project achieved Secure by Design Accreditation and the Scottish Building Standards 'Bronze Active' for sustainability.

Case Studies

We are continuing to reduce our carbon footprint with our exciting and innovative green policies. Our car pool scheme which was launched, in partnership with Enterprise Rent a Car, in October 2015 already has eight vehicles. The development of this scheme and other initiatives will contribute to the wider review of business travel with targeted **savings of £200,000**. Our Car Pool scheme made **significant reductions on CO2 emissions**, to the tune of approximately **1.5 tonnes**, in its first six months.



We have increased litter picking initiatives in communities. We have provided local groups, schools and businesses (including the **Ayrshire Litter Volunteer Network**) with the training and tools to keep our communities and towns cleaner.

These partnerships help keep our neighbourhoods and environment clean and welcoming. In particular great strides have been made at Stevenston Beach and the surrounding area. Streetscene assists volunteers by providing equipment such as trolleys and litter pickers as well as helping with the collection and disposal of the litter picked. There has been engagement with local schools which has seen an increase in the use of Stevenston Beach and is helping to create more civic pride in the area.

Success is breeding more success with the group growing in numbers and expanding into more areas making a real difference to the environment.

24%

reduction in carbon emissions through Carbon Management plan projects since 2006

56.4%

of our household waste is recycled

75

allotment plots have been established, managed by the local community

£5 million

investment in Biomass boiler and Solar PV retrofit programme to provide renewable energy to 20 Council buildings

45

schools achieving green flag status under the Eco Schools programme



CO2 emissions have reduced from 55,000 tonnes to 50,709 tonnes in and we continue to be on target for a **40%** reduction by 2030.

Installation of external wall insulation improvements to **626** mixed tenure properties.

'**Excellent**' rating from SEPA for the management of Shewalton Landfill site.

225 Voltage - the reduced electrical supply to Cunninghame House due to Voltage Optimisation, saving £10,000 per year.

Award of '**Super Local Authority**' from WWF on Climate Change Action.



Overall percentage of road network that should be considered for maintenance treatment is **37.8%**.

We maintain **2,410** hectares of public open space.

The standards of street cleanliness has improved from 92.3% to **95.8%**.

We are the **fourth** most improved road authority in Scotland since 2011.



North Ayrshire has been a Fairtrade Zone **since 2014**.

More than **50%** of food produce used for school meals is from organic sources.

Two schools growing and using their own food.



Underpinning Delivery

We need a sound financial base and a clear focus on what our customers and communities need to deliver effectively on our priorities. We also need good governance, good communication and most importantly highly motivated staff who work well together.

We continue to look at ways to **transform** our services to make them more effective and focused on our customers. A number of initiatives are making a significant contribution to transformational change across the Council.

These include:

- › Using private sector business process improvement tools such as Lean Six Sigma and Kaizen blitz to enhance the way we do things.
- › Developing more creative and innovative ways of delivering our services, including using more digital technology.
- › Investment in our technology to develop more resilient systems and processes.

Some of our highlights

- › A range of projects have been implemented to deliver **exceptional customer service**. Our new Customer Service Centre at Saltcoats Town Hall opened in February 2016 and customer feedback has been very positive. We have used new technology within the Contact Centre and this has helped to improve the percentage of calls answered.
- › We are working to improve the **online services** available to our residents. More customers than ever are now registered for an online account. Particularly successful this year has been the development of a fully automated free school meal and clothing grant process and the roll out of e-bills for Council Tax.
- › We successfully delivered the **2015 Westminster election** in North Ayrshire, involving a range of staff from across the Council.
- › We improved our level of sickness absence (although we just missed reaching our ambitious target of eight days per full time equivalent). The principal causes of sickness absence were Musculo/Skeletal and Stress/Anxiety. We continue to support employees back to work and reduce sickness absence.

Employees

Our People Connect, is our new people strategy that was designed by our people for our people. This short, distinct booklet is brought to life by using augmented reality and has our staff values at the heart of four key priorities that support the Council Plan and its Strategic Priorities, these are:

- › Strengthening leadership across the Council
- › Transforming how we work
- › Creating a great place to work
- › Supporting our people to develop, perform and thrive

A Cross Service Working Group designed Our People Connect and launched it at our Leadership Conference in June 2015. They then took this on tour throughout the Council, engaging with staff and talking about why people are at the heart of everything we do.

Communications

Our Communications staff continue to deliver a robust and professional service for both internal and external audiences.

Highlights of our activity have included:

- › National television coverage on BBC Scotland for our free holiday school meals initiative
- › Extensive online and social media coverage for a variety of campaigns including the Provost's Civic Pride Awards, Registering to Vote and Violence Against Women
- › The formal opening of Saltcoats Town Hall by the First Minister
- › Positioning North Ayrshire as a vibrant, connected and ambitious area where businesses grow and flourish

Online activity has seen us build the corporate twitter account to a followership of 13,500. News items continue to be uploaded regularly to both the website and Connects.

Governance

The Council is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with legislation and proper standards. We also need to ensure that public money is safeguarded, properly accounted for and used economically, efficiently and effectively. The Annual Governance Statement explains how North Ayrshire Council is complying with the Code of Corporate Governance. This framework identifies the systems and processes, and culture and values by which the authority is directed and controlled and the activities through which it accounts to, engages with and leads the community.

We ensure that all of our key governance documents are reviewed and kept up to date. Recent changes include amendments to the Council's Scheme of Administration and Scheme of Delegation to Officers in terms of the implementation of Locality Partnerships. We are currently reviewing information governance policies and processes in order to develop an Information Management Improvement Plan.

Our Community Planning Team co-ordinate and support the work of the Community Planning Partnership. This includes developing relationships with key partners, linking in with national developments, providing training and briefings, co-ordinating meeting arrangements and producing an Annual Report. In 2015 the Community Planning Team had a key role in developing Locality Partnerships.

A Delivery Partnership Agreement with the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) and other community partners, has been put in place. The agreement is to deliver Universal Credit, supporting the most vulnerable in our communities. The partnership is working well with the DWP Jobcentres at Kilbirnie, Irvine and Saltcoats. Monthly meetings are held with partners to resolve any operational issues and improve customer service.

A new **Corporate Fraud Team** was established at the beginning of 2015 to investigate suspected fraud within and against the Council. The Team has received a wide range of referrals from within the Council and from the public. During 2015, the team carried out eight separate internal investigations as well as a range of investigations covering areas such as Council Tax, Scottish Welfare Fund, Non-Domestic Rates, Blue Badges and Housing tenancy matters. The team achieved backdated recoveries in these areas of almost £100,000 as well as ongoing cost reductions for the Council of around £70,000.

Case Studies

We have introduced **'Get Connected'** volunteering days which are designed to increase employee engagement, enhance collaborative working and give something back to our communities. These have been a huge success supporting local nursery schools, with our volunteers building water walls, mud kitchens, outdoor classrooms, vegetable boxes, musical gardens and a Loch Ness Monster play area.

All volunteers left with a feeling of pride, and without exception would all love to do it again. The nurseries have been full of praise for providing them with resources they could not afford to buy themselves, all of which have since been well used by the children.



It was great to be involved and incredibly rewarding to know that we made a real difference to a vital local facility. The camaraderie was amazing.



Customer Services led a project team to offer **e-Bills** to those customers who were registered for an online account. The project team worked together to develop a process to securely deliver bills to Council Tax Customers. Customer insight information was used to identify the potential for take up for e-bills and to identify the most effective way of marketing the service. Information security was key and rigorous testing ensured that customers could see only information relevant to them.

A successful marketing campaign encouraged **65 percent** of eligible customers to sign up for an e-bill. Implementation of the next phase is now underway and the expectation is that this will help to reduce postage costs and encourage more customers to use online services.

15%

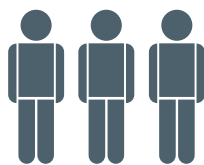
of procurement spend
with local suppliers

91%

of Stage One complaints
were closed on time

90%

of Stage Two complaints
closed on time



Online activity has seen us build the corporate twitter account to have over **12,600** followers.

We have dealt with **602** incoming press enquiries and issued **431** proactive press releases.

Employee engagement rose to **69.6%** in 2015 from 55% in 2012.

8.98 sickness absence days per employee (FTE) for the whole Council.



92.5% of valid invoices are paid within 30 days of receipt.

142,279 pays were produced for our employees.

99.91% of employee pays were produced accurately up from 99.44% in 2014.

4,325 pension forms were processed supporting our employees to plan for their future.



Comparing Performance

We are committed to improving outcomes for the residents of North Ayrshire. We want to know if we are delivering our services effectively. Comparing performance, or benchmarking, supports change and improvement within the Council by learning how better performing organisations achieve their results.

During the past five years we have been working with other Scottish councils and the Improvement Service to develop and improve the Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF). Data is provided for performance indicators by all 32 Scottish councils. This allows us to compare how we are doing against other councils performance. More information on how we compare can be found at <http://scotland.mylocalcouncil.info/>

The latest data available highlights that of the 53 LGBF indicators, we are ranked number one for four indicators. An **overview** of our ranking position by **quartiles** is outlined in the table below.

Quartile	2010/11	2013/14	2014/15
Top quartile (%)	24	36	38
Second quartile (%)	37	32	26
Third quartile (%)	22	24	28
Fourth quartile (%)	20	8	8

Improvement areas and activities to support our LGBF ranking include:

- › Work to reduce **inequalities** impacting on educational outcomes and life chances.
- › Increasing our **engagement** with parents in supporting their child's learning.
- › The **review of our Care at Home** services.
- › Leading the **LGBF Council Tax Family Group**. The focus of the group has been on improving collections for low banded properties. There is evidence that councils with a larger proportion of higher banded properties have higher collection levels than councils with a higher proportion of lower banded properties. North Ayrshire Council has around 80 percent of its properties in bands A to D. Collection performance across councils varies and the group has looked at direct debit initiatives, methods of payment and the number of monthly instalments and improving recovery procedures. The group has also concentrated on cost reduction initiatives like e-billing and data capture technology.
- › Improving our performance on the payment of invoices within 30 days. Visits have been made to Renfrewshire and East Renfrewshire to learn about their success in this area. Following these meetings invoice payment processes have been revised and improvements will be implemented during 2016-17.
- › Recognising that it is important to monitor and compare our property portfolio performance with other local authorities. In early 2016 we joined the National Best Value Benchmarking Scheme (NBVBS), which is a **property benchmarking scheme** set up by property professional societies in conjunction with Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA). This provides us with regular updates on public sector asset management issues, topics and best practice guides.
- › Leading the **LGBF Museums Family Group** of ten local authorities and trusts, which is a helpful platform for benchmarking and sharing good practice.
- › Involvement of the North Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership in a small working group. The initial piece of work was an **analysis of educational attainment for looked after children**. In November 2015, the group completed its second project which was an analysis of the transition process from children to adult services. The report was distributed to key service managers for consideration and action.

- › Work to understand the **high level of children's referrals** to the Scottish Children's Reporter's Administration (SCRA). Although the numbers are reducing, we still compare unfavourably to the rest of Scotland. This learning was used to influence the development of the newly established Police Concerns Hub. Use of new processes in the hub should lead to a lower volume of police referrals to SCRA.
- › We participate in the **Heads of Planning Scotland Benchmarking Group** which consists of participants from five other councils. Over the past year we have discussed issues such as agile working, highlighting the use of shared desks, mobile technology and the associated benefits and disadvantages. This knowledge will help inform service improvements within the whole Council.
- › A comprehensive review of the **Roads service** has been undertaken. This was to identify ways of improving performance further and to find the most appropriate opportunities for an integrated **Streetscene and Roads** service model. The report identified a number of strategic issues and opportunities for consideration and improvement. These have been developed into the Roads and Streetscene Strategic Change Programme which commenced implementation in January 2016.



Our performance has improved in 58% of LGBF performance indicators.

We are ranked first, second or third for **21% of LGBF indicators** which shows an improvement from 2013-14 when it was 15%.



We are ranked in the top half of all councils for 64% of LGBF performance indicators.

We are in the **top quartile** for performance in **38% of the LGBF performance indicators.**



Financial Performance

The Council continues to demonstrate sound financial planning and stewardship with appropriate reserves and expenditure contained within our annual budget. A balanced budget was agreed for 2016-17 in February 2016 together with a refreshed long-term capital plan. The Medium Term Financial Plan has been updated and approved and work continues on the Long Term Financial Strategy.

To support further development of the Council's financial management arrangements, the procurement of the new Financial Management System (FMS) is almost complete and is on track for implementation by the end of 2016-17.

Revenue Expenditure

Councils need to account for their spending and income in a way which complies with our legislative responsibilities. Most day to day spending and income is recorded within the General Fund. Costs in relation to the management of our housing stock are recorded within the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).

During the year the Council delivered General Fund services at a cost of £333 million in support of the Council's objectives and this is illustrated in Exhibit 1.

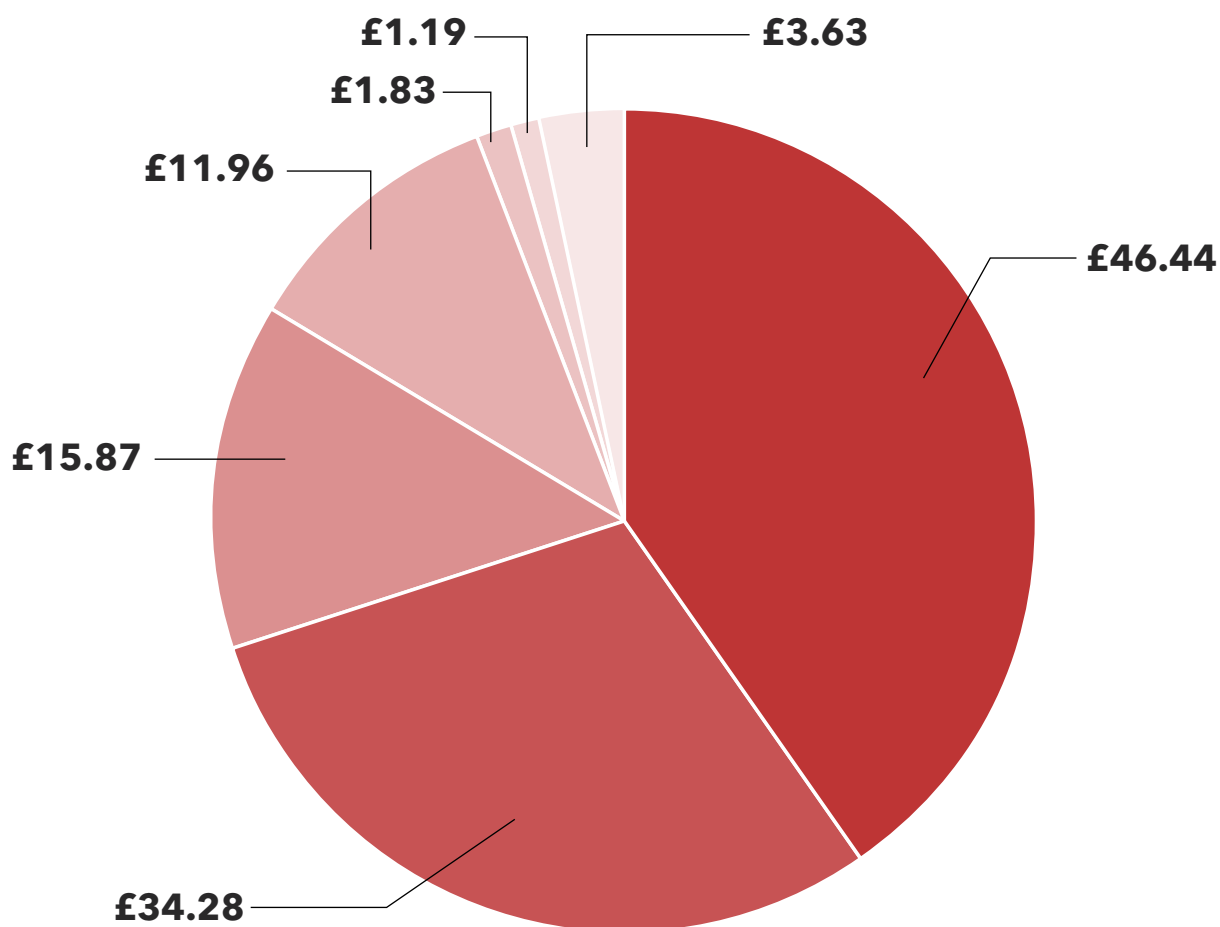
Exhibit 1 - General Fund 2015/16 Revenue Expenditure

Expenditure	2015-16 Budget £m	2015-16 Spend £m	Variance £m
Education and Youth Employment Early Years, Primary, Secondary and Additional Support Needs	135.032	134.346	(0.686)
Integrated Health and Social Care Partnership and Social Services Children and Families, Older People, Independent Services, Learning Disabilities, Mental Health Needs, Criminal Justice and Addiction Services	97.058	99.167	2.109
Place Property Management and Investment, Roads, Streetscene, Transport, Waste Services, Facilities Management and Building Services	46.230	45.913	(0.317)
Economy and Communities Planning and Protective Services, Economic Development and Connected Communities	35.617	34.601	(1.016)
Finance and Corporate Support Finance, Revenues and Benefits, Audit and Risk, Procurement, Human Resources, ICT, Customer Services, Registration and Business Support	6.172	5.280	(0.892)
Chief Executive and Democratic Services Legal, Policy, Performance and Community Planning, Communications, Committee and Member Services, Change Programme and Civic Contingencies	3.734	3.444	(0.290)
Other Corporate Items Financing Costs, Capital Charges	12.428	10.499	(1.929)
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	336.271	333.250	(3.021)

How do we spend your Council Tax?

Monthly spend of £115.20 per household based on Band D

Education and Youth Employment	£46.44
Integrated Health and Social Care Partnership & Social Services	£34.28
Place	£15.87
Economy and Communities	£11.96
Finance & Corporate Support	£1.83
Chief Executive and Democratic Services	£1.19
Other Corporate Items	£3.63



In total General Services underspent by £5.2 million. This was achieved by underspending against our budget by £3 million and generating an additional £2.2 million of income. This has been earmarked for service expenditure in 2016-17. The £5.2 million underspend reflects the robust financial management which is in place across the Council and can be analysed across the following broad categories:

- › Level of funding available from the Scottish Government to fund Discretionary Housing Payments and the Council Tax Reduction Scheme has resulted in the funds set aside by the Council no longer being required (£1.2 million)
- › Delay in the implementation of Universal Credit for residents within the homelessness service means that funds set aside to meet the funding shortfall are not required (£1.0 million)
- › The impact of general inflation being less than anticipated at the start of the year (£1.0 million); and
- › Implementation of vacancy management to help deliver future year efficiencies (£0.8 million)

This underspend has been partly off-set by an overspend within the Health and Social Care Partnership.

Housing Revenue Account Services were delivered at a cost of £44.5 million during the year as detailed below in Exhibit 2.

Exhibit 2 - Housing Revenue Account 2015-16 Revenue Expenditure

Expenditure	2015-16 Budget £m	2015-16 Spend £m	Variance £m
Employee Costs, Supplies and Services, Transport and Admin Costs	9.694	9.420	(0.274)
Running costs of providing a housing service function to tenants			
Repairs and Maintenance	17.557	17.054	(0.503)
Equipment & Adaptions, Voids, Planned & Response repair costs of Council housing			
Capital Financing	19.383	18.048	(1.335)
Capital financing costs including funding contributions and charges in relation to borrowing for Council House build and improvements to existing stock			
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	46.634	44.522	(2.112)
	2015-16 Budget £m	2015-16 Spend £m	Variance £m
Income			
Rental Income, Other Income	(46.634)	(46.384)	0.250
TOTAL INCOME	(46.634)	(46.384)	0.250
NET POSITION	-	(1.862)	(1.862)

The Housing Revenue Account underspent by £1.9 million in the year compared to a budgeted break-even position. The main factors contributing to the final underspend at 31 March 2016 are:

- › Lower than anticipated loan charges, due to the use of internal balances to fund capital investment, together with slippage on the capital programme (£1.3 million)
- › Underspends in repairs and adaptations to housing stock (£0.5 million)
- › Reduced write off of rent arrears which is reflective of current collection levels (£0.3 million)

The underspend in both General Services and HRA will be carried forward in the Council's reserves and utilised in future financial years.

Capital Investment

Key to the delivery of Council services is investment in the assets which are used to deliver our services. This includes schools, houses, infrastructure and the utilisation of capital funding to stimulate regeneration in local areas. In 201-16 the Council budgeted for a total capital investment of £76.5 million. Capital expenditure amounted to £76.1 million, an underspend of £0.4 million (0.5 percent).

Several major projects were successfully completed during the year, including Saltcoats Town Hall, the Millport Field Centre and the Strategic Investment Site in the Irvine Enterprise Area. Work also continues on the new Irvine Leisure Centre, Garnock School Campus and Largs School Campus which will form part of a significant capital investment programme planned over the coming years. We also continue to develop and build new homes.

The combined programme is illustrated in Exhibit 3 on page 54.

Exhibit 3 - Capital Investment 2015-6

Expenditure	2015-16 Budget £m	2015-16 Spend £m	Variance £m
Housing Revenue Account	21.085	19.972	(1.113)
Place	15.495	16.653	1.158
Education and Youth Employment	19.409	19.631	0.222
Integrated Health and Social Care Partnership	0.293	0.213	(0.080)
Economy and Communities	19.168	18.654	(0.514)
Finance & Corporate Support	1.030	1.038	0.008
Other Corporate Items	0.061	-	(0.061)
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	76.541	76.161	(0.380)

Income	2015-16 Budget £m	2015-16 Spend £m	Variance £m
Prudential Borrowing	(34.239)	(35.011)	(0.772)
Scottish Government Funding	(16.161)	(16.160)	0.001
Use of Funds	(5.100)	(4.737)	0.363
Capital Financed from Current Revenue	(11.107)	(11.097)	0.010
Grants and Contributions	(5.034)	(4.942)	0.092
Capital Receipts	(4.900)	(4.214)	0.686
TOTAL INCOME	(76.541)	(76.161)	0.380

2015-16 Performance Indicators

We collect, report and publish a range of performance information. We use measures that help us track progress on our priorities and provide an overview of how we are delivering services. All of our performance indicators are subject to internal and external audit on a sample basis.

Keen to see more?

More data about our performance measures and how our performance compares with other Councils is available at our North Ayrshire Performs portal on our website at:

www.north-ayrshire.gov.uk/councilperformance

In a number of indicators, 2015-16 performance data is not yet available due to a time lag in production of the data. Where available, performance data covering the last three financial years is included in our North Ayrshire Performs portal. Data which is not available will be published as soon as it is available.

What do you think?

Please take a few minutes to tell us what you think about this Annual Report by completing this short questionnaire.

This can be found online at <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/CMW68QK>

1. How do you rate the design and layout of the Annual Report?

☐ Very good ☐ Fairly good ☐ Average ☐ Poor

2. How easy is it to read and understand?

☐ Very easy ☐ Fairly easy ☐ Not very easy ☐ Not at all easy

3. How useful is it in informing you about the work of your Council?

☐ Very useful ☐ Fairly useful ☐ Not very useful ☐ Not at all useful

4. Which sections did you find particularly useful?

5. What other information would you like to see in a future Annual Report?

6. Other comments

Thank you for your feedback

Alternatively you can print and complete the questions on this page and return to Policy and Performance, Democratic Services, North Ayrshire Council, Cunninghame House, Irvine KA12 8EE

Or contact Democratic Services, North Ayrshire Council, Cunninghame House, Irvine, KA12 8EE, Tel: 01294 324140.

E-mail us at: northayrshireperforms@north-ayrshire.gov.uk

We will use your feedback to improve future publications.

NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

Agenda Item 10

25 October 2016

Cabinet

Title: **Consultation on Social Security in Scotland**

Purpose: To advise the Cabinet of the Scottish Government's consultation on Social Security in Scotland

Recommendation: Agree to approve the Council's response to the consultation on Social Security in Scotland, as set out at appendix 1.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Scottish Government has recently launched a consultation on Social Security in Scotland entitled "A New future for Social Security". The consultation is seeking views on how best to use new devolved powers around Social Security. This reports sets out the Council's response to the consultation, which is set out at appendix 1. A summary of the key elements of North Ayrshire response is provided at 2.4.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Scotland Act 2016 devolves welfare powers to the Scottish Government for carers, disabled people and those who are ill, for example Attendance Allowance, components of the Regulated Social Fund, for example cold weather payments, flexibility to vary payment of the Universal Credit housing element and power to top-up and create new benefits for people of working-age. Benefits relating to employment, for example Jobseekers Allowance, remain a reserved matter.
- 2.2 The Scottish Government intends to establish a Social Security Agency to oversee the administration of devolved benefits.
- 2.3 The Scottish Government is undertaking a separate option appraisal regarding the delivery mechanisms for Social Security.

2.4 The consultation is in three parts:

Part 1: A principled approach

- principles for the new Social Security Agency;
- outcomes and the user experience;
- delivery of social security in Scotland;
- equality and low income; and
- Independent advice and scrutiny.

Part 2: Devolved Benefits covering each of the powers being devolved to Scotland in the area of Social Security.

Part 3: Operational Policy

- advice;
- overpayments and debts;
- fraud;
- protecting information;
- uprating of benefits;
- representation;
- advocacy;
- complaints, reviews and appeals; and
- residency and cross-border issues.

2.5 The key elements of North Ayrshire response are noted below;

- Putting customers at the heart of the Service by establishing the right culture through the establishment of clear principles and a "Customer Charter";
- Ensuring the system is as streamlined and efficient as possible through appropriate data sharing and maximising use of a digital approach;
- Involving customer and appropriate agencies in the design of the new Agency;
- Devolution of service delivery to local government which already works closely with local communities and service users and has extensive experience of delivering a similar range of services;
- Local delivery will make the service easily accessible for the customer and ensure integration with other services, for example Health and Social Care Partnership, to provide a less complex and more holistic service leading to improved outcomes;
- Existing local infrastructure would provide a value for money solution in terms of set-up costs and ongoing administration costs;
- A clear statement on the advantages, disadvantages of current benefits and the opportunities this creates for the Scottish Government;
- The need for appropriate, transparent and accessible review, appeals and complaints processes.

3. Proposals

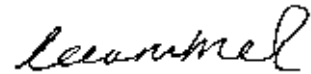
- 3.1 The Council's proposed response to the consultation on Social Security in Scotland is set out at appendix 1 and Cabinet is asked to agree to approve the response.

4. Implications

Financial:	No immediate financial implications have been identified. Social Security arrangements are of vital importance to some of our most disadvantaged residents and the effectiveness of such arrangements is likely to have effects on the Council and the costs associated with some of our own measures to support residents. At this stage, the potential financial impacts cannot be quantified.
Human Resources:	Any devolution of Social Security to Local Authorities may have HR implications but this cannot be quantified at this stage.
Legal:	None
Equality:	The effectiveness of the Social Security system is likely to impact on the Council's ambition to reduce inequality in the local area.
Environmental & Sustainability:	None
Key Priorities:	None
Community Benefits:	None

5. Consultation

- 5.1 The consultation response includes comments from Democratic Services, Health and Social Care Partnership, Place, Finance and Corporate Support and Economy and Communities.



LAURA FRIEL

Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Support)

Reference : SH

For further information please contact Stephen Humphries Senior Manager Revenues and Benefit on 01294 310106

Background Papers

Creating a Fairer Scotland - a new future for Social Security in Scotland
Consultation on Social Security in Scotland

A New Future for Social Security

Consultation on Social Security in Scotland

Answer Booklet

July 2016



Introduction to the Answer Booklet

This is designed to accompany the Consultation on Social Security in Scotland which can be found here: <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2016/07/9955> . This booklet can be used if you can not or do not want to provide an online response. Please refer to the consultation document to give context to the questions. This should only be used if you do not or cannot complete the consultation online.

Send your completed response to:

socialsecurityconsultation@gov.scot

or

Social Security Consultation
5th Floor
5 Atlantic Quay
150 Broomielaw
Glasgow
G2 8LU.

We need to know how you wish your response to be handled and, in particular, whether you are happy for your response to be made public. Please complete and return the **Respondent Information Form**. If you ask for your response not to be published we will regard it as confidential, and we will treat it accordingly.

All respondents should be aware that the Scottish Government is subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 and would therefore have to consider any request made to it under the Act for information relating to responses made to this consultation exercise.

Comments and complaints

If you have any comments about how this consultation exercise has been conducted, please send them to:

Chris Boyland
5 Atlantic Quay, 5th floor
150 Broomielaw
Glasgow,
G2 8LU.

or

E-mail: socialsecurityconsultation@gov.scot

RESPONDENT INFORMATION FORM



Consultation on Social Security in Scotland to determine how best to use the new social security powers which will be devolved by the Scotland Act 2016.

Please Note this form **must** be returned with your response.

Are you responding as an individual or an organisation?

☐ Individual

☒ Organisation

Full name or organisation's name

	North Ayrshire Council
--	------------------------

Phone number

Address

Cunninghame House Irvine

Postcode

KA12 8EE

Email

shumphries@north-ayrshire.gcsx.gov.uk

The Scottish Government would like your permission to publish your consultation response. Please indicate your publishing preference:

☒ Publish response with name

☐ Publish response only (anonymous)

☐ Do not publish response

We will share your response internally with other Scottish Government policy teams who may be addressing the issues you discuss. They may wish to contact you again in the future, but we require your permission to do so. Are you content for Scottish Government to contact you again in relation to this consultation exercise?

☒ Yes

☐ No

CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

PART 1: A PRINCIPLED APPROACH

1. Fixing the principles in legislation

Q: Which way do you think principles should be embedded in the legislation?

(please tick the option/s you prefer)

A. As a 'Claimant Charter'?	x
B. Placing principles in legislation?	
C. Some other way, please specify	

Why do you favour this/these option/s?

Please explain your answer

Legislation should provide the framework for the Social Security Agency and include provision for a charter.

There is a precedent set by the Patients Right Act 2011 and a charter of Patient Rights and Responsibilities where the Act makes provision for a charter and the key principles of health care are embedded in a charter. The 5 Social Security principles noted below should be embedded in a similar way. It is important to define the culture within the agency and how the principles will be achieved. A charter is readily accessible and easier for service users to understand and it can be reviewed and updated as the agency evolves.

1. Social Security is an investment in the people of Scotland;
2. Respect for the dignity of individuals is at the heart of everything we do;
3. Our processes and services will be evidenced based and designed with the people of Scotland;
4. We will strive for continuous improvement in all our policies, processes and systems, putting the user experience first; and
5. We will demonstrate that our services are efficient and value for money.

If you think option A, ' a Claimant Charter' is the best way to embed principles in the legislation please advise:

Q: What should be in the Charter?

Please explain your answer

The charter should contain the 5 key Social Security principles;

Define the culture of the agency;

It should explain how claimants access the Social Security system and how they will be treated when they use the system and what their rights are;

It should contain information about how staff will communicate about a claimant's entitlement and explain how decisions will be made and how they will be informed and their rights if they disagree with the decision;

It should explain how their personal data will be used in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1988 and how it will be shared;

It should outline a claimant's right to give feedback, make comments or raise concerns about the Social Security Service received;

The Charter should advise service users what to do if their rights have not been respected;

It should outline what the Social Security Agency expects from claimants for example they must notify of a change in their circumstances; and

How to access more information and services.

Q: Should the Charter be drafted by:

(please tick the option/s you prefer)

A. An advisory group?	
B. A wider group of potential users and other groups or organisations?	
C. Both	x
D. Some other way, please specify	

Why do you favour this/these option/s?

Please explain your answer

The Social Security Agency is new and there is an opportunity to include the views of service users who have experienced the current scheme across all levels and other agencies involved in delivering welfare benefits for example disability groups, DWP and Local Authorities. An advisory group would provide the necessary independent support and advice.

Local Authorities have a large amount of experience of administering Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction and providing a welfare service to customers and would make a valuable contribution to the charter.

Q: We are considering whether or not to adopt the name, “Claimant Charter”. Can you think of another name that would suit this proposal better? If so, what other name would you choose?

Please specify below

“Claimant charter” assumes only claimants will use or access the Social Security Agency which may not be the case.

“Social Security users’ charter” may provide a wider definition of service users.

Q: Do you have any further comments on the ‘Claimant Charter’?

Please specify below

The Council has no further comments on the claimant charter.

If you think option B ‘placing the principles in legislation’ is the best way to embed principles in the legislation, please advise:

Legislation should provide the framework for the Social Security Agency and include provision for a charter to embed the key principles.

Q: On whom would you place a duty to abide by the principle that claimants should be treated with dignity and respect? (please tick the option you prefer)

A. The Scottish Government	x
B. The Scottish Ministers	x
C. The Chief Executive of the Social Security Agency	x
D. Someone else, please specify	

Please specify below

The Scottish Government and Scottish Ministers have a responsibility to abide by the principles that claimants should be treated with dignity and respect.

The Chief Executive of the Social Security Agency is responsible for the culture of the organisation and has a duty to ensure that the agency performs its Social Security functions and that treating claimants with dignity and respect is upheld; and also ensure that any person who provides Social Security either through a contract or agreement upholds this principle.

Q: Do you have any further comments on placing principles in legislation?

Please specify below

The Council has no further comments.

Q: Do you have any further comments or suggestions in relation to our overall approach, to fix our principles in legislation? For example, do you feel that there is no need to fix principles in legislation?

(please tick one box)

Yes	
No	x

Please explain your answer

The Council is in favour of Legislation providing the framework for the Social Security Agency and the 5 principles being embedded through a charter. This allows flexibility for new principles to be added in the future as the agency evolves.

2. Outcomes and the user experience

Q: Are the outcomes (shown in the table on page 17 of the consultation) the right high level outcomes to develop and measure social security in Scotland?
(please tick one box)

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please explain your answer

The short and long term outcomes cover the essential components of a Social Security System in terms of people applying, the administration of the service, paying benefit accurately and on time, providing value for money and improving the wellbeing of people in local communities. Performance and evaluation measures are required to ensure desired outcomes are achieved.

Q: Are there any other outcomes that you think we should also include (and if so, why?)

Please specify below

The Council believes that the delivery of Social Security should be devolved and integrated at a local level through partnership working with existing partners for example Housing Associations and third sector agencies. The short and long term outcomes should record and measure the positive the outcomes achieved by local integrated services.

The objectives to integrate with the UK reserved benefit system and other public services to support customers is paramount to the success of the Social Security system.

Q: How can the Scottish social security system ensure all social security communications are designed with dignity and respect at their core?

Please specify below

All communications should be written in plain English and crystal marked and also available in other languages and accessible formats;

By using language and tone of communication which reflects the principle of dignity and respect and should be inclusive for all users of the service; and

All staff involved in the delivery of Social Security are trained to the highest level to ensure customers are treated with dignity and respect and have the skills to deal with customers with different abilities and requirements.

Q: With whom should the Scottish Government consult, in order to ensure that the use of language for social security in Scotland is accessible and appropriate?

Please specify below

The Scottish Government should consult with the Plain English Campaign, Service users and organisations involved in delivering Social Security related services; including disability groups, local authorities, and voluntary organisations.

Q: Are there any particular words or phrases that should not be used when delivering social security in Scotland?

(please tick one box)

Yes	x
No	

Please state below which words or phrases should not be used

Any words or phrases that may label or stigmatise customers and any words that would discourage someone from applying should be avoided for example vulnerable, on welfare, single parent and fraudster.

Q: What else could be done to enhance the user experience, when considering the following?

- When people first get in touch
- When they are in the processes of applying for a benefit
- When a decision is made (for example, about whether they receive a benefit)
- When they are in receipt of a benefit

Please specify below

When people first get in touch –the service should be easy to access, quick and friendly service and customers provided with the information they require at the first point of contact. Staff should be trained to the same level to ensure consistency in the advice given and decisions made.

When they are in the process of applying for benefit – customers should be able to track their application and be given an indication when their claim will be processed and benefit paid.

When a decision is made – the decision is explained in a language the customer can easily understand and how to appeal if they disagree with the decision.

When they are in receipt of benefit –Give customers access to their own account that shows full details of their benefit entitlement and the income used in the calculation.

Make it easy for customers to report a change of circumstance for example by using an online form or customer portal.

Opening hours should meet user requirements where possible.

Q: How should the Scottish social security system communicate with service users? (For example, text messaging or social media)?

Please specify below

The Social Security system should be designed to ensure the latest digital technology is maximised to provide a modern, efficient and cost effective service for example electronic forms, data integration with back office systems, and customer portals. The provision of multiple communication channels is expensive but there is a recognition that not all service users may have the means to access or the skills to use modern technology and a strategy should be put in place to migrate everyone to a digital platform over time. In the short term, provision should be made to provide alternative services on a reduced scale for some claimants, for example telephone and face to face services.

The DWP provide a television channel for Universal Credit for Sky and Virgin users and there may be an opportunity for developing a similar approach to reach Scottish households.

Responses to frequently asked questions should be made widely available to reduce the number of enquiries received from customers.

Q: What are your views on how the Scottish Government can ensure that a Scottish social security system is designed with users using a co-production and co-design approach?

Please specify below

The Scottish Government should engage with users of the current social security system to listen and understand the strength and weaknesses of the system and how Services can be improved under the new agency; focus groups, surveys and service user panels could be used for this purpose.

Local Authorities should be consulted on the successful delivery of the Scottish Welfare Fund; this joined up and integrated service has provided positive outcomes for customers and is the first example of devolved welfare powers in operation.

The overarching objective is to provide integrated service delivery to meet the needs of customers and all organisations and agencies involved in the delivery of social security to the Scottish public should be consulted on system design.

Q: We are considering whether or not to adopt the name “User Panels”. Can you think of another name that would better suit the groups of existing social security claimants which we will set up?

Please specify below

“User panels” seems a reasonable title to use to engage with social security service users. However the panels should not be exclusive to social security claimants; organisations with experience of administering the current system should be included.

3. Delivering social security in Scotland

Q: Should the social security agency administer all social security benefits in Scotland?

(please tick one box)

Yes	
No	x

Please explain you answer

Local Government has an excellent track record of delivering complex change and has a vital role to play in the delivery of social security to local residents.

The Council believe that social security administration should be further devolved to local government. Local Authorities work closely with local communities and service users and have extensive experience of delivering services for example Housing Benefit, Council Tax Reduction, school clothing grants, free school meals, Education Maintenance Allowance, Blue Badges and Scottish Welfare Fund Services.

Delivery of social security at a local level will make the service easily accessible for the customer and can be integrated with other services for example Health and Social Care Partnership to provide a less complex and more holistic service to customers leading to improved outcomes. This existing infrastructure would provide a value for money solution in terms of set-up costs and ongoing administration costs and would avoid further cost increases associated with the delivery of social security.

The Council's employability hub model has shown the benefits of joined up working at a local level and local service delivery linked to the new agency would provide the right support to claimants

The Council is willing to contribute to the design and delivery of any new social security system in Scotland.

Q: Should the social security agency in Scotland be responsible for providing benefits in cash only or offer a choice of goods and cash?

(please tick one box)

Yes	
No	x

Please explain you answer

The Social Security agency should provide benefits in the most advantageous way to meet the needs of customers. This could be cash or goods depending on the circumstances of the claimant. Providing goods instead of cash in some cases ensures that the money is used for its intended purpose and all options should be considered at this system design stage.

Q: How best can we harness digital services for social security delivery in Scotland?

Please specify below

The Social Security agency should provide a full digital service and make use of the best technology available to support the system:

Electronic claims forms that are intuitive and easy to complete to claim benefit and report changes; available by mobile app and online;

Electronic forms that can capture data and automatically update the information to core social security system to maximise processing times;

Customer portals to access information and to carry out claim related actions for example report changes of circumstance;

Use of digital services to interact with customers for example web chat and eLearning videos.

A strategy for supporting customers to move to a digital platform over time needs to be included in the system design; short term provision should also be made for customers who do not have the skills to use or access online services to ensure no one is excluded when the system goes live.

Q: Should social security in Scotland make some provision for face to face contact?

(please tick one box)

Yes	x
No	

Please explain you answer

In some cases personal contact regarding a claim for benefit is required, and face to face contact will improve customer service, may improve take-up and reduce the likelihood of people disengaging with the social security system. A face to face service could be delivered digitally through online chat facilities or similar technology rather than physically being present.

If face to face contact is required then delivery of this service at a local level would provide the opportunity to discuss other requirements of the customer for example personal budgetary support; referrals can then be made to other local services.

Face to face contact is expensive and will require adequate funding.

Q: Who should deliver social security medical assessments for disability related benefits?

Please specify below

Medical assessments for Disability Living Allowance claimants previously used information from their doctor but under Personal Independence Payment this has been contracted out to private health companies.

A medical assessment can be stressful for claimants and the new social security system should deliver this service in a caring and professional manner.

A medical assessment should be easily accessible for claimants and may be best delivered at a local community level. General Practitioners are well placed to carry out medical assessments for disability related benefits as the medical history of customers may already be known. Customers may have more confidence in the system if the information came from their own doctor. While asking General Practitioners to carry out medical assessments is the preferred approach it is recognised that there may be an issue regarding capacity to meet demand

Q: Should we, as much as possible, aim to deliver social security through already available public sector services and organisations?

(please tick one box)

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please explain you answer

The Council believes that social security administration should be further devolved to local government.

Councils have good working relationships with community partners and this existing infrastructure can be used to deliver the social security system at a local level. Local delivery means that customers can be easily referred and gain access to other services based on their circumstances for example budgetary advice and financial inclusion services.

Councils and local organisations can provide front line support that underpins any National digital strategy that is introduced and ensure that people who are entitled to social security payments receive them. There are also established links to Health and Social Care partnerships to provide holistic services to customers.

This delivery model would reduce the risk of people not applying for the benefits and mitigate delays in the application process.

Q: Should any aspect of social security be delivered by others such as the 3rd sector, not for profit organisations, social enterprises or the private sector?

(please tick one box)

Yes	x
No	

If yes, which aspects?

The third sector and not for profit organisations currently provide a valuable supporting role to customers who are unable to make a claim or find it difficult to engage with the current social security system and this proactive work should continue under the new system where there is the infrastructure and governance arrangements to do so. Partnership working between Local Authorities and the third and voluntary sector would allow the integration of services to improve service delivery for customers.

4. Equality and low income

Q: How can the Scottish Government improve its partial EqIA so as to produce a full EqIA to support the Bill?

These prompts could be helpful in framing your answer:

- What does the Scottish Government need to do, as it develops a Scottish social security system, to ensure that equality implications are fully taken into account?
- What does the Scottish Government need to do, as it develops a Scottish social security system, to ensure that any implications for those on low incomes are fully taken into account?
- Are there equality considerations for individual benefits that you would like to draw to our attention?
- Are there considerations about individual benefits for those on low incomes that you would like to draw to our attention?
- What are your views on how we can best gather equality information for the new Scottish benefits?
- What does the Scottish Government need to do to ensure that its social security legislation (including secondary legislation and guidance) aligns its vision and principles with equality for all those who need assistance through Social Security support?
- What does the Scottish Government need to do to ensure that a Scottish social security system provides the right level of support for those who need it, and what are the possible equality impacts of this?

Please specify below

We believe the partial equality impact assessment represents a sound basis but the full EqlA should take more cognisance of how the Scottish Social Security System interacts with

The reserved benefits system; and
Other public services in Scotland.

The EqlA needs to consider broadly how the rest of the system will need to evolve to provide an integrated system for example the link between the social security system and other support and services to provide easy access for various customer groups.

5. Independent advice and scrutiny

Q: Do you think that there is a need for an independent body to be set up to scrutinise Scottish social security arrangements?

(please tick one box)

Yes	x
No	

Please explain your answer

Independent scrutiny of the Social Security Agency will provide a fair, equitable and transparent review of the work of the agency. This will provide the necessary verification that the system is being delivered effectively and demonstrate value for money. Such scrutiny will confirm that the 5 key principles set out in the charter are being applied and that customers can have full confidence in the system.

Q: If you agree, does the body need to be established in law or would administrative establishment by the Scottish government of the day be sufficient?

(please tick one box)

Yes	x
No	

Please explain your answer

The question raised is looking for a preference and cannot be answered by responding Yes or No.

The independent body should be established in law. This would provide a legal framework that outlines the role of the body and give a level of certainty that the Social Security Agency will be subject to regular scrutiny and review.

The body should have powers to investigate the social security system and produce regular reports of its findings.

Q: If yes, what practical arrangements should be made for the independent body (for example, the law could state how appointments to it are made and the length of time an individual may serve as a member of the body)?

Please specify below

The law should state:

The purpose of the independent body;

Who appoints body members and who can serve on the body and length of service;
How often the Social Security Agency will be subject to scrutiny and review and what the procedural matters will be; and

A statement of practice detailing how the body will publish its findings.

However the independence of the body needs to be established; it should be free to pass comment and recommendations to Ministers and agencies.

Q: Should there be a statutory body to oversee Scottish social security decision making standards?

(please tick one box)

Yes	x
No	

Please explain your answer

An independent body should oversee the Social Security decision making standards. This could be part of the responsibility of the scrutiny body.

Q: If yes, should this be a separate body in its own right?

(please tick one box)

Yes	
No	x

Please explain your answer

As detailed above, an independent body should oversee the Social Security decision making standards but this could be combined with the responsibilities of the scrutiny body.

Q: Do you have any other views about the independent scrutiny of social security arrangements in Scotland (e.g. alternative approaches)?

Please specify below

The Council has no further comments.

PART 2: THE DEVOLVED BENEFITS

6. Disability Benefits (Disability Living Allowance, Personal Independence Payment, Attendance Allowance, Severed Disablement Allowance and Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit)

Q: Thinking of the current benefits, what are your views on what is right and what is wrong with them?

Disability Living Allowance (DLA)

What is right with DLA?

While Disability Living Allowance is being replaced by Personal Independence Payment there are elements of Disability Living Allowance that are valid and should be retained in any new benefit:

Non Means Tested;

Non Taxable;

Payable to both in and out of work;

Assess both Care and Mobility needs;

DLA is based on what care needs are “reasonably required” in accordance with Case law and legislation.

Disregarded in full for other means tested benefits.

Attracts extra premiums in means tested benefits and tax credits.

What is wrong with DLA?

The areas that need to be addressed by the Social Security Agency are:

People possibly entitled to DLA not claiming it;

New claims Children only;

When a child aged 16 moves to PIP; different rules means winners and losers.

Cases open to judgement of Decision Makers and Tribunals as to whether claimant satisfies the Regulations; therefore two different decision makers / Tribunals can arrive at different decisions on entitlement on the same case. Clearer criteria is required.

The criteria for DLA is often not understood by claimants and decision makers. DLA High Mobility only paid to those with physical disabilities and not mental disabilities. Claimants with mental health issues are disadvantaged by DLA, as the descriptors are heavily weighted towards physical disability. Physical and Mental health should be considered when setting any descriptors.

Functions such as laundry, housework, shopping, etc. are not currently taken into account and this should be reviewed.

Personal Independence Payment (PIP)

What is right with PIP?

The elements of Personal Independence Payment that are valid and should be retained are:

Non Means Tested;

Non Taxable; and

Payable to both in and out of work

Disregarded in full for other means tested benefits.

Attracts extra premiums in means tested benefits and tax credits.

What is wrong with PIP?

The areas that need to be addressed by the Social Security Agency are:

High levels of delay and administrative error;

Enhanced Mobility test much stricter than DLA thereby increasing the risk of people losing benefit when transferring from DLA to PIP; and

Poor claimant experiences with face to face assessments e.g. alleged inaccurate reports and distance claimants travel for assessment.

The initial process for applying for PIP is lengthy, complex and not customer friendly; resulting in high levels of delay and administrative error .The process now has slightly improved though further steps need to be undertaken to ensure claimants can access PIP more easily.

The threshold for Enhanced Mobility is much stricter (20metres) than DLA Mobility (generally less than 50metres), thereby creating losers in the transfer from DLA to PIP and new claimants of PIP.

Poor claimant experiences with face to face assessments e.g. inaccurate reports, distance claimants travel for assessment.

Poor decision making resulting in 65% of PIP appeals being overturned.

Tribunals are making decisions based on diagnosis of illness and not whether the award descriptor is met or not.

Attendance Allowance (AA)

What is right with AA?

The elements of Attendance Allowance that are valid and should be retained are:

Non Means Tested;

Non Taxable;

Payable to both in and out of work;

Assess Care needs;

Established Case law; and

AA based on what care needs are “reasonably required” in accordance with Case law and legislation.

Disregarded in full for other means tested benefits.

Attracts extra premiums in means tested benefits and tax credits.

What is wrong with AA?

The areas that need to be addressed by the Social Security Agency are:

No Mobility benefit;

Different rules from Disability Living Allowance regarding Mobility and Low Care for example cooking test and care required during significant portion of day;

AA based on what care needs are “reasonably required” in accordance with Case law and legislation;

Q: Is there any particular change that could be made to these disability benefits that would significantly improve equality?

Please specify below

Some claimants with mental health issues struggle with the assessment process in attending assessments, discussing their disabilities in full, etc. This often results in no awards. Where possible medical information should be obtained from GP, Mental Health worker etc. before referring for assessment; provided there is the capacity to do so.

Claimants who have been granted asylum or immigration rights have their entitlement restricted based on “past residence “and this should be removed And based on current circumstances.

Currently different disability benefits apply to different age groups DLA Birth, age 16, PIP age 16-64, AA age 65 onwards. Different rules and rates of payment apply to these benefits, consideration may need to be given to one disability benefit and age ranges being reviewed. This would reduce administration and other costs.

The Social Security System should consider how to make the application process easy for children leaving school and moving into adulthood. Local Authorities may hold information to support an application for benefit and this data should be shared where possible to make the system as accessible as possible.

A national minimum entitlement based on disability e.g. registered blind, to be paid thus avoiding some people receiving DLA Middle Care while others receive DLA Low Care.

We want to make sure that the process is clear and accessible from start to finish, and that people claiming devolved benefits understand how and when their claim will be dealt with.

Q: In relation to the above how should the new Scottish social security system operate in terms of:

- A person applying for a disability related benefit
- The eligibility criteria set for disability related benefits
- The assessment/consideration of the application and the person’s disability and/or health condition
- The provision of entitlements and awards (at present cash payments and the option of the Motability Scheme)
- The review and appeal process where a person isn’t content with the outcome

Please specify below

The Scottish benefits system should be designed around the needs of the customer;

Application process; the application process should be easily accessible and straightforward to complete as possible. The system should be digital for users who are able to use it and other provision made for people who do not have the skills to use online services and complete application forms. There should be no cost to the applicant to apply.

The eligibility criteria requires to be clear and concise. The backward qualifying period requires to be addressed as, persons who sustain severe disability for example accident and injury currently need to wait 3- 6 months before receiving a payment. Consideration should be given to awarding from date of claim. We would support retaining the DLA/AA forward qualifying period for 6 months rather than 9 months as in PIP. The questions asked should be tailored towards both mental and physical health.

Assessment process; this can be stressful for claimants and should be carried out at a local level by the claimant's own doctor similar to the previous approach used for Disability Living Allowance.

Entitlement and Awards; Provision of cash payments and mobility scheme should remain and the option of further awards considered where it meets the needs of the customer. Cash payments should complement existing schemes for example Scottish Welfare Fund Community Care Grants.

Appeal process; the review process should exclude the current Mandatory Revision as this has created a barrier to disabled people accessing their legal rights. The appeal process should be independent of the agency for fairness and transparency.

Q: With this in mind, do you think that timescales should be set for assessments and decision making?

(please tick one box)

Yes	x
No	

Please explain your answer

There should be clear timescales set for the assessment of claims and for reaching decisions. Timescales provide customers with a clear indication of the standard of service to be provided and can be used as a measure of performance.

A timescale should also be set for claimants to provide all information necessary to complete an application. Timescales for assessment and decision making should be set in the legislation and any Charter. However, discretion should be applied if a claimant has a legitimate reason for not submitting the information on time and guidance provided on how this will be dealt with.

Q: What evidence and information, if any, should be required to support an application for a Scottish benefit?

Please specify below

The standard of evidence required should include for example identity, income and capital as required. It is important that the level of evidence is easy for customers to obtain at no or minimum cost and a risk based model should be used to determine the level of evidence required for different levels of benefit. The system should remove the complexities of evidence gathering which exist in the current system. The evidence should be sufficient to allow decision makers to make quick and accurate decisions on claims in accordance with Regulations.

Who should be responsible for requesting this information?

Please specify below

Any organisation involved in the delivery of the social security scheme should be able to request this information. Flexibility around the gathering of evidence is important and data sharing arrangements should be in place to ensure evidence can be provided at source easily and quickly to prevent delays with claims.

Who should be responsible for providing it?

Please specify below

The claimant or someone acting on their behalf has a responsibility to provide the level of evidence required within set timescales. Organisations who are providing information to a claimant for example HMRC and banks should also be empowered to provide evidence direct to the agency on behalf of claimants to improve the speed of processing. For medical assessments NHS or doctors should be able to provide evidence direct to the agency on behalf of the claimant provided they have the capacity to do so.

Please explain why

The claimant or someone acting on their behalf is making an application and is therefore responsible for completing the information in full. Much of the delay in the current system is due to claimants gathering evidence from various sources and this needs to be addressed in the new system and any organisation involved in the process should have the facility to provide information provided they meet the requirements of the Data Protection Act and any data sharing agreements formed as part of the system.

Q: Should the individual be asked to give their consent (Note: consent must be freely given, specific and informed) to allow access to their personal information, including medical records, in the interests of simplifying and speeding up the application process and/or reducing the need for appeals due to lack of evidence?

(please tick one box)

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>

If no, please explain why

Q: If the individual has given their permission, should a Scottish social security agency be able to request information on their behalf?

(please tick one box)

Yes	x
No	

If no, please explain why

Q: Do you agree that the impact of a person's impairment or disability is the best way to determine entitlement to the benefits?

(please tick one box)

Yes	x
No	

If yes, which aspects of an individual's life should the criteria cover and why?

Personal Care and Mobility

Consideration should be given to bodily function impairment, mental health and sight and hearing etc.

Nature and degree of disability should also be taken into account when assessing the impact of a person's impairment to maintain dignity and self-respect.

The assessment should consider the level of care required even if the care is provided or not.

The nature and degree of disability should also be taken into account.

If no, how do you suggest entitlement is determined?

Q: Currently there are only special rules for the terminally ill but should there be others?

(please tick one box)

Yes	x
No	

Please explain why

The special rules could be extended to progressive long term illnesses and disabilities, for example, accepting that people diagnosed with certain conditions certain cancers, severe mental health, motor neurone disease and Huntingdon's disease.

Consideration should be given to bodily functions impaired also ; sight and hearing etc.

How could this be determined?

This information should be provided by claimants' doctor or medical professional provided they have the capacity to do so.

Q: What do you think are the advantages and disadvantages of automatic entitlement?

Please specify below

Provided there is a clear eligibility criteria and robust controls are in place to prevent fraudulent claims then the Council can see no reason why automatic entitlement is not part of the social security system for certain criteria of claims.

Advantages

Automatic entitlement would remove stress from individuals;
It would simplify the system for claimants and their families and ensure benefit was paid as quickly as possible to provide a quality of life; and
It would remove the need for evidence gathering, improve consistency of decision making, reduce appeals and improve administration and improve speed of processing performance.

Disadvantages

Those who do not automatically qualify would obviously perceive this as unfair; It could also be said that automatic entitlement may not recognise how a condition affects an individual; and Automatic entitlement could result in increased costs; this would need to be balanced between administrative cost of an assessment.

Q: Would applicants be content for their medical or other publicly-held records, for example, prescribing and medicines information or information held by HMRC, to be accessed to support automatic entitlement where a legal basis existed to do this?

Please specify below

The Council is not in a position to say if applicants will be content for their medical records and other information to be accessed; this would need to be investigated further to ensure customer consent is received. The claim process needs to be simplified as much as possible and information provided quickly and from source to reduce the complexity of the system and this needs to include the sharing of information from all organisations involved in the claim process; in accordance with data protection and data sharing agreements.

Q: Do you agree that the current UK-wide PIP and AA process for supporting people with terminal illnesses is responsive and appropriate?

(please tick one box)

Yes	
No	x

If yes, should this approach be applied to all disability-related benefits for people with a terminal illness?

If no, how could the approach could be improved?

Communication in this area needs to be improved under the new agency. There is a lack of communication between DWP and Health and Social Care partnerships often meaning disabled people only receive their disability benefits and are not signposted to other services; this could deliver more positive outcomes for the service user.

Q: Should there be additional flexibility, for example, an up-front lump sum?

(please tick one box)

Yes	x
No	

Please explain your reasons

If the qualifying criteria is met for the benefit then the system should be as flexible as possible to offer a range of payments to meet the needs of the customer including lump sums. Lump sum payments would give customers in need access to income more readily and could improve the quality of their life. Any lump sum payments would need to be treated and calculated as advance payments of the benefit awarded.

The disadvantage of lump sum payments is the increased risk of overpayments and these should be minimised where possible. Any lump sum scheme would need to reduce this risk for example recovering any overpayments from on-going benefit or restricting the lump sum to a set amount.

Q: In the longer term, do you think that the Scottish Government should explore the potential for a consistent approach to eligibility across all ages, with interventions to meet specific needs at certain life stages or situations?

(please tick one box)

Yes	x
No	

Please explain why

This proposal would be worthwhile exploring further; a Single Disability Benefit with a consistent eligibility criteria across all ages would simplify the social security system and reduce the complexity of the current scheme where claimants may be claiming more than one benefit under different scheme and regulations and receiving different payments at different rates. A single disability benefit would also reduce the time spent applying and minimise the evidence required, improve performance and ensure benefit is paid as quickly as possible.

Q: What would the advantages and disadvantages of a single, whole-of-life benefit be?

Please specify below

Advantages

The advantages are outlined in the box above

Disadvantages

The eligibility criteria may be difficult to define when amalgamating a range of benefits to ensure that no eligible claimant is excluded.

Q: Could the current assessment processes for disability benefits be improved?

(please tick one box)

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please explain how

The current assessment process has proved to be extremely unpopular with claimants. Under the new agency assessments should be easily accessible, timely and travel arrangements minimised. Assessments could be delivered locally through the claimants doctor to improve service delivery at a local level.

Currently decisions overturned at appeal are on the basis that consideration has not been given to the legal definitions of descriptors either by the assessor or the decision maker. This should be addressed when developing improvements to the assessment process.

Q: For those people that may require a face-to-face assessment, who do you think should deliver the assessments and how?

For example, private organisation, not-for-profit organisation, public sector body or professional from health or social care.

Please specify below

The current assessment process is not providing the standard of service required to claimants and can be improved under the new agency.

The Council would support the delivery of the assessment process by local doctors and health professionals who know the medical history of the claimant and can make accurate decisions based on their medical judgement. Local service delivery would make the assessment less onerous for claimants and reduce the complexity of the system. The capacity of General Practitioners to carry out this role may be an issue.

Q: What are the advantages and disadvantages of different types of assessments?

e.g. paper based, face-to-face, telephone

Please specify below

Different types of assessments can lead to different information being provided or some important information could be missing leading to inconsistent or incorrect decisions and this should be avoided within the agency.

Paper based – not everyone has the skill or confidence to complete paper application forms and important information may be omitted; it is difficult to reach a decision without seeing the claimant.

Face to face – the advantage is that the medical professional is able to see the claimant and this would help the assessment process; may be expensive to administer and involve customer travel, so close location is essential; and

Telephone – an assessment may be time consuming over the telephone and the medical professional is unable to see the claimant.

Q: How could the existing assessment process be improved?

Please specify below

The assessment process should be carried out by local doctors and medical professional who may already know the medical history of the claimant. The application process should be simplified with the minimum amount of information required to make a decision. Assessments should be carried out quickly and without delay. Capacity for General Practitioners to carry out this work may be an issue.

Training should be provided on the eligibility criteria and legislation and previous case law as required.

Q: Could technology support the assessment process to promote accessibility, communication and convenience?

(please tick one box)

Yes	x
No	

Please explain why

Technology could address all areas and make the system accessible, convenient to use and aid communication. It can also support the provision of evidence without the need to be gathered by claimants and all documents required should be routed for processing by the fastest means possible.

Some claimants may not be able to access or use the technology provided and other provision should be made for these claimants to ensure no one is excluded from applying. The long term strategy should be to support customers to make the transition to digital services.

Q: If yes, please explain what technology would be helpful

e.g. Skype, video conferencing

Please specify below

All types of technology should be included in the system design for example Skype, facetime, and video conference to enhance face to face discussions; customer portals and electronic claim forms and data capture technology to improve the speed of processing.

Q: If the individual's condition or circumstances are unlikely to change, should they have to be re-assessed?

(please tick one box)

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Please explain why

Reassessments should be minimised where possible and this should be integral to the qualifying criteria; some form of weighting system could be applied based on a claimant's circumstances to denote if a reassessment is required or not. This could be on a risk based or hierarchy model for example full assessment, light touch or just a review of medical notes.

Q: What evidence do you think would be required to determine that a person should / or should not be reassessed?

Please specify below

A claimant should not be reassessed where there is medical evidence that their medical condition will not improve based on the eligibility criteria of the benefit concerned. Where there is evidence that the claimant's condition may improve over time then they should be reassessed.

Q: Who should provide that evidence?

Please specify below

The claimants own doctor or medical consultant are best placed to provide the evidence required provided they have the capacity to do so.

Q: Do you think people should be offered the choice of some of their benefit being given to provide alternative support, such as reduced energy tariffs or adaptations to their homes?

(please tick one box)

Yes	x
No	

Please explain why

The social security scheme should be as flexible as possible and meet the needs of the claimant; giving people a choice would enhance the system.

The purpose of disability benefit is to help disabled person live a full life and to provide income to meet any costs associated with their disability. A disabled person should have the choice to decide how best to spend their benefits and therefore people should be offered a choice at the application stage.

Increased choice may increase administration costs and this would need to be explored further before an informed decision is reached.

What alternative support do you think we should be considering? (Please specify below)

The alternative support could include:

Equipment to meet the needs of the disabled person;
Clothing vouchers;
Vouchers for energy top-ups; and
Adaptations to homes and vehicles.

Service users should be consulted on the type of alternative support they would require.

Q: Would a one-off, lump sum payment be more appropriate than regular payments in some situations

(please tick one box)

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please explain the reason for your answer

The Social Security system should be as flexible as possible. Payment of benefit is related to the need and circumstances of the claimant and different frequency of payments including advanced lump sum payments should form part of the scheme. The advanced lump sum payment should cover a set period of time and overpayments recovered from ongoing entitlement.

The disadvantage of lump sum payments is the increased risk of overpayments and these should be minimised where possible. Any lump sum scheme would need to reduce this risk for example recovering any overpayments from on-going benefit or restricting the lump sum to a set amount where the risk of overpayment is acceptable.

If yes, what are they?

Lump sums payments should be linked the needs and circumstances of the claimant. Other frequencies should also be considered as part of the system design.

Q: What would be the advantages and disadvantages of such an approach?

Please specify below

Advantages

The claimant would be able to use the money to improve the quality of their life; and purchases can be made over shorter period of time and this may prevent customers from buying items that attract interest or other charges applying;

Disadvantages

The claimant may run out of money if the lump sum payment is not used for its intended purpose; and

There is an increased risk of overpayments arising and this would need to be minimised by recovering from on-going benefit or a risk based model used to cap the amount of a lump sum. Overpayments could be mitigated by restricting the advanced lump sum payment to a maximum period of time.

Q: Should the new Scottish social security system continue to support the Motability scheme?

(please tick one box)

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please explain why

The Motability scheme provides people with the ability to drive and live a normal a life as possible and this scheme should form part of the Social Security system.

Q: How could the new Scottish social security system support older people with mobility problems not eligible for a mobility allowance?

Please specify below

Currently people whose disabilities affect their mobility once they are age 65 or over, do not qualify for any mobility related benefit.

Consideration could be given to introducing a Mobility component into Attendance Allowance.

A single disability benefit would resolve this if it removed age restrictions, though there would be significant financial implications with this.

Consideration should be given to replicating DLA / PIP Mobility into Attendance Allowance, particularly if someone aged 64 could qualify for Mobility but someone for example aged 66 may not.

A single disability benefit would resolve this by removing age restrictions.

Q: How could the new Scottish social security system better support people of all ages with mobility problems who are in receipt of a mobility allowance?

Please specify below

As above.

Q: What kind of additional support should be available for people who need more help with their application and during assessment?

Please specify below

Claimants often require assistance with the completion of their forms and this now forms a large part of Advice agencies caseload as DWP only do “home visiting” to housebound /vulnerable claimants. Additional funding to agencies providing this service would be appropriate.

The needs of customers could be met by local, integrated services; this will ensure support is targeted and responsive and will provide more positive outcomes for customers.

Q: How could disability benefits work more effectively with other services at national and local level assuming that legislation allows for this e.g. with health and social care, professionals supporting families with a disabled child.

Please specify below

The evidence provided by Health and Social Care staff very often leads to an award of DLA/PIP/AA as the evidence focuses on the claimant’s disabilities and care needs and how this meets the regulations.

Consideration should could be given to referral pathways and sharing information (in accordance with Data Protection) between Scotland’s Benefits Agency and Health & Social Services, Local Authority, etc. to facilitate benefit take up and prompt decision making.

Entitlement to a Mobility Component should passport a claimant to a Blue Badge without the need for an application.

The Scottish Disability Benefit could also work more effectively for those severely disabled people who receive Independent Living Fund (Scotland) by seeking evidence from ILF of the awards/support they provide for the severely disabled, thus avoiding them being subject to reassessment or possible removal of benefits.

Any replacement / changes to DLA /AA/PIP will also require the eligibility criteria of ILF to reflect this.

Q: How do you think this might be achieved?

Please specify below

As above

Q: What are the risks?

Please specify below

Failure to work together and share information will result in the new agency experiencing similar issues to the ones currently experienced by DWP and Local Authority and Health and Social Care Partnerships and increase administration costs.

Q: If DLA and PIP help meet the additional costs of disability, what is the role of Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit (IIDB) and its supplementary allowances (Constant Attendance Allowance, Reduced Earnings Allowance etc) in the benefits system?

Please specify below

IIDB is paid to employees who suffer an injury or contract a prescribed disease in the course of their work. The role of Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit (IIDB) is to provide compensation and to assist those employees who very often see their income fall following the injury/ disablement.

Q: In addition to the issues set out at page 47 of the consultation, please tell us:

What is right with the IIDB scheme?

Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit is non Means tested and reflects that the payment is made due to an injury or disease in the course of their work and this should be retained.

What is wrong with the IIDB scheme?

Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit (IIDB) counts as income for means tested benefits and can reduce other entitlements for the person involved.

Please explain your answer

IIDB is deducted from benefits such as UC, IS, JSA and ESA (IB)

Q: Should different approaches be taken for people with life limiting conditions compared to people with less severe conditions?

(please tick one box)

Yes	x
No	

What would be the advantages or disadvantages of such an approach?

Any award of IIDB should take into account life limiting conditions accordingly. Life limiting is completely different to less severe conditions and the payments should take cognisance of this and be designed in such a way to ensure this distinction is made. This will ensure that people receive a fair and equitable awards due to their condition. Eligibility criteria needs to be robust to ensure only relevant cases are considered for payment.

Q: Are there situations where a one off lump sum payment would be more appropriate than a regular weekly IIDB benefit payment?

(please tick one box)

Yes	x
No	

What are they, and why? What would be the advantages and disadvantages of such an approach?

If the claimant receives a means tested benefit they should have the option to receive a one off lump sum.

The payment should be disregarded where capital rules relating to a benefit apply.

Consideration for lump sum payment could also be given to those suffering life limiting illness/disability.

Advantages

Recipients suffering from terminal diseases who currently only receive the award for a short time may feel properly compensated.

Disadvantages

Depending how means tested benefits treat the lump sum i.e. counts as capital, this may remove the claimant from an award of means tested benefits.

Q: Should the Scottish Government seek to work with the UK Government to reform the IIDB scheme?

(please tick one box)

Yes	x
No	

If yes, what should the priorities be? What barriers might there be to this approach?

The priority should be to ensure that groups who find it difficult to access the benefit for example people in prison is resolved. The barriers may be the interaction of IIDB with other the UK reserved benefits and how the income is treated against mean tested benefits for example Income Support and Working Tax Credits.

Q: Do you agree with the Scottish Governments approach to Severe Disablement Allowance?

(please tick one box)

Yes	x
No	

Please explain why

Working age recipients of Severe Disablement Allowance are transferring to Employment Support Allowance to leave a small number of cases by the time the benefit is devolved. Protection of this reduced number of claimants is essential to ensure none of the claimants receive a reduction in their income during any transition period.

7. Carers Allowance

Q: Do you agree with the Scottish Government's overall approach to developing a Scottish Carer's Benefit?

(please tick one box)

Yes	
No	x

Please explain why

Further consideration requires to be given between the delivery of the Scottish Carers Benefit and the implementation of the Carers Act.

We agree with developing a Scottish Carer's Benefit, however we disagree with the approach as we believe it requires further analysis of the following:

1. making it a non means tested benefit;
2. the costs attached to this;
3. the eligibility criteria for example will care require to be provided 35 hours per week; will there be an earnings limit etc.
4. Will all 750,000 carers qualify;
5. Will it create winners and losers;
6. Who will deliver it; is there potential for integration with H&SCP and the provisions of the Carers Act; if so how will this work and what resources will be available to implement this etc. and
7. Will Carers still qualify for Class 1 contributions?
8. Consideration for those in further education and those caring for more than once person.

The initial proposal of increasing Carers Allowance to £73.10 will mean only those receiving Carers Allowance will benefit. The Carers who have an underlying entitlement to Carers Allowance due to receiving a Contributory Benefit (for example JSA, ESA and Retirement Pension) will not benefit from the increase and this may be viewed as unfair.

Q: Do you agree with our proposed short to medium term priorities for developing a Scottish carer's benefit?

(please tick one box)

Yes	
No	x

Please explain why

See previous comments "Further consideration requires to be given between the delivery of the Scottish Carers Benefit and the implementation of the Carers Act."

Further clarification of the Young Carers Allowance is required before the proposals can be ratified; the impact and responsibility a caring role has on a young carer's mental health, wellbeing and education cannot be underestimated.

An incremental approach towards the development of a Scottish carer's benefit is a rational approach to take. It provides time to gather evidence relating to the proposal for a young carers allowance and improving the current carer's experience through the creation of integrated services such as Health and Social Care partnerships and providing access to other UK reserved benefits.

Q: How can we improve the user experience for the carer (e.g. the application and assessment process for carer's benefit)?

Please specify below

Information sharing between the Scottish Benefits Agency and DWP will be essential in ensuring claims are processed accurately, any additional premiums due are awarded accordingly; an award of CA does not generate an overpayment of other benefits for example UC and IS, the termination of CA does not leave the Carer without any income.

Produce clear guidance detailing when claimants should apply for Carers Allowance or the carers element of Universal Credit.

A single portal to access financial and other support would improve the user experience for carers. A single integrated assessment should be developed which builds upon local authority experience around self-directed support. Single point of contact to ensure an equitable and consistent service.

Q: Should the Scottish Government offer the choice of exchanging some (or all) of a cash benefit for alternative support (e.g. reduced energy tariffs)?

(please tick one box)

Yes	x
No	

Please explain why

The purpose of carers allowance is to help with the costs of caring for people and a carer should have the choice to decide how best to spend their carer's benefit and therefore should be offered a choice at the application stage.

Q: What alternative support should be considered?

Please specify below

This should include for example vouchers to purchase clothing, equipment and to meet the cost of utility bills.

Consideration should be given to extending Motability scheme to include Carers.

Carers should be consulted on the type of support they require and how it can be provided.

Q: How can we achieve a better alignment between a future Scottish carer benefit and other devolved services?

Please specify below

Information sharing between the Scottish Benefits Agency and DWP will be essential.

Information sharing between the Scottish Benefits Agency and Local Authorities and Health & Social Care Partnerships should also be addressed.

A customer portal for accessing support and financial information.

Clear communication and eligibility criteria is key.

Q: Do you agree with our proposed long term plans for developing a Scottish Carer's Benefit?

(please tick one box)

Yes	
No	x

Please explain why

The definition of a Carer has been widened by the Carers (Scotland) Act and the definition for welfare purposes has still to be determined.

As the precise details of the Scottish Carers Benefit, including the definition and who will be responsible for delivering are unknown then the Council cannot comment on the long term delivery plans.

Q: Do you have any other comments about the Scottish Governments proposals for a Scottish Carer's Benefit?

The Council has no other comments.

8. Winter Fuel and Cold Weather Payments

Q: Do you have any comments about the Scottish Government's proposals for Winter Fuel and Cold Weather Payments?

Please specify below

The findings from the Fuel Poverty Strategic Working Group and the Scottish Rural Fuel Poverty Task Force will be vital in shaping the design of the Winter fuel or Cold weather payments.

Temperature thresholds should reflect Scottish conditions and extending the scheme to include families with disabled children and households off the gas grid is welcome.

Overall the proposal seem fair and equitable. Further consideration should be given to discontinue payments for people living abroad periodically and people who do not have a direct fuel liability for example, those living with family who would not be

eligible. However, this could present problems in administration regarding establishing the facts and could cause payment delays.

Introducing a means test or financial thresholds may be a consideration going forward.

Q: Could changes be made to the eligibility criteria for Cold Weather Payments? For example, what temperature and length should Cold Weather Payments be made on in Scotland?

Please specify below

The proposed eligibility criteria and temperature and length of time seems fair.

With regards to different wind chill factors, provided trigger points can be agreed with the Met Office then this is a fair way of deciding when payments should be made.

Payment should be made after the period of cold weather as a forecast can be unreliable. Advanced payments may lead to overpayments and increases in the cost of administration to recover these.

9. Funeral Payments

Q: Proposals for Funeral Payment: What should the benefit cover?

Please specify below

The funeral payment should cover the cost of a dignified funeral. We believe through further consultation, a minimum cost could be established for this.

Q: Which of these elements do you think should be paid for by the Funeral Payment?

	YES	NO
Professional funeral director fees – advice and administration etc.	x	
Removal or collection of the deceased	x	
Care and storage of the deceased before the funeral	x	
Coffin	x	
Hearse or transport of the deceased	x	
Limousines or other car(s) for the family		
Flowers		x
Death notice in a paper/local advertising to announce details of funeral (time and location)		x
Fees associated with the ceremony e.g. for the minister or other celebrant		
Order of service sheets		x
Catering for wake/funeral reception		x
Venue hire for a wake/funeral reception		x
Memorial headstone or plaque		x
Travel expenses to arrange or attend the funeral	x	

Q: Are there other elements that you think should be included or explicitly excluded?

(please tick one box)

Yes	X
No	

Please explain why

The following must be included:

Grave and burial fees and cremation fees; and

Deposit to arrange funeral

Q: How can we improve the process for identifying whether someone is responsible for the funeral and should receive the funeral payment?

Please specify below

The application process should be made as straightforward as possible and organisations involved in arranging the funeral should have the opportunity to digitally submit evidence on behalf of the claimant to reduce the need for providing receipts.

Q: In terms of the Scottish Funeral Payment, are there any qualifying benefits (e.g. Pension Credit) that you would add to or take away from the current qualifying benefit list?

(please tick one box)

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please explain your answer

Consideration should be given to claimants whose sole income is Contributory JSA or Employment Support Allowance and those on low income in receipt of Housing Benefit.

Q: Is the three month application window for a Funeral Payment sufficient time for claimants to apply?

(please tick one box)

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>

If no, please explain your answer and suggest an alternative length of time in which a claim could be made.

Q: What are your views on the options for speeding up and simplifying the payment?

Please specify below

Claimants very often cannot arrange the funeral without a deposit; consideration could be given to facilitating an interim payment based on an estimate cost of a funeral. Consider applicants consent for statutory agencies to provide information and to contact funeral providers as required.

Q: The other funds which are deducted from the DWP funeral payment are listed below. What sorts of funds do you think it is appropriate to deduct from a Scottish FP?

	YES	NO
Funds in the deceased's bank account	x	
Funeral plan/insurance policy	x	
Contributions from charities or employers	x	
Money from an occupational pension scheme	x	
Money from a burial club	x	

Q: Are there any other funds that you think are appropriate to deduct?

Please specify below

No further comment.

Q: Which services should promote awareness of the funeral payment to ensure that claimants know about it at the relevant time?

Please specify below

Registration Services should provide a funeral pack when registering a death. Hospitals, hospices, undertakers, social services, police, DWP, the social security agency, third sector organisations involved in palliative care.

Q: Are there any other points that you would like to raise in connection with the new Scottish Funeral Payment?

Please specify below

Speed of processing applications for claimants is essential as many families may not be able to afford any outlays and delays paying funeral directors should be avoided.

Online eligibility checker and rates charged by local funeral directors would inform choice.

10. Best Start Grant

Q: What are your views on who should receive the Best Start Grant (BSG)?

Please specify below

To respond fully to this, we would require a better understanding of the outcomes Scottish Government wish to achieve. However at this stage, we would put forward that BSG should be targeted at those most in need who would benefit most.

Q: Should we continue to use the same system to determine who is responsible for a child for the purposes of the BSG application?

(please tick one box)

Yes	
No	x

Please explain why

As identified in the consultation the issue of looked after children needs to be addressed given that those children will not be included in the Universal Credit assessment.

Q: Do you agree that each of the three BSG payments should only be made once for each child?

(please tick one box)

Yes	x
No	

If no, what exceptions would you make to this rule?

While we agree in principle but we would support some flexibility to allow exceptions for example children living in changeable family situations or chaotic lifestyle.

Q: Should we continue to use the same method as the SSMG to determine whether a child is the first child in a household?

(please tick one box)

Yes	
No	x

Please explain why

There is no entitlement to the SSMG if there is a member of the claimant's family under 16 years old. This obviously creates difficulties for families where the child is 10-15 years old as it would be unlikely the family would retain the original items for a new-born child for this period of time and that they would still be fit for purpose.

If no, what alternative method should we use?

Q: Do you agree that we should retain the requirement to obtain advice from a medical professional before making a maternity payment?

(please tick one box)

Yes	x
No	

Please explain your answer

This will ensure that expectant mothers receive the proper medical advice to improve their pregnancy outcomes and receive access to antenatal care. This would create opportunities to refer customers to other services for support for example financial inclusion.

Q: Are there other points during the first five years of a child's life when families face greater pressure than at the start of nursery (other than birth and the start of school)?

Please specify below

Families may face pressure for informal child minding and childcare arrangements during the first 5 years. The scheme should consider all circumstances a family may face in the lead up to a child going to nursery and meet their needs where possible. The outcomes to be achieved from the BSG payment may help establish if starting nursery is the appropriate test to use.

Q: What are your views on defining 'the start of nursery' as the point of entitlement to a funded early learning and childcare place, for the purposes of making the second payment?

Please specify below

The start of nursery seems a reasonable starting point for making a second payment. Local Authorities are involved in early learning and childcare placements and there may be benefits in linking these two initiatives at a local level.

Q: Are there any particular issues related to the nursery payment that you think we should consider?

Please specify below

Any issues are fully covered in the consultation document.

Q: Are there any particular issues related to the school payment that you think we should consider?

Please specify below

Children start school at different ages and this should be taken into account; and the relationship between the school payment and the provision of clothing grants and free school meals to avoid duplicate payments.

Local Authority Education Services should be involved in the design of school payments for children.

Q: Should the school payment be payable to all eligible children who begin primary school for the first time in Scotland, or should an upper age limit be included?

Please specify below

The payment should be eligible to children who begin primary school for the first time in Scotland as this will not discriminate on the grounds of age. Families eligible for the benefit face similar pressures regardless of the age of their children.

Q: What are your views on our proposals in relation to the BSG application process?

Please specify below

Proposal for three separate applications seems reasonable and simple; and Agree with proposal to extend claiming to 6 months from child date of birth.

Local Authorities are involved in early learning and childcare placements and are therefore well placed to support nursery and school payments. Councils also have access to household residency and financial information for example council tax, council tax reduction and clothing grants that could simplify the application process.

Q: What are your views on establishing an integrated application process for the BSG and Healthy Start?

Please specify below

There is an overlap in eligibility between the two payments and therefore there is an opportunity to streamline the process and design an integrated application process. This ensures that information is only requested once for multiple purposes resulting in improved service delivery and faster payment of benefit.

Q: What are the advantages and disadvantages of this approach?

Please specify below

The advantages are that applicants only need to provide information once and this will improve speed of processing and time taken by the applicant to apply for more than one benefit.

The disadvantage might be that the applicant is unclear what they are applying for and what they are entitled to but this can be mitigated through communication and form design.

Q: Would the option to receive items rather than a cash payment as part of the BSG have benefits?

(please tick one box)

Yes	x
No	

Please explain why

The system should be flexible to meet the needs of customers and the option to provide items will ensure that the money is being used for what it is intended for and that will ensure more positive outcomes and avoid money being used inappropriately. This model works well for Community Care Grant as part of the Scottish Welfare Fund although it should be noted that the BSG spend will be much smaller compared to a Community Care Grant and this may make it expensive to administer.

Q: Which services should promote awareness of the BSG to ensure that claimants know about it at the relevant time?

Please specify below

Any service that is involved in the Sure Start Maternity Grant should continue to promote the Best Start Grant for example Health visitors, doctors, and Health and Social Care partnerships.

11. Discretionary Housing Payment

Q: Could the way that Discretionary Housing Payments (DHPs) are currently used be improved?

(please tick one box)

Yes	
No	x

Please explain why

Discretionary Housing Payment is intended as a temporary payment to support customers with their housing costs. In recent years the scheme has been used to award longer term payments for example mitigation of the bedroom tax. The Scotland Act 2016 may provide mitigation of the bedroom tax through Universal Credit rather than DHP and this would provide local authorities with more time to focus on hardship issues caused by Local Housing Allowance, Benefit Cap and other welfare reforms.

Q: Could the administration of DHP applications be improved?

(please tick one box)

Yes	x
No	

Please explain why

At present there is a requirement for a person to apply for Discretionary Housing Payment and not everyone who is entitled to it applies for it, for example people living in under occupation should be mitigated but some people do not apply. If information is held by Local Authorities that would remove the need for an application then this should be used as the basis of the award. This will ensure that people who need support receive it and prevents the build-up of arrears in housing costs and potential evictions.

Q: Does the guidance for local authorities on DHPs need amending?

(please tick one box)

Yes	
No	x

Please explain why

The DWP guidance on DHP's is comprehensive and is updated on a regular basis by the DWP. The scheme works effectively and this guidance should continue but should be subject to review to reflect any new pressures or reforms.

12. Job Grant

Q: What should the Scottish Government consider in developing the Job Grant?

Please specify below

We believe that the new job grant being developed should at its core be -

- Simple to understand
- Easy to claim
- Bureaucracy light to keep down admin costs
- Aligned with local offers of support for people transitioning into work

We believe such a system is best delivered locally, with national guidelines to ensure minimum levels and consistency.

In developing the job grant, we believe it is important that Government considers using this to support those people who are most in need of transitional support, while at the same time wherever possible not encouraging employers to abdicate from their responsibilities. We believe as part of the Governments drive to achieve "Fair Work" that employers should receive clear messages that measures need to be in place which provide new employees with transitional support that allows them to take up employment. While it is accepted that most employers now pay on a monthly basis, it is not realistic for new employees to wait a number of weeks before receiving wages. Employers should as a matter of course have arrangements in place to advance wages or offer free travel cards etc.

13. Universal Credit flexibilities

Q: Should the choice of managed payments of rent be extended to private sector landlords in the future?

(please tick one box)

Yes	X
No	

Please explain why

The Council believes the risks associated with the payment of rent in the social sector should be dealt with as a priority.

Managed payments should be extended for private sector landlords. Councils currently have discretion to pay Local Housing Allowance to private landlords where a tenant is unable or unlikely to pay their rent or to sustain a tenancy; this helps reduce the risk of eviction for those renting from the private sector and this type of managed payment should continue under Universal Credit.

In some areas, due to a lack of social rented accommodation, the private sector is people's only choice. Many private landlords are reluctant to rent their properties to people in receipt of benefits, due to the risk of non-payment of rent, which reduces the availability of rented housing. Extending managed payments to this part of the rented sector should help alleviate their fears somewhat.

Q: Should payments of Universal Credit be split between members of a household?

(please tick one box)

Yes	X
No	

Please explain why

Yes.

In situations where domestic abuse exists a single payment to one member of the household may encourage financial abuse to be part of the on-going domestic abuse.

The ability to split payments between members of a household already exists under the Universal Credit scheme and the costs and benefits of extending this in Scotland would be required before reaching any formal decision.

If Yes, please indicate if you think the default position should be:

a) automatic payments to individuals, with the option to choose a joint payment

(please tick one box)

Yes	
No	X

b) automatic household payments, with the option to choose individual payments?

(please tick one box)

Yes	x
No	

If Yes, how do you think payments should be split? For example 50/50 between members of a couple or weighted towards the person who is the main carer if the claim includes dependent children?

Please specify below

The payment should be weighted to the person who is the main carer of the children or based on evidence in individual cases.

Q: Do you have any other comments about how the Scottish Government's powers over Universal Credit administrative flexibilities will be delivered?

Please specify below

There is concern that payment of the Housing Element direct to claimants' impacts on rent collection and the power to direct managed payments to social landlords should be introduced as soon as possible.

Waiting 6 weeks for a first payment of Universal Credit is unrealistic. The theory behind this is that claimants should have a final salary to live on; however, this is rarely the case. During this time claimants have to request an advance which reduces their future payments of UC, putting additional pressure on them financially.

Even with an advance, claimants frequently run out of money and the stakes are particularly high when it comes to recipients of Universal Credit running out of money, it can lead to crisis or destitution. This particularly applies to those disabled people who have failed an ESA assessment who have to claim Universal Credit and wait 5 weeks for their first payment.

The administrative flexibilities should be used to allow, as with legacy benefits, claimants to receive their benefits fortnightly. This will prevent them having to wait long periods of time for their payments.

Q: Do you have any comments about the Scottish Government's powers over the housing element of Universal Credit?

Please specify below

The tenant should have the choice of having the housing element paid directly to their landlord, as is the situation with RSLs and Housing Benefit at the moment.

Tenants who have various conflicting financial priorities and receive the housing element paid directly to them may not pay their rent, and use the money for other things. This will lead to increased levels of rent arrears throughout the sector, which in turn affects service provision and development programs.

Payment of rent arrears is a key factor in sustaining tenancies and the future financial stability of individuals and the powers should be used to deliver positive outcomes in both these areas.

Tenants receiving their housing element directly will be at an increased risk of homelessness if they do not pay their rent. This will put additional pressure on, already stretched, advice agencies.

PART 3: OPERATIONAL POLICY

14. Advice, representation and advocacy

Q: What role[s] should publicly funded advice providers play in the development of a new Scottish social security system?

Please specify below

They require to relate their and the claimants experiences in the delivery of benefits e.g. highlighting claimants difficulties in accessing the current system, the difficulties in ensuring claimants benefits are correct and the difficulties in getting to appeal. Advisers also experience great difficulties in accessing information from DWP, consideration could be given to how this is operated and extending the Apollo List.

Q: What steps need to be taken, to understand the likely impact of the transfer of the devolved benefits on publicly funded advice in Scotland?

Please specify below

Public funded organisations involved in advice services require to be consulted on their experience of supporting customers through the complexities of the current benefit system to ensure good practice is retained and improvements made as required under the new system.

Additional funding should be considered for Advice Agencies, Local Authorities / H&SCP to assist with the implementation of new benefits.

Q: How could the transfer of the devolved benefits to Scotland be used to drive improvements in the provision of publicly funded advice?

Please specify below

There is an opportunity to explore and streamline how advice services are funded and the existing range of services they provide to customers and to design a service delivery model that will support the 5 principles of the Social Security system charter and provide value for money.

Advice services will be required to provide the right advice and meet the standard of service required to drive improvements in service delivery. The number of claimants supported and positive outcomes achieved would be a measure of success. Training programmes will be required to raise standards, and there should be open channels of communication between advisers and the agency to ensure consistency of approach and to resolve matters effectively.

Local Authorities should also be included in the conversation as they are involved in casework and signposting to other local Services.

Q: Do you think that Independent Advocacy services should be available to help people successfully claim appropriate benefits?

(please tick one box)

Yes	x
No	

Please explain why

Advocacy services play a vital role in ensuring claimants receive their legal entitlement to their benefits and there will be claimants that will continue to require such services under the new social security system. This may be best delivered at a local level to ensure easy access to advice and guidance and the opportunity to signpost customers to other services.

Q: What next steps would you recommend that would help the Scottish Government better understand the likely impact of the transfer of the devolved benefits on independent advocacy services?

Please specify below

By consulting with the advocacy services involved to understand the current provision involved in this area and to obtain the benefit of their experience and to use this information to inform the design of the Social Security system.

15. Complaints, reviews and appeals

Q: Do you agree that we should base our CHP on the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman's 'Statement of Complaints Handling Principles'?

(please tick one box)

Yes	x
No	

Please explain why

The Complaints Standard Authority is recognised as a centre for excellence and this should form the basis of the agency claim handling procedure.

Q: How should a Scottish internal review process work?

Please specify below

The current Mandatory Revision (MR) process has created another barrier for claimants to get over to access their benefits, particularly those with mental health problems.

The MR has also resulted in delays in claimants accessing their benefits via appeal.

We would support the abolition of MR and return to the straightforward process of decision to appeal. Following an appeal being lodged, there should still be an opportunity for the original decision to be changed, similar to the current Housing Benefit appeal process.

The Scottish internal review process should be open, transparent and operate to set timescales and follow set procedures that are easily applied.

Q: What would be a reasonable timescale for the review to be carried out?

Please specify below

The Council consider that a review should be resolved within a maximum 28 days. This would allow a decision maker to obtain any further information required to carry out the review. This links with the decision making process for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction reconsiderations.

Q: Should a tribunal be used as the forum for dispute resolution for the Scottish social security system?

(please tick one box)

Yes	x
No	

Please explain why

The current tribunal system is effective and provides an independent review of a claim with binding decisions. It would also meet aspects of the 5 key principles of the agency in terms of transparency and accessibility and scrutiny.

Q: If no, are there any alternative methods of dispute resolution that you think would be preferable to a tribunal?

Please specify below

Q: How can we ensure that our values underpin the appeals process for a Scottish Social Security agency?

Please specify below

By embedding the 5 key principles into the Legislation and charter that establishes a Tribunal Service that will consider appeals under the Social Security system. The culture of the Tribunal should reflect the principles and values.

Tribunal hearings should be independent, user friendly and carried out at a local level to reduce claimants' costs and minimise travel time.

Q: Are there any other values that you feel should be reflected in the design of the appeals process?

Please specify below

The following values should be included:

Impartiality;
Fairness;
Equitable;
Transparent;
Accessible; and
Timely

Q: What do you consider would be reasonable timescales to hear an appeal in relation a decision on a devolved benefit?

Please specify below

There is currently no timescale for when an appeal is lodged to when the appeal hearing should take place.

The timescale for resolution of appeals should be able to meet the key principles and the Tribunal Service resourced to achieve this outcome. The Council would consider that a maximum period of 1 months is appropriate to conclude an appeal similar to stage 2 reviews of the Scottish Welfare Fund.

Q: In order to ensure a transparent appeals process, what steps could be taken to ensure that those appealing fully understand and are kept informed at each stage of the appeals process?

Please specify below

Appellants should be able to track their appeal using a portal that outlines the appeal stages and highlights where their appeal is in the process with estimated timescales for completion.

When an appeal is submitted appellants should be provided with an appeal pack online or in paper form that fully explains the appeal process and what action they need to take.

Q: How could the existing appeals process be improved?

Please specify below

A timescale should be introduced for when an appeal is lodged to when the appeal hearing should take place.

The appeal process could be improved by placing a legal responsibility on the agency to submit appeal papers within a set timeframe following the receipt of an appeal.

The process in general should be made more customer friendly through utilisation of technology.

16. Residency and cross-border issues

Q: Should Scottish benefits only be payable to individuals who are resident in Scotland?

(please tick one box)

Yes	X
No	

Please explain why

The current situation is that some benefits Attendance Allowance (AA), Disability Living Allowance (DLA) and Personal Independence Payment (PIP) are paid for up to 13 weeks (26 weeks if it is for medical treatment) whilst a person is abroad. Carers Allowance (CA) can be paid for 4 weeks holiday in a 26 week period.

If a person moves abroad permanently to another EEA country or Switzerland they may be able to get DLA (care component), PIP (Living Component), AA or CA. There are conditions which have to be met such as having paid enough National Insurance to qualify for contribution-based benefits. The mobility component of DLA or PIP cannot be claimed abroad.

It would seem fair to continue this practice for people who would normally be resident in Scotland.

Q: What are your views on the ‘habitual’ residence test currently used in the UK by DWP?

Please specify below

The Habitual Residence Test is applied to people travelling under a British passport as well as to non-UK nationals. It applies to everyone unless they are specifically excluded by regulations e.g. EEA workers, refugees, people receiving Income Support, Jobseekers Allowance (Income Based) or Employment and Support Allowance (Income Related). The same “test” is applied to all and a decision is made on the facts of each case. It is a comprehensive assessment covering all aspects of the person’s circumstances and does not need to be changed. It is fair and equitable and should be retained under the new system.

However gathering the necessary evidence can take time and may not fit in with Principle 5 (efficiency). Care will also need to be taken to adhere to Principle 2 (Respect and Dignity) as the information required to make the decision can be detailed and personal to the customer

Q: Are there other issues that the Scottish Government should take into account when it comes to residency rules?

Please specify below

The Council has no further comment.

Q: What factors should Scottish Government consider in seeking to coordinate its social security system with other social security systems in the UK?

Please specify below

The need for robust data sharing between social security systems to enable checking what benefits are already in payment and by whom. An electronic system similar to the current Customer Information System that the DWP have given Local Authorities access to check customers' income from Benefits at present.

Q: How can the Scottish Government ensure that no-one either falls through the cracks or is able to make a 'double-claim'?

Please specify below

Good publicity and easy accessible application for benefits to encourage those who could fall through the gaps to claim.

Technology, data matching between agencies and data sharing arrangements used should be able to identify a previous claim has been made.

17. Managing overpayments and debt

Q: Could the existing arrangements for recovering social security overpayments be improved in the new Scottish social security system?

(please tick one box)

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>

If yes, please explain your answer

Errors that cause overpayments should be eliminated as far as possible from the system and this can be achieved by reducing the amount of manual keying that is

required from applications form and system design. Capturing and importing data directly into back office systems without manual intervention should form part of the system design. This will reduce the requirement to recover overpayments as much as possible.

The system will still contain errors for example wrong information provided and overpayments created but the volume may be more manageable.

Recovery of overpayments from on-going benefit is an effective method of recovery and should continue under the new system. This makes it transparent to a claimant that their income has reduced due to an overpayment caused by an error and may prevent a repeat. Overpayment recovery is more complex when a person has stopped receiving a benefit and the overpayment has to be recovered by other means for example invoice. If the claimant has other debts then it is difficult to recover overpayments from people on low incomes as they tend to have other debts. The Scottish Government may wish to consider the priority rating of a benefit overpayment when an application is made to recover from on-going benefits as other debts for example rent arrears have a higher priority.

Q: What are your views on the role that financial advice can play in the recovery of overpayments?

Please specify below

Unexpected events, such as benefit overpayments, can cause real money problems or exacerbate existing problems. These types of situations together with welfare reforms can make it increasingly difficult for people to manage their money.

Early budgeting advice may be needed for some customers to allow them to work out their personal budgets, arrange payments, and avoid doorstep lenders and to avoid the situation from spiralling.

Financial advice is important but so too is advice about how to prevent overpayments from arising in the first place and this has to be included in the advice given.

18. Fraud

Q: Should the existing Scottish Government approach to fraud be adopted for use in our social security system?

(please tick one box)

Yes	
No	x

If no, what else should be used instead?

There is an opportunity to revisit the Scottish Government approach to fraud to ensure it links to the 5 principles of the social security system and is joined up with fraud relating to UK reserved benefits and provides a legal basis to take action as required.

Local Authorities have a wealth of experience in benefit fraud related matters and should be consulted on the design of the approach.

Q: If yes, should our existing counter-fraud strategy be adapted in any way?

(please tick one box)

Yes	x
No	

Please explain your answer

The Council has used targeted campaigns to successfully reduce fraud and error across its local area and to publicise the outcomes achieved from benefits investigations to act as a deterrent. The counter fraud strategy should include actions that will deter people from committing fraud.

Q: How could the new Scottish social security system 'design out' errors and reduce the potential for fraud at the application stage?

Please specify below

To reduce fraud from entering the benefit system requires real time data matching from other sources for example HMRC and DWP benefits and data sharing should form part of the system design to eliminate as much fraud as possible at the point

of entry. Each application received should be cross checked to a range of other services and benefits including UK reserved benefits to identify potential fraudulent claims.

The system should not be designed in a way that makes it difficult and time consuming for genuine people to make a claim for benefit; technology should be used to fast track applications for genuine applicants.

A risk based approach should also be considered and existing evidence used to identify the areas of high, medium and low risk of fraud.

Q: Should the Scottish social security system adopt DWP's existing code of practice for investigators?

(please tick one box)

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Please explain your answer

There is an opportunity to review the DWP existing code of practice to ensure it includes joint working arrangements for Scottish Benefits and UK reserved benefits.

Q: What are your views on the existing range of powers granted to investigators?

Please specify below

The powers given to investigators have to be sufficient to meet the requirements of the agency to identify and eliminate fraud and error. The existing powers under the Social Security Administration Act 1992 provide a good range of powers to investigate an alleged fraud. Similar powers should be given to investigators within the agency.

There is also an opportunity to review the powers to investigate a range of benefits to be administered by the agency and where joint working with local authorities and DWP Single Fraud Investigation Service could be improved to achieve more positive outcomes.

Q: What are your views on conducting interviews under caution?

Please specify below

An interview under caution provides essential protection for individuals and should continue under the new agency arrangements.

Q: What improvements could be made around conducting interviews under caution?

Please specify below

Interviews are stressful for individuals and are held in different environments for example at home or offices. There should be a consistent approach to how interviews should be conducted to respect the dignity of the applicant and training provided to investigators carrying out the interview under caution to ensure the required standard is met.

Q: Should the Scottish Government retain the same list of offences which people can be found guilty of in terms of social security fraud?

(please tick one box)

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please explain your answer

The current list of offences covers false statements, providing false material in support of a claim, not reporting a change of circumstance when aware it affects a claimant or another person's entitlement. These offences should be retained by the Scottish Government.

Q: Should the Scottish Government impose the same level of penalties for social security fraud as are currently imposed?

(please tick one box)

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please explain your answer

Imposing the same penalties as UK reserved benefits and Scottish Social Security will ensure a consistent approach across all aspects of Social Security fraud.

19. Safeguarding your information

Q: Should the existing Scottish Government approach to Identity Management and Privacy Principles be adopted for use in our social security system?

(please tick one box)

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please explain your answer

In principle there is no reason why this approach could not be used. There may be a public perception that such techniques will lead to profiling that may have an adverse or unjustified impact on individuals. Additionally it should be explained clearly to the public and recorded what the justification is for using such techniques and how they align to UK domestic legislation.

It would be prudent to ensure that if adopted that these align with the information rights strategy of the UK Information Commissioner. Emerging changes as a result of the General Data Protection Regulations (or equivalency in UK controls) around information rights, data minimisation and requirement to adopt a privacy by design approach.

Q: If yes, should our existing Identity Management and Privacy Principles be adapted in any way?

(please tick one box)

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please explain how

Potentially yes however there needs to be a level of assurance provided to the Public that those organisations involved in aspects of information sharing understand how these apply. There would need to be a level of assurance that all parties involved understand this concept and how to apply the principles.

The technical architecture of LA's systems and networks may not support the principles and difficulties may arise which could negatively impact on public perception leading to a lack of trust or confidence. For example LA's may not capture the same data and meta data identifiers within their systems. Legacy systems if adopted for use may not be compliant with data protection legislation or designed to ensure privacy rights of the individuals are maintained and respected.

Q: Who do you consider should be consulted in regard to the Privacy Impact Assessment and what form would this take?

Please specify below

The Public;

Information Commissioner;

Local authorities;

Community planning partners e.g. third sector;

Private sector organisations involved in supporting members of the public and services users; and

Scottish Public Sector Information Security Group.

The assessment should be undertaken using a variety of methods and tailored to suit the audience.

Q: What are your views on privacy issues that may affect the new agency?

Please specify below

The new agency may not have a legal basis established to share information and public opinion not supportive, believing that their privacy rights are not being adequately addressed.

The data is merged to provide a single understanding of a person, family or household and not held in a secure database with the local authority IT systems leading to exposure of data in the public domain and/or identity theft or fraud occurring.

Privacy issues may arise if information sharing is not be correctly governed, auditable or meets stringent security requirements. Individuals may raise concerns that their information rights and human rights are impacted and that they are losing control over their data and its re-use. Where multiple organisations are potentially sharing and using the same data sets there may be a public perception that a much wider set of information may be collected which could be seen as intrusive. No controls in place to manage real time data or the information lifecycle which agencies may hold for differing periods leading to wrong decisions being made about individuals.

Q: Do you perceive any risks to the individual?

Please specify below

Public may consider that there is a clear breach of their human rights and that their right to privacy is not being respected;

- Individual has not consented and perceives no legal basis exists ;
- Privacy notices are not effectively communicated;
- Identity theft.

Data from other organisations are merged to provide a single understanding of a person, family or household leading to;

- Data collected is of poor quality leading to duplicate records and identity issues that impact on the individual;
- Transfers of data e.g. LA to Scottish Government results in personal information being accessed illegally or misused by others;
- Excessive amount of data being collected and held for longer than is necessary;

Lack of appropriate governance controls across the new services and LA's leads to accidental/deliberate breach or loss of data.

If Yes, What solutions might be considered to mitigate against these?

Public assurances (fair processing and privacy notices) given that organisational data has gone through a cleansing exercise where inaccuracies are identified and rectified, any unnecessary information is removed and only kept for as long as is necessary.

Effective communication framework with the public and those involved in consultation process.

Good governance that is auditable and meets the robust security requirement must be implemented across all organisations involved.

Information sharing purposes must have a valid reason or purpose and in the context of sharing personal information this must be limited and confirmed only to that which is relevant and appropriate. This should be supported by the appropriate information sharing protocols and regular audits and outcomes published.

Q: Would you support strictly controlled sharing of information between public sector bodies and the agency, where legislation allowed, to make the application process easier for claimants? For example, this information could be used to prepopulate application forms or to support applications, reducing the burden on applicants.

(please tick one box)

Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
No	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please explain your answer

Only if all public bodies and the agency were working to the same standards, systems and processes were matched.

Data set composition and capture across differing public sector organisations may present challenges as different cultures and thoughts around master data management could impact of information sharing where the data is inaccurate and not reliable. There would need to be a level of assurance around data controller and processing responsibilities given it is likely to be large volumes of data transfers and appropriate sharing agreements in place.

Frameworks must be in place which will allow information to be exchanged in ways which respect the rights of the people the information is about. Failing to have the proper and effective controls will undermine public confidence and trust.

Q: Would you support strictly controlled sharing of information between a Scottish social security agency and other public sector organisations (for example local authorities) to support service improvements and deliver value for money?

(please tick one box)

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Please explain your answer

Sharing of personal information should not happen unless it meets the principles of the data protection and conditions for processing personal and sensitive personal data can be justified.

An organisation sharing information on the basis of service improvement and delivering value for money is potentially at risk of breaching data protection legislation leading to regulatory sanctions.

Organisations are required by law to comply with the Data Protection Act (1998) and information about individuals must be collected and used fairly, stored safely and securely and not unlawfully disclosed to third parties. Public perception may be a large contributory factor around information sharing and may see this as an infringement of their information rights and a move towards a “big brother” society. Reliance on public interest test to justify information sharing would probably not be sufficient given the data is likely to be of a sensitive personal nature.

Q: What are your views on having the option to complete social security application forms online? Can you foresee any disadvantages?

Please specify below

If intention is to use technology within the online process that makes automatic decisions this must be developed in such a way that the information rights of the individual are maintained and respected. There will be challenges around the authentication process, digitally engaging with users and making facilities available within communities for individuals who have no access to online facilities.

Any such solution would have to be fully secure and we would expect the Scottish Public Sector Information Security Group to have been consulted in process to provide us with the required assurances.

Q: What are your views on the new agency providing a secure email account or other electronic access to check and correct information for the purposes of assessing applications (noting that any such provision would need to be audited and regulated so that the security and accuracy of the information would not be compromised)?

Please specify below

With the demise of GCSX email and Scottish LA's not fully integrated to secure email from SWAN we would need to understand what you mean by “secure email account”. Will you be following the Government Guidelines related to TLS 1.2 and DMARC and therefore ensuring that all parties can comply or are you looking at systems such as Egress or THRU that will leave the Local Authority to manage information assets residing within systems out with their control?

Uprating

Q: What are your views on the best way to ensure that devolved benefits keep pace with the cost of living?

Please specify below

Uprating by using the Consumer Price Index (CPI) has worked well in the past until the CPI fell and there was no increase in the value of the benefits for April 2016. Therefore it may be better to adopt the same mechanism as for DLA and PIP whereby the amount paid out can be altered through the link with inflation or by legislation. This would give greater flexibility.

Q: Are there any devolved benefits in particular where uprating based on a measure of inflation would not be effective?

If so, please explain which benefits and why

No.

NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

Agenda Item 11

25 October 2016

Cabinet

Title: **Corporate Asset Strategy**

Purpose: To seek approval for the updated Corporate Asset Strategy and advise Cabinet of the revised governance arrangements for the capital programme.

Recommendation: Cabinet approves the Corporate Asset Strategy and notes the review of governance of the capital programme.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report outlines the changes that have been put in place for the governance of the capital investment programme. The changes reflect the commitment to strengthen governance and ensure a more collaborative approach to delivery of the capital investment programme.
- 1.2 A review of the Corporate Asset Strategy has also been carried out to reflect the revised governance and respond to one of the actions emerging from the recent Audit Scotland report "Major Capital Investment in Scotland".

2. Background

Governance

- 2.1 The current governance arrangements for the General Fund Capital Investment Programme were established in January 2013 when the Council approved the Corporate Asset Strategy.
- 2.2 Since January 2013 a number of changes have been made to the monitoring arrangements to ensure clearer lines of responsibility, a corporate approach to project delivery and delivery of more projects on time and within budget. The key developments include;
 - Direct reporting of major projects to the Executive Leadership Team (ELT);
 - Establishment of Service Programme Boards;
 - Development of the Strategic Assets Group.

- 2.3 The impact of these changes is an overlap of responsibility and duplication of reporting.
- 2.4 In addition to this Audit Scotland has carried out a number of audits on "Major Capital Investment in Scotland". In their latest report in January 2016, one of the actions for North Ayrshire related to the updating of the Corporate Asset Strategy, the review of which includes the governance of the capital investment programme.
- 2.5 To establish a more streamlined approach the following revised reporting arrangements have been put in place;

2.5.1 Capital Programme Asset Group (CPAG)

CPAG was established in 2010, with its role evolving since then. To deliver a more streamlined approach CPAG will;

- Focus on overview of programme;
- Give initial consideration of all Business Cases;
- Review Service Board and Strategic Asset Group Minutes / Action notes to ensure any impact on overall programme is clear;
- Review capital receipts;
- Review external funding opportunities;
- Monitor implementation of best practice, including Audit Scotland recommendations.

2.5.2 Strategic Asset Group

The Strategic Assets Group's (SAG) which was established recently provides a focus on the Council's operational assets to ensure that the use of these assets is optimised through cross directorate working. The SAG brings together representatives from all Directorates to develop and deliver the Asset Management Plans which inform the potential relocation and co-location of services. The key driver of the Strategic Assets Group is the effective utilisation of Council assets to reduce the public sector's building footprint and deliver improved services from a smaller, more efficient, better managed and fit for purpose retained estate through;

- Identifying property needs in accordance with the Neighbourhood;
- Developing full business case proposals for consideration by ELT based upon property need and within financial budgets;
- Establishing a smaller estate portfolio of better quality buildings in the right locations;
- Supporting more shared services and co-location to deliver reduced running costs for the retained estate;
- Identifying opportunities for the promotion of land and development;

- Consolidating customer access channels through one stop shops or community hubs;
- Identifying opportunities for Capital Receipts through project development;
- Combining technical expertise of Asset Management and Estates staff with Services professional expertise.

2.5.3 Service Boards

Service Board have also been established in the recent past to strengthen governance and collaboration across Services and with other agencies with the aim of delivering more projects on time. The focus of Service Boards is to;

- Review of all major projects;
- Progress reporting on delivery, budget and costs, risk and issues and decision making on emerging issues;
- Review of full capital programme for Service area;
- Development of emerging projects;
- Lessons Learned;
- Development and implementation of Asset Management Plans, with twice yearly report to Cabinet

2.5.4 There are no changes proposed to the roles of Council, Cabinet, Executive Leadership Team, Physical Environment Advisory Panel or the Business Plan Implementation Group.

Corporate Asset Strategy (CAS)

2.6 Evolution of the approach to developing and monitoring the Councils' long term capital investment programme requires a refresh of the 2013 Strategy. The main updates in the CAS relate to;

- Proposed changes to the formal governance arrangements, as outlined above;
- Updates to reflect current Directorate structure;
- Inclusion of criteria for prioritising new proposals;
- Annual review of Loans Fund and establishment of a Loans Fund Reserve;
- Removal of specific detail around the capital investment programme (to avoid the Strategy being out of date as soon as the capital investment programme is updated).

A copy of the revised Strategy (2016) is attached at Appendix 1.

3. Proposals

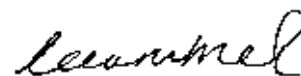
3.1 Cabinet is asked to approve the Corporate Asset Strategy and note the review of governance of the capital programme.

4. Implications

Financial:	No specific implications.
Human Resources:	No specific implications
Legal:	No specific implications.
Equality:	No specific implications
Environmental & Sustainability:	No specific implications
Key Priorities:	Effective governance underpins delivery of the Council's key objectives.
Community Benefits:	No specific implications

5. Consultation

- 5.1 The Council has developed its arrangements for capital planning and monitoring and this has had a positive impact on the delivery of its capital programme. The revised arrangements will ensure a more streamlined approach is in place.



LAURA FRIEL
Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Support)

Reference :

For further information please contact Laura Friel, Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Support) on 01294 324554

Background Papers

Appendix 1 - Corporate Asset Strategy (August 2016)

NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL
CORPORATE ASSET STRATEGY
AUGUST 2016



NORTH AYRSHIRE
COUNCIL

1. INTRODUCTION

Robust asset management is a core component of effective strategic management of large organisations.

North Ayrshire's first Corporate Asset Strategy (CAS) was approved by the Executive in March 2011, this was updated and approved by Council in January 2013. Since then a number of changes have taken place requiring a further update of the strategy, these include;

- Changes to the Council's Directorate structure;
- Development of the Council's approach to Asset Management updated in May 2014; and
- Alignment of the Council's approach with best practice as highlighted in a number of recent Audit Scotland reports.

All assets are managed corporately across the organisation, supporting delivery of the Council's key objectives.

North Ayrshire Council's CAS is a high level framework for the management of the Council's core assets and infrastructure and sets out broad principles for the development of the Council's capital strategies and plans. The CAS does not restate the detail of the individual asset plans but sets these in the wider strategic context.

2. CORPORATE ASSET MANAGEMENT

The Council's CAS, Asset Management Plans and Capital Investment Programme continue to be affected by the challenging financial climate. In developing its approach the Council recognises that a longer term financial plan for assets is vital to secure best value, this reflects the high value of these assets together with the longer time frame to secure, develop or dispose of assets. By carefully planning investment and taking a longer term approach the Council ensures that scarce resources are applied in a sustainable way that supports Council and partner priorities.

To assist the Council in achieving its key objectives it requires to ensure that its assets align with the broader priorities and plans of the Council and the Single Outcome Agreement. These are set out below:

- Growing our economy, increasing employment and regenerating towns
- Working together to develop strong communities
- Ensuring people have the right skills for learning, life and work
- Supporting all of our people to stay safe, healthy and active
- Protecting and enhancing the environment for future generations

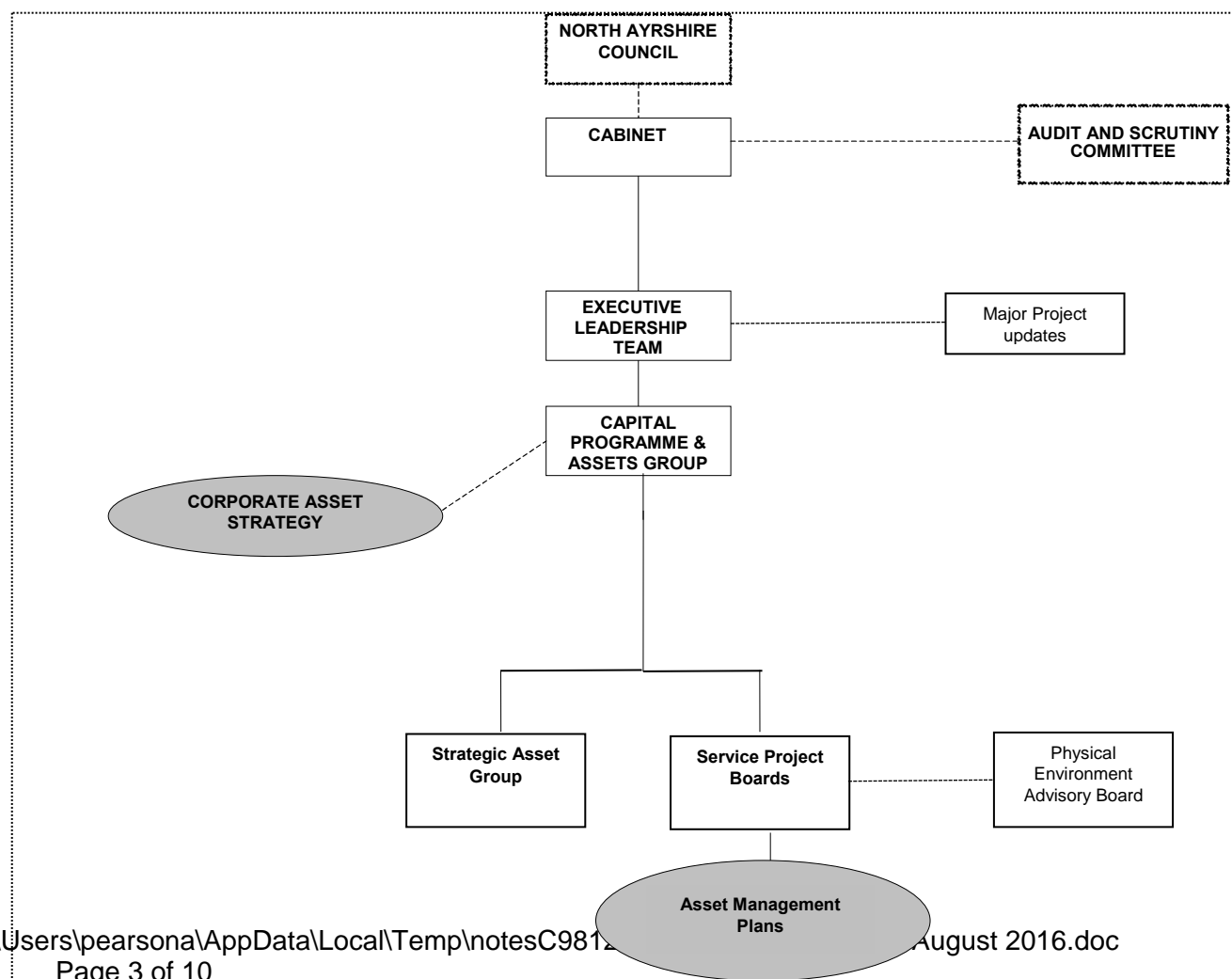
In addition to the five key outcomes the Council Plan outlines the change that is required to deliver better services and address the demographic challenges in a context of less public sector funding. It also recognises the importance of close partnership working with other agencies, communities and local people.

The strategic approach focusses on best value and improvement, ensuring the council complies with best practice by:

- Having sound governance arrangements to improve corporate asset management;
- Ensuring the Council only retains assets which support its strategic objectives;
- Having a corporate approach to prioritisation of investment founded on a clear business case and clear criteria, with due consideration to whole-life costing;
- Delivering better public services through improved assets and appropriate colocation of services;
- Ensuring assets are fit for purpose, deliver best value in terms of investment, running costs, maintenance and environmental impact;
- Maximising usage of all assets;
- Maintaining the condition of core assets through life cycle investment;
- Complying with all statutory requirements;
- Having appropriate financial and performance measures, including benchmarking, demonstrating improved performance over time;
- Embedding post-project evaluation; and
- Ensuring effective procurement, including partnership working with South West Hubco where appropriate.

3. GOVERNANCE

The diagram below represents the Council's governance arrangements for corporate asset management within the Council:



3.1 Roles and Responsibilities

The **Council** approves the corporate framework and the medium and longer term capital investment programme.

Cabinet receives regular progress reports and approves amendments to the capital investment programme.

The **Executive Leadership Team**, the **Capital Programme and Assets Group (CPAG)** and the **Strategic Asset Group (SAG)** ensure officer co-ordination of corporate asset management and support the Council and Cabinet at chief officer and senior management levels.

The **Executive Leadership Team** is responsible for advising Members on the relative priorities of the Council's long term investment needs and ensuring all major capital projects deliver anticipated benefits on time and within budget.

CPAG is chaired by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Support) with representation from senior officers across all Services. It meets on a monthly basis with the remit of:

- ensuring a strategic and corporate overview of the capital investment programme;
- developing and monitoring the Council's capital investment programme, tracking slippage on delivery of the programme and expenditure against approved budget;
- developing clear criteria for investment of Council resources on asset matters and assessing all investment business cases;
- developing a capital receipts strategy.

The **Strategic Assets Group (SAG)** provides a strategic focus on the Council's operational assets ensuring that the use of these assets is optimised through cross directorate working, developing and delivering the Asset Management Plans.

The key objective of the Strategic Assets Group is the effective utilisation of Council assets to reduce the public sector's building footprint and deliver improved services from a smaller, more efficient, better managed and fit for purpose retained estate. The Group is developing a strategy for implementing the vision for each Neighbourhood.

Physical Environment Advisory Panel (PEAP) is part of the Council's approach to engagement with the wider group of elected and receives updates on major projects funded via the General Fund.

Chief Officers and **Senior Managers** are responsible for:

- working together to ensure a corporate approach to asset management is in place and delivering the Council's asset management plans and associated investment programme;
- contributing to the development and delivery of asset strategies and plans;
- ensuring consultation on asset management is undertaken with all relevant stakeholders.

Service Project Boards chaired by Executive Directors with representation from relevant Services are responsible for ensuring robust project management is in place to deliver projects on time and within budget.

The **Business Plan Implementation Group (BPIG)** oversees the development and delivery of the HRA Business Plan which underpins the capital investment strategy. This group is not a decision making body and requires Committee approval for any proposals that recommendations.

Financial Services is responsible for effective management of the Loans Fund and in partnership with Services for ensuring availability of timely and accurate financial information.

3.2 Asset Plans

In line with the CIPFA “Guide to Asset Management and Capital Planning in Local Authorities” North Ayrshire has classified its assets into six categories;

Asset Plan	Directorate	Chief Officer
Property (including Common Good assets)	Place	Head of Physical Environment
Housing		
Roads including structures, lighting and water infrastructure		Head of Commercial Services
Open Space		
Fleet including vehicles, plant and equipment		
ICT	Finance and Corporate Support	Head of Customer and Digital

Development of the asset management plans reflects best practice and North Ayrshire Council’s commitment to sound asset management.

The Asset Plans aim to ensure that the Council holds the right assets and that they are fit for purpose in terms of condition, suitability, sufficiency and accessibility and are used to inform the capital investment programme.

The Asset Plans follow a broadly similar structure, establishing the Council’s current asset base and are the vehicles for identifying future investment across all asset classes. The Plans set out clear actions for each asset plan, with the Action Plans updated on annual basis.

Lifecycle investment costs are identified for relevant asset classes to ensure there is a clear understanding of the cost of maintaining assets and infrastructure to a standard that supports current service delivery.

In addition to the assets captured in the core asset plans there is a range of initiatives, including town centre regeneration which do not sit within any of the core asset plans as the assets are not Council owned. The need for investment in these assets is recognised in the Council's capital investment programme.

To ensure Members are fully apprised of progress on development of the Council's approach to the management of its assets, reports are submitted twice a year to Cabinet.

4. CAPITAL INVESTMENT PROGRAMME

4.1 Approach

The approach to capital investment planning has moved from medium term to longer term planning, covering a 10 year period. The 10 year plan is updated annually with a triennial full refresh.

4.2 10 Year Capital Programme

The Council's 10 year capital investment programme establishes a firm programme for the first 5 years and indicative proposals for the following 5 years. The longer term approach is desirable due to:

- the longer time frame required to define need and develop sound plans / business cases;
- the need to ensure that all investment fits with the longer term Council mission;
- the high cost of acquiring, developing and using assets and the need to ensure these are in use for the longest time period.

The longer term programme may be affected by a number of factors; the economy, inflation, availability of Scottish Government Grants, value and timing of capital receipts; and market condition impacting on the tenders submitted by contractors. The Programme is reviewed on an annual basis to ensure projects can continue to be delivered within available resources.

In developing the 10 year capital programme there are 3 broad stages;

- a review of the current programme to identify any reprofiling of projects or release of funds for higher priority projects;
- identification of priority projects;
- where there is insufficient funding, establishment of a programme of aspirational projects.

In developing proposals lifecycle investment in current assets requires to be considered to sustain these assets for future service delivery.

Investment priorities are assessed against available resources, including additional prudential borrowing.

Given the longer term nature of the 10 year programme it is inevitable that high level estimates will be used for the schemes later in the programme. Following approval of the programme, these require to be developed to full schemes.

Draft proposals are reviewed by the ELT prior to presentation to members for consideration.

4.3 Project Business Cases

A Business Case template has been established to ensure a consistent approach is taken to the identification and prioritisation of investment needs. Key information includes;

- Aims and objectives
- Approach
- Scope
- Benefits
- Consequences of not proceeding
- Implications for stakeholders
- Key milestones
- Evaluation criteria and scoring mechanism
- Capital costs, funding profile and revenue impact

Investment is prioritised using the following criteria;

- invest to save;
- statutory duty;
- business continuity;
- cost avoidance;
- alignment to Council outcomes.

All Business Cases are considered by ELT with a recommendation being made to Cabinet for inclusion of new projects into the programme.

4.4 Lifecycle Investment and Asset Maintenance Strategy

There is a requirement for the Council to continue to invest in its core assets and infrastructure to sustain these for future service delivery. This includes:

- ensuring key properties are fit for purpose, as far as possible, in terms of condition, inclusion and suitability;
- minimising deterioration in the condition of the Council's roads network and ageing lighting columns,
- replacing vehicles which are essential to the delivery of a range of services including Education, Health and Social Care and Waste Services,
- replacing some of the Council's ageing ICT equipment to allow the Council to maximise use of technology and operate as efficiently as possible;
- continuing the Council's investment in its landfill site at Shewalton; and
- continuing investment to ensure our cemeteries meet the needs of our communities.

In addition to capital funding the Council has revenue funding available for major and day to maintenance and statutory compliance of the property estate.

5 FUNDING STRATEGY

5.1 Funding Principles

In developing the Council's corporate 10 year capital investment programme it is important to ensure the investment proposals are affordable now and in future. As such a number of broad principles are applied:

- As far as possible initiatives are funded from the Scottish Government Grant;
- Where there is a clear business case and efficiencies or significant contribution to strategic objectives can be demonstrated, investment may be funded via additional prudential borrowing;
- Where external funding, grants or partner contributions, can be secured for a key Council priority and match funding is required by the Council;
- Where capital receipts have been confirmed this can be used to enhance the core investment programme, recognising the risk around value and timing of capital receipts.

Outwith the above, additional prudential borrowing will only be supported where provision is specifically made within the Council's medium / long term revenue financial plan. Charges to the General Fund will comply with relevant legislation and regulations ensuring a prudent approach is deployed.

An annual review of the Loans Fund will be carried out aligning the Council's borrowing decisions with investment decisions, the Council's debt profile and its revenue budget.

The Council has established a Loans Fund reserve to smooth the funding requirements of its 10 year capital investment programme.

5.2 Funding Sources

In determining the affordability of its capital investment programme, an estimate is made of available resources, giving due consideration to the inter-dependencies between the capital and revenue budgets. Capital investment may generate, avoid or reduce cost pressures on the revenue budgets depending on the nature of the investment. Similarly, revenue investment in asset maintenance may avoid or delay the need for capital expenditure.

The main sources of funding are prudential borrowing and Scottish Government Grant. Other sources include; revenue contributions; use of earmarked funds; contributions from other organisations and capital receipts.

5.3 Prudential Borrowing

The Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities enables councils to set their own borrowing limits with a requirement to ensure that investment plans are affordable, prudent and sustainable. The Council can borrow over a number of years

to augment its capital income, provided the resultant annual debt repayments can be accommodated within future years' revenue budgets. The Council's annual Treasury Management Strategy sets out the prudential indicators and parameters, with regular reporting to Members.

5.4 Capital Grants

Scottish Government general capital grant is a significant funding source for the General Services capital programme. Like other sources of funding this is subject to change.

Forecasts of government grant for future years require to be closely monitored and spending plans adjusted as appropriate, particularly recognising the long lead time associated with capital projects and the limited ability to reduce spending once projects have been initiated.

5.5 Capital Receipts

The economic downturn had an adverse impact on the Council's ability to generate capital receipts from the disposal of surplus land, buildings and other assets. The capital receipts plan requires to be kept under review to ensure the value and timing of capital receipts continue to align with the assumptions in the capital investment programme.

5.6 Other Sources of Funding

The Council seeks to secure funding from other organisations where this fits with delivery of outcomes. Opportunities include SPT and the Scottish Government Capital Regeneration Fund.

6 SUMMARY

North Ayrshire continues to develop its approach to asset management to ensure it complies with best practice and delivers best value. This is achieved through keeping the governance arrangements under review, including the Corporate Asset Strategy (CAS) and implementing the Action Plans around its six Asset Plans.

The CAS and the Asset Plans inform the development of the 10 year capital investment programme. A longer term Capital Investment Programme ensures the Council has more effective plans around its core assets.

The Corporate Asset Strategy and Capital Investment Programme will continue to develop via:

- An annual review of the investment programme to update for any significant matters, ensuring a rolling firm 5 year plan with planning assumptions for the remaining 5 years
- Progress report twice a year on development and implementation of the six asset management plans

- Regular two-monthly capital monitoring reports to Cabinet
- Learning from Best Practice, including Audit Scotland reports.

Laura Friel
Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Support)
August 2016

NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

Agenda Item 12

25 October 2016

Cabinet

Title: Future Cemetery Provision

Purpose: To update the Cabinet on the future provision of cemeteries in North Ayrshire.

Recommendation: It is recommended that Cabinet:

1. notes the proposals to:-

- consolidate the number of cemeteries on Arran due to the lack of suitable, available land. Public consultation will take place on this matter.
- continue to pursue options, including additional funding requirements, for Brodick, Arran and report back to a future Cabinet meeting.
- extend the existing cemeteries at Kilbride Cemetery (Arran), Knadgerhill Cemetery (Irvine), High Road (Stevenston), Dalry Cemetery and West Kilbride Cemetery.
- realise additional burial capacity at Kilbirnie New by utilising appropriate parcels of land not currently allocated for burials through the removal of trees, shrubs and the removal of a redundant outbuilding to extend the burial capacity from 2 years up to potentially 7 years.
- create new cemeteries in Kilwinning and Kilbirnie

2. notes that the current allocation of Capital Funding includes provision for the proposals listed with the exception of the creation of a new cemetery in Kilbirnie and extensions to Dalry and West Kilbride cemeteries, and

3. agrees that the provision of the required additional funding, both Capital and Revenue, be considered by Council as part of the 2017/18 budget setting process.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 At the Cabinet meeting held on 14 May 2013, it was agreed to adopt a locality approach for the provision of cemeteries in North Ayrshire. The principal was that once a cemetery reached capacity other cemeteries within the locality would be utilised, whilst ensuring a minimum of one available cemetery is provided within each locality.
- 1.2 This matter was raised at the Council meeting on 30 March 2016 and the following motion was agreed:

"Given recent questions from the community in Kilbirnie and the willingness of the Administration to further consult on the May 2013 decision, I move that Officers prepare a report to the Cabinet following the Summer recess on options and costs involved in providing new or extended cemetery provision in North Ayrshire and that in so doing they commit to meaningful consultation prior to any change".
- 1.3 A petition with 181 signatures was also received from Kilbirnie and Glengarnock Community Council opposing the locality based approach to the future provision of cemetery space.
- 1.4 The replacement of each cemetery, where available, will require additional capital funding of between £840,000 and £1.285m depending on land purchase costs and revenue funding of £30,000. This approach will result in the provision of further cemetery space in Dalry, Kilbirnie and West Kilbride. Sufficient land has not been identified for individual replacement on Arran, therefore it will be necessary to undertake consultation to identify appropriate amalgamation of cemeteries.

2. Background

- 2.1 There are 44 burial grounds in North Ayrshire. Of these, 26 can no longer be used for new lairs and 18 remain operational and open for new lairs.
- 2.2 Whilst these 26 burial grounds can no longer provide new lairs they can still be used for burials if families have previously bought lairs/plots that have remaining capacity within them. These cemeteries, like the 18 operational cemeteries continue to be maintained to a high standard by the Council's Streetscene Service.

- 2.3 At the time of agreeing a locality based approach in May 2013, it was anticipated that 10 of the 18 cemeteries would reach capacity within 10 years. This was calculated based on the number of plots remaining divided by the estimated number of new plots required per year (based on historical information).
- 2.4 A significant piece of work has now been carried out to review all operational cemeteries to identify options for potentially increasing their burial capacity to ensure they remain available for new interments for at least 10 years.
- 2.5 The research included the following factors:
- Confirm the estimated provision required for each cemetery
 - Assess land available taking account of ground conditions, planning conditions and the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) policy on the siting of new cemeteries
 - A more efficient use of space within the current layout of cemeteries including the potential creation of additional lairs through a number of activities such as the removal of shrub beds, trees, buildings, paths and road to free up additional ground, suitable for new lairs
- 2.6 Following the research and calculation of the plots available against predicted usage, and despite a general trend showing a slight increase in the number of cremations, it was established that the number of cemeteries reaching capacity within 10 years remains the same as stated in the May 2013, 10 cemeteries are affected.
- 2.7 However, on review the remaining capacity within Kilbirnie New, whilst previously estimated to be likely to reach capacity in 2018, will now not expect to reach capacity until 2023. This is a result of additional parcels of land having been identified within the cemetery which along with the removal of trees along the boundary wall and the removal of a redundant outbuilding will ensure there is now 7 years capacity.
- 2.8 The table at Appendix 1 provides updated details of each of the 10 cemeteries with less than 10 years capacity remaining, their estimated burial requirements, number of lairs remaining and estimated number of years burial capacity remaining.

- 2.9 The research and review carried out has highlighted potential scope to create additional burial space within some cemeteries by adopting the activities outlined in the third bullet point of 2.5 above, such as the removal of shrub beds, trees, buildings, paths and roads to free up additional ground, suitable for new lairs.
- 2.10 It should be noted that whilst the cemeteries are maintained to a high standard, the removal of shrub beds, trees and paths may well affect the visual appearance of the cemetery. However, it will create the opportunity for more burial ground.
- 2.11 Where existing burial capacity cannot be provided by the removal of shrub beds, trees and paths etc., an assessment of alternative options including the availability of adjacent land to extend in to and the availability of suitable land nearby to allow the construction of a new cemetery was carried out. This approach has not highlighted any potential opportunities in Brodick, Sannox and Shiskine on the Isle of Arran due to the non-availability of suitable land. It has therefore been necessary to review nearby cemeteries which can provide burial space when these cemeteries reach capacity.
- 2.12 Details of all 18 operational cemeteries and their estimated remaining burial capacity are contained within Appendix 1.
- 2.13 Options have been developed for each of the 10 cemeteries which will reach capacity within the next 10 years detailing potential options and estimated costs involved in providing new or extended cemetery provision. A more efficient use of space within the current layout of cemeteries including the potential creation of additional lairs through a number of activities including the removal of shrub beds, trees, buildings, paths and roads to free up additional ground, suitable for new lairs has also been considered. Outline proposals have been devised and a high level initial costing exercise completed to estimate the required additional capital funding.

It is estimated an additional £840k to £1,285k capital funding would be required. Additional revenue funding to cover additional maintenance costs and general running costs is also required and is estimated to be £30,000 per annum.

Brodick New, Isle of Arran

There are 32 lairs remaining and it is estimated that 5 new lairs are required per year, it therefore has capacity for another 6 years.

The land currently available within the cemetery is challenging to manage given its topography. However further work will be carried out to test the site to ascertain if more plots can be made available.

The Council's Estates Team has reviewed options for acquiring land in the area, however none have been identified that is suitable for a cemetery. This work will continue.

The plan is therefore to:

- Test dig land within the existing cemetery to assess its suitability for burials
- Continue to review potential sites within Brodick
- If none of the above are possible, burials be accommodated at Kilbride Cemetery, Lamlash

Kilbride Cemetery, Lamlash, Isle of Arran

There are 9 lairs remaining and it is estimated that 17 new lairs are required per year, it therefore has capacity for another 6 months.

The cemetery is being extended and the land adjacent to the cemetery is being purchased from the Church of Scotland.

This would provide an additional 436 plots and will extend the capacity of the cemetery for another 22 years. This takes account of additional burials from Brodick, if required.

A planning application for this extension was submitted to the Council on 4 July 2016 and subsequently approved on 25 August 2016.

Acquisition costs, site investigation costs and construction costs are already provided for in the 2016/17 General Services Capital Budget. The costs are estimated to be approx. £700k.

Sannox Cemetery, Isle of Arran

There are 7 lairs remaining and it is estimated that 3 new lairs are required per year, it therefore has a capacity for another 2 years.

There is no means of extending the cemetery and no scope to increase capacity by removing shrub beds, trees, buildings, paths and roads.

The Council's Estates Team has reviewed options for acquiring land in the area, however none have been identified that is suitable for a cemetery as the surrounding land is boggy. There was an offer of land adjacent to the cemetery to be gifted to the Council, however this was not considered to be suitable for burials.

It is therefore proposed that once the cemetery is full, burials be accommodated at Lochranza Churchyard which has capacity for the long term. Whilst it is acknowledged there is issues in Lochranza Churchyard with a high water table, burials can still be accommodated in a number of areas within the Churchyard.

Shiskine New Cemetery, Isle of Arran

There are 10 lairs remaining and it is estimated that 3 new lairs are required per year, it therefore has capacity for another 3 years.

There is no means of extending the cemetery and no scope to increase capacity by removing shrub beds, trees, buildings, paths and roads.

The Council's Estates Team has reviewed options for acquiring land in the area, however none have been identified that is suitable for a cemetery as the surrounding land is very wet.

It is therefore proposed that once the cemetery is full, burials be accommodated at Kilmory Churchyard which has capacity for the long term.

Knadgerhill Cemetery, Irvine

There are 106 lairs remaining and it is estimated that 48 new lairs are required per year, it therefore has capacity for another 2 years.

The land adjacent to Knadgerhill Cemetery is common good land and it is proposed to purchase this and develop cemetery plots. This will provide a further 400 plots and extend the capacity to 10 years.

Property Management & Investment have developed outline proposals which indicate the estimated cost of this is approx. £620k. This is already budgeted for within the General Services Capital Budget.

Kilwinning Cemetery

There are 119 lairs remaining and it is estimated that 26 new lairs are required per year, it therefore has capacity for another 6 years.

There is an option for a small extension to the cemetery creating 30 new lairs and there are some paths that can be filled in and used as burial ground. However there will not be enough plots created to provide 10 year capacity. The proposals for Kilwinning is to create a new cemetery.

There are 2 potential sites available in Kilwinning. Discussions have taken place with Planning and a preferred site owned by the Council has been identified off the B785. The land is considerable in size and only a portion will be required to meet medium term requirements. It is estimated that acquiring this land will initially provide for 165 plots extending the capacity in Kilwinning for another 10 years.

Longer term, further parcels of land could be developed within this area to provide cemetery provision in Kilwinning for the foreseeable future.

Property Management & Investment have developed outline proposals which indicate the estimated cost of this is approx. £580k. This is already budgeted for within the General Services Capital Budget.

High Road Cemetery, Stevenston

There are 247 lairs remaining and it is estimated that 26 new lairs are required per year, it therefore has capacity for another 9 years.

The cemetery was developed based on 3 phases, phase one being the current provision. There is available land adjacent to the cemetery for phase 2 and 3 which will provide a further 700 plots.

It is proposed to develop part of phase 2 which will provide a further 40 plots, extending the capacity to 11 years.

Property Management & Investment have developed outline proposals which indicate the estimated cost of this is approx. £90k. This is already budgeted for within the General Services Capital Budget.

Dalry Cemetery

There are 64 lairs remaining and it is estimated that 14 new lairs are required per year, it therefore has capacity for another 4 years.

There is available adjacent land to extend this cemetery. This will provide a further 400 plots however it is proposed to only develop part of the area to provide for a further 120 plots and extend cemetery provision for a further 13 years.

Property Maintenance & Investment have developed outline proposals which indicate the estimated cost of this is approx. £220k.

Kilbirnie Cemetery (New)

Additional parcels of land have been identified through the potential removal of trees along the boundary wall, removal of shrubs and the removal of a redundant outbuilding. This will provide a further 140 plots and increase the capacity from 2 years to 7 years.

Property Management & Investment have developed outline proposals which indicate the estimated cost of this is £50k. This can be met from within the General Services Capital Budget.

Furthermore there is an option to develop a new cemetery in Kilbirnie to provide a long term solution and potential land has been identified near to the existing cemeteries.

The value of the land has yet to be determined and therefore accurate costings cannot be provided. However, Property Management & Investment have developed outline proposals which indicate the estimated cost of this is in the region of £580k to £1,025k.

West Kilbride Cemetery

There are 75 lairs remaining and it is estimated that 9 new lairs are required per year, it therefore has capacity for another 8 years.

There is provision to extend the cemetery and this will be implemented to provide a further 46 plots and extend provision for a further 13 years.

Property Management & Investment have developed outline proposals which indicate the estimated cost of this is approx. £40k.

3. Proposals

3.1 It is proposed that Cabinet:

(1) notes the proposals to:-

- consolidate the number of cemeteries on Arran due to the lack of suitable, available land. Public consultation will take place on this matter.
- continue to pursue options, including additional funding requirements, for Brodick, Arran and report back to a future Cabinet meeting.
- extend the existing cemeteries at Kilbride Cemetery (Arran), Knadgerhill Cemetery (Irvine), High Road (Stevenston), Dalry Cemetery and West Kilbride Cemetery.
- realise additional burial capacity at Kilbirnie New by utilising appropriate parcels of land not currently allocated for burials through the removal of trees, shrubs and the removal of a redundant outbuilding to extend the burial capacity from 2 years up to 7 potentially years.
- create new cemeteries in Kilwinning and Kilbirnie.

(2) notes that the current allocation of Capital Funding includes provision for the proposals listed with the exception of the creation of a new cemetery in Kilbirnie and extensions to Dalry and West Kilbride cemeteries, and

(3) agrees that the provision of the required additional funding, both Capital and Revenue, be considered by Council as part of the 2017/18 budget setting process.

4. Implications

Financial:	<p>The current allocation of Capital Funding includes the proposals listed in the report with the exception of a new cemetery in Kilbirnie and extensions to Dalry and West Kilbride. This will require additional funding of £840k to £1,285k from the General Services Capital Budget. This reflects the additional cost of moving away from locality based approach.</p> <p>This excludes the potential options for Brodick which will be reported to a future meeting.</p> <p>Additional revenue costs of £30,000 per annum are required to cover increased maintenance and general running costs.</p>
Human Resources:	None.
Legal:	The Council has a statutory obligation under the Burial Grounds (Scotland) Act 1855 to provide ground for the burial of the dead. This duty is being replaced through the Burial and Cremation (Scotland) Act 2016 which is in force but yet to be fully implemented.
Equality:	None.
Environmental & Sustainability:	There are no environmental implications at this time however any new sites will require approval from the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA).
Key Priorities:	The proposed approach will support the core objective of delivering efficient and effective services.
Community Benefits:	None.

5. Consultation

- 5.1 Consultation has taken place with the Council's Finance Team and Property Management & Investment. The Physical Environment Advisory Panel has also considered the proposals.



CRAIG HATTON
Executive Director (Place)

Reference : CH/RM/TR

For further information please contact Thomas Reaney, Senior Manager (Streetscene) on 01294 324890

Background Papers

0

Neighbourhood Locality	Site	No of new lairs req'd per year	No of Lairs Remaining	No of Years Remaining	Notes
Arran	Brodick New Cemetery	5	32	6	Options being pursued - to be reported to a future Cabinet meeting.
	Kilbride Cemetery, Lamlash	17	9	0	Being extended.
	Kilmory Churchyard	2	190	95	
	Lochranza Churchyard	2	142	71	
	Sannox Cemetery	3	7	2	Once full burials will be accommodated at Lochranza
	Shiskine New Cemetery	3	10	3	Once full burials will be accommodated at Kilmory
Irvine	Dreghorn New Cemetery	10	131	13	
	Knadgerhill Cemetery, Irvine	48	106	2	Extend
	Shewalton Cemetery, Irvine	2	34	17	
Kilwinning	Kilwinning Cemetery	26	119	5	Purchase new land
Three Towns	Ardrossan Cemetery	39	416	11	
	High Road Cemetery, Stevenston	26	247	9	Extend and move to phase 2
Garnock Valley	Dalry Cemetery	14	64	5	Extend
	Kilbirnie New Cemetery	24	180	7	Use existing space more efficiently. Potential to construct a new cemetery.
	Beith New Cemetery	12	487	40	
North Coast	Brisbane Glen Cemetery, Largs	32	362	11	
	West Kilbride Cemetery	9	75	8	Extend to phase 2
Cumrae	Millport New Cemetery	14	282	20	

5 years or under

6 - 9 years

10 years and over

NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

Agenda Item 13

25 October 2016

Cabinet

Title: **Roads Winter Service and Weather Emergencies Plan 2016/17**

Purpose: To seek approval from Cabinet for the Roads Winter Service and Weather Emergencies Plan 2016/17

Recommendation: That the Cabinet agrees to (a) approve the Roads Winter Service and Weather Emergencies Plan 2016/17 and (b) note the preparations and developments contained in the Winter Action Preparation Plan.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 North Ayrshire Council has a statutory obligation, under Section 34 of the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984, to take such steps as it considers reasonable to prevent snow and ice endangering the safe passage of pedestrians and vehicles over public roads which by definition includes carriageways, footways, footpaths, pedestrian precincts, etc.
- 1.2 The Council is also responsible for the management and operation of the coastal flood prevention schemes at Largs and Saltcoats. The Council will close the flood gates on the promenades and erect the flood barriers at Largs Pier in advance of predicted severe weather with minimum disruption to promenade users and the Largs to Cumbrae ferry. Coastal flooding can occur at any time and, accordingly, the Council provides this service throughout the year.
- 1.3 A review of the Council's Winter & Weather Emergencies Service was undertaken over the summer months. A 2016/17 Winter Action Preparations Plan has been developed to ensure adequate preparations and effective arrangements are in place for 2016/17. The Winter Action Preparation Plan is included at Appendix 1.
- 1.4 The Roads Winter Service and Weather Emergencies Plan 2016/17 is contained at Appendix 2.

2. Background

- 2.1 In its statutory role as the local Roads Authority, the aim of North Ayrshire Council in respect of its winter service and weather emergencies is to:-
- provide a standard of service on public roads which will permit safe movement of vehicular and pedestrian traffic appropriate to the prevailing weather conditions;
 - establish a pattern of working which will keep delays, diversions or road closures to a minimum during adverse weather conditions;
 - conduct operations having regard to the requirements of the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 and any other relevant enactments.
- 2.2 Separately, the Trunk Road Network is the responsibility of Transport Scotland and their management contractor, Scotland TranServ. The Trunk Road network includes the A78, the A737 from Kilwinning to the Renfrewshire Boundary and A738 from the Pennyburn Roundabout to the A737 Dalry Road Kilwinning.
- 2.3 All winter gritting and snow clearing operations on the Trunk Road Network are therefore the responsibility of Scotland TranServ. The Council's Roads Team do however liaise on a regular basis with the trunk road operator during periods of adverse weather in order to provide the best possible seamless service to the travelling public.
- 2.4 The Council's current updated Winter Action Preparation Plan 2016/17 highlights a number of key areas where change and/or improvement is ongoing or planned:-
- route prioritisation/levels of service (including footways);
 - salt supply resilience, storage and capacity;
 - fleet and equipment requirements;
 - grit bins/community resilience;
 - communications;
 - operational controls;
 - performance management.

- 2.5 Whilst the Council's primary focus is on our Priority Network, our communities have an expectation of wider assistance during extreme weather, for example in and around schools, in residential streets, car parking areas, etc. There are approximately 450 grit bins provided on the road network. Salt is also available from a number of supply points throughout the Council area. An information leaflet has been published and has been distributed throughout the Council area. Weather forecast information and details of planned winter treatments are posted on the Council's website. In addition details of disruption to the road network caused by adverse weather is also posted on the website.
- 2.6 Priority 1 and Priority 2 carriageway routes were reviewed and rationalised prior to the 2013/14 winter season and remain unchanged for 2016/17 covering 66% of the total network.
- 2.7 The remaining 34% of the road network, comprising of minor rural and residential roads is covered by Priority 3 routes. Details of our priority gritting routes are available on the Council's website at:-

<http://www.north-ayrshire.gov.uk/resident/roads-and-travel/winter-gritting.aspx>
- 2.8 Priority 1 routes will be treated on receipt of an adverse weather forecast as detailed in the decision making matrix contained in Appendix C of the Winter Service and Weather Emergencies Plan 2016.
- 2.9 Priority 2 routes will be treated in addition to Priority 1 routes when sub-zero temperatures are forecast to extend beyond midday and will be treated following completion of Priority 1 routes. Generally the treatment of Priority 2 routes will commence at 8.00am however appropriate treatment may be instructed at any time depending on conditions.
- 2.10 Priority 3 routes will generally only be treated following severe weather or when sub-zero conditions are forecast to continue over an extended period. They will be treated as resources permit only after all Priority 1 and Priority 2 routes are clear unless identified as an emergency.
- 2.11 Arrangements have been made with Streetscene to assist with the treatment of priority footways over the winter season. Stand-by arrangements are also in place with Streetscene to cover at weekends from 26 November 2016 through to 5 February 2017 and over the Festive Holiday period

- 2.12 It should be noted that brine spraying of Irvine and Kilwinning Town Centres has been withdrawn this winter as an agreed efficiency saving. These town centres will however continue to be treated as part of the Priority 1 footway network.
- 2.13 Footway routes have been reviewed and arrangements have been put in place to treat the main walking routes to the new Garnock Campus as a Priority 1 footway route.
- 2.14 Last winter season Roads and Transportation used approximately 6600 tonnes of salt treating the road network, compared to approximately 8500 tonnes of salt during the winter of 2014/15. 7000 tonnes of salt will be stored at our Goldcraigs Depot and 1600 tonnes at our Market Road depot on Arran, complying with the salt stock levels agreed with the West of Scotland Regional Resilience Partnership (WoSRRP). In addition salt will be distributed to Streetscene Depots to assist with the treatment of footways. Salt usage will be monitored weekly and stocks will be augmented if necessary.
- 2.15 Grit bins will be replenished to allow communities to self-help during periods of adverse weather and these will be replenished when necessary within available resources over the winter period.
- 2.16 Similar to last winter information on weather forecasts, winter treatment decisions and any road closures due to adverse weather will be provided on the Council's website.
- 2.17 A pre-winter planning meeting was held on 28th September with Managers from across Council Services. This meeting was held to ensure all Services are taking the necessary steps to prepare for the severities of winter weather.
- 2.18 A planning exercise known as the 'dry run' was carried out on the mainland on 30th September and is arranged on Arran on 25th October to check our readiness for the forthcoming winter season.
- 2.19 The weather station on the A760 at Catburn, between Largs and Kilbirnie, was upgraded last winter season and a camera was installed to assist Winter Controllers and Supervisors in monitoring weather conditions. The Weather Station on The B880 String Road on Arran will be upgraded and a camera installed for this winter season.
- 2.20 Each year, a Winter Preparation Action Plan is created to ensure adequate and appropriate arrangements are being put in place for the forthcoming winter. The 2016/17 Action Plan detailed at Appendix 1 confirms all planned actions are either complete or are on target.

3. Proposals

- 3.1 Cabinet is asked to approve the Roads Winter Service and Weather Emergencies Plan 2016/17 and note preparations currently underway as detailed in the attached 2016/17 Winter Action Preparation Plan.

4. Implications

Financial:	Budget provision of £913,763 was available for 2015/16, actual expenditure on the delivery of the winter service was £790,518. The allocated budget for 2016/17 is £868,810.
Human Resources:	There are no significant human resource implications at this time.
Legal:	The Council has a statutory obligation under Section 34 of the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 "to take such steps as they consider reasonable to prevent snow and ice endangering the safe passage of pedestrians and vehicles over public roads".
Equality:	There are no equality implications.
Environmental & Sustainability:	There are no environmental implications.
Key Priorities:	Delivery of the winter service supports a range of priorities in the single outcome agreement.
Community Benefits:	Delivery of the winter service supports a range of priorities in the single outcome agreement.

5. Consultation

- 5.1 Consultation regarding preparations for the forthcoming winter season and the development of the Winter Action Plan was undertaken with the Ayrshire Civil Contingencies Team, Transport, Streetscene, Waste Services, Communications, Customer Services, North Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership, Education, Housing, Criminal Justice, suppliers and external organisations. The Physical Environment Advisory Panel has considered the Plan at its meeting on 12 September 2016.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 The Roads Winter Service and Weather Emergencies Plan 2016/17 will ensure effective arrangements are in place to respond to severe weather incidents and winter weather during 2016/17.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'CH', written over a horizontal line.

CRAIG HATTON
Executive Director (Place)

Reference : CD/RM

For further information please contact Campbell Dempster, Team Manager
(Roads and Transportation) on 01294 324845

Background Papers

0

COMMERCIAL SERVICES - 2016/17 WINTER PREPARATION ACTION PLAN

Service Improvement Action	Existing Operation	Proposed Action	Timescale	Progress
1.0 Policies, Procedures & Guidance				
1.1 Review Existing Policy and Procedures document	Winter and Weather Emergencies Procedures and Resources Document reviewed on annual basis	Review annually after each Winter Period	October 2016	Complete
2.0 Review of Existing Winter Maintenance Operations				
2.1 Existing Priority Gritting Routes	Priority 1 route rationalised in 2013 to 49% of network, approximately 500km.	No changes proposed.	October 2016	Complete
2.2 Non-Priority Routes	The network is divided into 3 priorities. Priority 1 routes are treated as a precautionary measure. Priority 2 routes which cover an additional 17% of road network are treated when freezing conditions are forecast to extend beyond midday. Priority 3 routes are only treated following an extended cold spell or following severe weather.	Review annually.	October 2016	Complete
2.3 Footway Gritting	Formal arrangement with Streetscene for assisting with reactive delivery of the winter service.	Review annually. Review and revise footway routes associated with new Garnock Campus.	October 2016	On target
2.4 Assistance from outside parties.	Formal arrangement in place with local contractors and farmers to assist in the event of extreme weather condition.	Review annually	October 2016	On target

Service Improvement Action	Existing Operation	Proposed Action	Timescale	Progress
2.5 Gritting of other Council and additional locations.	Education and Housing have arrangements in place with Streetscene and Community Justice for assistance with snow clearing.	Review arrangements annually.	October 2016	Complete
2.6 Brine Spraying in town Centre locations	Irvine and Kilwinning Town centre public realm treated with brine proactively throughout winter period	Brine spraying withdrawn as aa efficiency saving. Town Centre locations to be treated along with other priority 1 footways when instructed by Winter Controller.	October 2016	Complete
3.0 Winter Gritting Fleet				
3.1 Winter Gritting Fleet	The gritting fleet comprise 11 No. 18 tonne Econ Uni-Bodies and 3 No 7.5 Tonne Econ Uni-Bodies.	Review fleet requirements annually. Vehicles to be serviced and gritter units to be calibrated.	October 2016	Complete
4.0 Operational Controls				
4.1 Weather forecast provision	The Council's weather forecast service is currently procured by means of a collaborative contract with 12 other Local Authorities from 2010 – 2016	New Weather Forecast provider, The Met Office awarded contract, 4 years + 2 year extension option, from 16 May 2016.	May 2016	Complete
4.2 Ice Prediction methods	North Ayrshire Council has two weather stations installed on the road network and has access to a further two weather stations with the Council area, provided by Transport Scotland, on the trunk road network. We also have access to a number of additional weather stations on our neighbouring authorities' road network.	A760 Catburn Weather Station upgraded for winter 2015/16. Propose to upgrade weather station and introduce camera on B880 String Road Arran for winter 2016/17.	October 2016	On target

Service Improvement Action	Existing Operation	Proposed Action	Timescale	Progress
4.3 Winter Gritting Records	Records of winter instructions and operations recorded on Manager winter roads management system during 2015/16.	Continue to record roads winter actions on Manager - Winter Roads Management System. Introduce record keeping for footway treatments undertaken.	October 2016	Complete
4.4 Business Continuity	The provision of Winter and Weather Emergencies Procedures and Resources document is included within the Business Continuity Plan.	Review Business Continuity Plan.	Review Annually	On target
5.0 Salt				
5.1 Salt Storage	Salt stock starting level 7000 tonnes on the mainland and 1600 tonnes on Arran providing 46 days heavy salting resilience.	Ensure salt stock complies with Scottish Government resilience levels prior to the onset of the winter season.	Review Annually	Complete
5.2 Salt Distribution	Procedure implemented for salt distribution throughout Council Services in place at Depot.	Review and ensure all staff know procedures annually.	Review Annually	Complete
6.0 Communication				
6.1 Information available to Members, Council Services, general public and other stakeholders	Weather forecasts and winter decisions distributed across Services.	Present proposals at Physical Environment Advisory Panel.	September 2016	Complete
	Roads winter gritting decision posted on Council Website.	Issue report to Locality Committees for information.	Nov/Dec 2016	On target
	Details of any road closures due to adverse weather posted on Website.	Continue to provide information on the council website.	Review Annually	On target
	Provide Winter Advice Leaflet at Council Offices	Monitor effectiveness of information provided on the Council website.	Review Annually	On going
		Promote Roads Winter Service during Customer Services Week	October 2016	On going

		and Ready for Winter campaign.		
--	--	--------------------------------	--	--

Service Improvement Action	Existing Operation	Proposed Action	Timescale	Progress
7.0 Measuring Performance				
7.1 Monitor performance of winter actions	Performance is currently measured using APSE Performance indicators which measure efficiency in relation to documented procedures. Winter Survey carried out in October 2013.	Review annually	October 2016	On target
7.2 Monitor performance on individual routes	Routes reviewed to optimise efficiency.	Priority 3 routes developed for this winter.	October 2016	On target
7.3 Introduce route based forecasting to improve efficiency.	Existing forecasts and decision making is made based on 3 geographical domains, Coastal, Inland and Arran.	Proposed to move to route based forecasting to reduce unnecessary gritting operations and improve efficiencies.	October 2017	On target
8.0 Training				
8.1 Winter Service Training	Staff trained in delivery of winter service.	Identify training needs of personnel involved with the provision of the winter maintenance service. Arrange appropriate training.	Review Annually	Complete
9.0 Health & Safety				
9.1 Toolbox Talks	Toolbox talks are delivered to all personnel engaged in the delivery of the winter maintenance service.	Review toolbox talk at the start of each winter.	Annually	Complete



North Ayrshire Council
Comhairle Siorrachd Àir a Tuath

Commercial Services

Roads Winter Service and Weather Emergencies Plan

2016 – 2017

Cunninghame House
IRVINE
Ayrshire KA12 8EE
Tel: 01294-310000

CONTENTS

	Page No
1. Introduction	2
2. Priorities for Winter Treatment	3
3. Organisation	5
4. North Ayrshire Council Resources (Roads)	6
5. Other Resources	7
6. Weather Forecasting	8
7. Decision Making	8
8. Ice Prediction	9
9. Road Condition Reports	9
10. Communications	9
11. Road Closures	10
12. Liaison with the Police	10
13. Cross Boundary Arrangements	10
14. Vehicle Routes	11
15. Precautionary Salting	11
16. Grit Bins	11
17. Largs and Saltcoats Flood Prevention Schemes	12
18. Sandbag Procedures	12

Appendix A - Priority1 Carriageway Gritting Routes

Appendix B - Level of Service

Appendix C - Decision Making

Appendix D - Summary of Available Labour & Plant

Appendix E - Community Grit Bins

Appendix F - Summary of Available Materials

Appendix G - Salt Resilience

Appendix H - Contacts Arrangements

Appendix I - Distribution List

Appendix J - Bridges with weight or height restrictions

Appendix K - Arrangements with other Authorities

Appendix L - Grit Bin Policy and Procedure

1. INTRODUCTION

North Ayrshire Council has a statutory obligation, under Section 34 of the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984, to take such steps as it considers reasonable to prevent snow and ice endangering the safe passage of pedestrians and vehicles over public roads which by definition includes carriageways, footways, footpaths, pedestrian precincts, etc.

In its statutory role as the local Roads Authority, the aim of North Ayrshire Council in respect of its winter service and weather emergencies is to:-

- (i) provide a standard of service on public roads which will permit safe movement of vehicular and pedestrian traffic appropriate to the prevailing weather conditions;
- (ii) establish a pattern of working which will keep delays, diversions or road closures to a minimum during adverse weather conditions;
- (iii) conduct operations having regard to the requirements of the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 and any other relevant enactments.

This Plan only relates to the Council's duties as Roads Authority and does not cover the wider response of the Council during winter and other weather emergencies.

North Ayrshire Council has no responsibility for the treatment of trunk roads. From 1st April 2001, the contract for management and maintenance of the trunk roads in Scotland has been awarded by the Scottish Government to the private sector. The successful contractor for the South West of Scotland is Scotland TranServ and the roads involved in North Ayrshire are as follows:-

A78 full length from Meadowhead roundabout, Dundonald to Inverclyde boundary at Skelmorlie;

A737 Dalry Road, Kilwinning to Renfrewshire boundary;

A738 Byres Road, Kilwinning to Pennyburn roundabout.

All winter gritting and snow clearing operations on these roads will be the responsibility of Scotland TranServ. North Ayrshire Council's Commercial Services (Roads & Transportation) and Scotland TranServ liaise on a regular basis during periods of adverse weather in order to provide the best possible service to the travelling public.

North Ayrshire Council is also responsible for the management and operation of the coastal flood prevention schemes at Largs and Saltcoats. The Council will close the flood gates on the promenade and erect the flood barriers at Largs Pier in advance of predicted severe weather with minimum disruption to promenade users and the Largs to Cumbrae ferry. Coastal flooding can occur at any time and, accordingly, the Council will provide this service throughout the year.

In the event of extreme weather similar to that which was experienced on Arran late March 2013 where major disruption affects large parts of the community, a coordinated response is adopted by the Council to ensure public safety. In dealing with such emergencies, the Police initially lead the emergency or response stage of the emergency. Thereafter, the Council leads the recovery stage. Generally, there are 3 levels of Civil Contingencies response. There is a strategic group at National or Strathclyde wide level, a tactical group at North Ayrshire level and an operational group at local level.

The Ayrshire Civil Contingencies Team (ACCT) act as lead for the Council and implement the Civil Contingencies Plan liaising with all relevant Stakeholders identified within the Plan.

A key role of the Council as a Category 1 responder is to plan for such Civil Contingencies. In August 2014, the ACCT undertook Exercise Ayrshire Polar Storm to test the resilience within the relevant emergency plans.

2. PRIORITIES FOR WINTER TREATMENT

North Ayrshire Council has defined the priorities for carriageway and footway/footpath treatment as follows:

2.1.1 Carriageway Priorities

Where slush is formed, this shall be removed as soon as practicable to avoid the risk of rutting should there be a further significant fall in road temperatures which might result in freezing conditions.

2.1.2 Carriageway Routes for Proactive Treatment

Priority 1 – Strategic, Main Distributor and Distributor routes, bus routes and certain pre-determined Secondary Distributor routes identified from the Local Transport Strategy (LTS) will be treated when it is forecast that snow or ice is likely to be present on road surfaces.

Due to the various climatic domains within North Ayrshire the Priority 1 routes may be adjusted to cover either the four pre-determined Inland Routes or two pre-determined High Routes which all currently form part of our existing Priority Network.

Priority 1 gritting routes are available on the Council website (See Appendix A).

2.1.3 Carriageway Routes for Reactive Treatment

- a) **Priority 2** – Remaining Secondary Distributor, local access and residential distributor roads.

Given the presence of ice and snow Priority 2 routes may be treated during normal working hours as resources permit when sub-zero temperatures are forecast to continue beyond midday following completion of Priority 1 routes.

- b) **Priority 3** – The remaining road network including minor rural unclassified routes and remaining residential areas not already covered

Priority 3 routes will be treated as resources permit when sub-zero conditions are forecast to continue over an extended period only after all Priority 1 and Priority 2 routes are clear unless it is identified as an emergency.

2.1.4 **Carriageway Routes for Snow Clearance**

On receipt of a weather warning predicting medium (25 - 100 mm deep) or heavy (over 100 mm deep) snowfalls, the Senior Manager (Roads & Transportation) where appropriate, will recall to depots such vehicles capable of being equipped with snowploughs.

While snow is still falling the Strategic and Main Distributor Network will be prioritised for ploughing and treatment in order to target resources and to keep these routes open for traffic.

After snow has stopped falling but is lying, the remaining Priority 1 precautionary routes will be ploughed and treated before commencing ploughing and treatment on Priority 2 and Priority 3 routes as resources and conditions permit.

2.1.5 **Cumbrae**

The Senior Manager (Roads & Transportation) has no roads operatives based on the Isle of Cumbrae, however arrangements have been made with Streetscene to carry out gritting operations on the Island.

2.2 **Footway/Footpath Priorities**

With limited resources available footways and footpaths will only be treated when considered necessary (e.g. heavy snowfall or extensive icing). They will normally only be treated during normal working hours, but arrangements are in place to undertake emergency work out of normal working hours, weekends and public holidays in extreme circumstances.

Generally, treatment of footways and footpaths will be reactionary and not pre-planned, and where possible work will be undertaken during normal working hours.

When treatment is instructed the following priorities will apply:-

Priority 1 Routes will be considered for treatment if it is forecast that ice or snow is likely to be present or where surfaces are wet with temperatures forecast to remain below zero until 10:00am the next working day.

Priority 1 Routes - Urban shopping areas and precincts, footway access to schools, emergency facilities including fire and rescue, police and ambulance services, hospitals, sheltered housing, doctors surgeries and health centres etc;

Priority 2 routes will be treated if it is forecast that ice or snow is likely to be present with temperatures forecast to remain below zero for a prolonged period only after priority 1 routes are clear.

Priority 2 Routes - Steep hills on main distributor and residential distributor routes, routes to bus stops etc, only after all Priority 1 have been cleared;

Priority 3 routes will be treated if it is forecast that ice or snow is likely to be present with temperatures forecast to remain below zero for a prolonged period only after priority 1 and 2 routes are clear.

Priority 3 Routes - Other areas of high pedestrian concentration.

Streetscene staff will assist with the treatment of footways.

In order to maximise coverage on footways, generally only one side of a road will be initially treated.

It is not possible for the Council to treat all footways and footpaths within North Ayrshire. As such the Council encourages the community to participate in self help, through the use of grit bins which can be requested through the grit bin application process. Grit bins will only be allocated where it has been assessed and deemed as an appropriate location by the Council.

2.3 Cycle Routes

With limited manpower resources no treatment will be carried out on off road cycle routes.

2.4 Response and Treatment Times

Routine precautionary salting of priority 1 carriageway routes should be completed within 3 hours of the planned start time. For emergency or unplanned salting the start time from leaving the depot shall be no more than 1 hour.

3. ORGANISATION

The Head of Commercial Services is responsible for specifying the level of winter service required based on approval from the Council. The Senior Manager (Roads & Transportation) is responsible for implementing this service.

A duty Winter Controller and Winter Supervisor will be appointed by the Senior Manager (Roads & Transportation) for the whole of the winter period covered by these procedures (mid-October to early April)

4. NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL RESOURCES (ROADS)

4.1 General

Following approval from the Council, it is the responsibility of the Head of Commercial Services to define the level of service to be provided within their sphere of operations and to issue appropriate instructions to the Senior Manager (Roads & Transportation) to provide the necessary labour and plant for winter operations. This level of service will be based on the national Code of Practice for Well Maintained Highways (see Appendix B).

The level of winter treatment is established utilizing the weather forecasts provided by MeteoGroup UK Limited in accordance with the winter treatment matrix (Appendix C).

The Senior Manager (Roads & Transportation) shall thereafter be responsible for advising the Head of Service of any matters which may affect his ability to deal with adverse weather conditions e.g. labour disputes, extensive plant breakdowns etc.

Labour resources from Commercial Services (Roads & Transportation) will be provided for the Winter and Weather Emergencies Service. The stand-by period will be 27th October 2016 until 13th April 2017. This period may be extended beyond the given dates if conditions warrant such action. These arrangements include home stand-by which is activated by the designated Winter Supervisor when instructed by the Winter Controller or as the result of hazardous road conditions being reported.

4.2 Labour

A proportion of the roads labour force will be on stand-by for winter service operations out of normal working hours, with the remainder on call out as necessary. This allows evening and early morning precautionary salting to be carried out on our priority carriageway network to treat dangerous roads before the morning rush hour.

In determining the labour resources required for the winter service, cognisance is taken of the key objective to treat all priority routes before the commencement of the morning peak period.

4.3 Vehicle Plant and Equipment

Prior to commencement of winter service operations, the Senior Manager (Roads & Transportation) will ensure that all equipment for salting roads and snow clearing is in working order and, where appropriate, that ancillary items can be fitted to vehicles without difficulty, e.g. ploughs set up on blocks to facilitate assembly. The above procedure should also be applied to vehicles and plant available under contract for the winter service.

The Senior Manager (Roads & Transportation) will ensure that all vehicles engaged in the winter service are equipped with radios or other appropriate communication devices to allow contact to be maintained between the depot and operators.

Superintendents have mobile telephones. There is also vehicle tracking system fitted and operational in all vehicles to reduce the risk associated with gritting operations.

A summary of labour, vehicles, plant, and equipment available for the winter service work is detailed in Appendix D.

Once per year the Senior Manager (Roads and Transportation), will organise a trial closure of the flood gates and erection of the de-mountable barriers at the Largs and Saltcoats Flood Prevention Schemes. This is to ensure that the gates and barriers remain in full working order and that all staff are familiar with the process.

4.4 Salt

Salt is purchased through a Scotland Excel annual purchase contract. Mainland salt deliveries are stored in the salt barn within the Goldcraigs Depot. Salt on Arran is stored in the open at the Roads Depot in Market Road, Brodick.

During the season, the Senior Manager (Roads & Transportation) will arrange for a weekly check to be made on the amount of salt used and for stocks to be augmented as necessary. There is a procedure in place at the depot to strictly control salt distribution. All vehicles are tagged and must cross the weighbridge to accurately record salt usage. This includes salt distributed to Streetscene and contractors assisting with winter service delivery.

Small quantities of salt are available for issue free of charge to the public, subject to residents supplying a suitable container. Details of locations of community grit bins where small quantities of salt are available are given in Appendix E

The planned salt stock level at commencement of winter is given in Appendix F.

In the event of prolonged severe weather the Council has a salt resilience plan (Appendix G), which will be implemented if conditions require.

5. OTHER RESOURCES

During adverse weather conditions, the Senior Manager (Roads & Transportation), (after consultation with the Head of Commercial services), shall, if necessary, augment his resources by the use of personnel from Streetscene and external contractors at rates agreed prior to engagement through a framework contract. The Head of Commercial Services should be advised, as soon as practicable, of external resources engaged as a result of decisions made outwith normal working hours.

The Senior Manager (Roads & Transportation) will provide a supply of salt to Streetscene and external contractors where appropriate to permit the treatment of agreed footways/footpaths. This will be managed through a salt management system based at Goldcraigs Roads Depot.

6. WEATHER FORECASTING

North Ayrshire Council, through a collaborative contract lead by South Lanarkshire Council, has appointed The Met Office, as their weather forecast provider. During the winter service period The Met Office will provide a weather forecasting service and monitor road and weather conditions.

The Met Office receive, monitor and interpret, climatic, ice prediction and weather radar information on a continuous basis and provide detailed weather forecasts on a daily basis during the whole winter period.

SEPA operate a coastal flood warning system for the Firth of Clyde. If storm surges and coastal flooding are predicted, SEPA provide advance warning to the Council by e-mail and also through their Floodline service which is available on their website or by phone. This service is available all year round.

7. DECISION MAKING

The Senior Manager (Roads & Transportation) will appoint suitably trained and experienced personnel as Winter Controller.

During the winter season the Winter Controller will receive the weather forecast around 12.00 hours and decide on the treatment to be carried out. The Winter Controller will check the treatment decision of neighbouring authorities for consistency and reconsider if necessary. The weather forecast provider will provide an evening forecast around 19.00 hours and if this update indicates any change in the forecast the Winter Controller will amend the decision accordingly and advise the Winter Supervisor.

For out of office hours, Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays the Senior Manager (Roads & Transportation) shall provide the weather forecast provider with contact telephone numbers of the on duty Winter Controller. If the forecast conditions change from good to adverse at any time, then the weather forecast provider will phone the Winter Controller either at work or at home as appropriate. Thereafter, it is the responsibility of the Winter Controller to take action including the calling out of stand-by squads to undertake salting/snow clearing.

Winter Controllers have the facility at any time to contact the weather forecast provider for advice or clarification of forecasts. These arrangements will be in place from 13 October 2016 until 13 April 2017 and these dates can be extended if required.

The decision making process is illustrated in Appendices B & C.

The Head of Commercial Services will appoint suitably trained staff and experienced personnel to manage the coastal flood prevention schemes at Largs and Saltcoats. During the winter season, this will be the Winter Controller.

8. ICE PREDICTION

In addition to the weather forecast information, the Council has available further information from sensors which have been installed at the locations listed below:-

- A78 Ardrossan
- A737 Highfield
- A760 Catburn
- A735 Near Dunlop
- B880 Arran, summit of The String

The sensors provide current details of road and air temperatures and indicate the presence of moisture, thereby identifying locations that icing has occurred or where there is a risk that icing will occur.

By utilising the data from these sensors the weather forecast provider is able to supplement their forecast by producing site specific forecasts. The above information is available to the Winter Controller via computer link 24 hours a day throughout the winter period.

9. ROAD CONDITION REPORTS

During periods of adverse weather, the Senior Manager (Roads & Transportation) shall receive reports on road conditions from the Winter Supervisor by 09.45 hours. These reports should be updated as necessary depending on changing circumstances.

10. COMMUNICATIONS

The Head of Commercial Services or nominated senior manager will deal with statements to the Press, Radio and Television regarding road conditions throughout the area. The Council's Communication team will assist, and may take the lead role depending on the nature of any significant event.

General advice and information, along with timeous service updates, will be placed on the Council's website.

The Head of Commercial Services (or nominated senior officer) will ensure that all staff involved in communication with members of the public are fully briefed with consistent and accurate information.

The Senior (Roads & Transportation) will produce and distribute the Winter Maintenance Advice leaflet that will contain general information for members of the public on the Winter Service. The advice leaflets will be available to the public at selected locations throughout North Ayrshire, such as libraries etc.

A formal protocol has been agreed by the former West of Scotland Regional Resilience Partnership (WoS RRP) and Ayrshire Civil Contingencies Team (ACCT) for the transfer of information in relation to Winter and Weather Emergencies.

The Council's daily winter decisions are available for the public and can be accessed via the Council's website. Any winter and weather emergencies can be reported to North Ayrshire Council and the Trunk Road Operators using the contact information contained within Appendix H.

The distribution list for winter weather emergencies can be found under Appendix I.

11. ROAD CLOSURES

Where it is considered that a road is rendered unsafe due to adverse winter conditions then the Police or persons acting on behalf of the Chief Constable will arrange to have the road closed and advise the on-duty Winter Supervisor as soon as possible of their actions. The Winter Supervisor will advise the Winter Controller/Senior Manager (Roads and Transportation) of any road closures. Appropriate measures will also be taken to re-direct traffic and to ensure that the necessary signs are put in place. When the road affected is a through route the adjoining Councils will be kept informed. Police will advise the other emergency services (Ambulance & Fire) of the closures.

Prior to signing diversionary routes, the capacity of the roads and the headroom and weight restrictions of structures should be checked with the Winter Controller to ensure that they are adequate (see Appendix J).

12. LIAISON WITH THE POLICE

Commercial Services (Roads & Transportation) will ensure close liaison with the Police, particularly during periods of severe weather.

Where practicable, the Police will be informed in advance of North Ayrshire Council's proposed operations. Similarly arrangements have been made for exchanging information on proposed actions with neighbouring authorities and the trunk road operating company.

Where necessary the service will request appropriate assistance from the Police when moving equipment, arranging road closures and dealing with abandoned vehicles.

Reports from the Police regarding dangerous road conditions should be acted upon by the Winter Supervisor as soon as practicable, having regard to priorities in this document and the conditions pertaining throughout the area.

13. CROSS BOUNDARY ARRANGEMENTS

Because the Council boundaries do not always coincide with convenient turning points at the end of gritting routes, arrangements have been drawn up with all adjacent authorities for the gritting routes to be continued short distances to appropriate turning points. See (Appendix K).

14. VEHICLE ROUTES

From local knowledge and the resources available, routes are drawn up by Roads and Transportation on the basis of the priorities listed in Paragraph 2.1. However, in order to minimise unproductive mileage, some roads in a lower category may be treated out of sequence. This may also occur when conditions vary throughout the area.

A complete set of route cards will be kept in the Commercial Services (Roads & Transportation) offices, with a duplicate set being held in Goldcraigs Depot.

Treatment of precautionary carriageway salting routes should be completed within three hours of planned start time under routine conditions. When the Winter Controller instructs immediate winter service operations, the response time to start treatment should be within one hour.

It should be noted that gritting routes are either at or close to capacity and it is unlikely that any additions to routes could be considered without additional finance and human resources.

15. PRECAUTIONARY SALTING

On receipt, within normal working hours, of a forecast from the weather forecast provider warning of frost, freezing or snow conditions, the Winter Controller in consultation with the Senior Manager (Roads & Transportation), shall give consideration to precautionary salting of main roads.

Where such a warning is received out with normal working hours, the Winter Controller has delegated authority to activate call-out procedures as indicated in section 7.

Extensive and accurate records of weather forecasts, winter treatment decisions and actions taken will be kept to demonstrate our compliance to our Winter and Weather Emergencies Procedures and Resources document.

16. GRIT BINS

There are approximately 450 grit bins distributed across North Ayrshire. These are located at areas of particular difficulty e.g. dangerous bends, steep gradients etc. The policy and procedures for siting of grit bins, and requests for additional bins is shown in Appendix L.

Grit bins will be refilled prior to the start of winter and as considered necessary during the winter season and following periods of severe weather when resources are available.

The locations of Community Grit Bins are listed in Appendix E.

17. LARGS AND SALTCOATS FLOOD PREVENTION SCHEMES

On receipt of a severe weather warning predicting a combination of strong winds, high tides or tidal surges the Winter Controller will, when necessary, instruct the closure of the flood gates on the promenade at Largs and/or the erection of the flood barriers at the Largs Pier and/or Saltcoats promenade.

18. SANDBAG PROCEDURES

The deployment of sandbags to prevent or contain floodwaters can be an effective way of mitigating the effect of a flood, however the lead time for filling and deployment can be lengthy, as a large number of bags cannot be filled in advance due to storage problems. Therefore, an early decision must be taken to sandbag, to avoid a subsequent waste of time and effort. The deployment of sandbags will be decided with regard to the following priorities:

1. To prevent loss of life or serious injury
2. Maintenance of access for the emergency services
3. Protection of vital facilities within the community
4. Protection of transportation routes
5. Protection of NAC property
6. Protection of private dwelling houses

The decision to deploy sandbags will be made by the Winter Controller / Supervisor or appropriate officers in Building Services, Cleansing or the Island Officer on Arran in accordance with the Services' callout/emergency procedures.

Notes:

1. Sandbags will not normally be deployed to protect commercial property;
2. Appropriate stocks of empty and filled sandbags will be held by the Services mentioned above, based on previous usage and experience.

The above procedure mainly relates to tidal, fluvial and watercourse flooding. Where flooding occurs as a result of a blocked, damaged or ineffective Council owned drainage systems, sandbags will be deployed as required to mitigate the effects of flooding (and reduce the likelihood of claims against the Council) including the protection of commercial property.

***Priority 1 Carriageway Gritting Routes
Policy & Procedure***

Priority 1 Gritting Routes can be viewed on the Councils website using the following address:-

<http://www.north-ayrshire.gov.uk/resident/roads-and-travel/winter-gritting.aspx>

LEVEL OF SERVICE

Road Surface Temperature	Precipitation	Predicted Road Conditions		
		Wet	Wet Patches	Dry
Temperature Forecast between +1.5°C And +0.5°C	No Rain No Hoar Frost No Fog	High Route Patrols		No action likely
Temperature Forecast below +0.5°C	No Rain No Hoar Frost No Fog	(Priority 1 Routes)		
	Expected Hoar Frost Expected Fog	Salt before frost		
	Expected rain BEFORE freezing	(Priority 1 Routes) Salt after rain stops		
	Expected rain DURING freezing	(Priority 1 Routes) Salt before frost, as required during rain and after rain stops		
	Possible rain Possible hoar frost Possible fog	(Priority 1 Routes) Salt before frost	Monitor weather conditions	
Expected Snow Fall		(Priority 1 Routes and footways) Salt before snow fall		
The decision to undertake precautionary treatments should be adjusted, where appropriate, to take account of residual salt.				
All decisions should be evidence based, recorded and continuously monitored and reviewed.				

DECISION MAKING

WINTER TREATMENT SPREAD RATE MATRIX SCOTS WINTER SERVICE SUBGROUP ADVICE - AUGUST 2015

Salt Type	Precautionary Treatment for frost / ice	Variation of Well Maintained Highways Appendix H - September 2013					
		Column C	Column D	Column G	Column H	Column K	Column L
		Poor Cover Medium Traffic Normal Loss	Poor Cover Medium Traffic High Loss	Fair Cover Medium Traffic Normal Loss	Fair Cover Medium Traffic High Loss	Good Cover Medium Traffic Normal Loss	Good Cover Medium Traffic High Loss
Dry Salt	RST at or above -2 Degrees and dry or damp road conditions (Table H9 of Code - where the road surface is dry no action is needed even when conditions are below zero)	10 (8)	10 (8)	10 (8)	10 (8)	10 (8)	10 (8)
Pre-wet Salt		10 (8)	10 (8)	10 (8)	10 (8)	10 (8)	10 (8)
Treated Salt		10 (7)	10 (7)	10 (7)	10 (7)	10 (7)	10 (7)
Dry Salt	RST at or above -2 Degrees and wet road conditions	15 (13)	20 (16)	10 or 15 (11)	15 (13)	10 (8)	10
Pre-wet Salt		15 (12)	15 (14)	10 (10)	15 (12)	10 (8)	10 (9)
Treated Salt		10 (10)	10 or 15 (11)	10 (8)	10 (10)	10 (7)	10 (7)
Dry Salt	RST below -2 deg C and above -5 deg C and damp road conditions	15 or 20 (17)	20	10 or 15 (14)	20 (17)	10 or 15 (11)	15 (13)
Pre-wet Salt		15 or 20 (16)	20 (18)	15 (14)	15 (16)	15 (11)	15 (12)
Treated Salt		15 (12)	15 (14)	10 or 15 (11)	15 (12)	10 (8)	10 (10)
Dry Salt	RST below -2 deg C and above -5 deg C and wet road conditions	1 x 20 then monitor & treat as required (2x17)	1 x 20 then monitor & treat as required (2x20)	1 x 20 then monitor & treat as required (2x28)	1 x 20 then monitor & treat as required (2x17)	20(20)	1 x 20 then monitor & treat as required (25)
Pre-wet Salt		1 x 20 then monitor & treat as required (2x16)	1 x 20 then monitor & treat as required (2x18)	1 x 20 then monitor & treat as required (27)	1 x 20 then monitor & treat as required (31)	1 x 20 then monitor & treat as required (21)	1 x 20 then monitor & treat as required (24)
Treated Salt		1 x 20 then monitor & treat as required (24)	1 x 20 then monitor & treat as required (28)	1 x 20 then monitor & treat as required (21)	1 x 20 then monitor & treat as required (24)	1 x 20 then monitor & treat as required (16)	1 x 20 then monitor & treat as required (19)
Dry Salt	RST at or below -5 deg C and above -10 deg C and damp road conditions	1 x 20 then monitor & treat as required (2x16)	1 x 20 then monitor & treat as required (2x19)	1 x 20 then monitor & treat as required (27)	1 x 20 then monitor & treat as required (2x16)	20	1 x 20 then monitor & treat as required (24)
Pre-wet Salt		1 x 20 then monitor & treat as required (2x16)	1 x 20 then monitor & treat as required (2x18)	1 x 20 then monitor & treat as required (27)	1 x 20 then monitor & treat as required (31)	1 x 20 then monitor & treat as required (21)	1 x 20 then monitor & treat as required (24)
Treated Salt		1 x 20 then monitor & treat as required (23)	1 x 20 then monitor & treat as required (27)	1 x 20 then monitor & treat as required (20)	1 x 20 then monitor & treat as required (23)	1 x 20 then monitor & treat as required (15)	1 x 20 then monitor & treat as required (18)
Dry Salt	RST below -5 deg C and above -10 deg C and wet road conditions	1 x 20 then monitor & treat as required (2x32)	1 x 20 then monitor & treat as required (2x39)	1 x 20 then monitor & treat as required (2x27)	1 x 20 then monitor & treat as required (2x32)	1 x 20 then monitor & treat as required (2x20)	1 x 20 then monitor & treat as required (2x24)
Pre-wet Salt		1 x 20* then monitor & treat as required (2x31)	1 x 20 then monitor & treat as required (2x36)	1 x 20 then monitor & treat as required (2x27)	1 x 20 then monitor & treat as required (2x31)	1 x 20 then monitor & treat as required (2x21)	1 x 20 then monitor & treat as required (2x24)
Treated Salt		1 x 20 then monitor & treat as required (2x23)	1 x 20 then monitor & treat as required (2x27)	1 x 20 then monitor & treat as required (2x20)	1 x 20 then monitor & treat as required (2x23)	1 x 20 then monitor & treat as required (30)	1 x 20 then monitor & treat as required (2x18)

() = Appendix H rates in brackets

Please see H10.25 regarding effectiveness of sodium chloride at low temperatures.

Salt Type	Precautionary Treatments Before Snow or Freezing rain		
		Light or Medium Traffic	Heavy Traffic
Dry Salt	Light Snow Forecast	20g/m ²	20g/m ²
Pre-wet Salt		20g/m ²	20g/m ²
Treated Salt		15g/m ²	15g/m ²
Dry Salt	Moderate/Heavy Snow Forecast	20g/m ²	40g/m ²
Pre-wet Salt		20g/m ²	40g/m ²
Treated Salt		15g/m ²	30g/m ²
Dry Salt	Freezing rain Forecast	1 x20g/m ² then monitor	
Pre-wet Salt		1 x20g/m ² then monitor	
Treated Salt		1 x15g/m ² then monitor	

Note:

- Rate of spread for precautionary treatments may be adjusted to take account of local variations along the routes such as residual salt, temperature variations, surface moisture (air or road surface) road alignment and traffic density.
- All decisions should be evidence based, recorded and require continuous monitoring and review.

- Ice refers to all ice on the road surface, including black ice.
- The level of service generally complies with the recommendations laid down in “Well Maintained Highways” the UK Code of Practice for Highway Management and is summarised above.
- Appendix H of “Well Maintained Highways” which covers winter maintenance operations and treatments underwent a complete revision in November 2013. The SCOTS winter Subgroup has been in consultation with the National Winter Service Research Group (NWSRG) concerning the implementation of Appendix H of Well Maintained Highways. The Subgroup made a number of suggestions to implement Appendix H that have been commented on by the NWSRG. Having considered the comments from the NWSRG on the review of Appendix H the SCOTS Winter Service Subgroup provided advice that Scottish Local Roads Authorities adopt variations to Appendix H of Well Maintained Highways that North Ayrshire Council are following.

SUMMARY OF AVAILABLE LABOUR & PLANT

TYPE OF PLANT	GOLDCRAIGS	ARRAN	OTHER NAC	TOTAL
Gritters				
18 Tonne Uni-body	11	3		14
7.5 Tonne Uni-body	2	0		2
Trailer Gritter	0	0	1	1
Footway Gritter	1	1	7	9
Lorries				
18 Tonne Uni-body	11	3		14
7.5 Tonne Uni-body	2	0		2
Loading Shovel	1	0		1
JCB 2CX	0	1		1
Telehandler	0	1		1
Ploughs				
Fixed V	3	2		5
Small Blade	3	0		3
Large Blade	11	3		14
LABOUR				
Drivers	24	6	7	39
Operatives	11	3	36	40
Other Equipment				
Muck Truck + plough (For footways)			2	2

Note

When necessary labour, vehicles, plant and equipment from other Council Departments, farmers, plant hirers and contractors will be used to supplement above resources.

This also applies for non-winter related emergency responses.

COMMUNITY GRIT BINS

Small quantities of salt are available for issue free of charge to members of the public, subject to their supplying a suitable container from the Community Grit Bins sited at the following locations.

Town	Location
Irvine	Bartonholm Civic Amenity, Site.
Kilwinning	Goldcraigs Roads Depot.
Dalry	Car Park, Kirk Close.
Kilbirnie	Civic Amenity Site, Paddockholm Road.
Beith	Community Centre, Kings Road.
West Kilbride	Corse Street.
Fairlie	Car Park, Pier Road.
Largs	Cleansing Depot, Alexander Avenue.
Skelmorlie	Toward View (opposite Fire Station).
Stevenston	Car Park, Garnock Road.
Saltcoats	Cleansing Depot, Sorbie Road.
Ardrossan	Carpark, North Crescent Road.

SUMMARY OF AVAILABLE MATERIALS

The following salt, grit and sand stocks will be in place at commencement of winter:-

DEPOT	TONNAGE SALT	TONNAGE SAND (for Sandbags)
Goldcraigs (salt barn)	7000	100
Arran	2000	300
Cumbræ	20	(500 filled sandbags)

Approximately 4000 sandbags are located at Goldcraigs, and 500 on Arran.

Salt Resilience Plan (Mainland)

Level 1 (Green) Service – Stock Levels 2500 Tonnes and above

- Service levels as detailed in NAC Winter and Weather Emergencies Plan.
- Typical daily salt usage (snow conditions) 470T – **resilience 5 days**
or
- Typical daily salt usage (frost & ice only) 235T – **resilience 10 days**

Level 2 (Amber 1) Service – Stock Levels 1800 Tonnes – 2500Tonnes

- Only Priority 1 carriageway routes treated with pure salt, remaining priority carriageway routes reduced to half the normal spread rate or salt/grit mix at 50/50
- All footway routes reduced to salt/sand mix at 50/50
- Grit bins replenished with salt/sand mix at 50/50.
- Typical daily salt usage (snow conditions) 330T – **resilience 2 days.**
or
- Typical daily salt usage (frost & ice only) 165T – **resilience 4 days**

Level 3 (Amber 2) Service – Stock Levels 1000 Tonnes – 1800 Tonnes

- All carriageway routes reduced to half the normal spread rate or salt/grit mix at 50/50
- Priority 1 footway routes treated with salt/sand mix at 50/50
- Remaining footway routes treated with sand/grit mix at 50/50
- Grit bins replenished with sand/grit mix at 50/50
- Typical daily salt usage (snow conditions) 150T – **resilience 5 days.**
or
- Typical daily salt usage (frost & ice only) 75T – **resilience 10 days**

Level 4 (Red) Service – Stock Levels less than 1000Tonnes

- Priority 1 carriageways reduced to half the normal spread rate or salt/grit mix at 50/50
- Treat remaining carriageway routes with sand/grit mix at 50/50
- All footway routes treated with sand/grit mix at 50/50
- Grit bins replenished with sand/grit mix.
- Typical daily salt usage (snow conditions) 100T – **resilience 10 days**
or
- Typical daily salt usage (frost & ice only) 50T – **resilience 20 days**

Assuming 4,500 tonnes in stock at start of winter our total resilience would be either

- **Total Resilience during periods of heavy snow - 22 days**
or
Total Resilience during periods of frost & ice conditions - 44 days

Salt Resilience Plan (Arran)

Level 1 (Green) Service – Stock Levels 1000 Tonnes and above

- Service levels as detailed in NAC Winter and Weather Emergencies Plan.
- Typical daily salt usage (snow conditions) 52T – **resilience 10 days**
or
- Typical daily salt usage (frost & ice only) 26T – **resilience 20 days**

Level 2 (Amber 1) Service – Stock Levels 550 Tonnes – 1000Tonnes

- Only Priority 1 carriageway routes treated with pure salt, remaining priority carriageway routes reduced to half the normal spread rate or salt/grit mix at 50/50
- All footway routes reduced to salt/sand mix at 50/50
- Grit bins replenished with salt/sand mix at 50/50.
- Typical daily salt usage (snow conditions) 44T – **resilience 10 days.**
or
- Typical daily salt usage (frost & ice only) 22T – **resilience 20 days**

Level 3 (Amber 2) Service – Stock Levels 250 Tonnes – 550 Tonnes

- All carriageway routes reduced to half the normal spread rate or salt/grit mix at 50/50
- Priority 1 footway routes treated with salt/sand mix at 50/50
- Remaining footway routes treated with sand/grit mix at 50/50
- Grit bins replenished with salt/sand mix at 50/50
- Typical daily salt usage (snow conditions) 30T – **resilience 10 days.**
or
- Typical daily salt usage (frost & ice only) 15T – **resilience 20 days**

Level 4 (Red) Service – Stock Levels less than 250 Tonnes

- Priority 1 carriageways reduced to half the normal spread rate or salt/grit mix at 50/50
- Treat remaining carriageway routes with sand/grit mix at 50/50
- All footway routes treated with sand/grit mix at 50/50
- Grit bins replenished with sand/grit mix.
- Typical daily salt usage (snow conditions) 20T – **resilience 12 days**
or
- Typical daily salt usage (frost & ice only) 10T – **resilience 25 days**

Assuming 1,500 tonnes in stock at start of winter our total resilience would be either

- **Total Resilience during periods of heavy snow - 42 days**
or
Total Resilience during periods of frost & ice conditions - 85 days

NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

CONTACT ADDRESS & TELEPHONE NUMBERS

During Normal Working Hours	Outwith Normal Working Hours
<p style="text-align: center;">MAINLAND</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Commercial Services Roads and Transportation Cunninghame House IRVINE KA12 8EE</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Tel: 01294-310000</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL CALL CENTRE</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Road & Lighting Faults</p> <p style="text-align: center;">24 hours, 7 days per week</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Tel: 01294 310000</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">ARRAN</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Arran Local Office Lamlash Isle of Arran KA27 8JY</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Tel: 01770-600338 Fax: 01770-600028</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">TRUNK ROADS A78, A737 & A738</p> <p>Scotland TranServ Network Control Centre 150 Polmadie Road Glasgow G5 OHD Tel 0141 218 3999 Email southwestcontrol@scotlandtranserv.co.uk</p>	

DISTRIBUTION LIST

	<u>Copies</u>
North Ayrshire Council	
Chief Executive	
Executive Director: Place	1
Executive Director: Finance & Corporate Support	1
Executive Director: Educational & Youth Employment	1
Executive Director: Economy and Communities	1
Head of Commercial Services	1
Head of Physical Environment	
Head of Democratic & Administration Services	1
ACCT	1
All Elected Members of North Ayrshire Council	30
Police Scotland	
Divisional Commander, Kilmarnock	1
Traffic Management, Ayr	1
Strathclyde Partnership for Transport	1
Scottish Fire & Rescue Service – Divisional Commander	1
Scottish Ambulance Service	1
The Met Office	1
Scotland TranServ	1
Ayrshire Roads Alliance	1
Renfrewshire Council - Head of Roads	1
East Renfrewshire Council – Head of Roads & Planning	1
Inverclyde Council – Head of Transportation & Roads Service	1
Contact Centre, Building Services, Stevenston	1
Contact Centre, Bridgegate House, Irvine	1

BRIDGES WITH WEIGHT OR HEIGHT RESTRICTIONS

HEIGHT RESTRICTIONS

Bridge Location	Grid Reference	Signed Height	
		Metric	Imperial
A737/110 : Dalry, Railway Bridge	229960 649702	3.8	12' – 6"
B706/40 : Barrmill	236834 651392	4.0	13' – 0"
B7047/10 : Meadowfoot Road, West Kilbride	220791 647032	4.7	15' – 3"
C6/10 : West Balgray	235333 642491	3.8	12' – 9"
C26/10 : South Kilruskin	220541 650473	4.4	14' – 6"
C26/20 : North Kilruskin	220423 650868	5.1	16' – 6"
C55/10 : Dubbs	228508 642006	3.0	9' – 9"
C55(A78 280) : Todhill (Dubbs Road, under A78, Kilwinning Bypass)	229175 642250	4.0	13' – 0"
C55/30 : Nethermains	230059 642199	3.6	12' – 0"
C56/30 : Moor Road	220639 652980	4.5	15' – 0"
C67/20 : Tandelhill	238174 651683	4.3	14' – 3"
C99/20 : Cockenzie	230694 646241	3.0	10' – 0"
Unc.TG/230 : Garnock View, Glengarnock	231875 653191	3.8	12' – 6"
Unc.TI/70 : Old Church Street, Irvine	213571 638800	4.1	13' – 3"

WEIGHT RESTRICTIONS

Bridge Location	Grid Reference	Signed Weight
B781/30 : West Kilbride, Dalry Road	221015 649062	7.5T
C5/30 : Drumbuie near Barrmill	235571 650404	7.5T
C129/20 : Floors, north of Kilmaurs	240866 641921	13T
C99/30 : Dusk Bridge, near Dalry	230599 646882	7.5T
Unc.TA/10 : Ardrossan, North Crescent	223140 642764	7.5T
Unc.TL/30 : Largs, May Street	220711 658602	7.5T
U16/10 : Dalgarven Mill Bridge, north of Kilwinning, (formerly Unc.NC/30)	229571 645847	18T
Unc.NT/10 : Barrmill	236472 650997	3T

ARRANGEMENTS WITH OTHER AUTHORITIES

ROADS TO BE TREATED BY ADJACENT AUTHORITIES	ROADS TO BE TREATED BY NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL
<p style="text-align: center;">Ayrshire Roads Alliance (East Ayrshire)</p> <p>A71 – from boundary westwards to Corsehill roundabout.</p> <p>A735 – that section within North Ayrshire boundary.</p> <p>B769 – from boundary south westwards to Chapeltoun junction.</p> <p>C129 – that section within North Ayrshire boundary.</p> <p>C20 – that section within North Ayrshire boundary.</p> <p>B706 - from boundary to A736</p> <p>C117 From Chapeltoun Bridge to Wheatrig Bridge</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">South Ayrshire</p> <p>U107 from the South Ayrshire Council boundary at the railway bridge to A759 Auchengate Interchange.</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">East Ayrshire</p> <p>A736 – from Caldwell Bridge southwards to Lugton.</p> <p>A736 – from B778 junction south eastwards to Torranyard.</p> <p>C24 - from Greenhill Terrace, Knockentiber to boundary at Plann Bridge.</p> <p>C126 From Montgreenan Bridge to North Lodge.</p> <p>Knockentiber Road from boundary near Springside to junction with C24</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">Renfrewshire Council</p> <p>A760 – from boundary to Kerse Road junction,</p> <p>Kerse Road – from boundary to A760 junction</p>

Note: There are no cross boundary arrangements with East Renfrewshire Council.

GRIT BIN POLICY & PROCEDURE

1. North Ayrshire Council shall provide grit bins for self-help by members of the public. These shall be sited locally in accordance with this policy.
2. Grit bins shall only be located where the following criteria are met: -
 - The location is not on a precautionary carriageway route;
 - The gradient is greater than 1 in 10, or at a junction with a known history of accidents;
 - The location shall not obstruct the passage of pedestrians, a minimum of 1.5m clearance on the footway is required;
 - The location shall not obstruct sight lines;
 - The location is not within 200m of another grit bin location;
 - The location is within an urban area;
 - The location is within the boundary of the public road. Infrastructure and Design will not provide grit bins in private areas or car parks for internal use by either the Council or any other public or private property such as schools, parks, hospitals, old people's homes, etc. unless a service level agreement is in place.
3. Grit bins will only be located where they can be filled from a lorry. The grit bins shall be replenished at the start of the winter period and on a monthly cycle during the winter period, as resources permit.
4. Grit bins will generally be left in place during the summer months, unless there is a history of vandalism at a particular location.
5. The location of grit bins will be recorded in an electronic database, which will be made available on the North Ayrshire Council website.
6. Only written requests on the Council's Grit Bin Application Form will be considered, these are available from the Head of Physical Environment, Cunninghame House, Irvine, KA12 8EE, and on the Council's website.
7. A request will not be accepted unless a location to site the grit bin has been agreed. Therefore, even if the criterion for locating a grit bin is met, a grit bin will not be provided if the adjacent residents cannot agree a position. The signed agreement of adjacent residents must be included on the submitted application form, otherwise the application will not be considered.
8. Grit Bin Application forms are available on the Council's website at <http://www.north-ayrshire.gov.uk/resident/roads-and-travel/winter-gritting.aspx>

NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

Agenda Item 14

25 October 2016

Cabinet

Title: Dubbs Road, Stevenston/Kilwinning Prohibition of Driving Order

Purpose: To seek approval to process a Traffic Regulation Order to prohibit driving on a section of Dubbs Road.

Recommendation: That Cabinet notes the findings in this report and approves (i) the proposal to promote a Traffic Regulation Order to prohibit driving on a section of Dubbs Road, and (ii) approves its implementation if no objections are received.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 Heavy vehicular use and road safety on Dubbs Road has been an issue that has been raised by residents, land owners and other non-motorised users for a number of years. The route is narrow with several sharp, blind, bends and is unsuitable for heavy traffic use.
- 1.2 The traffic survey of June 2016 identified that during the peak evening period, 79% of eastbound traffic entering Dubbs Road from Stevenston was using the road as a short cut.
- 1.2 The road is part of the National Cycle Network Route 73, and has seen increased use by pedal cyclists and pedestrians. In addition, local premises at Todhill Farm residential training centre for adults with learning difficulties and the Broom Farm Riding School see residents and visitors regularly using Dubbs Road for walking and equestrian use.
- 1.3 It is therefore considered appropriate that Dubbs Road closes to through vehicular traffic in the interests of road safety. This would significantly reduce the amount of vehicular traffic on the route as it would not be available as a short cut.
- 1.4 To facilitate works to prohibit driving on a section of Dubbs Road will require the promotion and implementation (subject to no objections) of a Traffic Regulation Order under the powers of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, Sections 1(1) and 2(1) to (3). This order will be promoted in accordance with the Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 1999.

2. Background

- 2.1 The use of Dubbs Road as a short cut has been an ongoing issue for more than 13 years. The construction of the three towns by-pass in 2004 appeared to alleviate the issue for a while. A traffic survey in 2005 showed that 26 vehicles per hour, eastbound, used the road in the evening peak period between 16:00 and 18:00.
- 2.2 The introduction of bus lanes on the A738 in 2006, resulted in a light increase in traffic. However, in more recent years, as traffic volumes have grown, the issue has escalated. Traffic from the A738 has difficulty exiting onto the A78 at the Pennyburn Roundabout due to the high flow of traffic at this location. This causes a backup of traffic on the A738, which in turn leads to an increasing number of drivers resorting to using Dubbs Road as an alternative route to head towards Kilwinning and Irvine. A recent Traffic Survey (June 2016) showed that peak hour traffic had increased to 60 vehicles per hour, eastbound, and that 79% of this traffic was using the road as a short cut.
- 2.3 Since 2008, Dubbs Road has been part of National Cycle Network Route 73. This has led to increased use by cyclists and pedestrians. Local residents have provided Council Officers with information relating to a number of near misses and incidents involving, what is perceived to be, speeding traffic and non-motorised users. The road is subject to the national speed limit, although signs at either end indicate an advisory speed of 30mph.
- 2.4 In October 2015, North Ayrshire Council undertook a questionnaire exercise, seeking feedback on proposals to close Dubbs Road to through traffic. Analysis of the questionnaire feedback forms shows that 60 out of 61 returned forms, were in favour of the closure.
- 2.5 There is a riding school (Broom Farm) which is located on Dubbs Road and the school regularly move horses from field to field, or go on treks. The owners have been particularly vocal regarding the possible closure, as they are keen to use the road for treks but are fearful of the traffic dangers.
- 2.6 Todhill Training Centre is a residential/day care provider for adults with learning difficulties. The centre was taken over by The Richmond Fellowship Scotland in 2014. They plan to redevelop the site with upgraded and increased accommodation. Residents often walk along Dubbs Road and the surrounding footpaths.

- 2.7 The number of personal injury accidents along the whole length of Dubbs Road/ Byrehill Road has been examined and shows a peak of 6 in 2001. Since then numbers have fluctuated between 0 and 2 per year, with no injury accidents recorded since 2011. Recorded non-injury accidents obtained from Police Scotland have very limited information and are generally not relied on for analysis purpose other than an indication of an issue, or supplementary information. These types of accidents are known to be grossly under reported.
- 2.8 Initial consultations have been undertaken with Police Scotland who, in principle, have no objections to the closure. They have confirmed that the route is not suitable as a diversion route in the case of closure of the A738 or A78.
- 2.9 Initial consultations with Fire Scotland provided useful information to confirm that Fire Appliances could not pass under the low (9'9") bridge near Ancumor Farm, and therefore any closure point east of this point could cause issues with tackling anti-social fire raising along this road.
- 2.10 A meeting was held on 27 July 2016 at Todhill Training Centre, Dubbs Road, for all landowners, principal land users and residents accessing Dubbs Road. The meeting discussed the background to this issue, traffic survey results and possible locations of any future closure. There was overwhelming agreement to the suggestion of closure to through traffic. Creating the closure point at the low bridge was discussed and three land owners offered the use of their land to create a turning point for traffic.
- 2.11 Works would be required to close Dubbs Road to through vehicular traffic. The preferred location of a closure is on Dubbs Road close to the low bridge near Ancumor Farm. This would prevent motorised traffic from passing at this point, while maintaining local vehicular access on either side of the point of closure (see location plan - Appendix 1). Through access along Dubbs Road would be maintained for pedestrians, pedal cyclists, and equestrians.
- 2.12 A new turning area would require to be formed on the Todhill side of the point of closure to enable vehicles that fail to see, or comply, with signing at the road entrances, a place to turn (see Appendix 2). An existing turning arrangement exists on the Ancumor Farm side of the point of closure.
- 2.13 To facilitate works to close Dubbs Road will require the promotion and implementation (subject to no objections) of a Traffic Regulation Order in accordance with the Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 1999.

- 2.14 The promotion of any Traffic Regulation Order follows a statutory process and provides any member of the public with an opportunity to comment/object to the measures being proposed.

3. Proposals

- 3.1 It is proposed that Cabinet notes the findings in this report and approves (i) the proposal to promote a Traffic Regulation Order to prohibit driving on a section of Dubbs Road in the interests of road safety and (ii) approves its implementation subject to no objections being received

4. Implications

Financial:	The cost of works to implement the proposed scheme is estimated at £17,000 which would be funded from the Commercial Services (Roads) revenue budget.
Human Resources:	There are no human resource implications.
Legal:	A Traffic Regulation Order will require to be promoted in accordance with the Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 1999.
Equality:	There are no equality implications.
Environmental & Sustainability:	There are no environment & sustainability implications.
Key Priorities:	The project aligns with the Councils corporate objective of improving road safety.
Community Benefits:	The project will provide economic, cultural and physical benefits to the community.

5. Consultation

- 5.1 Consultations have taken place with the majority of landowners, principal land users and residents, all of whom support this proposal.
- 5.2 Police Scotland and Fire & Rescue Scotland have confirmed that they would have no objections to the proposals.
- 5.3 The Council's Legal Services will be consulted and engaged in the processing and publication of the required Traffic Regulation Order.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'CH', written over a horizontal line.

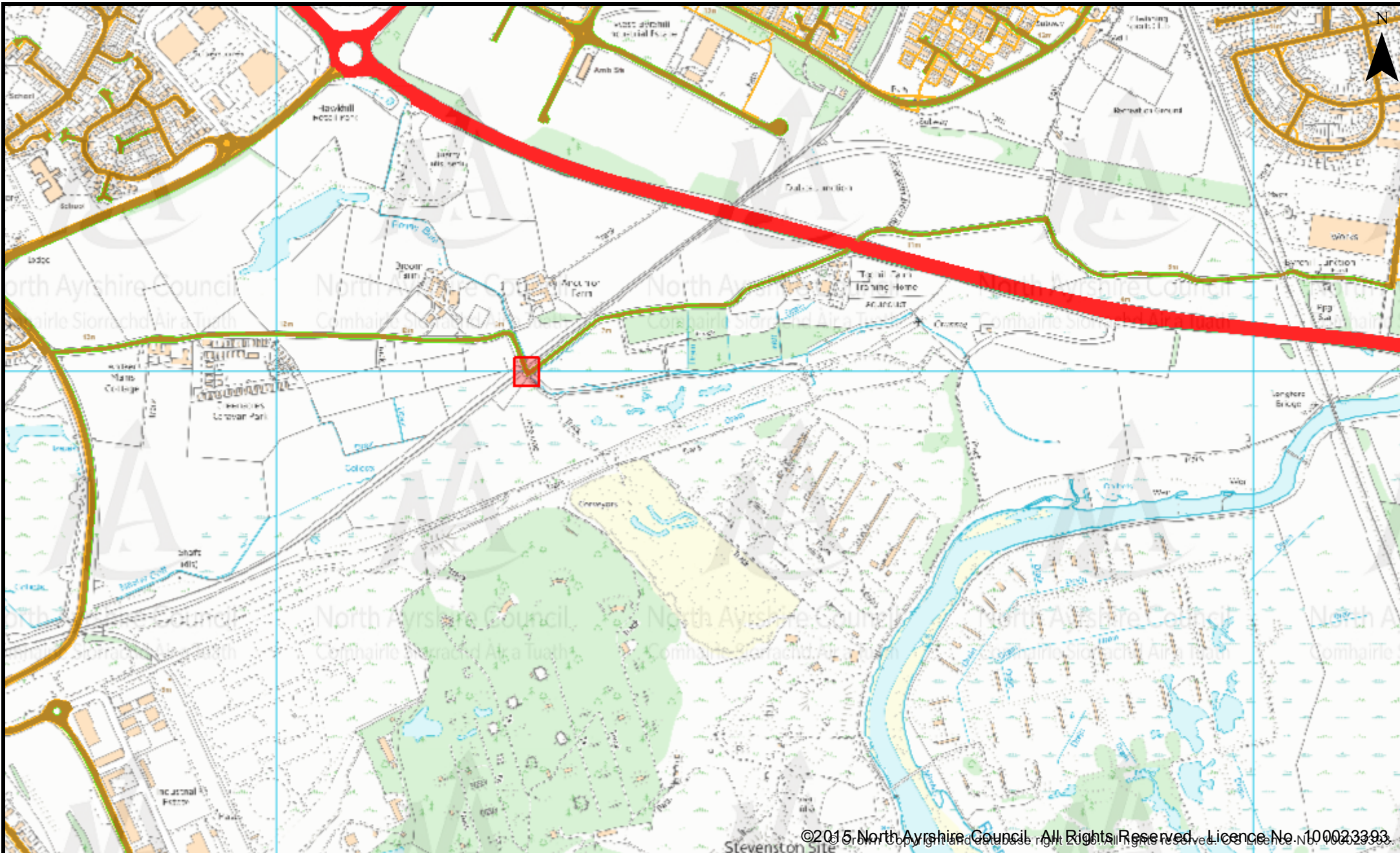
CRAIG HATTON
Executive Director (Place)

Reference : CF/HW

For further information please contact Crawford Forsyth, Team Manager on 01294 324842

Background Papers

None



©2015 North Ayrshire Council. All Rights Reserved. Licence No. 100023393.

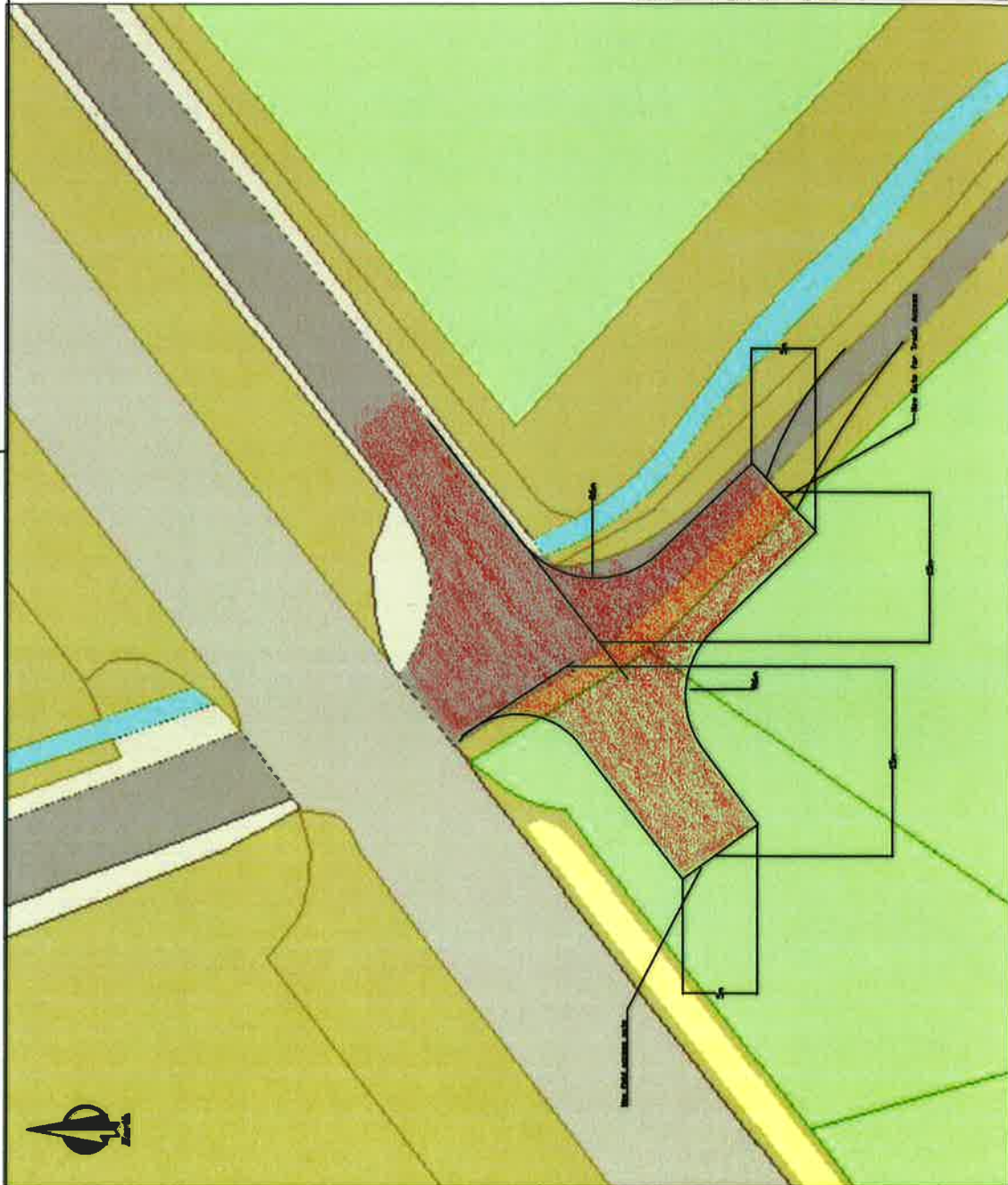


NORTH AYRSHIRE
COUNCIL

Dubbs Road, Stevenston

Proposed Road Closure

Scale: 1:10,000



Dubbs Road,
Stevenston

Proposed Turning
Area

DRAFT