



North Ayrshire Council  
Comhairle Siorrachd Àir a Tuath

## Audit and Scrutiny Committee

A Meeting of the **Audit and Scrutiny Committee** of North Ayrshire Council will be held in the **Council Chambers, Ground Floor, Cunninghame House, Irvine, KA12 8EE** on **Thursday, 25 January 2024** at **10:00** to consider the undernoted business.

### Meeting Arrangements - Hybrid Meetings

This meeting will be held on a predominantly physical basis but with provision, by prior notification, for remote attendance by Elected Members in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 2003. Where possible, the meeting will be live-streamed and available to view at <https://north-ayrshire.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>.

#### 1 **Declarations of Interest**

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

#### 2 **Minutes**

The accuracy of the Minutes of the Meeting of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee held on 14 November 2023 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).

#### 3 **Annual Report – School and Early Learning and Childcare Inspections 2022-23**

Submit report by the Executive Director (Communities & Education) informing of the performance of North Ayrshire schools and early learning and childcare settings in external inspections, with a focus on those published during session 2022-23 (copy enclosed).

#### 4 **Education Authority Annual Plan 2023-24**

Submit report by the Executive Director (Communities & Education) seeking approval for the publication of the Education Authority Annual Plan for 2023-24 (copy enclosed).

- 5 HMIE Progress Review of Community Learning and Development**  
Submit report by the Executive Director (Communities & Education) informing of the outcomes of the recent Progress Review of Community Learning and Development by HMIE (copy enclosed).
- 6 North Ayrshire Council's Performance Strategy 2023-28**  
Submit report by the Head of Service (Democratic) advising of the Council's Performance Strategy 2023-28, including a new approach to self-assessment (copy enclosed).
- 7 Year End Performance Reporting: Council Plan Year End Progress Report 2022-23; and Local Government Benchmarking Framework Analysis of 2023 Data Release**  
Submit report by the Head of Service (Democratic) advising on progress of the Council Plan priorities (copy enclosed).
- 8 North Ayrshire Council Plan 2023-28: Performance Management Framework**  
Submit report by the Head of Service (Democratic) on the Council Plan 2023-28 Performance Management Framework, attached at Appendix 1 to the report (copy enclosed).
- 9 Internal Audit Reports Issued**  
Submit report by the Head of Service (Finance) on the findings of Internal Audit work completed between November and December 2023 (copy enclosed).
- 10 Urgent Items**  
Any other items which the Chair considers to be urgent.
- 11 Exclusion of the Public - Para 1**  
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 item of business on the grounds indicated in terms of Paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.
- Non Disclosure of Information**  
In terms of Standing Order 21 (Disclosure of Information), the information contained within the following report 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.
- 12 Investigation Reports Issued (Exempt Item)**  
Submit report by the Head of Service (Finance) informing of investigation reports finalised since the last meeting of the Committee (copy enclosed).

## **Webcasting**

Please note: this meeting may be filmed/recorded/live-streamed to the Council's internet site and available to view at <https://north-ayrshire.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>, where it will be capable of repeated viewing. At the start of the meeting, the Provost/Chair will confirm if all or part of the meeting is being filmed/recorded/live-streamed.

You should be aware that the Council is a Data Controller under the Data Protection Act 2018. Data collected during the webcast will be retained in accordance with the Council's published policy, including, but not limited to, for the purpose of keeping historical records and making those records available via the Council's internet site.

Generally, the press and public seating areas will not be filmed. However, by entering the Council Chambers, using the press or public seating area or (by invitation) participating remotely in this meeting, you are consenting to being filmed and consenting to the use and storage of those images and sound recordings and any information pertaining to you contained in them for webcasting or training purposes and for the purpose of keeping historical records and making those records available to the public. If you do not wish to participate in a recording, you should leave the meeting. This will constitute your revocation of consent.

If you have any queries regarding this and, in particular, if you believe that use and/or storage of any particular information would cause, or be likely to cause, substantial damage or distress to any individual, please contact [dataprotectionofficer@north-ayrshire.gov.uk](mailto:dataprotectionofficer@north-ayrshire.gov.uk).

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## Audit and Scrutiny Committee Sederunt

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John Bell (Chair)  
Donald Reid (Vice Chair)  
Eleanor Collier  
Cameron Inglis  
Tom Marshall  
Matthew McLean  
Davina McTiernan  
Donald L. Reid  
John Sweeney

Chair:

Apologies:

Attending:



Audit and Scrutiny Committee  
14 November 2023

At a Meeting of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee of North Ayrshire Council at 10.00 a.m. involving participation by remote electronic means and physical attendance within the Council Chambers, Irvine.

**Present (Physical Participation)**

John Bell, Donald Reid, Eleanor Collier, Davina McTiernan, Donald L. Reid and John Sweeney.

**Present (Remote Participation)**

Tom Marshall.

**In Attendance**

C. Hatton, Chief Executive; P. Doak, Head of Service (Finance and Transformation) (Health and Social Care Partnership); A. McClelland, Head of Service (Education) (Communities & Education); M. Boyd, Head of Service (Finance), D. Forbes, Senior Manager (Financial Management), A.M. Fenton, Team Manager (Internal Audit) and K. Gray, Team Manager (Corporate Fraud) (Finance), T. Reaney, Head of Service (Neighbourhood Services) (Place); F. Walker, Head of Service and B. Quigley, Senior Manager (People & ICT), and A. Craig, Head of Service (Democratic), I. Hardy, Team Manager (Corporate Policy and Performance), C. Stewart and S. Wilson, Committee Services Officers (Chief Executive's Service).

**Also in Attendance**

F.M. Knight and D. Jamieson, Audit Scotland.

**Chair**

Councillor Bell in the Chair.

**1. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest by Members in terms of Standing Order 11 and Section 5 of the Code of Conduct for Councillors

**2. Minutes**

The Minutes of (i) the Ordinary Meeting of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee held on 5 September 2023; and (ii) the Special Meeting held on 12 September 2023 were confirmed and the Minutes signed in accordance with Paragraph 7 (1) of Schedule 7 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

**3. Elected Member Development**

Submitted report by the Head of Service (Democratic) providing information and seeking views on the development sessions provided to Elected Members over the 13 months from May 2022 to 30 June 2023, and on future planned developments.

Members asked questions and were provided with further information in relation to the following:-

- the turnout of some of the development sessions, including timing issues, and the suggestion that there should be a number of events on the same day in order to promote/enhance attendance; and
- the request by Strathclyde Fire and Rescue to hold a development session with Elected Members which would be followed up by officers, as appropriate.

The Committee agreed (a) to note the feedback provided on (i) the Elected Member Development sessions held in the period May 2022 to June 2023 (ii) means to support Elected Member attendance, (iii) how future programmes might be improved and (iv) possible additional topics for the next year; and (b) otherwise, to note the content of the report.

Councillor McTiernan joined the meeting during consideration of this item.

#### **4. 2022/23 Elected Member Requests Report**

Submitted report by the Head of Service (Democratic) informing of the Council's performance and the volumes and trends of Elected Member requests handled in Financial Year 2022/23.

Members asked questions and were provided with further information in relation to the following:-

- discussion on the increased number of requests and the reason(s) behind this;
- the nature and resilience of the EM Pro (Lagan) system particularly regarding logging requests, and some issues surrounding reliability and downtime (particularly over weekends);
- clarification on the treatment of multiple requests logged relating to the same issue and whether they were logged as individual and separate request(s); and
- the nature of some requests and the general approach to recording email enquiries some of these, subsequently, becoming Lagan reports (EM Pro) once received.

Noted.

#### **5. 2022/23 Complaint Report**

Submitted a report by the Head of Service (Democratic) informing of the Council's complaint performance and the volumes and trends of complaints received in Financial Year 2022/23. The report detailed the volume of complaints received and closed, complaints closed at each stage, complaint outcomes, the average time in working days for a full response at each stage, complaints closed within timescale, complaint timescale extensions, trends identified from upheld/partially upheld complaints and changes or improvements made as a result of complaints and compliments received.

Members asked questions and were provided with further information in relation to:-

- the action plan that had been put in place by Waste Services, in order to be as proactive, as possible, in terms of mitigating the risk of complaints being raised;
- email updates to Elected Members on missed bins; and
- the improved performance of the Waste Service.

Noted.

## **6. Audit and Scrutiny Committee Self-Evaluation 2023**

Submitted report by the Head of Service (Democratic) on the outcome of the annual self-evaluation of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee. The findings arising from the self-evaluation, together with improvement actions, were detailed in Appendices 1 and 2, respectively, to the report.

Members asked questions and were provided with further information in relation to the more proactive approach being adopted by Members of the Committee and the suggestion that external training for Members could be beneficial to Members in terms of enhancing their audit and scrutiny role.

The Committee agreed to (a) note the findings of the self-evaluation as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report; (b) approve the improvement actions identified in Appendix 2 to the report; and (c) to repeat the self-evaluation exercise on an annual basis.

## **7. External Audit Reports on the 2022/23 Audit and Best Value Thematic Work**

Submitted report by the Head of Service (Finance) on the annual audit report and the Best Value Thematic Work reports for 2022/23 and to consider verbal reports by the external auditor. Appendix 1 to the report detailed letters of representation to be signed by the Head of Finance as the responsible officer for North Ayrshire Council. The External Auditor's report, which summarised the findings of their audit, was attached as Appendix 2 to the report.

Fiona Mitchell-Knight and David Jamieson of Audit Scotland provided a verbal report on the appendices to the report, including highlighting key aspects in relation to the findings of their audit.

Members asked questions and were provided with further information in relation to:-

- The timing of the issuing of the audit report;
- the action plans that would be drawn up by Services in relation to the external audit findings including dormant accounts; and
- the accounting arrangements, including consolidation, of North Ayrshire Council Leisure (KA Leisure) accounts, together with an explanation on the heritage assets valuation.

The Committee agreed to (a) note (i) the findings of the 2022/23 audit of the financial statements as contained in the external auditor's annual report at Appendix 2 to the officer's report, (ii) the findings of the external auditor's Best Value Thematic Work report, (iii) the agreed Action Plan as outlined in Appendix 1 to each of the Reports and (iv) that the action plan would be brought to the Committee for review; and (b) approve the audited Annual Accounts for signature.

#### **8. External Audit Report on Best Value Thematic Work 2022-23**

Submitted report by Audit Scotland on Best Value Thematic Work 2022-23 which included key messages and information on the scope of the audit.

Noted.

#### **9. Internal Audit Annual Update Report – North Ayrshire Integration Joint Board (IJB)**

Submitted report by the Head of Service (Finance) informing of the IJB's annual report for 2022/23 and the approved internal audit plan for 2023/24.

Noted.

#### **10. Internal Audit Plan 2023/24: Mid-year Update**

Submitted report by the Head of Service (Finance) providing an update on progress made in delivering the 2023/24 Internal Audit Plan. Appendix 1 to the report detailed the approved Audit Plan for 2023/24.

Members asked questions and were provided with further information in relation to the following:

- the reasons for the changes being made to the audit plan;
- the learning review of Self-Directed Support; and
- a request for information in terms of how many people were in receipt of Self-Directed Support funding, including how many were currently on the waiting list for Self-Directed Support funding.

The Committee agreed (a) to note the current position with the 2023/24 internal audit plan; (b) to approve the inclusion of one additional audit review in 2023/24; (c) approve the deletion or deferral of four audits for consideration as part of the 2024/25 Internal Audit Plan; and (d) that Members of the Committee would be sent information on how many people were in receipt of Self-Directed Support funding including how many were currently on the waiting list for Self-Directed Support funding.

#### **11. Corporate Fraud Team update report**

Submitted report by the Head of Service (Finance) on the work of the Corporate Fraud Team between April and September 2023.

Members asked questions and were provided with further information in relation to the very low numbers of Blue Badge misuse and the possible reason(s) behind this, and whether new parking attendants might impact on misuse of Blue Badges.

Noted.

## **12. Internal Audit Reports Issued**

Submitted report by the Head of Service (Finance) on the findings of the Internal Audit work completed between August and October 2023.

Members asked questions and were provided with further information in relation to the following:-

IJB Community Engagement

- Closure of this action following publication on the HSCP website.

Accounts Payable Transaction Testing Q2

- How invoices were dealt with and whether automation would reduce errors.

Carers (Scotland) Act 2016

- The publication of updated guidance on the website.

Early Years Provision

- The availability of eligibility criteria, which could be shared with Elected Members.

Noted.

## **13. Internal Audit and Corporate Fraud Action Plans: Quarter 2 update**

Submitted report by the Head of Service (Finance) on the progress made by Council Services in implementing the agreed actions from Internal Audit and Corporate Fraud reports as at 30 September 2023. Appendix 1 to the report provided full details of three Internal Audit actions which were not completed within the agreed timescale.

Members asked questions and were provided with further information in relation to the reasons for the slight slippage in respect of the Glow Internal Audit action and the expected completion date of this action.

The Committee agreed to note (i) the current position with the implementation of the Internal Audit and Corporate Fraud actions; and (ii) challenges which were faced by those services which have not implemented actions within the previously agreed timescales.

#### **14. Strategic Risk Register 2023/24: Mid-year Update**

Submitted report by the Head of Service (Finance) providing an update on progress with actions related to the Strategic Risk Register. The Strategic Risk Register Report 2023/24, with detailed actions, was provided at Appendix 1 to the report.

Members asked questions and were provided with further information in relation to the following:-

- the Financial sustainability scoring of the Council and that of the Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) and the reasons behind the variance in terms of the scoring between the Council and the HSCP;
- the future management structure, including governance arrangements, of the HSCP (National Care Service); and
- Business continuity and resilience.

Noted.

#### **15. Exclusion of the Public – Para 14**

The Committee resolved 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 Paragraph 14 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

#### **16. Briefing on Cyber Security**

The Committee received a Briefing on Cyber Security by the Senior Manager (ICT).

Noted.

The meeting ended at 12.30 p.m.

## NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

25 January 2024

### Audit and Scrutiny Committee

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**Title:** Annual Report – School and Early Learning and Childcare Inspections 2022-23

**Purpose:** To inform the committee of the performance of North Ayrshire schools and early learning and childcare settings in external inspections, with a focus on those published during session 2022-23.

**Recommendation:** It is recommended that the committee:

- (a) Notes the contents of this report; and
- (b) Commends the performance of schools and ELC settings in inspections conducted by Education Scotland and the Care Inspectorate.

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#### 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 Education Scotland published inspection reports on eight educational establishments in North Ayrshire in session 2022-23. The overall performance of our schools and centres was very positive.
- 1.2 The Care Inspectorate published inspection reports on seven local authority early learning and childcare establishments in North Ayrshire in session 2022-23. The performance of these establishments was positive.
- 1.3 Action has been taken by individual schools and early years establishments, supported by the education service, to celebrate strengths and to address areas for improvement identified in the inspection reports.

#### 2. Background

- 2.1 Schools are subject to periodic external evaluation by the national inspection agency, Education Scotland. Early Learning and Childcare settings are inspected by both Education Scotland and the Care Inspectorate.
- 2.2 Education Scotland reports on the quality of school and early years provision under the following quality indicators, taken from the self-evaluation framework [How good is our school? \(4th edition\)](#):
  - Leadership of change
  - Learning, teaching and assessment

- Ensuring wellbeing, equality, and inclusion
- Raising attainment and achievement (primary, secondary, ASN schools)
- Securing children's progress (Early learning & childcare settings).

2.3 In 2022, the Care Inspectorate introduced a new [quality framework for daycare of children, childminding and school-aged childcare](#). This quality framework is structured around the following key questions:

- How good is our care, play and learning?
- How good is our setting?
- How good is our leadership?
- How good is our staff team?

2.4 All inspections focus on at least two quality indicators. In session 2022-23, Education Scotland carried out eight school inspections in North Ayrshire as part of a national sample size of 250 schools.

2.5 Education Scotland uses a six-point scale to report on the performance of the educational establishment in each of the assessed quality indicators. The categories of the six-point scale are: excellent, very good, good, satisfactory, weak, and unsatisfactory. Further detail on the meaning of the six-point scale is included at Appendix 2.

2.6 In session 2022-23, the Education Scotland inspection outcomes in North Ayrshire schools were as follows:

School	Inspection Report Date	1.3 Leadership of change	2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment	3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	3.2 Raising attainment and achievement
Ardeer Primary School	07/03/2023	[Not assessed]	Good	[Not assessed]	Very Good
Beith Primary School	28/03/2023	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
Greenwood Academy	25/04/2023	Good	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Good
Auchenharvie Academy	09/05/2023	[Not assessed]	Very Good	[Not assessed]	Very Good
Glebe Primary School	16/05/2023	Very Good	Very Good	Excellent	Very Good
Skelmorlie Primary School	16/05/2023	[Not assessed]	Good	[Not assessed]	Good
Corrie Primary School	29/08/2023	[Not assessed]	Good	[Not assessed]	Good
Shiskine Primary School	29/08/2023	[Not assessed]	Good	[Not assessed]	Good

2.7 In session 2022-23, the Education Scotland inspection outcomes in North Ayrshire early years classes were as follows:

School	Inspection Report Date	1.3 Leadership of change	2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment	3.1 Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	3.2 Raising attainment and achievement
Ardeer Primary Early Years	07/03/2023	[Not assessed]	Very Good	Not assessed	Very Good
Beith Primary Early Years	28/03/2023	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good



Corrie Primary Early Years	29/08/2023	[Not assessed]	Good	[Not assessed]	Good
Shiskine Primary Early Years	29/08/2023	[Not assessed]	Good	[Not assessed]	Good

- 2.8 Since the introduction of the current inspection framework “How Good is our School? (4<sup>th</sup> edition)” in session 2016-2017, there has been a total of 26 inspections by Education Scotland across North Ayrshire’s schools and early years classes. Over that time frame, the performance of North Ayrshire schools in Education Scotland inspections has been positive overall. By way of comparison in the table below, each grade has been assigned a numerical value to show our average performance against the regional and national performance. The higher the value, the better the performance.

**Average grade assigned through Education Scotland inspection 2016-2023 (schools only):**

Quality Indicator	NAC 2016-23*	Regional 2016-23 (SWEIC)*	National 2016-23*
Leadership of change	4.45	3.85	3.75
Learning, teaching and assessment	4.21	3.82	3.69
Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	4.45	4.00	3.92
Raising attainment and achievement	4.17	3.78	3.67

\* 6 = Excellent; 5 = Very Good; 4 = Good; 3 = Satisfactory; 2 = Weak; 1 = Unsatisfactory

**Average grade assigned through Education Scotland inspection 2016-2023 (early learning and childcare settings only (authority provision)):**

Quality Indicator	NAC 2016-23*	Regional 2016-23 (SWEIC)*	National 2016-23*
Leadership of change	4.13	3.78	3.63
Learning, teaching and assessment	4.33	3.95	3.67
Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	4.25	4.10	3.96
Securing children’s progress	4.33	4.03	3.77

\* 6 = Excellent; 5 = Very Good; 4 = Good; 3 = Satisfactory; 2 = Weak; 1 = Unsatisfactory

- 2.9 A further indicator of quality of educational provision overall is the percentage of school/early learning and childcare inspections by Education Scotland which resulted in an evaluation of “good” or better. Data has been analysed since the introduction of the current inspection framework in 2016-17 to the end of session 2022-23. Again, this demonstrates a strong performance in North Ayrshire:

**Percentage of inspections resulting in an evaluation of “good” or better 2016-23 (schools only):**

Quality Indicator	NAC 2016-23*	Regional 2016-23 (SWEIC)*	National 2016-23*
Leadership of change	82%	64%	60%
Learning, teaching and assessment	88%	71%	62%
Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	82%	70%	69%
Raising attainment and achievement	83%	70%	61%

**Percentage of inspections resulting in an evaluation of “good” or better 2016-23 (early learning and childcare settings only):**

<b>Quality Indicator</b>	<b>NAC 2016-23*</b>	<b>Regional 2016-23 (SWEIC)*</b>	<b>National 2016-23*</b>
Leadership of change	75%	66%	59%
Learning, teaching and assessment	83%	72%	59%
Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion	75%	73%	74%
Securing children’s progress	83%	75%	65%

2.10 The Education Scotland inspection reports (at Appendix 1) highlight a number of key strengths common to several of the establishments they visited in North Ayrshire in 2022-23. Notable strengths have been identified in the following areas:

- Positive professional culture and staff commitment, working well as a team.
- Positive relationships
- Strong leadership of senior leaders
- Nurturing and inclusive learning environments
- Engaged and motivated learners
- Learning experiences which are meeting needs and reducing barriers to learning
- Improved learning outcomes / attainment.

2.11 Areas for improvement in North Ayrshire were identified through the inspection reports. All reports always have at least one identified area for improvement. The improvement actions frequently include the wording “continue to” or “further develop”, demonstrating that establishments are already beginning to take steps to address these points.

2.12 In session 2022-23 the performance of North Ayrshire Early Learning and Childcare centres and classes in Care Inspectorate inspections was positive. Care Inspectorate reports can all be accessed via the [website](#). A total of seven Local Authority Early Years centres and classes and seven partner nurseries were inspected, the evaluations for which are summarised in the tables below:

<b>Early Learning and Childcare Setting (NAC)</b>	<b>Inspection Report Date</b>	<b>KQ1: How good is our care, play and learning?</b>	<b>KQ2: How good is our setting?</b>	<b>KQ3: How good is our leadership?</b>	<b>KQ4: How good is our staff team?</b>
Mayfield Primary School Nursery Class	20/09/2022	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
Caledonia Primary School Nursery Class	12/10/2022	Good	Very Good	Good	Very Good
Blacklands Primary School Nursery Class	18/01/2023	Good	Good	Good	Good
St Peter’s Primary School Nursery Class	27/02/2023	Adequate	Good	Good	Adequate
St Mark’s Primary School Nursery Class	17/03/2023	Good	Good	Good	Good
St Bridget’s Primary School Nursery Class	30/03/2023	Good	Very Good	Good	Good

Winton Primary School Nursery Class	16/05/2023	Good	Good	Good	Very Good
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Early Learning and Childcare Setting (partners)	Inspection Report Date	KQ1: How good is our care, play and learning?	KQ2: How good is our setting?	KQ3: How good is our leadership?	KQ4: How good is our staff team?
Treetops Nursery (Irvine)	26/08/2022	Good	Adequate	Good	Adequate
Bright Beginnings Early Years Centre	12/09/2022	Good	Good	Good	Good
Treetops Too (Saltcoats)	03/11/2022	Adequate	Adequate	Adequate	Adequate
Rainbow Childcare	23/11/2022	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good	Very Good
Summerlea House Nursery	21/03/2023	Good	Good	Good	Good
Burnside House Nursery	07/06/2023	Adequate	Good	Adequate	Adequate
Treetops Nursery (Irvine)	15/06/2023	Good	Adequate	Good	Good

2.13 The Care Inspectorate have recently updated their framework of quality indicators. Nevertheless, in order to mirror the approach above (for Education Scotland inspections) to providing trend information over several years, a calculation has enabled average performances to be shown, covering the period 2016-23, both for North Ayrshire's local authority early learning and childcare settings, as well as for the South West regional improvement collaborative.

#### **Average grade assigned through Care Inspectorate inspections in Early Learning and Childcare (NAC settings):**

New Quality Indicator (from 2022-23)	Previous Quality Indicator (before August 2022)	North Ayrshire Average Performance 2016-23*	SWEIC Average Performance 2016-23*
Quality of care, play and learning	<i>Quality of care and support</i>	4.80	4.56
Quality of setting	<i>Quality of environment</i>	4.69	4.42
Quality of leadership	<i>Quality of management and leadership</i>	4.37	4.28
Quality of staff team	<i>Quality of staffing</i>	4.61	4.49

\* 6 = Excellent; 5 = Very Good; 4 = Good; 3 = Satisfactory; 2 = Weak; 1 = Unsatisfactory

2.14 Common strengths from the Care Inspectorate reports on early learning and childcare settings in North Ayrshire in 2022-23 are:

- Children are happy, settled, confident and motivated
- Children are having fun playing with their friends
- The staff are kind, caring, compassionate and nurturing towards the children
- Warm and welcoming environments are provided where children are supported with their learning.

2.15 Care Inspectorate reports included three areas for improvement in total for early learning and childcare establishments in North Ayrshire in 2022-23. Plans are in place to address these. Similarly, for the two areas for improvement identified through

previous inspections, the Care Inspectorate confirmed that improvements had been made.

2.16 As part of the service's commitment to continuous improvement, inspection outcomes have been used alongside feedback and engagement sessions with head teachers and other senior officers, to feed into an evaluation of the service's Quality Improvement Framework, which has been refreshed and updated for session 2023-24. There is an increased flexibility in approach, agreed at individual establishment level. The Quality Improvement Framework is designed to give establishments, the service and elected members assurance that self-evaluation is a key aspect of the work of our establishments and that this leads consistently to planned improvements, based on local contexts.

### **3. Proposals**

3.1 It is recommended that the committee:

- (a) Notes the contents of this report; and
- b) Commends the performance of schools and ELC settings in inspections conducted by Education Scotland and the Care Inspectorate.

### **4. Implications/Socio-economic Duty**

#### **Financial**

4.1 None.

#### **Human Resources**

4.2 None.

#### **Legal**

4.3 None.

#### **Equality/Socio-economic**

4.4 None.

#### **Climate Change and Carbon**

4.5 None.

#### **Key Priorities**

4.6 Council priorities:

The external inspection activity confirms the focus of the Education Service is to align with the Council Plan 2023-28 strategic aim to "transition to a wellbeing economy, delivering prosperity, wellbeing and resilience for local people" and more specifically "improving educational attainment and achievement and closing the attainment gap" activities.

## **Community Wealth Building**

4.7 Better educational outcomes for children young people and adults, as well as increased capacity building and resilience in communities are required to underpin a strong local economy. North Ayrshire works in partnership with local early learning and childcare providers (local businesses) to ensure the provision of care is a shared endeavour.

### **5. Consultation**

5.1 There has been no specific consultation on the contents of this report.

Audrey Sutton  
**Executive Director**

For further information please contact **Andrew McClelland, Head of Service (Education)**, on **01294 324413**.

### **Background Papers**

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7 March 2023

Dear Parent/Carer

In December 2022, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland visited Ardeer Primary School and Nursery Class. During our visit, we talked to parents/carers and children and worked closely with the headteacher and staff.

The inspection team found the following strengths in the school's work.

- The effective teamwork across the school and nursery to support all children to achieve the best possible outcomes in their learning.
- The highly effective use of data to inform planning and measure the effectiveness of the strategies used to raise attainment in literacy and numeracy.

The following areas for improvement were identified and discussed with the headteacher and a representative from North Ayrshire Council.

- Continue to support children across the school to become more independent in their learning by providing more experiences that promote curiosity, independence, and confidence.
- Review the process used to plan learning across the school to enable staff to develop further creative teaching approaches.

We gathered evidence to enable us to evaluate the school's work using quality indicators from [How good is our school? \(4<sup>th</sup> edition\)](#) and [How good is our early learning and childcare?](#) Quality indicators help schools, local authorities and inspectors to judge what is working well and what needs to be improved. Following the inspection of each school, the Scottish Government gathers details of our evaluations to keep track of how well Scottish schools are doing.

## Here are Education Scotland's evaluations for Ardeer Primary School and Nursery Class

Quality indicators for the primary school	Evaluation
<b>Learning, teaching and assessment</b>	<b>good</b>
<b>Raising attainment and achievement</b>	<b>very good</b>
Descriptions of the evaluations are available from: <a href="#">How good is our school? (4<sup>th</sup> edition), Appendix 3: The six-point scale</a>	

Quality indicators for the nursery class	Evaluation
<b>Learning, teaching and assessment</b>	<b>very good</b>
<b>Securing children's progress</b>	<b>very good</b>
Descriptions of the evaluations are available from: <a href="#">How good is our early learning and childcare? Appendix 1: The six-point scale</a>	

A more detailed document called Summarised Inspection Findings (SIF) will be available on the Education Scotland website at:

[Reports page | Inspection reports | Education Scotland](#)

### What happens next?

We are confident that the school has the capacity to continue to improve and so we will make no more visits in connection with this inspection. North Ayrshire Council will inform parents/carers about the school's progress as part of its arrangements for reporting on the quality of its schools.

Pamela Adamson  
HM Inspector

28 March 2023

Dear Parent/Carer

In January 2023, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland visited Beith Primary School and Nursery Class. During our visit, we talked to parents/carers and children and worked closely with the headteacher and staff.

The inspection team found the following strengths in the school's work.

- Positive relationships are a strength of the school and nursery. Staff's passion for and commitment to children's rights and wellbeing underpins their work. This is leading to children who are confident, secure and happy in the school and nursery.
- The headteacher demonstrates strong and strategic leadership. She has created a climate of continuous improvement which is developing leadership at all levels.
- Teachers and practitioners have a strong collegiate approach to professional learning. They work well together to improve children's experiences which ensures children are motivated and eager to learn.
- Senior leaders' and staff's effective use of data allows them to identify and plan the correct interventions for children. They deliver well-planned support which is helping children to experience success.

The following areas for improvement were identified and discussed with the headteacher and a representative from North Ayrshire Council.

- In the nursery, continue to develop approaches to support children to talk about their wellbeing through the focus on children's rights. This will support the planned work on improving children's opportunities to explore diversity.
- In the school, as planned, continue to develop approaches to assess children's learning and track their progress across all curricular areas.
- In the school and nursery, continue to help children to identify and talk about the skills they are developing through the range of experiences they take part in.



We gathered evidence to enable us to evaluate the school's work using four quality indicators from [How good is our school? \(4<sup>th</sup> edition\)](#) and [How good is our early learning and childcare?](#) Quality indicators help schools, local authorities and inspectors to judge what is working well and what needs to be improved. Following the inspection of each school, the Scottish Government gathers details of our evaluations to keep track of how well Scottish schools are doing.

## Here are Education Scotland's evaluations for Beith Primary School and Nursery Class

Quality indicators for the primary stages	Evaluation
<b>Leadership of change</b>	<b>very good</b>
<b>Learning, teaching and assessment</b>	<b>very good</b>
<b>Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion</b>	<b>very good</b>
<b>Raising attainment and achievement</b>	<b>very good</b>
Descriptions of the evaluations are available from: <a href="#">How good is our school? (4<sup>th</sup> edition), Appendix 3: The six-point scale</a>	

Quality indicators for the nursery class	Evaluation
<b>Leadership of change</b>	<b>very good</b>
<b>Learning, teaching and assessment</b>	<b>very good</b>
<b>Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion</b>	<b>very good</b>
<b>Securing children's progress</b>	<b>very good</b>
Descriptions of the evaluations are available from: <a href="#">How good is our early learning and childcare? Appendix 1: The six-point scale</a>	

A more detailed document called Summarised Inspection Findings (SIF) will be available on the Education Scotland website at:  
[Reports page | Inspection reports | Education Scotland](#)

### What happens next?

We are confident that the school has the capacity to continue to improve and so we will make no more visits in connection with this inspection. North Ayrshire Council will inform parents/carers about the school's progress as part of its arrangements for reporting on the quality of its schools.

Gillian Frew  
HM Inspector

25 April 2023

Dear Parent/Carer

In February 2023, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland visited Greenwood Academy. During our visit, we talked to parents/carers and young people and worked closely with the headteacher and staff.

The inspection team found the following strengths in the school's work.

- The leadership of the headteacher, supported by the leadership team have worked well with staff to bring a sharper focus to school improvement and professional learning.
- Approaches to monitoring and tracking young people's progress are used well to inform school based interventions. The extended leadership team and staff are working well together to drive forward school improvement, share practice and initiate change.
- Strong partnership working with the local college and local business is impacting positively on learners' experiences, supporting strong levels of personal development and valuable qualifications.
- A strengthened focus on literacy and numeracy is leading to improved attainment for young people throughout the school.

The following areas for improvement were identified and discussed with the headteacher and a representative from North Ayrshire Council.

- More consistently high expectations of all young people and high-quality learning experiences are required across the school to support, motivate and engage young people.
- Continue to work together with young people, parents and staff to promote positive relationships across the school. The school should also review their approaches to wellbeing, equality and inclusion to ensure that all young people feel valued, included and respected in the life and work of the school.
- Improve the quality of passes in National Qualifications and support more young people to be ambitious and to achieve qualifications at the highest level.

We gathered evidence to enable us to evaluate the school's work using four quality indicators from [How good is our school? \(4<sup>th</sup> edition\)](#). Quality indicators help schools, local authorities and inspectors to judge what is working well and what needs to be improved. Following the inspection of each school, the Scottish Government gathers details of our evaluations to keep track of how well Scottish schools are doing.

## Here are Education Scotland's evaluations for Greenwood Academy

Quality indicators	Evaluation
<b>Leadership of change</b>	<b>good</b>
<b>Learning, teaching and assessment</b>	<b>satisfactory</b>
<b>Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion</b>	<b>satisfactory</b>
<b>Raising attainment and achievement</b>	<b>good</b>
Descriptions of the evaluations are available from: <a href="#">How good is our school? (4<sup>th</sup> edition), Appendix 3: The six-point scale</a>	

A more detailed document called Summarised Inspection Findings (SIF) will be available on the Education Scotland website at: [Reports page | Inspection reports | Education Scotland](#)

### What happens next?

We are confident that the school has the capacity to continue to improve and so we will make no more visits in connection with this inspection. North Ayrshire Council will inform parents/carers about the school's progress as part of its arrangements for reporting on the quality of its schools.

Teri McIntosh  
HM Inspector

9 May 2023

Dear Parent/Carer

In February 2023, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland visited Auchenhavrie Academy. During our visit, we talked to parents/carers and young people and worked closely with the headteacher and staff.

The inspection team found the following strengths in the school's work.

- The headteacher, senior leaders and staff have very successfully developed and maintained a supportive, safe and positive environment for learning. Young people are eager participants in their learning and demonstrate high levels of engagement.
- Staff have a very strong understanding of the needs of all young people in their community. They promote equity successfully by having high aspirations for all young people. This has resulted in nearly all young people moving on to positive destinations, such as university, college or work.
- Young people are very aware of the skills they are developing and are well motivated to learn across different contexts.
- The headteacher and senior leaders have led effectively a positive and sustained approach to improving the attainment and achievements for all young people.

The following areas for improvement were identified and discussed with the headteacher and a representative from North Ayrshire Council.

- Senior leaders and staff should continue to work together to increase further the consistency of high-quality learning and teaching across the school.
- Teachers should improve further their approaches to meeting the learning needs of all young people, including the most able.

We gathered evidence to enable us to evaluate the school's work using quality indicators from [How good is our school? \(4th edition\)](#). Quality indicators help schools, local authorities and inspectors to judge what is working well and what needs to be improved. Following the inspection of each school, the Scottish Government gathers details of our evaluations to keep track of how well Scottish schools are doing.

## Here are Education Scotland's evaluations for Auchenharvie Academy

Quality indicators	Evaluation
<b>Learning, teaching and assessment</b>	<b>very good</b>
<b>Raising attainment and achievement</b>	<b>very good</b>
Descriptions of the evaluations are available from: <a href="#">How good is our school? (4<sup>th</sup> edition), Appendix 3: The six-point scale.</a>	

A more detailed document called Summarised Inspection Findings (SIF) will be available on the Education Scotland website at: [Reports page | Inspection reports | Education Scotland](#)

### What happens next?

We are confident that the school has the capacity to continue to improve and so we will make no more visits in connection with this inspection. North Ayrshire Council will inform parents/carers about the school's progress as part of its arrangements for reporting on the quality of its schools.

Stuart Cathro  
HM Inspector

16 May 2023

Dear Parent/Carer

In February 2023, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland visited Glebe Primary School. During our visit, we talked to parents/carers and children and worked closely with the headteacher and staff.

The inspection team found the following strengths in the school's work.

- The outstanding leadership of the headteacher in driving forward improvement. She has developed successfully an aspirational learning community. She empowers children and staff to lead and make genuine and valuable contributions to the life of the school and beyond.
- The significant impact of approaches to nurture, promoting positive relationships and improving wellbeing. This results in a highly supportive and inclusive learning environment where children thrive.
- Articulate children who are motivated, resilient and keen to do their very best. They are confident, responsible and respectful, showing kindness, care and understanding towards each other.
- The very strong approaches of all staff to meeting the needs of children who face barriers to their learning. Led very effectively by the depute headteacher, all staff are highly responsive to the needs and changing circumstances of children and their families.
- The commitment and dedication of all staff in ensuring all children benefit from a broad range of quality learning experiences. This results in very strong attainment and high achievement for children.

The following areas for improvement were identified and discussed with the headteacher and a representative from North Ayrshire Council.

- Continue to take forward priorities for improvement, including promoting creativity and innovation in learning, as planned.

We gathered evidence to enable us to evaluate the school's work using four quality indicators from [How good is our school? \(4<sup>th</sup> edition\)](#). Quality indicators help schools, local authorities and inspectors to judge what is working well and what needs to be improved. Following the inspection of each school, the Scottish Government gathers details of our evaluations to keep track of how well Scottish schools are doing.

## Here are Education Scotland's evaluations for Glebe Primary School

Quality indicators	Evaluation
<b>Leadership of change</b>	<b>very good</b>
<b>Learning, teaching and assessment</b>	<b>very good</b>
<b>Ensuring wellbeing, equality and inclusion</b>	<b>excellent</b>
<b>Raising attainment and achievement</b>	<b>very good</b>
Descriptions of the evaluations are available from: <a href="#">How good is our school? (4<sup>th</sup> edition), Appendix 3: The six-point scale</a>	

A more detailed document called Summarised Inspection Findings (SIF) will be available on the Education Scotland website at: [Reports page | Inspection reports | Education Scotland](#)

### What happens next?

We are confident that the school has the capacity to continue to improve and so we will make no more visits in connection with this inspection. North Ayrshire Council will inform parents/carers about the school's progress as part of its arrangements for reporting on the quality of its schools.

Susie Smith  
HM Inspector



16 May 2023

Dear Parent/Carer

In March 2023, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland visited Skelmorlie Primary School. During our visit, we talked to parents/carers and children and worked closely with the headteacher and staff.

The inspection team found the following strengths in the school's work.

- Children who are confident, articulate and proud of their school. They experience positive relationships with all staff and their peers.
- The effective teamwork across the school to plan and deliver targeted support. All staff work well together to support children with barriers to their learning. Children are well supported in class and make good progress.
- Children benefit from learning in a range of motivating learning spaces and through increasingly relevant contexts. This supports children well to understand how their learning in the classroom links to their life beyond school.

The following areas for improvement were identified and discussed with the headteacher and a representative from North Ayrshire Council

- Continue to develop approaches to planning learning across the curriculum. Ensure all learning builds on what children already know and is appropriately challenging.
- Continue to develop approaches to tracking and monitoring children's progress and attainment. Ensure all staff use tracking information effectively to identify next steps in learning for all children.

We gathered evidence to enable us to evaluate the school's work using quality indicators from [How good is our school? \(4<sup>th</sup> edition\)](#). Quality indicators help schools, local authorities and inspectors to judge what is working well and what needs to be improved. Following the inspection of each school, the Scottish Government gathers details of our evaluations to keep track of how well Scottish schools are doing.

## Here are Education Scotland's evaluations for Skelmorlie Primary School

Quality indicators	Evaluation
<b>Learning, teaching and assessment</b>	<b>good</b>
<b>Raising attainment and achievement</b>	<b>good</b>
Descriptions of the evaluations are available from: <a href="#">How good is our school? (4<sup>th</sup> edition), Appendix 3: The six-point scale</a>	

A more detailed document called Summarised Inspection Findings (SIF) will be available on the Education Scotland website at:  
[Reports page | Inspection reports | Education Scotland](#)

### What happens next?

We are confident that the school has the capacity to continue to improve and so we will make no more visits in connection with this inspection. North Ayrshire Council will inform parents/carers about the school's progress as part of its arrangements for reporting on the quality of its schools.

Marion Carlton  
 HM Inspector

29 August 2023

Dear Parent/Carer

In May 2023, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland visited Corrie Primary School and Nursery Class. During our visit, we talked to parents/carers and children and worked closely with the headteacher and staff.

The inspection team found the following strengths in the school's work.

- The headteacher has created a positive, nurturing and inclusive culture with a strong sense of belonging across the school and nursery. Staff support children well which is resulting in children who are motivated, engaged and confident in their learning.
- In the nursery, the quality of the environments and learning experiences support children well to make choices and to lead their play.
- In the school, teachers plan well activities and experiences that meet the needs of all children. This results in children making good progress in reading, listening and talking and numeracy.

The following areas for improvement were identified and discussed with the headteacher and a representative from North Ayrshire Council.

- In the nursery, develop further approaches to planning and assessing children's learning to increase levels of challenge. This should support children to make the best possible progress.
- In the school, teachers should continue to improve children's progress in writing. They should plan more regular learning opportunities for children to write at length and apply skills to a wider range of contexts and audiences.

We gathered evidence to enable us to evaluate the school's work using quality indicators from [How good is our school? \(4<sup>th</sup> edition\)](#) and [How good is our early learning and childcare?](#) Quality indicators help schools, local authorities and inspectors to judge what is working well and what needs to be improved. Following the inspection of each school, the Scottish Government gathers details of our evaluations to keep track of how well Scottish schools are doing.

## Here are Education Scotland's evaluations for Corrie Primary School and Nursery Class

Quality indicators for the primary school	Evaluation
<b>Learning, teaching and assessment</b>	<b>good</b>
<b>Raising attainment and achievement</b>	<b>good</b>
Descriptions of the evaluations are available from: <a href="#">How good is our school? (4<sup>th</sup> edition), Appendix 3: The six-point scale</a>	

Quality indicators for the nursery class	Evaluation
<b>Learning, teaching and assessment</b>	<b>good</b>
<b>Securing children's progress</b>	<b>good</b>
Descriptions of the evaluations are available from: <a href="#">How good is our early learning and childcare? Appendix 1: The six-point scale</a>	

A more detailed document called Summarised Inspection Findings (SIF) will be available on the Education Scotland website at: [Reports page | Inspection reports | Education Scotland](#)

### What happens next?

We are confident that the school has the capacity to continue to improve and so we will make no more visits in connection with this inspection. North Ayrshire Council will inform parents/carers about the school's progress as part of its arrangements for reporting on the quality of its schools.

Gillian Frew  
HM Inspector

29 August 2023

Dear Parent/Carer

In May 2023, a team of inspectors from Education Scotland visited Shiskine Primary School and Nursery Class. During our visit, we talked to parents/carers and children and worked closely with the headteacher and staff.

The inspection team found the following strengths in the school's work.

- The headteacher has successfully created a professional culture where all staff learn together to improve outcomes for children. Across the school and nursery, all staff work very well together as a committed team.
- The wide range of interesting experiences that children enjoy within the school, nursery and in the community. These are developing children's confidence and social skills successfully.
- The very positive, nurturing relationships between adults and children across the school and nursery. Children are confident, engaged and enthusiastic learners who are proud of their school community.

The following areas for improvement were identified and discussed with the headteacher and a representative from North Ayrshire Council.

- Continue to improve approaches to assessing and tracking children's progress and achievement in the school and nursery.
- As planned, continue to develop approaches to planning, learning and teaching across all curricular areas in the school and nursery. This should ensure that all children, including those requiring additional support, receive the right level of support and challenge in their learning.

We gathered evidence to enable us to evaluate the school's work using quality indicators from [How good is our school? \(4<sup>th</sup> edition\)](#) and [How good is our early learning and childcare?](#). Quality indicators help schools, local authorities and inspectors to judge what is working well and what needs to be improved. Following the inspection of each school, the Scottish Government gathers details of our evaluations to keep track of how well Scottish schools are doing.

## Here are Education Scotland's evaluations for Shiskine Primary School and Nursery Class

Quality indicators for the primary school	Evaluation
<b>Learning, teaching and assessment</b>	<b>good</b>
<b>Raising attainment and achievement</b>	<b>good</b>
Descriptions of the evaluations are available from: <a href="#">How good is our school? (4<sup>th</sup> edition), Appendix 3: The six-point scale</a>	

Quality indicators for the nursery class	Evaluation
<b>Learning, teaching and assessment</b>	<b>good</b>
<b>Securing children's progress</b>	<b>good</b>
Descriptions of the evaluations are available from: <a href="#">How good is our early learning and childcare? Appendix 1: The six-point scale</a>	

A more detailed document called Summarised Inspection Findings (SIF) will be available on the Education Scotland website at:  
<https://education.gov.scot/inspection-and-review/find-an-inspection-report/find-an-inspection-report/details?id=4351>

### What happens next?

We are confident that the school has the capacity to continue to improve and so we will make no more visits in connection with this inspection. North Ayrshire Council will inform parents/carers about the school's progress as part of its arrangements for reporting on the quality of its schools.

Helen Mulholland  
HM Inspector



## Appendix 3: The six-point scale

The six-point scale is a tool for grading the quality indicators. It is mainly used by Education Scotland, local authorities and other governing bodies for the purpose of national and/or local benchmarking across a number of establishments. It is not necessary for individual schools to measure themselves against the six-point scale although they may choose to do so. It should be noted that, when a grading is applied, it is for the whole quality indicator. Individual themes should not be graded. In education, an evaluation can be arrived at in a range of contexts. We need to bear in mind that awarding levels using a quality scale will always be more of a professional skill than a technical process. However, the following general guidelines should be consistently applied.

<b>Excellent</b>	An evaluation of excellent means that this aspect of the school's work is outstanding and sector-leading. The experiences and achievements of all children and young people are of a very high quality. An evaluation of excellent represents an outstanding standard of provision which exemplifies very best practice, based on achieving equity and inclusion and a deep professional understanding which is being shared beyond the school to support system-wide improvement. It implies that very high levels of performance are sustainable and will be maintained.
<b>Very good</b>	An evaluation of very good means that there are major strengths in this aspect of the school's work. There are very few areas for improvement and any that do exist do not significantly diminish learners' experiences. An evaluation of very good represents a high standard of provision for all children and young people and is a standard that should be achievable by all. There is an expectation that the school will make continued use of self-evaluation to plan further improvements and will work towards improving provision and performance to excellent.
<b>Good</b>	An evaluation of good means that there are important strengths within the school's work yet there remains some aspects which require improvement. The strengths have a significantly positive impact on almost all children and young people. The quality of learners' experiences is diminished in some way by aspects in which improvement is required. It implies that the school should seek to improve further the areas of important strength, and also take action to address the areas for improvement.

<b>Satisfactory</b>	An evaluation of satisfactory means that the strengths within this aspect of the school's work just outweigh the weaknesses. It indicates that learners have access to a basic level of provision. It represents a standard where the strengths have a positive impact on learners' experiences. While the weaknesses are not important enough to have a substantially adverse impact, they do constrain the overall quality of learners' experiences. The school needs to take action to address areas of weakness by building on its strengths.
<b>Weak</b>	An evaluation of weak means that there are important weaknesses within this aspect of the school's work. While there may be some strength, the important weaknesses, either individually or collectively, are sufficient to diminish learners' experiences in substantial ways. It implies the need for prompt, structured and planned action on the part of the school.
<b>Unsatisfactory</b>	An evaluation of unsatisfactory means there are major weaknesses within this aspect of the school's work which require immediate remedial action. Learners' experiences are at risk in significant respects. In almost all cases, this will require support from senior managers in planning and carrying out the necessary actions to effect improvement. This will usually involve working alongside staff in other schools or agencies.







**NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**

**25 January 2024**

**Audit and Scrutiny Committee**

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<b>Title:</b>	<b>Education Authority Annual Plan 2023-24</b>
<b>Purpose:</b>	To inform the committee about the content of the statutory annual Education Authority Annual Plan for 2023-24.
<b>Recommendation:</b>	That the committee: (a) Notes the content of the Education Authority Annual Plan for 2023-24 and its publication as required by the Education (Scotland) Act 2016.

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**1. Executive Summary**

- 1.1 The Education Authority Annual Plan sets out how North Ayrshire Council will deliver the strategic priorities of the National Improvement Framework. In addition, the plan sets out the expected educational benefits of the improvement activities and how success will be measured.
- 1.2 The Education Authority Annual Plan primarily aligns with the Council Plan 2023-28 strategic aim to “transition to a wellbeing economy, delivering prosperity, wellbeing and resilience for local people” and more specifically operationalises activities to improve educational attainment and achievement and reduce the attainment gap. This plan outlines an ambitious programme for how the Education Service will deliver better outcomes for children, young people, and communities in North Ayrshire.

**2. Background**

- 2.1 The Education (Scotland) Act 2016, which amended the Standards in Scotland’s Schools Act 2000, introduced the National Improvement Framework (NIF) for education and includes a requirement on education authorities to produce annual plans and reports in pursuance of the National Improvement Framework priorities. Annual plans and reports should demonstrate progress and set out expected education benefits as well as how success will be measured.
- 2.2 The National Improvement Framework for Scottish Education 2023 was published in December 2022 and set out the Scottish Government’s vision for Scotland’s children and young people’s progress in learning through excellence and equity. All schools and education authorities have developed annual plans which focus on delivering:

2.2.1 Excellence through raising attainment and improving outcomes: ensuring that every child and young person achieves the highest standards in literacy and numeracy, as well as the values, attitudes, knowledge, and skills necessary to shape a sustainable future as successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens, and effective contributors; and

2.2.2 Achieving equity: ensuring every child and young person has the same opportunity to succeed, no matter their background or shared protected characteristics, with a particular focus on closing the poverty related attainment gap.

2.3 The key priorities set out in the National Improvement Framework for 2023 are:

- Placing the human rights and needs of every child and young person at the centre of education;
- Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing;
- Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people;
- Improvement in skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people; and
- Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy.

2.4 The draft Education Authority annual plan for 2023-24, attached at Appendix 1, aligns both to the national improvement priorities and sets these in the context of North Ayrshire Council Plan 2023-28 strategic aim to "transition to a wellbeing economy, delivering prosperity, wellbeing and resilience for local people."

2.5 In particular, this annual plan will operationalise and support the Council Plan activities linked to "improving educational attainment and achievement and closing the attainment gap."

2.6 This plan also aligns with North Ayrshire Children's Service's Plan and is underpinned by transformation activity within the Education Service, undertaken through the Scottish Attainment Challenge, Supporting Needs, and Expansion of Early Learning and Childcare, to improve outcomes for children and young people.

2.7 This plan contains stretch aims which articulate the service's ambition to improve a range of learner outcomes by 2026. The requirement to include three-year stretch aims within this plan was introduced by Scottish Government in its updated Framework for Recovery and Accelerating Progress, published in May 2023.

2.8 Once approved, the education authority annual plan must be published. A copy has also been sent to Scottish Ministers for reference.

### **3. Proposals**

3.1 It is proposed that the committee:

(a) Notes the content of the Education Authority Annual Plan for 2023-24 and its publication as required by the Education (Scotland) Act 2016.

## **4. Implications/Socio-economic Duty**

### **Financial**

4.1 None.

### **Human Resources**

4.2 None.

### **Legal**

4.3 The production of an Education Authority annual plan is a requirement under the Education (Scotland) Act 2016.

### **Equality/Socio-economic**

4.4 The Education Authority annual plan sets out specific improvement actions designed to improve educational outcomes for all, and also to reduce the impact of poverty on educational attainment.

### **Environmental and Sustainability**

4.5 None.

### **Key Priorities**

4.6 This Service Plan aligns with the Council Plan 2023-28 strategic aim to “transition to a wellbeing economy, delivering prosperity, wellbeing and resilience for local people” and more specifically “improving educational attainment and achievement and closing the attainment gap” activities.

### **Community Wealth Building**

4.7 North Ayrshire’s Education Authority Annual Plan supports North Ayrshire’s Community Wealth Building aspirations through providing high quality skilled workers who can contribute to the local economy. In addition, initiatives outlined in the Education Authority Annual Plan provide a wealth of opportunities for local businesses and people seeking employment in North Ayrshire.

## **5. Consultation**

5.1 The content of the Education Authority annual plan for 2023-24 has been agreed across the education service following rigorous self-evaluation in schools and across the service of the progress towards the previous year’s plan. The process of arriving at the service level priorities and strategic actions included engagement of Head Teacher and the service leadership team. At school level, priorities are identified through engagement with pupils, staff, parents/carers and key partners.

Audrey Sutton  
Executive Director of Communities and Education

For further information please contact **Andrew McClelland, Head of Service (Education)**,  
on **01294324413**.

**Background Papers**

1 – Appendix 1



# Education Service Improvement Plan

2023-26

Includes Action Plan for 2023-24



North Ayrshire Council  
Comhairle Siorrachd Àir a Tuath







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# Introduction



Andrew McClelland  
Head of Service (Education)

**We have no poverty of expectation, opportunity or aspiration for our children, young people and their families. As a result, our over-riding aim is to improve the educational outcomes for all learners, particularly those most disadvantaged learners.**

In almost all aspects of learning there has been a consistent improving trend of achievement across the last decade in North Ayrshire. Throughout, our schools and early learning and childcare settings have had a clear focus on raising attainment and reducing the poverty-related attainment gap, in line with local and national priorities. Nevertheless, the arrival of the coronavirus pandemic in 2020 brought with

it significant challenges for our families and communities. National lockdowns, interrupted learning and significant changes in personal circumstances have impacted on the outcomes achieved by our children and young people.

To mitigate this, we diverted significant resources. We invested in supporting our children and young people and maintaining a determination to make further progress in achievement for all learners. I am pleased to report that we are beginning to see the recovery take effect, with improvements in a range of areas last session.

As part of our ongoing process of self-evaluation, we have scrutinised how well we are doing as a service in supporting recovery and further improvement and we have used this evidence to shape the content of this Education Service Improvement Plan for 2023-26. You will read in the forthcoming pages our priorities for the next three years, which are aligned to North Ayrshire's Council Plan and the National Improvement Framework for Education. This document gives an overview of our priorities for the next three years and also summarises what we will do specifically in session 2023-24, what we aim to improve and how we will measure success.



This plan is ambitious yet achievable for our children and young people. We are confident that outcomes for our learners will continue throughout the life of this three-year plan and beyond. To demonstrate our sustained aspirations for and commitment to the children and young people we serve, we have included stretch aims for improvement over the next three years.

All educational establishments have created their own improvement plans, aligned to the broad priorities and themes within this plan, and tailored to the individual contexts and needs of learners in each school community. These plans are available from individual establishments and are accessible electronically on their websites.

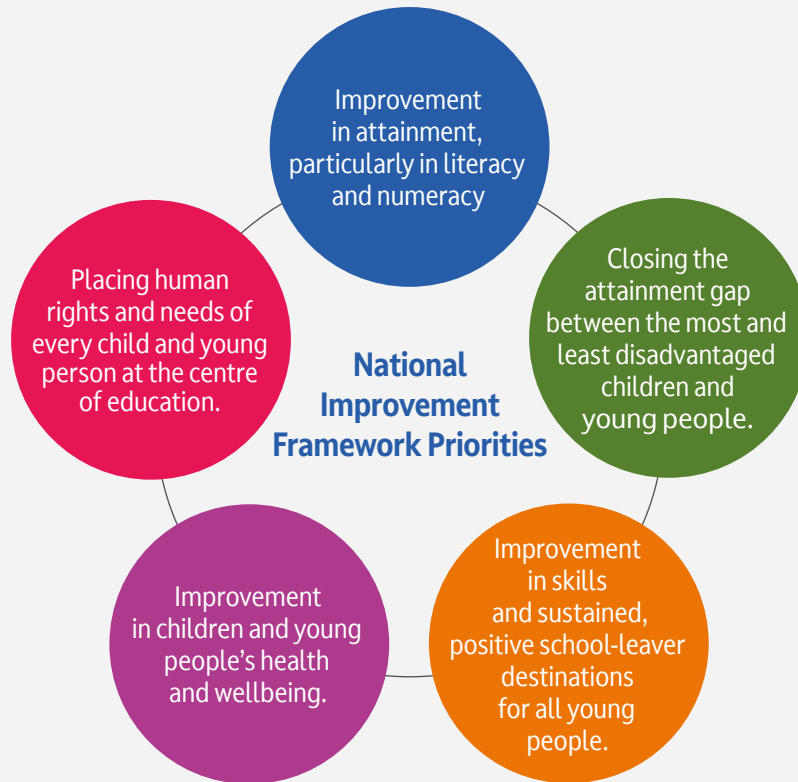
This plan builds on the excellent teamwork across our directorate. It reaffirms our commitment to continuous improvement and to delivering for the children and young people of North Ayrshire.

**We are confident that outcomes for our learners will continue throughout the life of this three-year plan and beyond. To demonstrate our sustained aspirations for and commitment to the children and young people we serve, we have included stretch aims for improvement over the next three years.**



# The National Context

This plan is aligned to the priorities of the [2023 National Improvement Framework \(NIF\)](#) and is designed to deliver the dual aims of excellence and equity in education for North Ayrshire's children and young people. Our five priorities for the three years from 2023-26 are as follows:



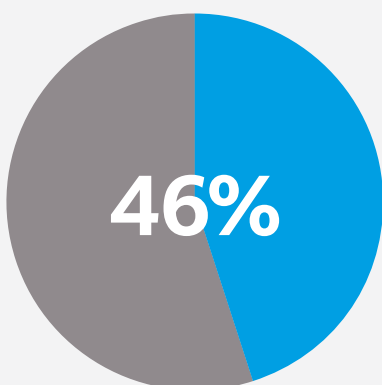
In the creation of this plan, we have built on a robust evaluation of our local context and the progress we have made to date in the improvement of educational outcomes for young people. We have taken account of a range of key national drivers of change which will affect education provision in North Ayrshire, including:

- The current national programme of educational reform
- The ongoing national review of the curriculum
- The ongoing national review of supporting needs
- The priorities and drivers of the National Improvement Framework
- The refreshed Attainment Scotland Fund
- The national Child Poverty Delivery Plan
- The ongoing work to embed the articles of the UNCRC
- The Promise and its associated delivery plan
- Revised Child Protection Guidelines
- The national Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy

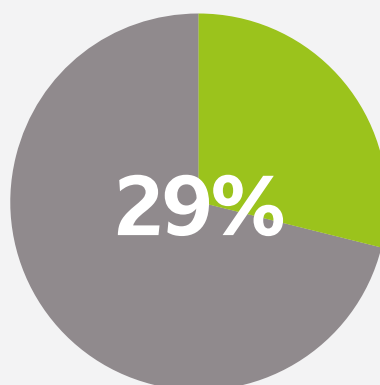


## The Local Context

The Education Service in North Ayrshire Council is responsible for the education of 18,061 pupils across the authority's primary, secondary and additional support needs schools. A further 2,064 children attend early learning and childcare settings in North Ayrshire.



46% of our Children and young people live in postcodes in the most deprived areas of Scotland according to SIMD.



29% of our Children and young people are living in relative poverty, according to UK government statistics.



6,135 of our Children and young people are registered for school footwear and clothing grants.



# Council Priorities

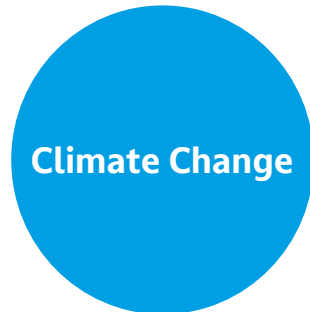
North Ayrshire Council's current priorities are:



To transition to a wellbeing economy, delivering prosperity, wellbeing and resilience for local people.



We will have active, inclusive and resilient communities.



To achieve net-zero by 2030.

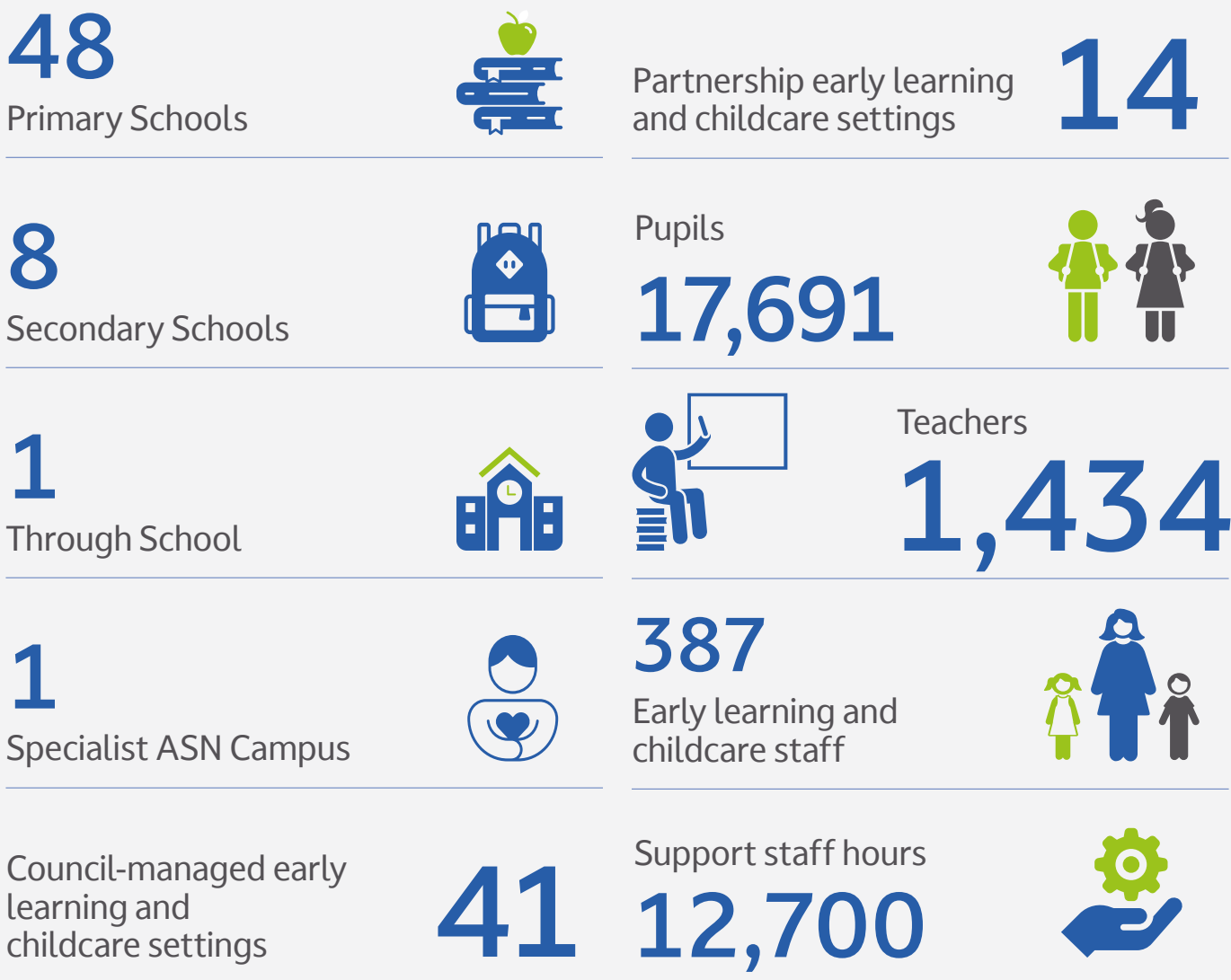


A community wealth building council that is efficient and accessible, maximising investment and focusing resources towards our priorities.



The education service is part of North Ayrshire Council’s Communities and Education Directorate, which works towards developing a society where everyone, has the same life chances to grow, prosper and have fulfilling and healthy lives. The education service has a central role in removing barriers and supporting delivery of the priority outcome to ensure North Ayrshire’s children and young people have the best start in life.

Education in North Ayrshire is delivered through:



This plan should be read in the context of these associated local plans:



North Ayrshire Council Plan 2019-24



North Ayrshire Children Services Plan 2020/2023



North Ayrshire Child Poverty Report 2021-22 and Action Plan 2022-23



SWEIC – Regional Improvement Plan 2022-23





# Improving as a Service

Our commitment to continuous improvement permeates the work of the service. Our establishments work very closely together with each other and our central team in a culture of positive support and challenge. Our overarching approach can be summarised as follows:

We strive to be a learning organisation.

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We support the principles of subsidiarity and empowerment of our head teachers and school communities.

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We evaluate the impact of the central education team in supporting consistency of improvement across our educational establishments.

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We work closely in partnership with colleagues across our Regional Improvement Collaborative and nationally.

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We are investing in the quality of our teachers, practitioners and support staff.

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We are investing in our learning environments to ensure they maximise opportunities for engagement and achievement for all.

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We are developing the leaders of tomorrow through our innovative leadership and facilitation programmes.

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# North Ayrshire Council Education Service Improvement Plan 2023-26

For the three years from 2023-26, the NAC Education Service Improvement Plan will focus on a stable and consistent set of priorities. Under each of the five priorities, we will undertake improvement activities grouped together under key themes. These will remain consistent across the three years. Each academic year, we will update the specific actions we will take forward during that school year in pursuit of these priorities.

The high-level priorities and themes of our Education Service Improvement Plan for 2023-26 are as follows:

## PRIORITY 01

Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy.

### THEMES:

- High quality learning, teaching and assessment
- Raising attainment and achievement



## PRIORITY 02

Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people.

### THEMES:

- Interventions to reduce gaps
- Specific focus on identified target groups, including care experienced learners



## PRIORITY 03

Improvement in skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people.

### THEMES:

- Improving skills
- Partnerships to improve post-school learner outcomes



## PRIORITY 04

Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing.

### THEMES:

- Improving attendance
- Supporting mental health and wellbeing
- Supporting physical health and wellbeing
- Supporting social and emotional wellbeing



## PRIORITY 05

Placing human rights and needs of every child and young person at the centre of education.

### THEMES:

- Supporting children's needs
- Maximising learner voice and participation
- Maximising parent/carer involvement and engagement



The work of the Service Improvement Plan will be enhanced through a focus on STRATEGIC SUPPORT themes as follows:

- Policies and operating procedures
- Creating inspiring learning environments
- Investing in leadership
- Workforce planning



## Improving outcomes for learners – our stretch aims

Below are the key core outcomes for learners we are working to improve by 2026, based on the most recently available cohort and performance information.

CORE OUTCOMES FOR IMPROVEMENT		Performance up to 2023					Stretch Aim (by August 2026)	Actual Progress Summary (updated annually)		
Description of improvement	Performance Measure	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023		2024	2025	2026
Core Stretch Aim 1 The proportion of learners in North Ayrshire who achieve the expected levels of attainment in literacy at P1, P4 and P7 will increase.	All learners	74%	n/a	59%	67%	68%	75%	-	-	-
	Q1	67%	n/a	49%	60%	63%	72%	-	-	-
	Q2-5	79%	n/a	67%	74%	74%	80%	-	-	-
	Gap 1 (Q1 vv Q2-5)	-12pp	n/a	-18pp	-14pp	-11pp	-8pp	-	-	-
Core Stretch Aim 2 The proportion of learners in North Ayrshire who achieve the expected levels of attainment in numeracy at P1, P4 and P7 will increase.	All learners	79%	n/a	67%	75%	76%	81%	-	-	-
	Q1	74%	n/a	58%	69%	71%	78%	-	-	-
	Q2-5	84%	n/a	75%	81%	80%	86%	-	-	-
	Gap 1 (Q1 vv Q2-5)	-10pp	n/a	-17pp	-12pp	-9pp	-8pp	-	-	-
Core Stretch Aim 3 The proportion of school leavers who achieve 1 or more awards at SCQF level 5 or better will increase.	All learners	87%	86%	90%	89%	n/a	92%	-	-	-
	Q1	80%	79%	83%	82%	n/a	89%	-	-	-
	Q2-5	93%	92%	95%	93%	n/a	95%	-	-	-
	Gap 1 (Q1 vv Q2-5)	-13pp	-13pp	-12pp	-11pp	n/a	-6pp	-	-	-
Core Stretch Aim 4 The proportion of school leavers who achieve 1 or more passes at SCQF level 6 (grades A-C) or better will increase.	All learners	65%	67%	71%	68%	n/a	74%	-	-	-
	Q1	52%	55%	61%	56%	n/a	62%	-	-	-
	Q2-5	75%	76%	78%	77%	n/a	80%	-	-	-
	Gap 1 (Q1 vv Q2-5)	-23pp	-21pp	-17pp	-21pp	n/a	-18pp	-	-	-
Core Stretch Aim 5 The proportion of 16-19 year-olds who are participating in education, employment or training will increase.	All learners	90.5%	90.6%	90.1%	90.8%	93.9%	95%	-	-	-
	Q1	87.8%	86.9%	85.3%	88.0%	90.6%	92.5%	-	-	-
	Q2-5	92.4%	93.5%	93.9%	93.0%	96.2%	97.5%	-	-	-
	Gap 1 (Q1 vv Q2-5)	-4.6pp	-6.6pp	-8.6pp	-5pp	-5.6pp	-5pp	-	-	-
Core Stretch Aim 6 School attendance levels will increase.	All learners	92.1%	91.6%	91.4%	89.4%	88.8%	93%	-	-	-
	Q1	90.7%	90.1%	89.9%	87.7%	86.7%	92%	-	-	-
	Q2-5	93.2%	92.8%	92.8%	90.8%	90.5%	94%	-	-	-
	Gap 1 (Q1 vv Q2-5)	-2.5pp	-2.7pp	-2.9pp	-3.1pp	-3.8pp	-2pp	-	-	-

## Improving outcomes for learners – our stretch aims (cont.)

Below are the additional outcomes for learners we are working to improve by 2026.

ADDITIONAL OUTCOMES FOR IMPROVEMENT		Performance up to 2023					Stretch Aim (by August 2026)	Actual Progress Summary (updated annually)		
Description of improvement	Performance Measure	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023		2024	2025	2026
Additional Stretch Aim 1 The proportion of children achieving local early learning milestones by the start of P1 will increase.	All learners	78.2%	n/a	72.0%	78.5%	81.4%	83%	-	-	-
	Q1	75.3%	n/a	61.8%	75.6%	75.1%	79.5%	-	-	-
	Q2-5	80.7%	n/a	80.8%	81.4%	86.8%	86%	-	-	-
	Gap 1 (Q1 vv Q2-5)	-5.4pp	n/a	-19pp	-5.8pp	-11.7pp	-6.5pp	-	-	-
Additional Stretch Aim 2 The proportion of school leavers achieving literacy at SCQF Level 5 or better will increase.	All learners	83.8%	81.5%	85.0%	83.8%	n/a	85.5%	-	-	-
	Q1	75.0%	73.3%	78.7%	76.4%	n/a	79%	-	-	-
	Q2-5	90.8%	87.5%	90.0%	89.0%	n/a	90.5%	-	-	-
	Gap 1 (Q1 vv Q2-5)	-15.8pp	-14.2pp	-11.3pp	-12.6pp	n/a	-11.5pp	-	-	-
Additional Stretch Aim 3 The proportion of school leavers achieving numeracy at SCQF Level 5 or better will increase.	All learners	69.3%	70.8%	72.3%	71.4%	n/a	74%	-	-	-
	Q1	58.5%	59.3%	64.0%	60.6%	n/a	65%	-	-	-
	Q2-5	77.7%	79.1%	78.6%	79.1%	n/a	81%	-	-	-
	Gap 1 (Q1 vv Q2-5)	-19.1pp	-19.8pp	-14.6pp	-18.5pp	n/a	-16pp	-	-	-
Additional Stretch Aim 4 The average “complementary tariff score” of school leavers’ best five qualifications will increase.	All learners	599	643	665	643	n/a	675	-	-	-
	Q1	465	495	539	508	n/a	570	-	-	-
	Q2-5	703	751	765	740	n/a	775	-	-	-
	Gap 1 (Q1 vv Q2-5)	-238pts	-256pts	-226pts	-232pts	n/a	-205pts	-	-	-
Additional Stretch Aim 5 The proportion of care experienced school leavers who achieve 1 or more awards at SCQF levels 4, 5 and 6 will increase.	1+ Level 4 or better	84.7%	77.2%	86.1%	90.3%	n/a	92.5%	-	-	-
	1+ Level 5 or better	50.6%	53.2%	62.4%	67.7%	n/a	69.5%	-	-	-
	1+ Level 6 or better	27.1%	29.1%	40.6%	34.4%	n/a	36.5%	-	-	-
Additional Stretch Aim 6 The proportion of care experienced school leavers who achieve literacy and numeracy qualifications at SCQF levels 4 and 5 or better will increase.	Lit L4 or better	75.5%	74.4%	71.7%	81.6%	n/a	84%	-	-	-
	Lit L5 or better	39.6%	53.9%	40.0%	51.0%	n/a	55%	-	-	-
	Num L4 or better	64.2%	69.2%	55.0%	79.6%	n/a	84%	-	-	-
	Num L5 or better	26.4%	38.5%	33.3%	32.7%	n/a	45%	-	-	-

## Appendix: Specific improvement actions for session 2023-24

### Priority 1: Improvement in attainment, particularly in literacy and numeracy

Theme 1: High quality learning, teaching and assessment		
What we will do	What we aim to improve	How we will measure success
Develop a partnership approach to our new model of professional learning to support improved quality of learning and teaching in the classroom, and include additional investment in high quality professional learning for support staff and early years practitioners.	Improve consistency and quality of learning, teaching and assessment across all establishments.	Quality of learning, teaching and assessment will be evaluated as good or better in all establishments. (HGIOS 2.3/HGIOELC 2.3/QIF/School Reviews)
Extend play pedagogy in the early stages of primary following a review of the pilot programme and work in partnership to increase outdoor active play in primary school settings.	Improve the cognitive, physical, social, and emotional well-being of children, and support the development of early level skills required for study, work and relationships.	The proportion of children achieving NAC early learning milestones by the end of ELC and early level by the end of P1 will increase. (Milestones data/ACEL/stretch aim)
Review, update and implement authority-wide frameworks for learning to support high quality learning and teaching across all schools and EYCs – including: Literacy; Outdoor learning/STEM; Early learning; Health & Wellbeing	Improve consistency of quality and build on and extend existing good practice.	Quality of learning, teaching and assessment will be evaluated as good or better in all establishments. (HGIOS 2.3/HGIOELC 2.3/QIF/School Reviews)
Support establishments to achieve Digital Schools status, ensuring that digital technologies are a central component of our approaches to quality learning and teaching.	Improve the effective use of digital technologies to enhance learning in all establishments.	The number of schools achieving Digital Schools status will increase. (Digital Schools award/QIF/HGIOS 2.3, 3.3 HGIOELC 2.3, 3.3)
Theme 2: Raising attainment and achievement		
What we will do	What we aim to improve	How we will measure success
Further enhance approaches to supporting and challenging schools/EYCs to make effective use of performance data to plan for further improvements in attainment. This will be supported through the development of new data visualisation resources.	Improve learner attainment and achievement at all levels.	Raising attainment and achievement will be evaluated as good or better in all establishments. (HGIOS 3.2 HGIOELC 3.2/QIF)
Implement further target setting arrangements to raise attainment and achievement for all.	Improve the quality of monitoring progress in learning and the effective use of targeted interventions.	The percentage of children and young people achieving the expected Curriculum for Excellence levels will increase (ACEL data) (stretch aims) The percentage of school leavers achieving literacy and numeracy qualifications will increase. (Insight national benchmarks L4,5,6)
Support primary schools to raise attainment in literacy through evidence-based improvement approaches to developing aspects of listening and talking skills in the early stages of primary and writing in the middle stages of primary.	Improve attainment levels in specific focus areas of literacy across a range of establishments.	The overall levels of achievement of school leavers will increase. (Insight attainment for all 20/60/20)

## Priority 2: Closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people

### Theme 1: Interventions to reduce gaps

What we will do	What we aim to improve	How we will measure success
Increase coherence between SEF and PEF interventions and support schools to improve the impact of PEF investments on target groups of learners.	Improve the effectiveness of targeted interventions in reducing the attainment gap.	The gap between the achievement levels of the most and least disadvantaged learners will reduce. (ACEL data/Insight attainment vv deprivation) (stretch aims)
With a specific focus on early learning, enhance the work of our Excellence and Equity Leads team to support the further reduction of the poverty-related achievement gap.	Improve early years outcomes for all children, particularly those most disadvantaged.	The gap between the early learning milestones data of the most and least disadvantaged learners will reduce. (Milestones Data) (stretch aims)
Continue to work closely across North Ayrshire services and third sector partners to reduce the cost of the school day and mitigate the impact of child poverty.	Improve the extent to which our schools and Early Years centres can mitigate the impact of child poverty.	The number of schools demonstrating a poverty aware approach to mitigating the impact of child poverty will increase. (QIF/COSD Toolkit evaluative framework)

### Theme 2: Specific focus on identified target groups, including care experienced learners

What we will do	What we aim to improve	How we will measure success
Continue to implement the strategic actions of the Promise, through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>further enhancing supports for care experienced children and young people, including mentoring services, that enable them to attain and achieve in line with their peers.</li> <li>expanding MCR Pathways programme to involve all mainland secondary schools.</li> </ul>	Improve the attendance, engagement and achievement of care experienced children and young people.	Attendance levels will improve and exclusion levels will reduce for all care experienced learners. (Seemis attendance/exclusion data) Achievement levels will improve for care experienced learners. (ACEL data/Insight average complementary tariff scores) The gap specifically between the achievement levels of care experienced learners and all other learners will reduce. (Milestone Data/ACEL data/Insight average complementary tariff scores)

## Priority 3: Improvement in skills and sustained, positive school-leaver destinations for all young people

### Theme 1: Improved skills

What we will do	What we aim to improve	How we will measure success
Commence a review of the curriculum across secondary schools.	Improve the shared understanding of the purpose and design of the curriculum in order to increase opportunities to maximise the successes and achievements of all our learners.	The number and quality of successful student presentations across all SCQF qualifications will increase. <i>(Insight breadth and depth/Insight average complementary tariff scores)</i>
Increase direct links within the curriculum to the Ayrshire Growth Deal and design further opportunities for skills development in a range of contexts.	Improve the articulation between curriculum and skills development through an increased knowledge and understanding of the Ayrshire Growth Deal.	The number of secondary schools engaging with Ayrshire College Innovation Bursts will increase. <i>(College participation data)</i> The senior phase curriculum offer will be broadened to recognise the 5 key programmes within the Ayrshire Growth Deal: <i>Aerospace and Space/Communities/Economic Infrastructure/Energy, Circular Economy, and Environment/Tourism</i> <i>(Qualifications data)</i>

### Theme 2: Partnerships to improve learner outcomes post-school

What we will do	What we aim to improve	How we will measure success
Through DYW co-ordinators and other partners, embed approaches to planning, supporting and tracking post-school destinations for all school leavers.	Improve the levels of sustained positive destinations for our young people.	The proportion of young people entering and sustaining positive destinations will increase. <i>(Insight positive destinations data)</i>
Strengthen partnership work with the NAC Local Employability Partnership, Skills Development Scotland and Ayrshire college to support sustained, positive participation in education, training or work for all young people up to the age of 19.	Improve participation levels for all young people up to the age of 19, through enhanced partnership working.	The proportion of young people positively participating in education, training or work will increase. <i>(Annual Participation Measure)</i>

## Priority 4: Improvement in children and young people's health and wellbeing

Theme 1: Supporting mental health and wellbeing		
What we will do	What we aim to improve	How we will measure success
Implement and evaluate the revised school counselling service across all schools.	Improve the targeting of the counselling resource to support the mental health & wellbeing needs of identified learners.	Children/young people will report increased engagement, satisfaction, and improved wellbeing following counselling and access to other wellbeing supports. (CORE/SDQ/ crisis counselling measures)
Continue to embed whole school approaches to supporting children's mental health and wellbeing, ensuring integration with community mental health and wellbeing approaches.	Improve early access for children and families to a wide range of high quality universal and targeted activities that will support positive mental health and wellbeing.	An increased number of children/young people will report having their mental health and wellbeing needs met. (Pupil Focus Groups, PASS, LIAM Measures, CYP CMHWB Supports and Services Reporting and Evaluations)
Support establishments to develop evidence-based staff wellbeing approaches around the key themes of autonomy, agency and affiliation for staff.	Improve the range of supports available to staff to support their mental health and wellbeing.	The proportion of staff reporting concerns about their mental health and wellbeing will decrease. (OH reports/staff absence data staff survey)
Theme 2: Supporting social and emotional wellbeing		
What we will do	What we aim to improve	How we will measure success
Establish whole school nurturing approaches in all establishments, including the designation of whole school nurture leads, the implementation of a comprehensive training programme for staff and the establishment of benchmarks to support self-evaluation and consistency of practice.	Improve the consistency of pupil experience of whole school nurturing approaches through the increased staff knowledge and application of these approaches in practice.	Staff knowledge and confidence in applying whole school nurture and relationship based approaches will improve and pupil outcomes will improve. (Nurture staff survey/QIF /QI3.1 evaluations/SDQ/Exclusion data)
Theme 3: Improving attendance		
What we will do	What we aim to improve	How we will measure success
Develop further universal supports to ensure improved school attendance for all, including updated processes and guidance.	Improve attendance through enhanced approaches to monitoring and the creation of agreed interventions to maximise engagement.	Attendance levels will improve, late coming will reduce and exclusion levels will reduce for all learners. (Seemis attendance/exclusion data/ PASS data)
Develop targeted approaches to support improved school attendance for individuals and identified groups of children and young people, including care experienced learners.	Improve access to an increased range of approaches and services to support better attendance.	Attendance levels will improve, late coming will reduce and exclusion levels will reduce for specific groups of learners, including those with attendance of below 50%/between 80-90%. (Seemis attendance/exclusion data/PASS data)

## Priority 5: Placing human rights and needs of every child and young person at the centre of education

Theme 1: Supporting needs		
What we will do	What we aim to improve	How we will measure success
Implement the recommendations of the Supporting Needs review including the review of governance, processes and practices to support placements, and the revised Staged Intervention policy.	Improve systems and processes governing the provision of support to learners.	The number of referrals to the inclusion group seeking alternative provision will reduce. <i>(Inclusion Group data)</i> Establishment evaluations about various aspects of the new processes/policies will be positive. <i>(internal data)</i>
Working in partnership with other services, engage with children, young people and their families to collaborate and co-create a communication strategy around how needs are supported in North Ayrshire.	Improve understanding among all stakeholders.	Stakeholder evaluations will demonstrate improved knowledge and increased satisfaction. <i>(Focus groups/surveys)</i>
Review support services and teams, including outreach services, classroom assistants and teaching support, and enhance professional learning programmes.	Improve the quality, interconnectedness and flexibility of the support resources available to support learners' needs.	Learner outcomes data will improve <i>(attainment data/stretch aims/wellbeing data)</i> Staff evaluations will demonstrate improved skills.
Refresh and redesign advice and guidance around best practice in curriculum approaches which offer flexible and bespoke learning experiences for young people.	Improve the flexibility of the secondary school curriculum shaped around learner needs.	The number of requests for external curricular provision will reduce. <i>(IG data)</i>
Theme 2: Maximising learner participation and voice		
What we will do	What we aim to improve	How we will measure success
Complete and implement a new Learner Participation Policy and increase opportunities for children and young people to play a meaningful role in shaping education and Council policy and practice.	Improve learner participation and voice in the four arenas of participation.	Learners will participate more meaningfully in all areas of school life. <i>(QIF/HGIOURS/SI)</i> The Service Improvement Group for Learner Participation will monitor and evaluate North Ayrshire's learner participation strategy.
Theme 3: Maximising parent/carer involvement and engagement		
What we will do	What we aim to improve	How we will measure success
Implement locally the revised 'Learning Together' Scottish Government parental involvement and engagement action plan and use the Strategic Framework for Parental Involvement, Parental Engagement, Family Learning and Learning at home to evaluate and plan for next steps at school and authority level.	Improve the range and quality of opportunities for parental engagement and involvement.	Parent/carer evaluations of their opportunities for involvement in decision making at school level will increase. <i>(PIE survey/HGIOS 2.7/HGIOURS 2.7)</i> Evaluation and feedback from families and schools on a range of aspects of family learning will improve. <i>(FL data/school impact reports)</i>



## Strategic support: Ensuring excellent educational experiences

Theme 1: Policies and operating procedures		
What we will do	What we aim to improve	How we will measure success
Continue the programme to replace Standard Circulars with new Policies and Operating Procedures.	Improve clarity of policy and consistency of implementation across establishments, leading to improved outcomes for schools and their children/young people.	Policy and practice inconsistencies will reduce. (QIF/complaint records) Satisfaction levels will increase. (Annual stakeholder surveys)
Theme 2: Creating inspiring learning environments		
What we will do	What we aim to improve	How we will measure success
Ensure the efficient and effective delivery of the learning estate in terms of condition, suitability and sufficiency through the delivery of key projects, including: Marress House Early Learning Centre; replacement Moorpark Primary School; Ardrossan Community Campus; New Primary School for Irvine East (Montgomerie Park); expansion of dining facilities at West Kilbride PS, Glebe PS, Loudoun-Montgomery PS.	Improve learning environments to ensure we: provide creative and engaging lifelong learning and teaching opportunities; are environmentally efficient; are digitally enabled; and meet the needs of all current and future learners within North Ayrshire.	The strategic objectives of each project will be met. (Project objective measures/ stakeholder evaluation)
Theme 3: Investing in leadership		
What we will do	What we aim to improve	How we will measure success
Design programmes to support the professional development of our staff – including phase 2 of the New Heads Induction Programme, the embedding of the DHT professional learning networks, and the partnership delivery of the SWEIC leadership development programme.	Improve the professional learning offer and leadership development pipeline for leaders at a range of levels across the system, leading to strengthened leadership of our establishments.	The number of participants in masters level learning will increase. The quality of leadership in our establishments will be further enhanced. (Into Headship participants/QI 1.3 evaluations/ applicants for leadership posts)
Theme 4: Workforce Planning		
What we will do	What we aim to improve	How we will measure success
Support service redesign across various education teams to ensure the efficient and effective deployment of resource to deliver high quality service.	Improve the service redesign process through enhanced understanding of the service objective, people and financial implications of proposals.	Service objectives will continue to be met successfully within the policy and financial context. (Budget monitoring/service self-evaluation/workforce planning data)









North Ayrshire Council  
Comhairle Siorrachd Air a Tuath



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## NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

25 January 2024

### Audit & Scrutiny

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<b>Title:</b>	<b>HMIE Progress Review of Community Learning and Development</b>
<b>Purpose:</b>	To advise Audit and Scrutiny of the outcomes of the recent Progress Review of Community Learning and Development by HMIE
<b>Recommendation:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) That the Committee notes the recent Progress Review carried out by HMIE against the CLD Strategic Plan and the positive feedback from this; and</li> <li>b) That the Committee approves the actions planned as a result of the outcome of the review.</li> <li>c) That the Committee notes progress review has been presented at Cabinet in December 2023.</li> </ul>

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## 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 Education Scotland HM Inspectors of Education (HMIE) evaluate and report on the quality of Community Learning and Development (CLD) provision within local authorities, in line with [The Requirements for Community Learning and Development \(Scotland\) Regulations 2013](#) and associated guidance for local authorities. This is also in line with the evaluation and reporting which HMIE carries out on other sectors of education provision, such as schools and early years centres.

HM Inspectors have developed interim arrangements for inspection from academic year 2023-24 to support improvement and provide external assurance of the quality of CLD provision in Scotland.

HM Inspectors are undertaking progress visits (PVs) to local authorities, commencing in September 2023. During PVs, HM Inspectors will take account of the extent to which local authorities are fulfilling their statutory duties in relation to CLD. HM Inspectors will evaluate the progress local authorities and their CLD partners are making to improve the quality of provision and services.

- 1.2 North Ayrshire was one of the earliest progress visits undertaken, with HM Inspectors visiting in the week of 18<sup>th</sup> September 2023. The report on the findings of the visit was published on 31<sup>st</sup> October.

## 2. Background

- 2.1 Between 2016 and 2019, HM Inspectors undertook inspections of CLD provision in all 32 local authorities in Scotland. A summary of the inspection findings was published in January 2020. The report highlighted key strengths and aspects for improvement in the leadership and delivery of CLD provision. In March 2020, HM Inspectors recognised that local authorities and CLD partners faced challenges in adapting to the pandemic. As a result, the routine programme of inspections of CLD planning and delivery by local authorities was suspended. HM Inspectors have now resumed external evaluation of CLD in autumn 2023.
- 2.2 Progress Visits will help to provide an overview of the current quality and improvement in CLD leadership and governance across Scotland. They will also inform any future Scottish Government review of the CLD Regulations and Community Empowerment legislation and the implementation of CLD national strategies. The findings will also inform future approaches to inspection of CLD provision in Scotland.
- 2.3 The visits evaluate the effectiveness of local authority CLD partnerships' approach to self-evaluation and planning for improvement, and consider progress made against identified priorities in their CLD plans. As with previous inspections, the starting point was the CLD plan and the local authority and partners' self-evaluation. The focus was on the following high-level questions:
- How effective is the leadership of the local authority and their CLD partners in outcomes?
  - How well does the performance of the local authority and their CLD partners demonstrate positive impact?

In answering these questions, a range of quality indicators from the CLD quality framework: How good is our community learning and development? were used and the HM Inspection team undertook a range of activities such as reviewing documentation, meeting strategic leaders and holding focus groups with partners and learners.

Progress visits are not graded using the evaluative grade scale for full inspections; however the inspection team makes an overall judgement on the progress that the local authority and their partners are making with the CLD plan and produce a statement of confidence.

The progress visit to North Ayrshire took place in the week of 18<sup>th</sup> September. A wide range of staff, partners and learners were involved in the activities which took place, and we would like to thank them once again for their support and engagement. At the end of the process the inspection team evaluated the progress locally as being of the level of the highest statement of confidence used, namely "The local authority and their CLD partners are making sufficient progress with their CLD plan and have the capacity to continue to improve."

This is testament to the robust planning and governance processes within North Ayrshire and the quality of delivery and evaluation undertaken by the Council and its CLD partners. Key areas of positive progress were identified as being:

- The value placed upon CLD across the CLS Partnership in North Ayrshire;
- Leadership of CLD in North Ayrshire: and
- Clear links from the CLD Plan to the Council Plan and the LOIP;

- A clear focus on inclusion and reducing barriers to participation;
- Effective support for learners, community activists and volunteers to gain skills that match their aims and ambitions.

In particular, the Modern Apprentice programme within Youth Services was highlighted as an example of highly effective practice and we have been asked to share this more widely as a case study, which is being developed for publication.

The process and report highlighted adult learner voice as an area for further development, and this is already being developed and will continue to be progressed. The ongoing development of the use of data in planning and of building capacity within colleagues to work with communities are the other areas of development identified. This aligns with the work already underway to continue to embed locality planning and delivery models working alongside communities within all parts of the Council and Community Planning Partnership. Next steps will be to implement a participation structure for adult learner voice, and to work with colleagues to support the ongoing development of locality planning and community empowerment.

The full report which has been published is attached as Appendix 1 for consideration.

### **3. Proposals**

3.1 Committee is asked to:

- a) Note the recent Progress Review carried out by HMIE against the CLD Strategic Plan and the positive feedback from this; and
- b) Approve the actions planned as a result of the outcome of the review.

### **4. Implications/Socio-economic Duty**

#### **Financial**

4.1 None

#### **Human Resources**

4.2 None

#### **Legal**

4.3 None

#### **Equality/Socio-economic**

4.4 The values base of CLD work includes valuing equality of both opportunity and outcome, and challenging discriminatory practice. The work of NAC staff and partners on the CLD plan helps to address inequalities across communities and empower them to have their place within the design and delivery of services. It helps to ensure resources are targeted to those in most need and where they will make the greatest impact on outcomes, while ensuring there is also a universal offer of learning opportunities and activities. Through working with communities and with partners, the voices, needs and aspirations of the communities inform the operational delivery and

targeting of resources. It is foreseeable that the escalating cost-of-living crisis will put pressure on individuals and communities and work with the community larder network and partners who provide energy, financial and mental health advice will intensify. The delivery of the plan focuses on building capacity and optimising opportunities so that efforts to address poverty and inequalities are strengthened.

## **Climate Change and Carbon**

4.5 None

## **Key Priorities**

4.6 The activities contained within the CLD Strategic Plan 2021-2024 support the North Ayrshire Council Plan strategic aims:

- To transition to a wellbeing economy, delivering prosperity, wellbeing and resilience for local people.
- We will have active, inclusive and resilient communities.
- A Community Wealth Building Council that is efficient and accessible, maximising investment and focusing resources towards our priorities.

## **Community Wealth Building**

4.7 The activities contained within the CLD Strategic Plan 2021-2024 support the following pillars of community wealth building:

- Creating volunteering and skills development opportunities;
- Sustaining local employment through skills development;
- Advancing community enterprises, such as food pantries, community centre ownership and community sports clubs; and
- Advancing local ownership of underused land and buildings.

## **5. Consultation**

5.1 No consultation was required for the purpose of this report.

Audrey Sutton  
Executive Director of Communities and Education

For further information please contact **Rhonda Leith, Head of Service (Connected Communities)**, on **01294 324415**.

## **Background Papers**

Appendix 1: Community Learning and Development Progress Visit Report North Ayrshire Council



# Community Learning and Development Progress Visit Report

**North Ayrshire Council**

31 October 2023

## 1. Context

HM Inspectors visited North Ayrshire Council to undertake a community learning and development (CLD) progress visit during September 2023. During the visit, we talked to learners and community representatives, CLD leaders, managers, staff, and volunteers, and other key stakeholders. HM Inspectors evaluated the effectiveness of the local authority CLD partnerships' approach to self-evaluation and planning for improvement, and considered progress made against identified priorities in their CLD plans.

## 2. Findings from the progress visit

### How effective is the leadership of the local authority and their CLD partners in improving outcomes?

#### Areas of positive progress

CLD practices and principles are embedded within the work of the North Ayrshire Council and the Community Planning Partnership (CPP). CLD is highly valued. Leadership of CLD is effective and supported by well-established reporting structures. The CLD plan reflects both council and local outcome improvement plan priorities. Staff understand their role well in delivering against CLD plan priorities. Shared aims and objectives are evident in partnership groups such as Locality Planning Partnerships (LPPs) and work is driven by council, CPP and local priorities. Senior leaders, the CLD service and partners have a clear commitment to partnership working with the communities they serve. Young people and community representatives are actively involved in a range of forums and meetings and their views are influential in shaping priorities and action plans. Third sector and community representatives are well represented across community planning structures and feel heard and valued. This supports services to understand the needs of communities. LPPs drive the delivery of CLD at area level, ensuring that services are responsive to locally identified need.

Effective evaluation and planning structures are in place. These support a continued focus on improvement at all levels. Council CLD staff review their progress against locality and North Ayrshire priorities. Staff at all levels are trusted and are empowered to make decisions about their work and undertake regular self-evaluation. This supports their capacity to reflect on their practice and work towards strong outcomes for learners and communities. The range of purposeful partnership groups, which include community members, supports the collective capacity to improve outcomes. The strong partnership between CLD and education colleagues is helping to embed the engagement and empowerment of young people in their education. Increasingly, CLD partners are coming together to discuss the impact of their work. This is helping to ensure resources are targeted appropriately on existing and emerging needs. Community organisations value the regular and useful communication they have with, and training provided by, CLD practitioners. CLD partners are effective in supporting the drawdown of significant additional funding by organisations across the local authority. North Ayrshire Council CLD has developed an effective 'grow your own' culture. This supports the service to maintain staffing levels in order to continue improving outcomes.

## Areas for development

Community members are well represented on community planning structures. However, there is scope to increase the role of community members in decision making about CLD planning at a strategic level. There is a need for the council and its CLD and education partners to further consider how adult learners can contribute to and influence CLD planning. Continuing to grow and develop approaches to self-evaluation between partners would enable senior leaders to better capture and understand the impact of CLD across North Ayrshire. Senior leaders are aware of the risk of CLD practitioners being viewed as key to the delivery of most work with communities. Senior leaders within the CPP and the council now need to consider how to grow the capacity of all services to work with communities to improve sustainability.

## How well does the performance of the local authority and their CLD partners demonstrate positive impact?

### Areas of positive progress

Senior leaders, managers and partners use both demographic and performance data effectively to inform the allocation of resources. For example, they identified unmet need in CLD provision for older adults when developing their 2021-24 CLD plan. Since then, they have successfully allocated and attracted funding to enhance this provision. Since the start of 2023, Discovery Award groups have been developed across the local authority. Participants are increasing their skills, contributing to their communities as volunteers, and building social networks. The CLD service has a systematic approach to the gathering of performance data. CLD service staff are supported well to undertake quarterly reviews of their individual work. These reviews help practitioners to ensure their practice is based on what learners and community members need. The high degree of trust between practitioners and organisations means partners are confident to share data. Doing so supports them in deciding which services to take forward.

CLD partners have a clear focus on inclusion and reducing barriers to participation. They work together very effectively to support individuals and families who are experiencing additional challenges, to progress and achieve. The Additional Support Needs youth group helps young people with a range of abilities and neurodiversity to socialise and develop communication and life skills. New Scots enjoy meeting, sharing food, and developing language skills together at the refugee-led Spike Wheat Scots Group. Currently, 14 community-run food larders operate across North Ayrshire. They network with each other well to support innovation and share resources. In addition to helping to address food poverty, they each provide bespoke support to individuals and families to address wider issues in their lives. In many cases this support is life changing for their members, and for some lifesaving. Ambitious community organisations and committed volunteers provide a wide range of services and programmes that support community members very effectively. They are instrumental in taking forward essential, needs-focused provision in many local areas. They support local people well on a wide range of issues including poverty, mental health, and addiction. Garnock Valley men's shed is helping to tackle social isolation and developing the skills of its members.

CLD partners are effective in supporting learners, community activists and volunteers to gain skills that match their aims and ambitions. Young people gain a wide range of skills, develop confidence, and progress towards their career aims through the CLD Modern Apprenticeship programme. Modern Apprentices (MAs) support young people from across North Ayrshire well to be heard, respected and influential, including through Joint Cabinets. At each Joint Cabinet 120 young people from schools across North Ayrshire make sure their voices are heard and their lived experience is taken into account as decisions are made. CLD service staff support

community organisations effectively to engage with local people to design services. ‘Doon The Beach’ community café is a strong example of a local partnership that has enhanced the local environment, creating a local business with employment and volunteering opportunities.

## **Areas for development**

CLD partners should now consider how they can use the data and other information they each gather to better demonstrate their collective impact and progress over time. The CLD service should continue work to create approaches to extend data sharing, analysis, and reporting across all CLD partners. This would help to provide a clearer picture of the difference CLD is making in North Ayrshire for senior leaders, funders, staff, and volunteers. Whilst there are areas of strength within adult learning provision, overall this is less well developed and coordinated across partners than other aspects of CLD. There is now a need for partners to work together to ensure that prospective and current adult learners are clear about the programmes and pathways available to them.

### **3. Practice worth sharing more widely**

The MA programme run by North Ayrshire CLD service has a significant impact on the young people who participate, the learners and communities they support as apprentices, and on the CLD service. Apprentices contribute to and run a wide range of CLD programmes across the local authority. They are key to the development of young people’s empowerment and involvement in influencing decisions. They are instrumental in running the Joint Cabinets between young people and elected members. Young people on the programme gain a wide range of skills and gain confidence. Whilst the staff provide clear leadership and support to the apprentices, the apprentices themselves also influence the CLD service. The input from MAs is helping the service be innovative and remain responsive to learners’ changing needs, especially for children and young people.

### **4. What happens next?**

The local authority and their CLD partners are making sufficient progress with their CLD plan and have the capacity to continue to improve. As a result, HM Inspectors will take no further action in relation to this progress visit. During the inspection, we identified an aspect of highly effective practice which we would like to explore further.

**Alona Murray**  
**HM Inspector**  
31 October 2023

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## NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

25 January 2024

### Audit and Scrutiny Committee

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**Title:** Our Performance Strategy 2023-28

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**Purpose:** To advise the Audit and Scrutiny Committee of Our Performance Strategy 2023-28, including a new approach to self-assessment.

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**Recommendation:** The Audit and Scrutiny Committee notes Our Performance Management Strategy and that it forms the basis of performance management within our Council.

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#### 1. Executive Summary

1.1. This paper presents Our Performance Management Strategy 2023-28 and proposed systematic approach to self-assessment. Our Performance Management Strategy has been updated following the approval of Our Council Plan 2023-28 by Council in June 2023. It reflects the Accounts Commission Statutory Performance Information Direction 2021, learning from the previous strategy and includes key findings from the initial Best Value Thematic Audit.

#### 2. Background

2.1. The Accounts Commission Statutory Performance Information Direction 2021 was published in December 2021. This Direction, effective from April 2022 until March 2025, has a stronger emphasis on self-assessment (as well as other key areas) than the previous Direction.

2.2. In January 2022 the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) discussed the Direction and agreed a revised Performance Management Strategy and new approach to self-assessment should be considered. It was decided the new approach to self-assessment would be included within the revised Performance Management Strategy 2023-28 following approval of Our Council Plan. This also provided the opportunity to gain more insight into the new Best Value Thematic Approach introduced during 2022-23 which directly drives the design and implementation of performance management across our Council.

2.3. Our Performance Management Strategy 2023-28, attached at Appendix 1, combines learning from the previous strategy with the Best Value Thematic Approach and initial draft results of the audit.

2.4. Though intended to be valid throughout the lifetime of Our Council Plan 2023-28, it will need to be reviewed following any statutory or national policy changes such as a new Direction (due December 2024) or changes in the National Performance Framework (currently being consulted on).

## **2.5. Self-Assessment**

2.6. Our proposed approach to self-assessment is summarised on page 17 of Appendix 1. How we self-assess will evolve as we gather feedback on the process and continually adapt and improve. For this reason, it is purposefully a summary within the strategy. Further details on the proposed approach are below.

2.7. During discussions at ELT in January 2021 it was suggested the self-assessment approach could be used to allocate resources effectively across teams/services and identify potential areas of transformation. Following the development of Our Council Plan in June 2023 and release of the 2023 Public Service Improvement Framework (PSIF) for self-assessment in November, it is proposed that North Ayrshire Council adopts the 2023 PSIF approach to self-assessment.

2.8. It is acknowledged that some approaches to self-assessment can be resource intensive, however we would alter our approach based on the 'risk' of a particular team and the depth of assessment would be tailored accordingly. The 2023 PSIF includes 'red threads', these are versions of the framework tailored to particular areas to ensure an efficient and effective process. In addition, the framework provides an opportunity to tailor it further to the needs of each area.

2.9. Prioritisation would be based on the statutory and corporate risk, impact on our communities, financial risk (investment in that team/service), potential reputational damage and whether any external scrutiny of that team/service had recently taken place. The findings of these investigations/audits would allow a decision on whether further assessment is necessary at this time. The approach would link with the Service Reviews process being undertaken by Financial Services.

2.10. Discussions have taken place with other local authorities via national groups, with many re-establishing scheduled self-assessments and using risk to prioritise services.

## **2.11. Next Steps**

2.12. Following approval of the self-assessment approach, officers will identify planned audits and inspections across our Council to help inform a timetable.

2.13. A medium-term programme of the teams/services prioritised for self-assessment would be agreed with ELT and Heads of Service. Following this, the Corporate Policy, Performance and Elections team would work with the team/service to utilise the PSIF. The Improvement Service has agreed to support the initial PSIF self-assessment and train relevant officers in self-assessment. Self-assessment would involve consideration of the following:

- PSIF self-assessment questionnaire.
- Recent audits, inspections and accreditations.
- Operational Plans (service outputs and outcomes).
- Benchmarking opportunities.
- People statistics such as employee absence, additional costs, health and safety, complaint handling, compliments and request response times (for example Elected Member, MP and MSP requests and FOIs etc.) to gain a full understanding of the performance and 'health' of a team.
- Financial management.
- Reputational management (communications and consultations).
- Discussion of results with relevant Senior Managers and Heads of Service prior to final report development and peer review.
- Capturing ideas for innovation or cross service working to improve performance and inform transformation.

2.14. An operational report would be produced and reviewed by a peer review group, similar to the approach undertaken prior to 2020 for Directorate Plan reports. A summary of this report would be published on our website in line with the Direction. Following self-assessment, we would develop work around peer review with other local authorities where appropriate, again with the support of the Improvement Service.

2.15. This approach would be in addition to any scrutiny already existing through public consultations or self-assessment of committees.

### **3. Proposals**

3.1. It is recommended that the Audit and Scrutiny Committee notes Our Performance Management Strategy and that it forms the basis of performance management within our Council.

### **4. Implications/Socio-economic Duty**

#### **Financial**

4.1. The Executive Leadership Team are considering how resources can be provided to help support self-assessment.

#### **Human Resources**

4.2. The Executive Leadership Team are considering how resources can be provided to help support self-assessment.

#### **Legal**

4.3. We have a statutory duty to demonstrate Best Value. Our Performance Management Strategy and self-assessment approach support this.

### **Equality/Socio-economic**

4.4. There are no equality or socio-economic implications.

### **Climate Change and Carbon**

4.5 There are no climate change and carbon implications.

### **Key Priorities**

4.6 Our Performance Management Strategy directly supports the management of Our Council Plan 2023-28. It is particularly focused on the priority 'A Sustainable Council'.

### **Community Wealth Building**

4.7 There are no climate change and carbon implications.

## **5. Consultation**

5.1 Consultation was undertaken with the Executive Leadership Team.

Aileen Craig  
Head of Service (Democratic)

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





# Our Performance Management Strategy 2023-28

*“Driving continuous improvement  
for the people of North Ayrshire”*



North Ayrshire Council  
Comhairle Siorrachd Àir a Tuath

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# Welcome

*The core purpose of effective performance management is to improve the lives of the people we serve by using high quality information to make decisions.*

We believe the impact our services have on our residents, employees, businesses and visitors cannot be demonstrated through charts alone. It requires a balance of quantitative and qualitative information such as real lived experiences and case studies to measure impact, provide context and effectively inform decision making. This approach relies on excellent communication between all teams to share information and is supported by both the Accounts Commission's Direction 2021 and the Scottish Government's National Performance Framework.

This strategy outlines how our performance management supports a culture of continuous improvement within our Council to support our priorities and so provide the best outcomes for our people. It provides an overview of statutory context and our current performance management arrangements.

Secondly, it includes an overview of planned developments to ensure continuous improvement within our performance management up until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2028 (coinciding with the lifespan of our current Council Plan). Innovation to ensure effective and transparent performance management will be central to our activities. We reviewed the outcomes of our previous Performance Management Strategy and these have informed our approach.

Finally, this strategy does not attempt to list the vast range of improvement activities currently underway in our Council. These are already covered through existing strategies published on [our website](#). Similarly, this strategy excludes Health and Social Care Partnership performance, which is managed separately.

This strategy is managed by the Corporate Policy, Performance and Elections Team and we would welcome any feedback you may have. We are constantly striving to make our Council and reports as accessible as possible and welcome opportunities to discuss how this can be achieved. For further information please contact:

**The Corporate Policy, Performance and Elections Team**

Tel: 01294 310000

Email: [NorthAyrshirePerforms@north-ayrshire.gov.uk](mailto:NorthAyrshirePerforms@north-ayrshire.gov.uk)

## Key Objectives

Empower and support teams to embed continuous improvement throughout our Council

Establish an effective dynamic performance management framework that reflects our services

Develop perception of performance as driving continuous improvement for the people we serve

Focus on efficient, transparent and robust performance management, minimising duplication and embracing innovation

Enhance accessibility through relevant, clearly understood publications, available through a variety of channels for our residents and stakeholders

Collaborate with and learn from teams across our Council and beyond

Encourage and support effective scrutiny at all levels within our Council as well as by external stakeholders

Establish the Corporate Policy, Performance and Elections Team as key point of contact for performance management

# Statutory Duty and National Context

*This section outlines the statutory duty of Best Value and the national context that needs to be considered within Our Performance Management Strategy.*

## Best Value

[Best Value](#) is a statutory duty as set out in the Local Government (Scotland) Act 2003 and applies to all public bodies in Scotland. Its core purpose is to ensure good governance, effective use of resources and continuous improvement in order to deliver better outcomes for our people.

A new approach to auditing Best Value within Scottish councils came into effect during 2022/23. *(Note: This approach relates to councils only. The Accounts Commission decided in 2021 not to proceed with Best Value audits of Integrated Joint Boards (IJBs) following a pilot and national policy developments. Broad local and national audits of IJBs will be used instead.)*

The new annual [Best Value Thematic Approach](#) explores a particular area of Best Value each year. The theme covered reflects local government risks and challenges and is determined by the Accounts Commission each year.

All 32 local authorities will be audited on the selected theme by their external auditors. The results of the audit will be integrated into the [Annual Audit](#) of each council in the autumn. In addition, a national thematic report will be produced to show a Scotland-wide view of performance.

At least once every five years a council's report will be highlighted to the Accounts Commission by the Controller of Audit through a section 102 report. The current programme of Best Value reporting is due to be published in October 2023, with final reports in August 2027.

At time of writing our most recent Best Value Audit Assurance Report was published in June 2020 and is available by clicking on the image to the right. We are currently undertaking the Best Value Thematic Approach for 2022/23, the results will be included in the Annual Audit expected to be published in November 2023.



Where the audit identifies areas for improvement, these will form part of an action plan managed by the Corporate Policy, Performance and Elections Team on behalf of the Executive Leadership Team. Actions are expected to be monitored within the audit year by the appointed external auditors on behalf of the Accounts Commission. Updates on Best Value actions will be reported regularly to Cabinet, Council and the Audit and Scrutiny Committee as appropriate.

## Direction 2021

The Accounts Commission has the statutory power to determine the performance information that must be published by local authorities. The Accounts Commission's [Direction 2021 on Public Performance Reporting](#) came into effect in April 2022 and defines how local authorities should demonstrate they are achieving Best Value for their residents up to March 2025.

The Direction gives flexibility in determining which performance indicators (PIs) meet the requirements of Best Value. Central to this is demonstrating continuous improvement and self-awareness in terms of our strengths and

areas for improvement. The Accounts Commission expects us to ensure balanced reporting as timeously as is practical.

Our strategy will be immediately refreshed following any new Direction from the Accounts Commission.

An extract from the 2021 Account Commission Direction showing the two Statutory Performance Indicators (SPIs) is below:

*“Each council will report on a range of information covered by the following two indicators (including in combination if desired):*

***Statutory Performance Indicator 1: Improving local services and local outcomes***

- Its performance in improving local public services, both provided by itself and in conjunction with its partners and communities.*
- Progress against the desired outcomes agreed with its partners and communities.*

*The Commission expects the council to report such information to allow comparison (i) over time and (ii) with other similar bodies (thus drawing upon information published by the Local Government Benchmarking Framework and from other benchmarking activities).*

*The Commission expects the council to, in agreeing its outcomes with its partners and communities, report on how it has engaged with, responded to and helped to empower its communities, including those who require greater support.*

***Statutory Performance Indicator 2: Demonstrating Best Value***

- Its assessment of how it is performing against its duty of Best Value, including self-assessments and service review activity, and how it has responded to this assessment.*
- Audit assessments (including those in the annual audit) of its performance against its Best Value duty, and how it has responded to these assessments.*
- Assessments from other scrutiny and inspection bodies, and how it has responded to these assessments.*

*In satisfying the requirements set out in this schedule, the Commission expects the council to take cognisance of current statutory guidance on Best Value requirements, and in particular to ensure:*

- Balance in reporting areas of improvement that have been achieved and not achieved.*
- This is undertaken in a timely manner.*
- Easy access to its performance information for all of its citizens and communities, with such information presented in an accessible style.”*

The 2021 Direction is the core focus of our Performance Management Strategy. Key changes between 2018 and 2021 Direction include greater focus on:

- Self-assessment and evidencing how this is used to improve services. (SPI 1)
- Assessments and inspections and how we have used this information to improve. (SPI 2)
- Empowering communities, particularly those requiring additional support, to set priorities and scrutinise performance in an accessible way. (SPI 1 and 2)
- Supporting the new annual Best Value Thematic Approach. (SPI 2)

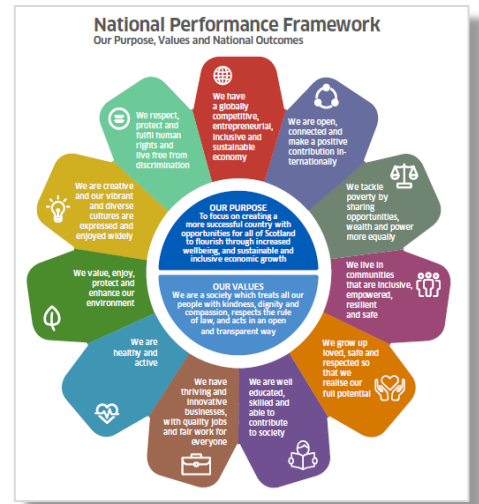


## National Performance Framework

The Scottish Government’s National Performance Framework aims to create a more successful country with more opportunities and better wellbeing for the people of Scotland. It looks to create sustainable and inclusive growth and reduce inequalities by giving equal importance to economic, environmental and social progress and aligns to the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals.

The National Performance Framework directly influences the outcomes within our Council Plan. Further information is available by clicking the image to the right.

At time of writing a review of the National Outcomes is taking place. Following this review our Performance Management Strategy will be updated with any amendments.



## The Local Government Benchmarking Framework

The Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) is administered by the [Improvement Service](#) in partnership with [SOLACE](#). It is highlighted within the Direction 2021 and provides an opportunity to benchmark our performance with other local authorities in Scotland. As a result, many of the indicators are used within our Council Plan.



By recording the same indicators as other local authorities across a wide range of themes we can identify opportunities to learn from each other. The Direction 2021 gives scope to focus on the LGBF indicators that directly link to our Council Plan priorities. South Lanarkshire Council took this approach as highlighted by the Accounts Commission in the [Local Government in Scotland Overview 2023](#). As a result, we have adopted this approach in 2023.

Local authorities with similar traits such as type of geography and levels of deprivation are categorised into “family groups” to enable as close as a like for like comparison as possible. Performance can be explored through the LGBF online tool by clicking the image above and further information is contained in the Benchmarking section of this strategy.

# Local Context

*This section outlines local context that needs to be considered within Our Performance Management Strategy.*

## The Community Plan

[The Community Plan](#) (Local Outcome Improvement Plan), is administered by our North Ayrshire Community Planning Partnership which consists of public, private and voluntary organisations and groups working together with communities through our six Locality Partnerships to make North Ayrshire a better place to live. The Community Plan has three themes:

- **Wellbeing** – Health and Wellbeing – Reducing inequalities by targeted support to improve individual, family and community wellbeing.
- **Work** – Economy and Skills – Addressing the causes and effects of poverty through a strong local economy and skills base.
- **World** – Climate Change – Working more closely and effectively together to reduce carbon emissions and mitigate the impacts of climate change.



### *Locality Plans*

[Locality Plans](#) are created by each of the six Locality Partnerships in North Ayrshire. Though supported by officers within our Council, the priorities and plans are led by our communities. As such, priorities vary by locality.

## Our Council Plan 2023-28

Our Council Plan 2023-28 is the main strategy for our Council for the next five years. Our vision 'A North Ayrshire that is fair for all' is shared with The Community Plan. Our mission 'Working together to improve the lives of our people in North Ayrshire' demonstrates how continuous improvement is embedded within our culture.

Our Council Plan outlines our priorities created in partnership with our residents and is aligned to The Community Plan. It is the core basis of our statutory performance reporting as outlined in the Accounts Commission Direction 2021. All plans that sit underneath Our Council Plan must align to it. Our Council Plan has four interlinked priorities:

- **Wellbeing** – To transition to a wellbeing economy, delivering prosperity, wellbeing and resilience for local people.
- **Communities and Local Democracy** – We will have active, inclusive and resilient communities.
- **Climate Change** – To achieve net-zero by 2030.
- **A Sustainable Council** – A community Wealth Building Council that is efficient and accessible, maximising investment and focusing resources towards our priorities.



For more details, please click the image on the right.

## Operational and Team Plans

Operational and Team Plans are not reported in the public domain, however they are critical in providing the detail needed to deliver Our Council Plan priorities. Operational Plans inform Team Plans, which in turn are more detailed. Both Operational Plans and Team Plans are crucial in supporting self-assessment.



## Personal Development Reviews

Personal Development Reviews are key to ensuring all employees are aware of how their actions contribute to the Council Plan priorities. They should take place at least once per year in addition to regular discussions about personal and team performance with line managers. Personal Development Reviews are also known as “Our Time To Talk” for all non-teaching employees, “Personal Review and Development” for teaching employees and psychologists and “Participant Quarterly Progress Reviews” for Modern Apprentices.

### *Our Staff Values*

Our Staff Values support a culture of continuous improvement by providing key guidance on how employees are expected to approach their activities. They are central to our recruitment and employee development. For further details please click on the image to the right.



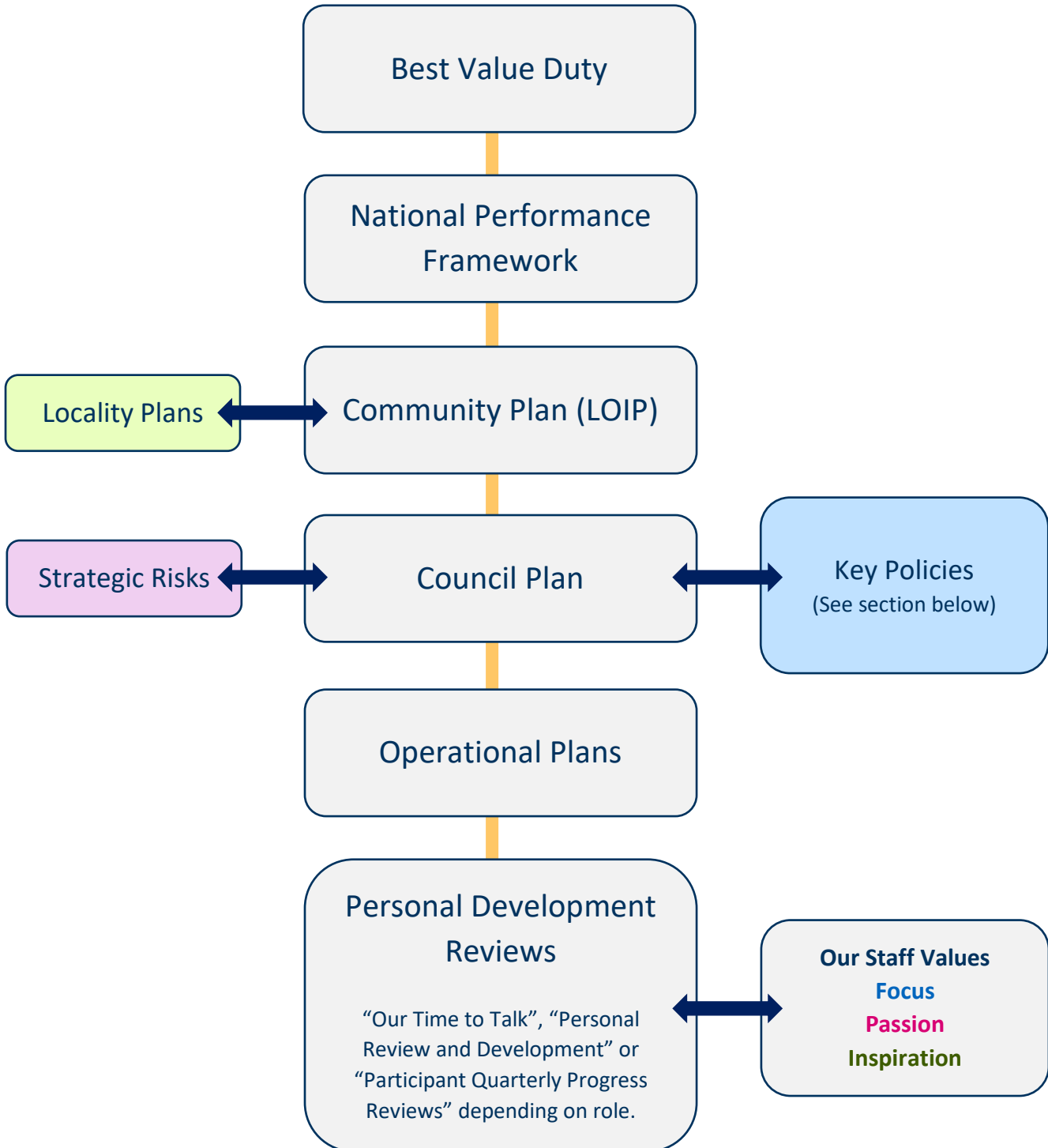
## Strategic Risks

We are risk aware, not risk averse. To ensure effective risk management many activities taken to mitigate strategic risks can be found within our Council Plan and Operational Plans.

# Performance Management

## The “Golden Thread”

Every task of every employee within our Council contributes to achieving better outcomes for the people of North Ayrshire. This link is referred to as the “Golden Thread”. An overview is shown below:



## Key Policies

The policy landscape is summarised below:

### National Themes / Policies

- Best Value and continuous improvement
- Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015
- Best Start Bright Futures Tackling Child Poverty Plan 2022-26
- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)
- The Promise
- Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC)
- Islands (Scotland) Act 2018
- Human Rights Based Approach
- Fairer Scotland Duty
- Equality Act 2010
- Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019 – Net Zero Scotland by 2045
- Placemaking Approach
- National Strategy for Economic Transformation (NSET)
- Green recovery and renewal

### Local Strategies

- Community Wealth Building Strategy
- The Regional Economic Strategy
- Community Plan (LOIP)
- Health and Social Care Partnership Strategic Plan
- Education Service Improvement Plan
- Child Poverty Action Plan
- Children’s Services Plan
- Children’s Rights Report
- Youth Participation and Citizenship Strategy
- Island Plans
- Regeneration Delivery Plan
- Local Housing Strategy
- Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP)
- Local Development Plan
- Environmental Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy
- KA Leisure (North Ayrshire Leisure Limited) Business Plan

## Roles

Everyone is responsible for performance, every task undertaken in the working day contributes to our “bigger picture” outlined by Our Council Plan (as detailed in the “Golden Thread” section above). However, roles have specific responsibilities in terms of performance management.

### Accounts Commission

The Accounts Commission is the independent public watchdog for local government, they report directly to our residents.

### North Ayrshire Council

North Ayrshire Council is responsible for approving the Council plan which sets out our vision and direction for five years.

### North Ayrshire Council's Audit and Scrutiny Committee

The Audit and Scrutiny Committee has oversight of a range of functions including the preparation of a strategy for performance review; ensuring that Chief Officers establish and implement arrangements for reviewing service performance against objectives; monitoring the performance of the Council towards achieving policy objectives and priorities; and reviewing the implementation of Our Council Plan.

### North Ayrshire Council Cabinet

Cabinet is the main decision making body within our Council. It is responsible for the setting of the vision and direction of our Council, scrutiny of performance and approving the submission of performance reports to the Audit and Scrutiny Committee.

### Executive Leadership Team (ELT)

The Executive Leadership Team has strategic responsibility for our Council Plan, scrutinising performance and agreeing action and resources to address areas of underperformance.

### Executive Directors

Executive Directors are responsible for the strategic direction of their directorate and ensuring it is inline with Our Council Plan. They have overall responsibility for the performance of their directorate. In addition they are directly involved in finalising the priorities and content of Our Council Plan.

### Heads of Service

Heads of Service are responsible for managing and scrutinising the performance of their teams through Council Plan reporting and Operational Plans. In addition they scrutinise and approve the release of information to external regulators. They also identify opportunities to learn by benchmarking performance with others (not limited to other local authorities).

### Corporate Policy, Performance and Elections Team

The Corporate Policy, Performance and Elections Team leads the delivery of the statutory duty to demonstrate Best Value as set out in the Local Government (Scotland) Act 2003. This includes supporting the Executive Leadership Team in the creation, management and reporting of Our Council Plan and other performance frameworks, contributing to national performance networks and collaborating with all teams within our Council to achieve continuous improvement.

### Senior Managers and Team Managers

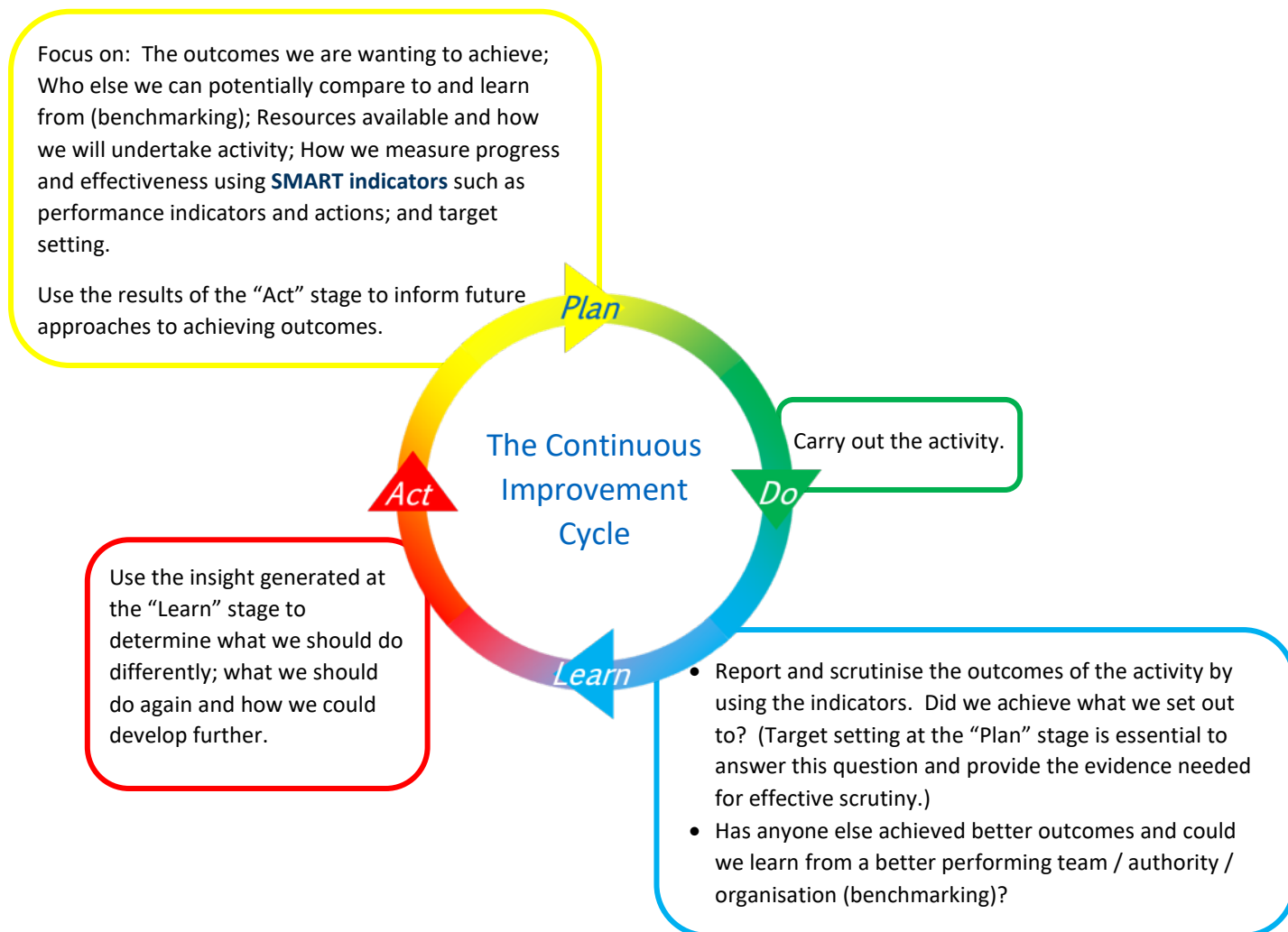
Managers are responsible for managing the performance of their team and supporting their team to deliver overall objectives in Our Council Plan. In addition Senior Managers are responsible for Operational Plan creation including setting objectives and targets and may be involved in updating Council Plan performance. They also identify opportunities to learn by benchmarking performance with others (not limited to other local authorities).

### All Employees

We all contribute to Our Council Plan through delivering the tasks agreed in our team plans and personal development reviews. As a result we all contribute to improving outcomes for the people we serve.

## The Continuous Improvement Cycle - Plan Do Learn Act

Performance management and performance reporting are very different things. Performance management is using the information available to us to effectively plan, undertake activities and learn from the results. We then act on this learning to inform future planning to meet the needs of the people of North Ayrshire. This is known as “The Continuous Improvement Cycle” or “Plan, Do, Learn, Act”. Performance reporting is a method within the “Learn” part of this cycle to show what has been achieved so progress can be effectively scrutinised and any changes to the approach made (in the “Act” and “Plan” stages).



This really is a continuous improvement cycle with its complexity and timescales tailored to the strategic level, scale or risk of a plan, project or activity. It is key to effective performance management throughout North Ayrshire Council.

### Be SMART: SMART objectives and indicators\* are:

<b>Specific</b>	Precise in what we are trying to measure.
<b>Measurable</b>	Realistic in terms of how we can measure the indicator and how practical it is to source this data when needed. If the effort of sourcing the data outweighs its value, then an alternative measure could be a better choice.
<b>Achievable</b>	Ambitious but realistic targets.
<b>Relevant</b>	The measure relates to our priorities, will tell us what we need to know to make a decision and relates to the overall aim.
<b>Time-bound</b>	There are timeframes for achieving goals.

*\*It is important to make a distinction between SMART indicators and other sources of information such as real lived experiences which are invaluable in informing policy and demonstrating impact.*

For further details about the “Continuous Improvement Cycle”, creating performance measures and setting targets to effectively manage performance, please contact the Corporate Policy, Performance and Elections Team. Further information on benchmarking can be found in the next section.

## Benchmarking

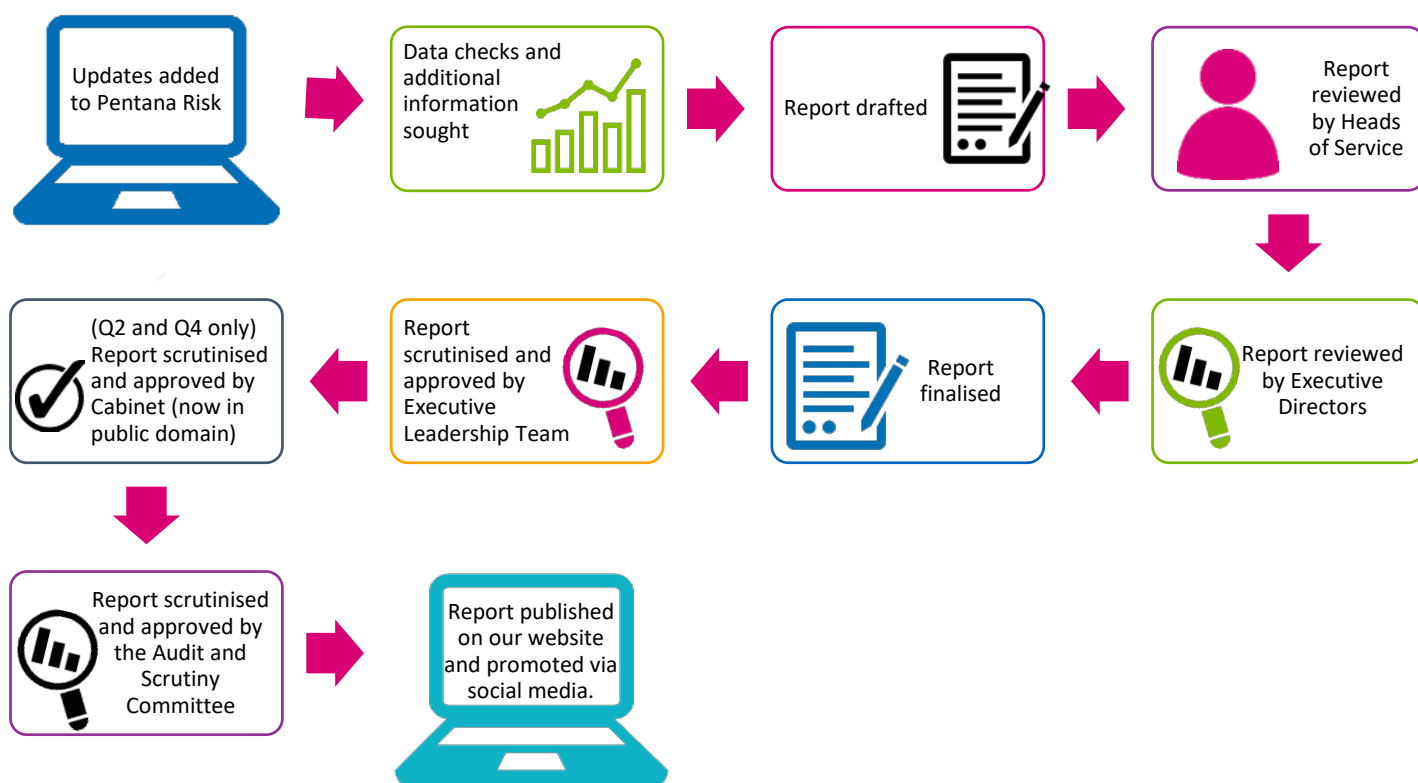
Benchmarking is comparing our performance to others (not only the public sector or within the UK) and learning how to improve as a result. This is not limited to comparing performance indicators, we actively benchmark by comparing different approaches to address the same issue or achieve similar outcomes.

We are one of 32 Scottish local authorities utilising the Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF), coordinated by the [Improvement Service](#) and [SOLACE](#). This framework enables us to compare our performance across a wide range of themes with other local authorities in Scotland. In addition, to provide as close a comparison as possible, councils with similar traits are grouped into “family groups”. This gives us access to a wide range of comparable data on as close to a like for like basis as possible. Further details on the LGBF can be found above.

We compare performance through several routes, many of which are specialised such as [APSE](#).

## Performance Reporting and Scrutiny

We have a statutory duty to report our performance in a balanced and timeous way. In addition, the process of reporting our performance ensures effective scrutiny by peers, Elected Members and ultimately our residents. An overview of the process is shown below.



In addition, there is a good deal of checking data, ensuring notes explain performance and provide context, sourcing qualitative information around the impact we are having such as case studies and ensuring our reports are accessible and relevant to the people of North Ayrshire. This includes the use of Power BI as the basis of our North Ayrshire Performance Dashboard.

As a result, effective time management is crucial to ensure reports are scrutinised and in the public domain while the data is still as relevant as possible. We work with teams to ensure good quality timeous information.

### *Actions*

Actions represent an update on planned activity over a certain time period. For this reason, action updates are explanations of performance, including what is going well and, if an activity is behind schedule, what is being done to address this.

The actions within Our Council Plan summarise activity undertaken through existing key strategies. The status of an action is determined in one of two ways:

1. If the action has not yet reached its due date, an informed decision is made by the action owner on whether they consider the action to be on target, slightly adrift or significantly adrift of where it should be at that time. This can be informed by project plans and milestones held within teams.
2. If an action is not complete at its due date, it is automatically set as significantly adrift of target. Due dates can only be extended where there is a reasonable explanation to do so. The amended timescales are then presented to Cabinet for full transparency and approval.

Actions form the basis of the narrative within Council Plan Progress Reports. A visual Action Status Tracker is included in the reports to enable any action trends to be identified.

### *Action Timescales*

Traditionally corporate performance management and reporting coincided with financial years, however with long-term developments such as the Ayrshire Growth Deal as well as recognising that some services, for example Education, work to different reporting frequencies and timescales such as academic years, this was reviewed as part of our previous strategy.

In April 2021 we introduced a more dynamic form of performance management that reflects the activity rather than the financial or academic year. This ensures:

- Education performance is captured using term time frequencies and academic years where appropriate within our corporate reporting. (I.e. Academic year end is captured in Quarter Two / Mid-Year Council Plan reporting.)
- Large scale projects are reported at a level where the full project, or relevant milestones (rather than small elements), are reported – preserving the context and providing a holistic view of performance and impact.

As actions for specific areas end, potential replacement actions are identified. These are approved by the Executive Leadership Team and Cabinet when public facing performance reporting is presented for scrutiny and approval (at Quarters Two and Four). Rationale for any replacement actions is on a case-by-case basis based on priorities and operating environment rather than like for like replacements.

The corporate Annual Performance Report remains aligned to financial years and captures all performance progress within that year.








## Performance Indicators

Performance Indicators (PIs) are numerical measures such as ‘number of’, ‘percentage of’ and so on. We set targets where possible and appropriate to do so. This informs the status of the PI at each reporting period (see below).

Where practical to do so, PI reporting frequencies should be quarterly or half yearly within Our Council Plan in addition to annual reporting, with a minimal lead in time.

## Performance Status (RAG Status)

The performance status is also known as RAG status due to colour coding used to show progress (red, amber or green). Within our performance reporting the status of a PI or action is determined as follows:

Status	Description
	On target
	Slightly adrift of target (typically this represents a variance $\geq 1\%$ and $< 5\%$ from the target).
	Significantly adrift of target (typically this represents a variance $\geq 5\%$ from the target).
	Data only (PIs only) – this is where a target has intentionally not been set, usually due to the indicator being a new indicator or where we can only partly contribute to the outcome.
	Data not available / status unknown - (PIs only) the status is not available either due to data not being available or no target being set.

When calculating the percentage of indicators with each status, the most recent available status is used up to the previous financial year end. For example, Quarter Two 2023-24 uses statuses up to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023. This ensures any data with a time lag is reported, yet information older than this is given the status of “data not available” for this calculation to ensure past performance does not impact on the scrutiny of current performance.

Indicators set as data only or with no data available are excluded. For example:

$$\text{Red status percentage} = \frac{\text{Number with red status}}{\text{Number of red + amber + green status}} \times 100$$

Positive and negative trends are shown within our reporting. In terms of Our Council Plan these are defined as:

- **Short-term Trend:** Comparison with previous year.
- **Medium-term Trend:** Comparison with three years previously.
- **Long-term Trend:** Comparison with more than three years previously.

*Schedule of Corporate Reporting*

	<b>Quarter 1</b> (April to June)	<b>Quarter 2</b> (July to September)	<b>Quarter 3</b> (October to December)	<b>Quarter 4</b> (January to March)	<b>Annual</b>
<b>Council Plan</b>	Light touch summary presented to the Executive Leadership Team.	Full six-monthly progress report produced for scrutiny by the Executive Leadership Team, Cabinet and the Audit and Scrutiny Committee.  Published on our website.	Light touch summary presented to the Executive Leadership Team.	Full six-monthly progress report produced for scrutiny by the Executive Leadership Team, Cabinet and the Audit and Scrutiny Committee.  Published on our website.	Full year Annual Performance Report produced for scrutiny by the Executive Leadership Team, Cabinet and the Audit and Scrutiny Committee.  Published on our website.  Public facing North Ayrshire Performance Dashboard updated.
<b>Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF)</b>					LGBF report produced for scrutiny by the Executive Leadership Team, Cabinet and the Audit and Scrutiny Committee.  Published on our website.
<b>Operational Plans</b>	Operational Plans are supported by the Corporate Policy, Performance and Elections Team. They are reported within Services and Directorates but are not in the public domain.				

In addition to corporate reporting, many directorates have specialised reporting to the Scottish Government, external regulators and groups.

# Planned Improvements

*We have a duty to ensure balanced reporting and effective scrutiny. This can only be achieved through working alongside teams to address any issues and provide support where it is needed. This section shows how this will be achieved, alongside planned improvements to strengthen our compliance with the Direction 2021.*

## The Council Plan Performance Management Framework

Within our previous Council Plan 2019-24 sub actions were introduced and sourced from existing strategies. Though intended to strengthen the golden thread between the Council Plan and teams, this resulted in approximately 100 specific actions within our Council Plan making effective scrutiny challenging.

Our Council Plan 2023-28 Performance Management Framework takes a more strategic approach, where actions are higher level but mapped to existing strategies. More than one team may be assigned an action. Relevant teams are then able to provide a fuller update, focussing on the performance of that strategy as well as associated activity. This should support more effective scrutiny and cross team working, promoting a whole system approach to our delivery for the benefit of our residents.

## Tell Us Once

Following a successful pilot during the Quarter Two 2020-21 reporting period, the Corporate Policy, Performance and Elections Team adopted a “tell us once” approach, sourcing qualitative information from existing sources as far as possible to minimise the duplication of effort within teams. This was especially important due to frontline services addressing immediate need due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Though there is still scope to reuse information held corporately, the extent of this approach will be scaled back. This is to ensure teams can regain effective ownership of their performance and a more strategic update can be produced in collaboration with Heads of Service. A proposal will be developed and presented to the Chief Officers Leadership Team (COLT) in January 2024.

## Best Value Thematic Approach

We will support the Best Value Thematic Approach across our Council. This includes supporting the audit and ensuring any actions are managed and reported as appropriate to the ELT, Cabinet, Council or Audit and Scrutiny Committee as appropriate.

## Pentana Risk

Pentana Risk is our corporate performance management system. We will engage with services to improve how we use Pentana to support effective and timeous updates of performance information.

Deadlines for the year will be published in the North Ayrshire Council Pentana homepage alongside information on additional support and links to final Progress Reports to help strengthen the reporting cycle.

We will enhance our use of portals (online viewing) to:

- Ensure users can view their own Council Plan actions and PIs, so there is a clear definition between statutory Council Plan measures and internal reporting.
- Enable teams to run Operational Plan reports on demand as required, providing greater flexibility for non-corporate updates within teams.

We will ensure corporately reported data is hosted centrally where appropriate. However, we understand other systems are in use for good reasons. Therefore, we will not require the data to be transferred / duplicated onto Pentana Risk other than for Corporate Reporting such as for our Council Plan or The Community Plan (LOIP).

We will ensure our performance management systems across our Council are supporting rather than defining our performance management approach due to historic or other reasons.

## Self-Assessment

A new approach to self-assessment will be introduced using the Public Services Improvement Framework (PSIF) tailored to teams and services. We will work with the Improvement Service to initiate the approach. Key principles will be:

- Use of PSIF tailored to risks and capacity of teams and services.
- Reporting to a 'peer review' group consisting of members of the Executive Leadership Team to invite scrutiny and inform resource allocation.
- Reporting summaries on our website and within Council Plan progress reports as appropriate.

Information used to inform the assessment will include:

- PSIF self-assessment questionnaire.
- Recent audits, inspections and accreditations.
- Operational Plans (service outputs and outcomes including benchmarking opportunities).
- People statistics such as employee absence, additional costs, health and safety, complaint handling, compliments, request response times (for example Elected Member, MP and MSP requests, FOIs etc.) to gain a full understanding of the performance and 'health' of a team (balanced scorecard).
- Financial management.
- Reputational management (communications and consultations).
- Discussion of results with Senior Manager and Head of Service prior to peer review.

This is in addition to scrutiny provided through public consultations and self-assessment of committees.

## Benchmarking

Benchmarking information such as data within the Local Government Benchmarking Framework was heavily impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. This has meant the value of comparisons over recent years has been limited. As the data stabilises and is more reflective of Council performance, we will improve our approach to benchmarking through:

- Ensuring benchmarked data relates directly to Our Council Plan priorities.
- Utilising Power BI to illustrate trends in a clearer way.
- Approach councils within our family group (or other councils performing particularly well) to understand our relative performance and seek improvements.

## Quarterly Performance Update Deadlines

Within the 2021-24 Performance Strategy we recognised competing demands on teams at quarter end and aimed to resolve issues through:

- Extending corporate deadlines from two to three weeks after quarter end to accommodate associated demands including gathering information from remote teams and data checking within secondary performance management systems. It also addressed capacity issues due to school holiday periods coinciding with quarter ends.
- Extending deadlines only when agreed with the Corporate Policy, Performance and Elections Team under certain circumstances, such as data source availability, data validation or team capacity issues.
- Educating teams in the need for deadlines to be met in order to produce reports that contain relevant timeous information that can be effectively scrutinised, highlighting the impact of delayed reporting.
- Training to ensure where no update is available, a note will be provided by the team assigned the measure to explain the reason and when the information will become available.

Deadlines are now three weeks after quarter end, however the other elements require further action and will continue within the 2023-28 Performance Management Strategy.

## Format of Public Facing Reports

We will continue to:

- Produce engaging “magazine” format performance reporting tailored for our residents.
- Share reports directly with our own teams as well as community groups following publication.
- Work with teams to better engage with our young people.
- Encourage feedback and use this to further improve our reporting.
- Use consistent branding across all corporate performance documents.
- Engage more with residents through social media using the #NorthAyrshirePerforms.
- Ensure our reporting is accessible.

In addition, we will capture recent audits, inspections and accreditations and associated improvement activity within our Council Plan progress reports, linking to published reports where possible.

## Publication of Reports and General Information

We will improve how our reporting is published both within our Council and externally through working with our Communications Team to develop a regular schedule. We will review our webpages and ensure all information is relevant and timeous.

## Power BI

We will continue to use Power BI to provide greater insights from the data we hold. This includes people statistics within Operational Plans, LGBF analysis and the North Ayrshire Performance Dashboard.

## Training

Corporate training will be refreshed for performance management, scrutiny and Pentana. The approach will be based on feedback from teams across our Council.

## Learning From Our Services

Performance should not be a desk-based exercise. To enable effective reporting, it is important Policy and Performance Officers have first-hand experience of many of the areas reported on. As a result, representatives from the Corporate Policy, Performance and Elections Team will be encouraged to attend events such as Locality Partnerships and community forums, as well as other activities, to increase our understanding of how to report and reach our residents more effectively.

## Support to Embed Continuous Improvement

We will support teams to embed continuous improvement throughout our Council by offering a range of support as listed below.

- **Benchmarking support** – Not only output/data based, but outcome based.
- **Scrutiny support** – Develop training for officers and Elected Members on effective scrutiny of our performance.
- **Signposting to data for policy creation** – The Corporate Policy, Performance and Elections Team has knowledge of, or access to, various sources of local and national data and information.
- **Collaboration with other teams** – Working closely with teams to make performance reporting as effective and efficient as possible.
- **Corporate data returns** – coordinating key cross service data returns such as the LGBF return.
- **Continued professional development of our team and those we support.**

## Managing Strategy Effectiveness

The above activities will be monitored through the Corporate Policy, Performance and Elections Operational Plan. Key activities will be included within Council Plan Progress Reporting where appropriate.

For further information please contact:

**The Corporate Policy, Performance and Elections Team**

Tel: 01294 310000 Email: [NorthAyrshirePerforms@north-ayrshire.gov.uk](mailto:NorthAyrshirePerforms@north-ayrshire.gov.uk)

## NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

25th January 2024

### Audit and Scrutiny Committee

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<b>Title:</b>	<b>Year End Performance Reporting: Council Plan Year End Progress Report 2022-23; Annual Performance Report 2022-23; and Local Government Benchmarking Framework Analysis of 2023 Data Release</b>
<b>Purpose:</b>	To advise the Audit and Scrutiny Committee on progress of our Council Plan priorities.
<b>Recommendation:</b>	That the Audit and Scrutiny Committee agrees to: a) Note the Council Plan Year End Progress Report and supporting performance measures as set out at Appendix One, Two and Three; b) Note the Council Plan Annual Performance Report as set out in Appendix Four; and c) Note the status of the Council's performance indicators within the LGBF Analysis of 2023 Data Release at Appendix Five.

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#### 1. Introduction

1.1. Under the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1992 and Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 we have a duty to demonstrate Best Value. To ensure we are supporting our residents, fulfilling our statutory duties and invite scrutiny, we actively manage performance and develop our reporting to make it accessible. Following Cabinet approval, our corporate performance reports are published on our website [www.north-ayrshire.gov.uk/performance](http://www.north-ayrshire.gov.uk/performance).

1.2. This report combines three key Council Plan and corporate performance reports:

- Our six-monthly Council Plan 2019-24 Progress Update (Year End 2022-23)
- Our Annual Performance Report 2022-23
- The Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) - Analysis of 2023 Data Release

#### 2. Background

2.1. Our Council Plan 2019-24 was approved by Council in June 2019. As our new Council Plan 2023-28 was approved in June 2023, this 2022-23 year-end reporting cycle marks the final reporting period for the 2019-24 Council Plan.

2.2. The **Council Plan 2019-24 Progress Update (Year End 2022-23)** and accompanying appendices provide detailed information on the progress made towards our strategic priority outcomes. The report includes key activities and case studies from across our Council in a magazine style format. It provides an overview of performance in the six months up to 31st March 2023. Areas of focus (next steps) are not included in this report as these are reflected in our new Council Plan 2023-28.

2.3. Our **Annual Performance Report 2022-23** summarises our performance across the entire financial year. As in 2021-22, to reduce duplication the Annual Performance Report is a high-level summary with links to our more detailed six-monthly Council Plan Progress Reports.

2.4. The **Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) Analysis of 2023 Data Release** provides information on how we compare to similar councils. The LGBF is a national framework collating performance information from across all 32 local authorities and is specifically referenced within the Accounts Commission Strategic Performance Information Direction. The Improvement Service, who administer the LGBF, is currently exploring how to publish data more timeously, therefore though this report mainly covers 2021-22 data as released during 2023, some information may relate to more recent periods. Data is as downloaded in September 2023 unless otherwise stated.

### 3. Performance Summary

#### 3.1. Key Activities (October to March 2023)





- £434million Capital Investment Programme was approved by Cabinet. This will be key to the economic recovery of North Ayrshire in response to the cost of living crisis.
- £3.3million was allocated to minimise the increase in council tax to support our residents.
- A £1.4million Early Intervention Fund was established to help address child poverty and the cost of living.
- Public mini enquiries were introduced to capture real lived experience and inform our Child Poverty Action Plan.
- We held the first Annual Promise Conference in November, the first in Scotland attracting 130 attendees and chaired by two of our care-experienced young people.
- 18,962 National Entitlement Cards have been used by our young people, providing free bus travel.
- We awarded the tender for two Council owned solar farms on former landfill sites at Nethermains, Kilwinning and Shewalton, Irvine.
- The formal opening of the £4.2million Lochshore Hub took place in October 2023.
- The first year of roundabout advertising has been successful. 28 locations have been granted planning consent, generating £20,000 per year.
- 1,400 residents and 37 community groups from across all six localities contributed to our budget consultation in January.
- Accessing Our Council, a key element of our 'No Wrong Door' approach is progressing well. Contact details have been rationalised to help direct our residents to the support they need.
- Our Council has been recognised by Carers Scotland as a Carer Positive 'Exemplary' employer in Scotland. The award demonstrates the support our Council provides for its employees who are working carers.



## 3.2. Council Plan Performance Indicators

- 3.2.1. Appendix 2 details Performance Indicators from the Council Plan Performance Framework, showing (where available) targets 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**).
- 3.2.2. Analysis of the indicators is outlined in Table 1 below. Where data is not available for Year End 2022-23, the most recently available data up to the annual figure for 2021-22 is used. 85.7% of indicators where the status is known are on target or slightly adrift of target as at 31st March 2023. This greater than last year, when 79.3% of indicators had this status. The two-year period covered below reflects the impact of the gradual easing of restrictions during 2021-22.

**Table 1**

Summary of Performance Indicator Status		
Traffic Light	Year End 2022-23	Year End 2021-22
 on target	17 (60.7%*)	18 (62.1%**)
 slightly adrift	7 (25%*)	5 (17.2%**)
 significantly adrift	4 (14.3%*)	6 (20.7%**)
 status unknown or data only	5 (15.1% of all Council Plan indicators)	5 (14.7% of all Council Plan indicators)




\* Of the 28 indicators where status is known

\*\* Of the 29 indicators where status is known

## 3.3. Council Plan Delivery Plan

- 3.3.1. Appendix 3 details the 39 actions from the Council Plan Delivery Plan. The status of sub-actions informs the overall action status.
- 3.3.2. At Year End 2022-23, 87.2% of actions are either on target or slightly adrift of target compared to 94.9% at Year End 2021-22.

**Table 2**

Summary of Overall Action Status		
Traffic Light	Year End 2022-23	Year End 2021-22
 on target	33 (84.6%)	32 (82.1%)
 slightly adrift	1 (2.6%)	5 (12.8%)
 significantly adrift	5 (12.8%)	2 (5.1%)

- 3.3.3. Following the approval of the new Council Plan 2023-28 any incomplete actions relating to our new priorities were either absorbed into the new Council Plan actions or included in Operational Plans as appropriate. Any actions not directly related to the new priorities were closed.

#### **4. Local Government Benchmarking Framework**

- 4.1. In line with the Accounts Commission Strategic Performance Information Direction 2021, the PIs analysed within the LGBF framework directly relate to our priorities. As this report was produced in the transition period between the final reporting on the Council Plan 2019-24 (when this performance was delivered) and our new Council Plan 2023-28, the report includes measures included within both plans.
- 4.2. In total 32 PIs closely relate to our priorities and are analysed within the report. To provide as close to a like for like comparison as possible, local authorities are grouped based on similar levels of deprivation or rurality for each measure. Trend information is shown relating to the relevant family group alongside an explanation of performance.
- 4.3. The Improvement Service states that as this dataset covers the second year of the pandemic, most of the information relates to 2021-22, the data should be interpreted within this context.
- 4.4. The analysis clearly shows the impact of the pandemic across the majority of indicators. Though we continue to face significant challenges in North Ayrshire in areas such as child poverty, rent arrears and business startups; there are also signs of recovery and / or consistently good performance such as in employability support, proportion of people earning the living wage, energy efficiency of our homes, the percentage of invoices sampled paid within 30 days and the speed of crisis grant decisions. This demonstrates how we are actively working to support our residents.

#### **5. Proposals**

- 5.1. That the Audit and Scrutiny Committee agrees to: a) Note the Council Plan Year End Progress Report and supporting performance measures as set out at Appendix One, Two and Three; b) Note the Council Plan Annual Performance Report as set out in Appendix Four; and c) Note the status of the Council's performance indicators within the LGBF Analysis of 2023 Data Release at Appendix Five.

#### **6. Implications/Socio-economic Duty**

##### **Financial**

- 6.1. None

##### **Human Resources**

- 6.2. None

##### **Legal**

- 6.3. This report confirms the arrangements for the Council's compliance with its duties under the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1992 and the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 and our commitment to improving public performance reporting.

##### **Equality/Socio-economic**

- 6.4. None

## **Environmental and Sustainability**

6.5. None

## **Climate Change and Carbon**

6.6. None

## **Key Priorities**

6.7. This report helps to demonstrate our Council's delivery of our strategic priorities.

## **Community Wealth Building**

6.8. There are no community wealth building implications.

## **7. Consultation**

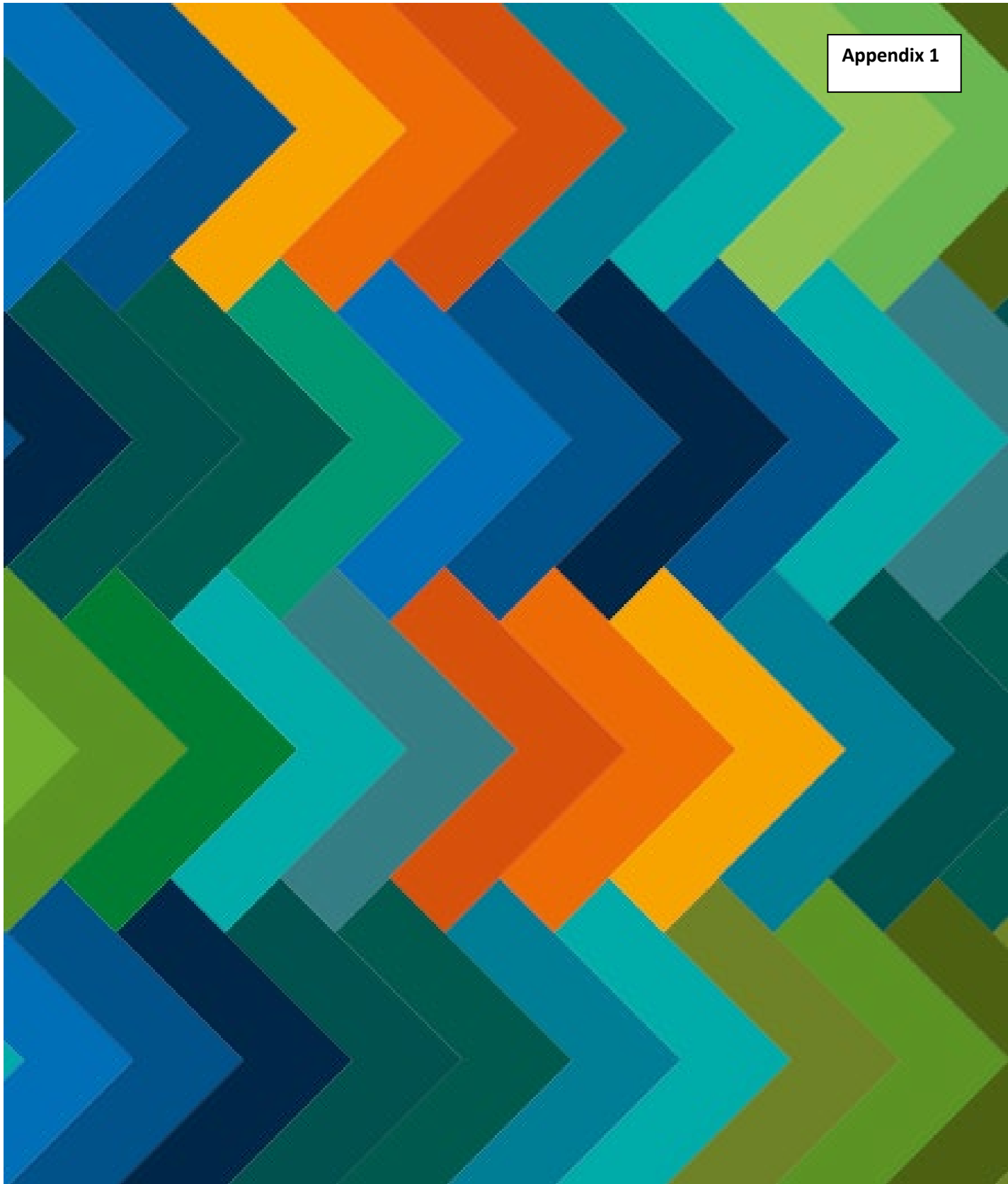
7.1. Feedback from the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) informed the content of this report.

Aileen Craig  
Head of Service (Democratic)

For further information please contact **Isla Hardy, Team Manager (Corporate Policy and Performance)**, email: [IslaHardy@North-Ayrshire.gov.uk](mailto:IslaHardy@North-Ayrshire.gov.uk).

## **Background Papers**

Council Plan 2019-24



# Council Plan 2019-24 Progress Update

Year End 2022-23



North Ayrshire Council  
Comhairle Siorrachd Àir a Tuath

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The Corporate Policy, Performance and Elections Team welcome any feedback you may have. We strive to make our Council and reports as accessible as possible and appreciate opportunities to discuss how this can be achieved. For further information please contact:

**The Corporate Policy, Performance and Elections Team**  
Tel: 01294 310000  
Email: [NorthAyrshirePerforms@north-ayrshire.gov.uk](mailto:NorthAyrshirePerforms@north-ayrshire.gov.uk)



## Our Performance at a Glance

20% our Modern Apprenticeships ringfenced for those with a disability or who are care-experienced

**£434 million Capital Investment Programme approved for next 10 years**

Our **two new council-owned Solar PV farms** in Shewalton and Nethermains are at the design phase with the tender awarded

Almost 19,000 Free Bus Travel Passes issued to those under 22 years of age



**£1.4m Early Intervention Fund established**

£80,000 to develop the skills of our residents in Arran and Cumbrae

Electric Vehicle charging infrastructure expanding

172 community and partner representatives attended our Tackling Child Poverty mini enquiries

**Over 35,000 new trees planted**

Community Renewable Energy Generation Funding Scheme established

£3.3million to support our residents by minimising the increase of council tax

**New Financial Inclusion Strategy 2023-28 launched**



## Welcome

Welcome to the Year End Progress Report on our Council Plan. This report covers the last six months of 2022/23 and, following the approval of our new Council Plan 2023-28 by North Ayrshire Council in June 2023, concludes our Council Plan 2019-24.

Challenges continue to be felt by our residents and communities in relation to the cost of living and supporting our residents with these challenges remains a key area for our Council. We delivered a balanced budget, approved by Council on 1<sup>st</sup> March 2023 focussing on supporting our residents. This included ensuring North Ayrshire's council tax increase was lower than inflation. We also allocated £1.4m to our Child Poverty and Cost of Living Board to directly address the causes of poverty and help our most vulnerable residents find a sustainable route out of poverty.

If you are in need of assistance with the cost of living, please visit this [link to the North Ayrshire Council Cost of Living Support webpage](#) or call 01294 310000.

Our Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) continues to deliver a range of homes across all our localities. This includes general needs housing, wheelchair accessible and supported housing, with 831 homes (including employee units) delivered over the lifetime of our Council Plan 2019-2023. Our new SHIP 2023-2028 was approved by Cabinet in November 2022 and supports the Scottish Government's Affordable Housing Supply Programme. This will see the further development of homes for our residents across North Ayrshire.

Mitigating the impact of climate change is always at the heart of our projects. This will be increasingly evident over the next few years as our £434million Capital Investment Programme is rolled out focussing on more sustainable developments and the longevity of our environment including the creation of two new solar farms in North Ayrshire.

Next steps and areas of focus are not included within this report as, following the approval by Council of our new Council Plan 2023-28, it contains details on our new priority areas.

Together we can create a **North Ayrshire that is Fair For All.**





# Our Council Plan 2019 - 2024

## Our Vision

*A North Ayrshire that is 'Fair for All'*

## Our Mission

*Working together to improve wellbeing, prosperity and equity in North Ayrshire*

## Our Priorities

### ***Aspiring Communities***

- ◆ Active and strong communities
- ◆ Children and young people experience the best start in life
- ◆ Inclusive, growing and enterprising local economy
- ◆ Residents and communities enjoy life-long health and wellbeing
- ◆ Residents and Communities are safe

### ***Inspiring Place***

- ◆ Well connected with effective infrastructure
- ◆ Homes that meet residents' needs
- ◆ Vibrant, welcoming and attractive environment
- ◆ A sustainable environment

### ***A Council for the Future***

- ◆ An accessible Council that puts residents and communities at the heart of what we do
- ◆ An efficient Council that maximises resources and provides value for money
- ◆ A valued workforce that delivers high quality services
- ◆ A powerful and respected voice



## Aspiring Communities – Key Activities

### Active and strong communities

#### *Community Investment Fund*

Cabinet approved the award of £45,000 of the Community Investment Fund (CIF) to the Three Towns Locality Partnership in conjunction the Community Housing Advocacy Project (CHAP). The award will support the recruitment of a new community outreach worker to support access to financial services and advice to those residing in the Three Towns who are struggling with the cost of living.

£100,000 of funding was approved by Cabinet to support a £600,000 3G football pitch at Winton Park in Ardrossan through the Ardrossan Community Sports Hub (ACSH). The funding will help secure further investment in the project.

#### *Participatory Budgeting*

Funding bids for the two streams of participatory budgeting closed in February. Local groups across North Ayrshire could apply for funding for locality projects (up to £1,000 per project), or arts and culture projects (up to £400 per project) with decisions made by the community.

9,357 votes were received from across all six localities and 128 community groups were successful in their bids. Each will receive a share of £109,777 provided jointly by our Council and the Health and Social Care Partnership. A summary of the participatory budgeting results can be found [on our website](#).

Our Young People's Participatory Budgeting Initiative in December 2022 ensured 4,131 young people cast three votes each for projects across our localities via the online Young Scot's voting platform or through our schools and youth centres. This resulted in nearly 100 youth projects receiving a proportion of £56,000. A full list of the winning projects can be found [on our website](#).

#### *Community Planning*

The Community and Locality Planning Conference took place on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> January 2023 – the first held since the Covid-19 pandemic. Focussing on

community impact and placemaking, it attracted 70 attendees and positive feedback.

To support a new approach to Locality Partnership meetings, workshops have taken place with Elected Members and senior officers to progress new guidance and agenda formats.

#### *Islands Recovery and Renewal Pilot project*

Significant progress has been made on the delivery of the ten year local Island Plans launched in March 2022. Developed with and for our island communities, these aim to drive the development of community, economic and environmental wellbeing. This includes:

- Formation of Island Plan Delivery Working Group;
- Development of the North Ayrshire Islands Skills Initiative Fund;
- Establishment of the Arran Housing Task Force;
- Delivery of the Cost Of Living Crisis Emergency Fund; and
- Securing funding to support the delivery of Island Plan actions with partners.

## Children and young people experience the best start in life

#### *Child Poverty and Cost of Living Board*

Our £1.4 Early Intervention Fund was approved by Council in March 2023. This consolidates some previous funding such as the Cost of the School Day Fund to more effectively deliver the work of the Child Poverty and Cost of Living Board.

Our Child Poverty and Cost of Living Board introduced mini enquiries to inform how we address child poverty in North Ayrshire. Between October and March representatives from our communities and Community Planning Partners shared real lived experience which directly informed our Child Poverty Action Plan 2023-26 and Council Plan 2023-28. These will continue to inform the delivery of the Early Intervention Fund.

Tackling child poverty themes covered so far include:

- **No Wrong Door Mini Public Enquiry** - 5<sup>th</sup> October 2022 at the Redburn Community Centre, Irvine.



- **Employability Mini Public Enquiry** - 28<sup>th</sup> November 2022 at Whitlees Community Centre, Ardrossan.
- **Food Mini Public Enquiry** - 11<sup>th</sup> January 2023 at the Volunteer Rooms, Irvine.
- **Islands – Arran Mini Public Enquiry** - 13<sup>th</sup> February 2023 at the Ormidale Pavilion, Brodick and **Cumrae Mini Public Enquiry** - 20<sup>th</sup> February 2023 in Garrison House, Cumrae.

Due to the varying challenges our islands face, over £60,000 has been awarded to North Ayrshire through the Scottish Government’s Island Cost Crisis Emergency Fund. It has been identified that those in our island communities are facing steeper price rises than those living on the mainland. The award will be available as follows:

- ◆ £30,000 to support third and voluntary sector work on Arran and Cumrae.
- ◆ £15,000 for additional study support for pupils in Arran and Cumrae and Largs Academy. This funding will also go towards family support initiatives and visiting specialists to ensure that children receive well-rounded and meaningful experiences.



- ◆ £10,000 will support our Council’s Energy Smart initiative helping support the improvement of energy efficiency in homes and ultimately, reducing the cost to our residents.
- ◆ £10,000 to support the Money Matters Service in assisting access to benefits for our residents.

#### *The Promise*

Our first Annual Promise Conference with Care-Experienced Young People, senior leaders from across the Community Planning Partnership, Scottish Government officials including the Minister for Children and Young People, and the Chief Executive Officers of The Promise Scotland and Children’s First was held on 4<sup>th</sup> November 2022. This was the first conference of this kind in Scotland. 130 people including 23 carers and care-experienced young people attended the conference. The event was chaired by two of our care-experienced young people. The themes of the conference were Relationships, Voice and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), and Whole Family Support.

#### *Lockhart Campus Official Opening*

Lockhart Campus held an official opening day on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2023. The new £20million Additional Support Needs (ASN) School opened in August 2021 however, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, no celebration to mark the opening took place at that time. Our young people and teams delivered a music-filled afternoon for invitees.

#### *Holiday Meal Programme*

At the beginning of March, Cabinet approved a plan to provide residents eligible for free school meals with a direct cash payment rather than vouchers over the Easter Holidays. It was arranged for families to receive the cash payment directly into their bank account and was the equivalent of the cost of a school meal per day. We introduced the cash first approach to provide families with more flexibility and better value for money. It also provides a more consistent method for parents and carers where other supports are already processed in this way. Community volunteers agreed to support an extensive food and activity programme.

### *Free Bus Travel Scheme*

18,962 National Entitlement Cards (NEC) and Young Scot NECs have now been used to take part in the national free bus travel scheme across North Ayrshire - the third highest uptake across all 32 Scottish local authorities. Anyone aged between five and 21 years old living in Scotland is eligible to use the scheme.

### *Outdoor Learning*

After the success of our outdoor literacy project 'Go Wild!', the project has been extended to a further six schools (12 schools participate in total). Developed in partnership with our Council's Literacy Officer, the aim of the project was to provide a programme of outdoor learning opportunities encompassing literacy that can be delivered by teachers. Twilight 'Go Wild' sessions have been delivered by the Ranger Service with another scheduled for May 2023. A full day session was delivered at Whiting Bay Primary School.

An additional 13 schools are now looking to take part in the project over the 2023/24 academic year.

## **Inclusive, growing and enterprising local economy**

### *Community Wealth Building*

We held Scotland's first Community Wealth Building (CWB) conference at Saltcoats Town Hall in October 2022 where over 100 stakeholders from across Scotland attended including the Minister for Community Wealth and Public Finance.

In February 2023, a [Regional Economic Strategy for Ayrshire](#) with a CWB approach was approved by the Ayrshire Economic Joint Committee.

In March 2023, the CWB Commission was attended by the Minister for Community Wealth and Public Finance to discuss the Scottish Government's CWB Legislation Consultation

Also in March 2023, the first in-person meeting was held for the Ayrshire Growth Deal CWB programme at Ayrshire College, Kilmarnock. 100 attended and a range of speakers presented including Ayrshire businesses who have been supported by the programme.

### *Visitor Economy*

Throughout 2022/23 we continued to support the visitor economy sector to manage the impact of the post Covid domestic tourism increase. We implemented our 2022 Visitor Management Plan for the peak tourism season through coordinating and increasing our focus on management of place assets to maximise the experience for our visitors. This ensures our businesses get the benefit from increased domestic tourism, while minimising impacts on communities. This delivered over £2m investment in support tourism.

### *Procurement*

Since October 2022, 20 Community Benefit wishes have been delivered as part of our ongoing "Community Benefits Wishlist". Community groups can request donations or time from local suppliers and can register 'wishes' for their communities via the online Wishlist Portal. As at March 2023, there are:

- ◆ 43 groups registered on the list.
- ◆ 91 wishes live.
- ◆ 2 wishes in discussion.
- ◆ 4 wishes in progress.

### *Employability and Skills*

During 2022/23, Employability and Skills 'Step into Business' programme enabled 11 parents to complete a PC Passport qualification leading to paid work experience and the opportunity to complete an SVQ Level II in Business Administration within an anchor institution such as NHS Ayrshire and Arran, Ayrshire College, Scottish Fire and Rescue and The Adolescent and Children's Trust (TACT).

To target school and college leavers, a careers event attracted 30 employers and 400 young people.

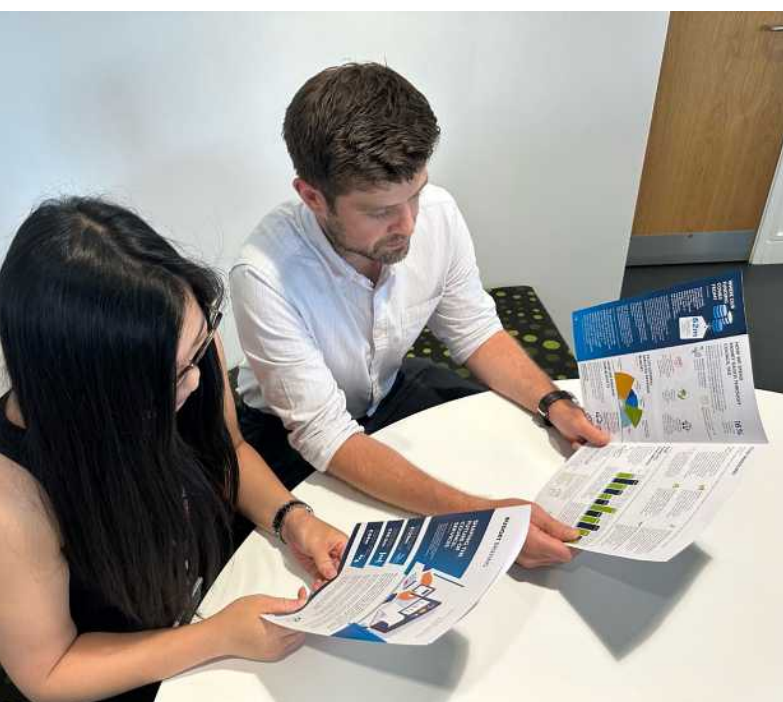
Our Council embarked on a partnership with Ayrshire College and the University of the West of Scotland offering employees the opportunity to complete qualifications whilst in work. 20 employees are being supported to complete qualifications ranging from SVQ Level II to degree level.

To support income from employment as a key driver out of poverty, an Employability Child Poverty Action Plan was created in order to help support parents in

increasing their household income via gaining employment or progressing with existing employment.

The North Ayrshire Local Employability Partnership launched a Corporate Parenting Action Plan to increase fair work outcomes for care-experienced young people.

To date, 36 people have been recruited to the Streetscene Environment Skills Training Academy all of whom are supported to gain qualifications while working and earning the Living Wage as an employee of North Ayrshire Council.



#### *Fair Employment*

During 2022/23, the Fair Work Ayrshire Team has engaged with 236 businesses. With 44 Ayrshire businesses referred to secure real living wage accreditation, 54 referred to secure disability confident accreditation, and 43 referrals to Carer Positive Scotland.

#### *Equal Programme Jobs Fair*

Along with the Local Employability Partnership and supported by [Your Next Move - Working North Ayrshire](#), the Equal Supported Employment Programme arranged a jobs fair with a difference at Lockhart Campus in February 2023. Rather than a traditional arrangement where jobseekers enter a

room of employers arranged in tables to see what jobs are available, the aim was more of a 'talent showcase' where employers toured the room of potential candidates, gaining the opportunity to have a coffee and more informal discussion. At the fair, 20 residents with disabilities discussed their skills and experienced with potential employers which resulted in nine formal interviews, five work trials and three job offers.

## Residents and communities enjoy good, life-long health and wellbeing

### *Active Schools*

In partnership with North Ayrshire Young Carers Team, Active Schools provided a variety of sport and physical activity for young people and their families attending the Young Carers Event. This provided a forum for discussion on barriers to participation in sport where resources could be best focused.

A Care Experience Event was also held in partnership with the Corporate Parenting Team where Active Schools delivered sport and physical activities that young people could participate in with their parent or carers. This was another opportunity to provide support and remove barriers to participation in sport and physical activity across North Ayrshire.

## Residents and communities are safe

### *Flood Risk Management*

The second [Ayrshire Flood Risk Management Plan](#) has been published. The plan highlights areas across Ayrshire that may be more susceptible to flooding. The plan details the responses needed now to alleviate future problems and empowers residents with the knowledge to better protect themselves and their properties.

### *Millport Coastal Flood Protection Scheme*

Work to start the £48million coastal flood protection scheme for Millport has begun, with 80% funded by the Scottish Government. The project became operational in 2021 when the detailed design development started, with construction commencing in March 2023. The project end date is estimated to be Autumn 2024. Sheltered waters provided by the completion of the offshore breakwaters will allow for the construction of a step ashore marina.



## Aspiring Communities – Case Study

### North Ayrshire Island Skills Initiative (NAISI)

Arran and Cumbrae now have their own 10-year Strategic Local Island Plans and a dedicated Senior Islands Officer to test new ways of working across stakeholders, whilst contributing to the delivery of the strategic objectives of the Scottish Government's National Islands Plan and principles of Community Wealth Building. Through ongoing engagement with our island communities on the Isles of Arran and Cumbrae, the following areas were repeatedly highlighted as areas of concern:

- ◆ Economic growth, investment, and sustainability
- ◆ Community capacity and empowerment
- ◆ Education and skills and retention of young people
- ◆ Population and depopulation
- ◆ Recruitment and retention of employees

We secured £80,000 of Scottish Government funding to develop and deliver a small-scale pilot and bespoke '**North Ayrshire Islands Skills Initiative' (NAISI)** project to support education and skills interventions on the islands of both Arran and Cumbrae.

The North Ayrshire Islands Skills Initiative (NAISI) ran from January – March 2023. The fund was open to individuals, up to the value of £1,500 and groups, businesses and partnerships up to the value of £10,000. A grants application process distributed skills development grants to seven island-based individuals and 19 island-based business in Arran as well as six island-based businesses in Cumbrae, supporting a total of 32 skills initiatives.

The successful applications included a range of training interventions retaining young people and services on the island. This included training in veterinary nursing, paddleboarding, accountancy and MOT testing.

Feedback from skills fund beneficiaries include:

*"It has helped by retaining a school age leaver and enabled him to develop further skills that not only allow our business to explore new growth opportunities but also provided this individual with skills for life which he can use in future employment. This has resulted in the individual remaining on the island as oppose to leaving to seek employment on the mainland".*

*"This improves the likelihood of a vet surgery on Arran which is essential to community and island economy".*

*"The good news is he passed his MOT Testing with flying colours!! This gives us more flexibility within the business and helps us to retain a young member of staff who appreciates the chance to receive this extra skill and deliver this service on the island".*

This initiative supported the resilience of the island's economy post-pandemic, whilst driving economic growth for the future.

It is anticipated that this pilot will contribute to the sustainability of our islands. The outcomes from this exclusive, island pilot will inform the wider Ayrshire Growth Deal investment and Ayrshire Skills Investment Fund. These have inclusive economic growth as the key driver to tackle inequality, grow local talent, create new connections and provide new opportunities and employment for people across our region including rural and island localities.

## Inspiring Place – Key Activities

### Well connected with effective Infrastructure

#### *Local Development Plan*

The third Local Development Plan (LDP3) process began in March, with a new [online hub](#) developed to support the plan's creation. The hub outlines the process involved in the creation of LDP3 and provides the opportunity for residents to voice their views on the future of their surroundings. The first phase of developing the plan runs until June 2023 and we aim to adopt the plan in Summer 2026. LDP3 will be the framework from which all planning applications are assessed for the following decade.

#### *B714 Upgrade*

Following confirmation of the £23.7m award in October 2021 from the UK Government's Levelling Up Fund, we have continued to progress the design and business case for the project. Extensive consultation has been undertaken with landowners and a broad range of stakeholders. This included a public consultation and exhibition in November and December 2022 on the preferred option. Detailed ground investigations and surveys including environmental and ecological surveys are also underway. The feedback and information obtained from this process will inform the Business Case and design development. Targeting submission to the UK Government for approval in Autumn 2023. This project is match funded by a £3m award from our Council's Investment Fund.

#### *Ayrshire Growth Deal*

We have made progress on several of our Ayrshire Growth Deal Projects. We have:

- Completed our full business case for the i3 Flexible Space and Digital Process Manufacturing Centre at i3 Irvine.
- Made our Digital Process Manufacturing Centre building suitable for occupation.
- Secured partnership of National Manufacturing Institute Scotland and University of Strathclyde as having a presence as lead operator of a national innovation centre for manufacturing.

- Launched consultation on the Irvine Harbourside masterplan, which is key moving into delivery of the Ayrshire Growth Deal (note in current financial year we have appointed designers for the regional play park/coastal hub which will be the first delivery phase).
- Developed academic partnerships with University of Stirling to support our blue economy ambitions through the International Marine Science Centre project and Hunterston.
- Continued development of our partnership with Crown Estate Scotland, particularly to support development of marine tourism projects.

### Homes that meet residents' needs

#### *Strategic Housing Investment Plan*

Our Council [Strategic Housing Investment Plan](#) (SHIP) 2023-2028 was approved by Cabinet in November 2022 and supports the Scottish Government's Affordable Housing Supply Programme (AHSP). Both the SHIP and AHSPs aims are to deliver affordable housing for rent for our residents across North Ayrshire and support our Council's Regeneration Delivery Plan to implement regeneration across sites including town centres.

At the beginning of 2023, work began on a new housing development at Afton Court, Stevenston. The £1.3million development - with £600,000 of Scottish Government funding - is expected to be completed by late summer 2023 and will create six new amenity bungalows delivered by a modular construction method. The bungalows will be built in a controlled factory environment using sustainable practices reducing waste and energy required. Kitchens, bathrooms, plumbing and electrics will all be installed in the factory before the bungalows are transported to site and moved into position. Tenants of the bungalows will benefit from the modern, energy-efficient homes owing to the ultra-insulated building envelope and the installation of air-source heat pumps and photovoltaic (PV) panels.

14 new homes will be built at sites as part of our Estates Based Regeneration Programme. The draft plans were available online for our residents to comment on and a consultation event was held in Kilbirnie in February.



## Irvine & Kilwinning

35 of the 71 units at Irvine Harbourside were complete as at 31 March 2023 with the remaining 36 homes due to be provided to tenants during April 2023.

The 79 homes at St Michael's Wynd in Kilwinning were completed during September 2022. These include general needs, amenity, wheelchair user housing, sheltered housing and supported accommodation.

### *Arran Housing Task Force*

In March we established our Arran Housing Task Force as part of our Arran Island Plan commitment which incorporates a wide range of partners aiming to find a long-term resolution to the island's housing challenges. Details of the demand for affordable housing on the island – both location and type - will be identified, as well as barriers to economic sustainability and growth.

## Vibrant, welcoming and attractive environment

### *Moorings*

We have agreed a three-year contract to install, maintain and repair the visitor moorings at Arran and Cumbrae. Available throughout the season (April – October) and located at Millport, Brodick, Lochranza, Pirnmill and Whiting Bay, visitors can berth for up to three nights on a visitor mooring at these locations, with longer stays available at Lamlash, Largs, Fairley Quay and Clyde Marina. The development will attract tourism to our island communities throughout the warmer months and will enable visitors to stay and enjoy our area.

### *Millport Town Hall*

Renovation works to improve and restore the 144-year-old Millport Town Hall building have begun. Funding for the project for Phase One was secured in 2021 with £1.865 million sourced from the Scottish Government's Regeneration Capital Grant Fund (RCGF), and a further £200,000 in Community Investment Funding awarded by our Council and the North Coast and Cumbraes Locality Partnership in addition to £15,000 from the North Ayrshire Ventures Trust (NAVT). A further award of £0.509m was secured from the Scottish Government's Islands Programme for Phase Two of the project. The

Millport Town Hall Charity has also raised £537,710 over the lifespan of the project which is a key example of a locally led regeneration project.

### *Capital Investment Programme*

A £434million Capital Investment Programme has been approved by Cabinet and will play a key role in the economic recovery of North Ayrshire in response to the cost of living crisis. The investment will be delivered over the next decade and the projects covered by the investment will include:

- ◆ The Millport Flood Protection Scheme.
- ◆ Expansion of universal free meals in schools.
- ◆ The upgrade of the B714.
- ◆ Ardrossan Community Campus.
- ◆ Montgomerie Park Primary School.
- ◆ The solar PV farms at Shewalton and Nethermains in Irvine.
- ◆ The decarbonisation of our Council's transport fleet.
- ◆ Street lighting.
- ◆ Playparks.
- ◆ Our cycling, walking, and safer routes programme.

Inflation and increased costs have made it challenging to manage the capital budget. All projects are approached with a focus on protecting the environment and supporting our goal of becoming a carbon-neutral council.

### *Regeneration Delivery Plan*

We developed and delivered Year Two of our Regeneration Delivery Plan, focusing on the delivery of physical regeneration across North Ayrshire through an ambitious project based rolling action programme. This was delivered using funding secured from a range of sources including:

- Scottish Government's Place Based Investment Programme: £1.093m
- Scottish Government's Vacant and Derelict Land Fund: £1.32m
- Scottish Government's Vacant and Derelict Land Investment Programme: £0.4m
- Scottish Government's Cycling Walking and Safer Routes: £0.86m
- Strathclyde Partnership for Transport Capital Programme: £1.385m
- Scottish Government's Islands Programme £1.229m

## A sustainable environment

### *Solar PV Farms*

We have awarded the tender to deliver two Council-owned solar farms. The £12.8million project will see the former landfill sites at Nethermain in Kilwinning, and Shewalton in Irvine transformed into two solar farms. The detailed design phase is underway and works are scheduled to start on-site early in the new year. The transformation to a source of green energy use as part of our Council's Environmental Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy will see sterile land brought back into productive use and provide a significant amount of energy and income that can be reinvested in the area.

### *Community Renewable Energy Generation Funding Scheme*

We have established a Community Renewable Energy Generation Funding Scheme (CREGFS). The scheme empowers communities to undertake renewable energy initiatives. It will enable community groups to contribute to the net zero emissions by our 2030 commitment and accelerates community benefit from local renewable energy generation.

### *Lochshore Hub*

The formal opening of our £4.2million Lochshore Hub took place in October 2022, attracting approximately 1,000 attendees with a free family fun day. The Hub was funded by a range of sources including Scottish Enterprise, Garnock Rugby Club, the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority, the Scottish Government's Regeneration Capital Grant Fund and Vacant and Derelict Land Fund.

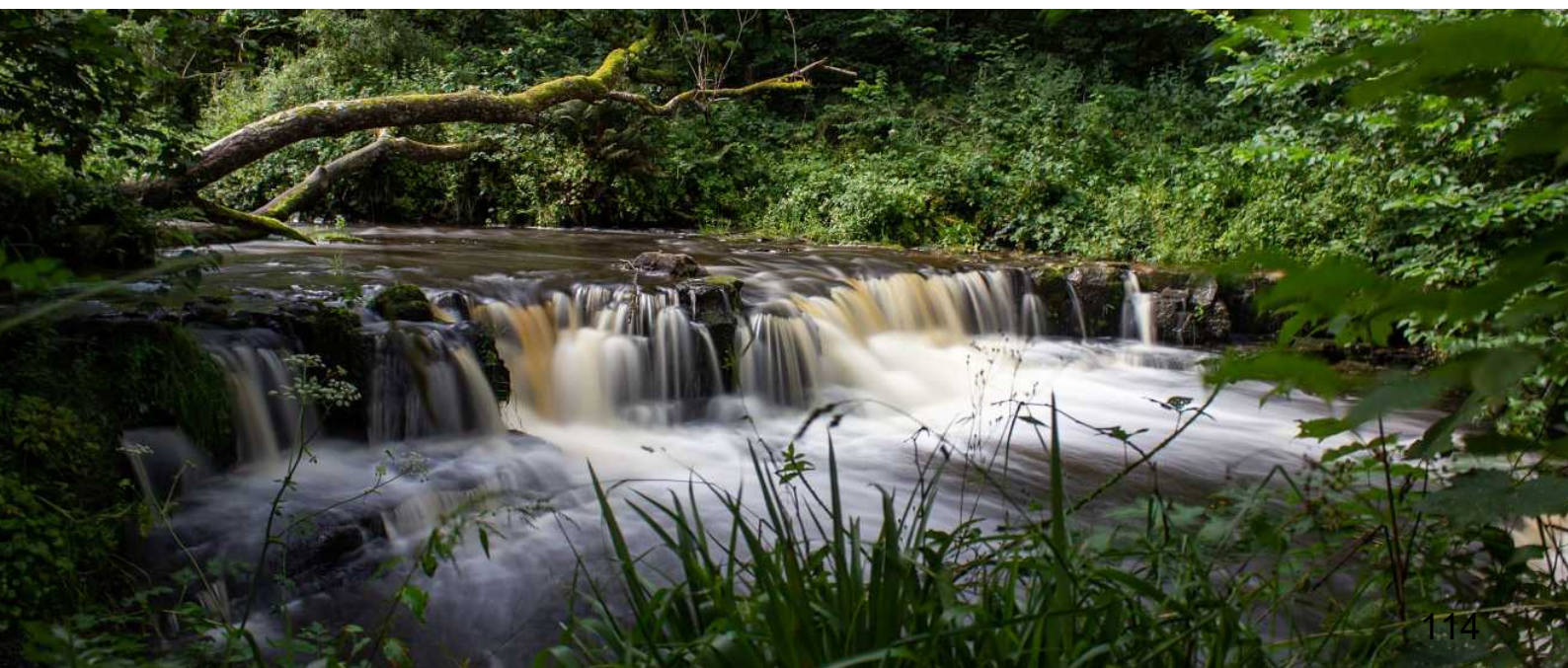
The preparation for planting 12 hectares of new woodland at Lochshore, Kilbirnie, began in February 2023. Following extensive groundworks, 17,000 trees will be planted with the species being informed by the ground conditions at the planting site. A community woodland area will be created, planted and managed by the community. The entire project aligns with our Council's ambition to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2030 which includes planting over 100,000 trees across North Ayrshire (over 35,000 new trees have been planted to date).

### *Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Infrastructure*

From October 2022 to March 2023 the following publicly accessible charge points were installed:

- ◆ Skelmorlie Community Centre – 1 x 50Kw EV Charge Point.
- ◆ Lockhart Additional Support Needs Campus – 1 x 7Kw EV Charge point.
- ◆ Clockhouse Car Park, Lamlash – 1 x 50 kw EV Charge point.
- ◆ Arran Outdoor Education Centre – 2 x 7Kw EV Charge points.

In addition, Cabinet approved the progression of an Inter-Authority Agreement with East and South Ayrshire to oversee and implement the expansion of the public vehicle charging network across Ayrshire. The project will involve private sector investment and grant funding from the Scottish Government to deliver a total of 433 charging points across Ayrshire – 150 in North Ayrshire alone.



## Inspiring Place – Case Study – Regeneration Delivery Plan

The Regeneration Delivery Plan approved in March 2021 is informed by stakeholder consultation and community priorities. It aims to address local priorities, support changes within communities and deliver a wellbeing economy.

The Plan focusses on the delivery of physical regeneration across North Ayrshire and informs our priorities for securing and delivering against external funding sources including Scottish and UK Government funds. Action in 2022/23 focussed on maximising the impact and leverage of investment and accelerate delivery. This includes funding to support community led delivery.

The Action Programme is aligned to the four themes of the Delivery Plan which align with and deliver across our Council Plan priorities. Key successes include:

### **Strengthening Communities**

- Approval of the local delivery plans for the £1.32m annual allocation from the Scottish Government's Vacant and Derelict Land Fund (VDLF).
- Launch of the Repurposing Property Grant Fund to support landowners and communities to bring vacant and derelict land and properties into positive management including two rounds of awards.
- Conclusion of the sale of Sites A and B at Montgomerie Park, Irvine to enable the delivery of the Simplified Planning Zone and commencement of construction. Commencement of next phases including proposals for neighbourhood retail site development.

### **Placemaking**

- Approval of the delivery plan for the £1.096m allocation from the PBIP including implementation of the Place Framework pilots in Kilwinning, Largs, Saltcoats and Lochshore Park.
- Working in partnership with Ardrossan Community Development Trust to successfully secure £0.749m from the Regeneration Capital Grant Fund (RCGF) for Ardrossan Promenade.
- Completion and launch of key Phase 1 projects for the Lochshore Park Masterplan including the Hub building and active travel route. Commenced construction on the 5km loop and play at the Hub and secured £0.1m funding from Forestry and Land Scotland for the delivery of new woodland.

### **Inclusive and Green Economy**

- Design development and tender of Phase Three of Pavilion development at Annickbank, Irvine including securing £0.25m from North Ayrshire Ventures Trust and £0.4m from the Scottish Government's Vacant and Derelict Land Investment Programme (VDLIP) towards the construction.
- Design development for the next phase of industrial unit development at Kyle Road, Irvine.
- Securing £0.509m from the Scottish Government Islands Programme for Phase Two of Millport Town Hall and £0.540m for the Islands Pit Stop project.

### **Enabling Infrastructure**

- Securing £1.385m from Strathclyde Partnership for Transport's (SPT) Capital Programme for the delivery of a range of active travel and transport projects across North Ayrshire.
- Securing £0.124m from the Smarter Choices Smarter Places for the continued delivery of the Trinity Active Travel Hub and Travel Smart programme.
- Development and delivery of a £0.86m programme of active travel design and works under the Scottish Government's Cycling, Walking and Safer Routes programme.

A draft action programme is being prepared for 2023/24 and 2024/25 to align priorities with resource. This will be informed by an assessment of progress to date, local priorities, project deliverability and funding. The implementation of action programme projects aligned to competitive funding sources will however be dependent on the success of the funding applications.



## A Council for the Future – Key Activities

### An accessible Council that puts residents and communities at the heart of what we do

#### *Budget and Council Plan Consultations*

1,400 residents completed the 2023/24 Budget Engagement Survey in January 2023 in addition to in-person events held across North Ayrshire's six localities attracting 37 community groups. Our residents were asked to rate services in order of importance, provide their views on schools and nurseries and offer opinions about our towns and surrounding areas.

These consultations informed our budget and the development of our Council Plan 2023-28 priorities, alongside real lived experience captured through the Child Poverty and Cost of Living mini-enquiries and other recent consultations for areas such as our Community Plan and HSCP Strategic Plan.

#### *Accessing Our Council and No Wrong Door*

Our Accessing Our Council programme has continued to progress. Focus has been on our digital services, with the review of our frequently used online processes to identify and implement improvements ensuring a streamlined customer journey across services. Phase One which rationalised the contact details for our Council is complete, resulting in a significant reduction in public facing telephone numbers and email addresses on our website.

The next phase of the project is focusing on the implementation of the new Customer Services Digital Team, the launch of the new Contact Us process for contacting Council services, the new My NAC online account and progressing our locality-based in-person service provision.

Accessing our Council contributes to a wider area of work around 'No Wrong Door' where no matter how a person contacts our Council, they are guided to relevant support. This approach is currently in development, with an awareness raising campaign due to begin in June 2023. It has been directly informed by the real lived experiences of our

residents and information from partners through our No Wrong Door Mini Enquiry in October 2022.

### An efficient Council that maximises resources and provides value for money

Council approved our budget on 1<sup>st</sup> March which has a clear focus on ways to mitigate the impact of the cost of living for our residents. It was agreed that £3.3million would be used to reduce the impact of the rising cost of living for our residents by capping the increase on council tax and making this significantly lower than inflation. In addition, our Council will further invest in its Energy Smart Programme. The programme was put in place to help residents source assistance with lowering their energy bills during the winter (see Aspiring Communities section above).

#### *Roundabout Advertising*

The first year of advertising on roundabouts across North Ayrshire has been positive. Of the 24 roundabout locations initially granted planning consent, 23 locations were sold within one week of release. £20,000 of income per year is generated by this initiative. 28 locations have now been granted planning consent. The initial agreement period extends to September 2024.

### A valued workforce that delivers high quality services

#### *Best Value Thematic Approach*

We have been supporting our annual Best Value Thematic Approach Audit. This is a new approach to auditing Best Value and replaces the five yearly Best Value Assurance Audit. This thematic approach focusses on a specific area each year in addition to our standard annual audit by our external auditors, Audit Scotland, on behalf of the Accounts Commission. 2022/23 is being audited on the theme 'Leadership of the development of new local strategic priorities' and is looking at the development of our new Council Plan 2023-28 following the Local Government elections in May 2022. A report on findings is expected in November 2023.

#### *Education Scotland Inspection*

Ardeer Primary and Early Years Establishment received a positive report with 'effective teamwork' in place to support staff and children at the establishment praised. The inspection was carried out

by Education Scotland in December 2022 and found many strengths within the school and early years classes in their approach to raising attainment. It was noted that Pupil Equity Funding (PEF) was effectively utilised to support pupils at all levels across the school allowing gaps in learning to reduce and progress to be made on prior levels of attainment. The inspection report can be read [here](#).

#### *Modern Apprenticeship Programme*

Our Council has been delivering its Modern Apprenticeship Programme, one of the largest local authority modern apprenticeship programmes in Scotland, for 12 years. The programme has undergone a review to determine its future scale and funding. The review has provided an opportunity to consider a wider range of apprenticeships such as Foundation Apprenticeships, Modern Apprenticeships and Graduate Apprenticeships all supporting vocational based learning (Scottish Vocational Qualifications up to SCQF Level 9) with the framework being used to develop the existing workforce. Updates to the programme will be implemented from April 2023.

Our ambition is to continue to provide and recruit 50 apprenticeships each year which comprises of new and existing employees, with 20% of places on the Modern Apprenticeship Programme ringfenced for residents with a disability or who are care-

experienced. The programme is developed in conjunction with Ayrshire College.

For existing employees, Graduate Apprenticeships will support workforce development in partnership with the University of the West of Scotland as a pilot and will focus on the qualifications of BA (Hons) Business Management, BEng (Hons) Civil Engineering, BA Early Learning & Childcare, BEng (Hons) Engineering Design & Manufacture, BSc (Hons) IT: Software Development. Foundation Apprenticeships will be developed alongside Education, Ayrshire College and local businesses.

#### *Equality and Inclusion*

In March 2023, we completed our Equality Mainstreaming Report 2020-22 and Outcomes 2021-25 Mid-Term Report which was approved by Cabinet in May 2023. Local Authorities are required to produce equality information once every two years under the Equality Act 2010. A selection of the key highlights for 2020-22 are:

- ◆ British Sign Language video landing page on our Council's website.
- ◆ The creation of a Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) pan-Ayrshire Employee Forum.
- ◆ New guidance on Menopause in the Workplace.
- ◆ Introduction of an online Equality and Children's Rights Impact Assessment training module.





- ◆ Our overall mean Gender Pay Gap has reduced to 0.22% (1.19% in 2021).
- ◆ Connected Communities successful achievement of the Silver LGBT Charter Mark.

#### *Pregnancy Loss*

To provide an environment where colleagues can discuss and be supported with pregnancy loss, we signed up to the Pregnancy Loss Pledge and introduced our new Pregnancy Loss guidance in October. This guide will help our managers provide practical and emotional support to all our employees affected by all forms of pregnancy loss.

#### *Gambling Charter*

Our Council has signed up to the Gambling Charter so that it can best support and help our workforce to manage issues caused by gambling. The Gambling Workplace Charter was developed by Trade Unions as a way of helping support those facing difficulties caused by gambling. Our Council already provides employees with a variety of health and wellbeing support through its LiveWell programme and this will add another element of support to those struggling and who may have found it difficult to reach out for help with gambling.

Our Gambling Related Harms in the Workplace Guide provides information on support available, including, but not limited to, our 'Wellbeing Warriors' who are available to talk things through with employees and the Money Matters team who can provide financial advice.

#### *Recruit with Conviction*

Our Council has received Recruit with Conviction Ambassador status. In association with 'Recruit with Conviction', the Ambassador status acknowledges our

efforts to provide safe and sustainable employment for those with current or historical criminal convictions. It ensures our applicable policies and procedures are current and proportionate and do not exclude the best candidates from gaining employment with us.

## **A powerful and respected voice**

#### *Carers*

Our Council has been recognised by Carers Scotland as a Carer Positive 'Exemplary' employer in Scotland. The award demonstrates the support our Council provides for its employees who are working carers, through a combination of practical support and policy, awareness raising, training and an active Carers Network.

The 'Exemplary' Level Three Award is the highest accolade given to organisations who go above and beyond in their caring commitments to colleagues and who demonstrate innovative and creative approaches to supporting and involving carers across their organisation.

The Carer Positive initiative fits with aspirations to promote fairer working practices and is highlighted as an example of best practice. It enables the Council to self-assess working practices against the principles and criteria of creating a healthy and safe environment, where an individual's wellbeing is actively supported, enabling a good work-life balance as well as creating a more diverse and inclusive workforce.



# Performance Summary

Where performance indicator information is pending, the most recent status up to 2021/22 year end is used. Indicators and actions adrift of target and not previously reported are detailed on the next page.

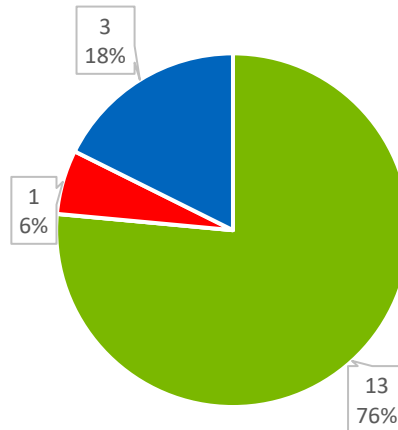
**Legend**

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

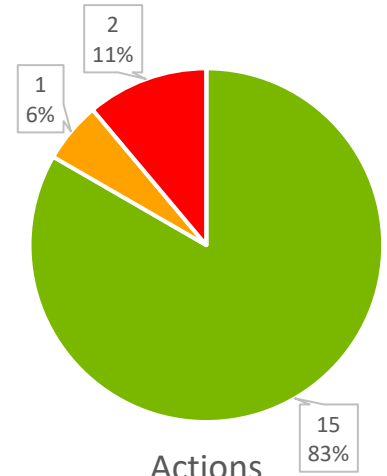
## Aspiring Communities

- ◆ Active and strong communities
- ◆ Children and young people experience the best start in life
- ◆ Inclusive, growing and enterprising local economy
- ◆ Residents and communities enjoy good life-long health and well-being
- ◆ Residents and communities are safe

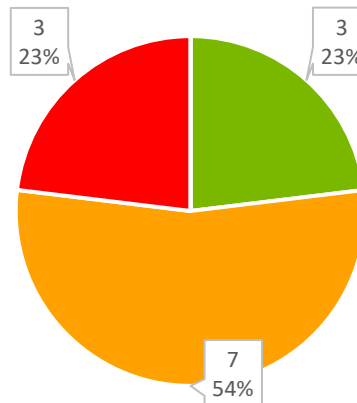
Performance Indicators



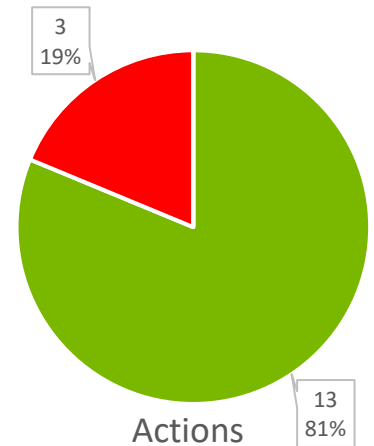
Actions



Performance Indicators



Actions



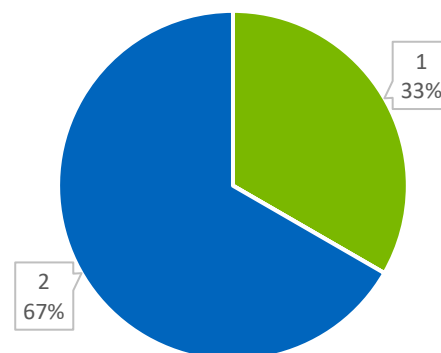
## Inspiring Place

- ◆ Well connected with effective infrastructure
- ◆ Homes that meet residents' needs
- ◆ A vibrant, welcoming and attractive environment
- ◆ A sustainable environment

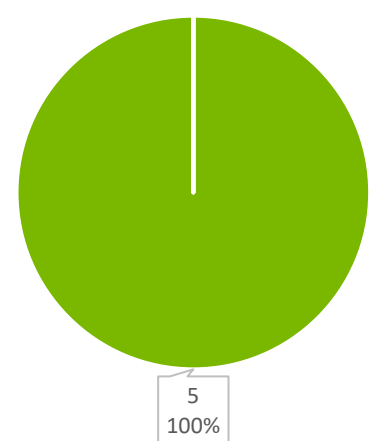
## A Council for the Future

- ◆ An accessible Council that puts residents and communities at the heart of what we do
- ◆ An efficient Council that maximises resources and provides value for money
- ◆ A valued workforce that delivers high quality services
- ◆ A powerful and respected voice

Performance Indicators



Actions





## Performance Indicators Adrift of Target

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

### **Significantly Adrift of Target - CP\_03 % of residents who agree they have access to opportunities to participate in their local community.**

The percentage of residents who agree they have access to opportunities to participate in their community from the 2022/23 People's Panel survey is 36%. This is below the target of 47%. It should be noted that the People's Panel is used to collect data around a small representative group of resident's opinions and experiences. However, from supplementary data we know that in the final quarter of 2022/23 5,169 adults engaged in Community Learning and Development activity with locality and thematic teams. Activities delivered and supported includes Men's Shed, adult literacy/numeracy/employability support, recovery/addiction groups, café solace, environmental groups, mental health and wellbeing groups, fairer food groups, New Scots community hubs, community-based organisation boards/committees, ESOL delivery, Community Councils, Community Associations, groups to support the voice of older people and Gaelic. In addition, there has been a wide variety of group work activity with 2,628 young people participating in activities including youth council, transition work, junior youth groups, Arran Outdoor group work and work around mental health and wellbeing. The Council and partners, including the Third Sector Interface, continue to ensure engagement with and support for residents and communities to become involved in local activities.

### **Significantly Adrift of Target - CP\_25 % of Council dwellings that meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (LGBF)**

The change in regulations which reduced the testing period for electrical testing from every 10 years to every five years has impacted on the reportable Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) figures. Prior to this change we were reporting an SHQS figure of 97.4% in reporting year 2020/21. This dropped to 49.3% in 2021/22 due to the number of properties which immediately fell outside the five-year testing period as a result of the reduced targets when introduced. An action plan has been developed and we have implemented several measures to meet the new targets to ensure we progress towards 100% compliance in this area.

### **Significantly Adrift of Target - CP\_26 Tourism Visitor Numbers**

A regional approach to the Tourism/Visitor Economy has recently been agreed at the Ayrshire Regional Economic Joint Committee, which together with the established North Ayrshire Local Tourism Forum, will work towards improving tourism visitor numbers as we continue to recover from the impacts of the pandemic.

### **Significantly Adrift of Target - CP\_27 Street Cleanliness Index - % Clean (LGBF)**

The Street Cleaning Index score decreased from 2021/22 to 2022/23 (86.7% to 84.6%). Changing demands on the service continue to be reflected in adjusted operational arrangements to improve street cleanliness scores. (Note: Previous figure of 89.5% for 2021/22 was a provisional figure based on an audit in late October 2021. The revised 2021/22 figure of 86.7% is from the most recent Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) data release. However, most recently our Street Cleanliness index is 84.6% as at 2022/23.)

### **Slightly Adrift of Target - CP\_19 Proportion of operational buildings that are suitable for their current use (LGBF)**

Projects which will contribute to improving our performance in this area are underway, including the replacement Moorpark Primary School and forthcoming Ardrossan Community Campus. In addition, rationalisation opportunities continue to be explored, and it is anticipated that there will be further improvement in the performance of the operational building estate ahead of the next reporting period.

### **Slightly Adrift of Target - CP\_20 Overall percentage of road network that should be considered for maintenance treatment**

There has been a marginal deterioration in overall road condition with an increase of 0.9% in the percentage of the road network that should be considered for maintenance treatment. This is reflective of inflationary pressures impacting on material and contractor costs. The continued road investment programme is developed to optimise investment and prioritise works across the network to maintain current road condition. The approved additional investment in 2022/23 and 2023/24 will assist in improving the road network performance indicator.

### **Slightly Adrift of Target - CP\_21 Proportion of properties receiving superfast broadband (LGBF)**

LGBF data confirms 94.9% of properties in North Ayrshire are receiving superfast broadband. This is an increase from 94.7% in 2020/21. Though we monitor this indicator, we do not have direct influence over the rollout of broadband as this sits with the national R100 programme.

### **Slightly Adrift of Target - CP\_22 Number of electric vehicle charging points publicly available.**

This indicator is only one EV charge point from reaching the target (59 against a target of 60) due to elongated community engagement to agree an appropriate location.

The number of publicly available EV charge points within North Ayrshire is 59 (35 owned by our Council and 24 privately owned). The following new charge points were added:

- 1 x 50kW at Skelmorlie Community Centre
- 1 x 7Kw at Lockhart ASN Campus, Stevenston
- 1 x 50kW at Clockhouse Car Park, Lamlash
- 2 x 7Kw at Arran Outdoor Education Centre, Lamlash

### **Slightly Adrift of Target - CP\_23 Number of new build Council housing units reaching completion (cumulative)**

The SHIP 2023 – 2028 was approved by Cabinet on 1 November 2022. As at 31 March 2023, a total of 831 new Council units have been completed since our development programme commenced.










We have been monitoring the impact of COVID-19 and inflationary pressures on the SHIP, all of which have created time and financial impacts, due to labour and material shortages and an increase in material costs.

### **Slightly Adrift of Target - CP\_31 % of total household waste that is recycled (calendar year as per SEPA) (LGBF)**

The household waste recycling rate for the calendar year 2022 was 55.3% compared to a target of 56.9%. As people continue to work from home, the composition and quantities of domestic waste generated continue to fluctuate. North Ayrshire Council is one of the highest performing for recycling in Scotland and continuously strives to improve performance in this area. A new Zero Waste Strategy is currently being developed, which will include a wide range of actions to assist in improving performance against this indicator.

## Actions Adrift of Target

Within our Council Plan Delivery Plan overall actions are supported by sub actions. Officers provide an update on activity and an estimate of the current status (red, amber or green). Where a sub action is adrift of target (amber or red) this sets the status of the overall target so that any off-target performance can be highlighted, with significantly adrift (red) statuses taking priority. This section highlights the reasons for underperformance within each action and efforts being made to remedy it. An overview of action performance can be shown in appendix three of this report.

 <p><b>CP_05 We will expand our learning and childcare estate, including ensuring all eligible children are able to access 1140 hours of free childcare each year</b></p>	
 <p>CP-SUB-08 Deliver major educational new build and refurbishment projects aligned to Scotland's Learning Estate Strategy: "Connecting People, Places and Learning".</p>	<p>Significant challenges within the construction industry persist, including programme and budgetary pressures arising from inflation, borrowing costs and access to labour and materials. This has led to delays on several projects including Ardrossan Community Campus, Moorpark Primary School and Marress Early Years Centre. Officers continue to work to keep all stakeholders updated timeously, mitigate delays as far as possible and complete projects in line with revised programmes.</p> <p>All children entitled to 1140 hours of free childcare continue to be successfully placed within Council and partner provision.</p>
 <p>CP-SUB-09 Develop an Outdoor Play Strategy to support Early Years Practitioners to provide excellent learning and developmental opportunities.</p>	<p>(Complete – no remedial note required)</p>
<p><b>CP_15 We will let people decide how best to manage their own care needs and support people to live in their own homes for as long as possible</b></p>	
 <p>CP-SUB-31 Re-design Older People's Services - Home First approach</p>	<p>(Complete – no remedial note required)</p>
 <p>CP-SUB-32 Grow Care At Home capacity</p>	<p>(On Target – no remedial note required)</p>
 <p>CP-SUB-33 Prioritise Day Services Model and Support for Carers.</p>	<p>(On Target – no remedial note required)</p>
 <p>CP-SUB-34 Prioritise integrated Island services, including unscheduled care.</p>	<p>(On Target – no remedial note required)</p>
 <p>CP-SUB-35 We will help individuals to have better choice and control of their support at an early stage by reinvigorating the HSCP charging policy.</p>	<p>(Complete – no remedial note required)</p>
 <p>CP-SUB-35a We will help individuals to have better choice and control of their support at an early stage by reinvigorating Self-Directed Support.</p>	<p>Phase one of the Self-Directed Support (SDS) Review is complete. A set of collective recommendations and actions have been agreed at the final SDS Learning review Board. Proposals and recommendations have been grouped under nine themes, a number of actions are in progress as a result and further engagement is being undertaken with the Partnership Senior Management Team to consider the priority actions to be taken forward and resourced into Phase Two.</p>



**CP\_16 We will work with individuals and communities to support positive lifestyle choices which improve health and wellbeing.**



CP-SUB-36 We will provide opportunities for people to be more active more often, through the Active Communities Strategy

(Complete – no remedial note required)



CP-SUB-37 We will work with Scottish Government as a trailblazer site for the whole systems approach to diet and healthy weight (public health priority)

(Complete – no remedial note required)



CP-SUB-38 Prioritisation of children and young people receiving support from Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services.

(On Target – no remedial note required)



CP-SUB-39 Prioritise community mental health services supporting people within their communities.

(On Target – no remedial note required)



CP-SUB-40 We will place Mental Health Practitioners into GP practices to offer triage calls, urgent and routine face to face assessments as well as directing patients to the most appropriate support without unnecessary referrals to mental health services.

A Mental Health and Wellbeing in Primary Care Business Case has been developed. We cannot progress further until anticipated Scottish Government funding is allocated. The service is recognising that funding may be unlikely to come in the near future and planning for such will need to be considered.



CP-SUB-41 We will improve emotional and mental health and wellbeing through physical and social participation in community activities, including for young people

(Complete – no remedial note required)





**CP\_19 We will provide well-maintained, integrated travel and transport networks, supporting alternative and sustainable transport.**




CP-SUB-50 We will support the development of the Ayrshire Regional Transport Appraisal.


Transport Scotland (TS) previously confirmed that the Regional Transport Appraisal (RTA) would be part of the Strategic Transport Projects Review 2 (STPR2) process. At this stage, there remains no clarity on the approach to regionally significant projects. Our response on STPR2 was prepared and submitted to Transport Scotland in April 2022 which reinforced the points raised previously, in particular, the Council's disappointment in the lack of any North Ayrshire specific interventions and the lack of clarity on the RTA approach.

 **CP\_26 We will actively promote a mix of homes by facilitating private housing development.**


 CP-SUB-67 We will deliver an alternative affordable housing model – HOME – in one of our most pressured localities

The financial viability of the HOME model continues to be assessed during the currently volatile house construction market. A report will be presented to Cabinet to consider the current position.


 **CP\_29 We will provide well-kept public places and town centres which will benefit our residents, visitors and businesses.**

 CP-SUB-69 We will seek opportunities to develop affordable housing in our town centres through our Strategic Housing Investment Plan

(On target – no remedial note required)

 CP-SUB-70 We will deliver the actions arising from the Open Space Strategy and the Litter, Fly Tipping and Dog Fouling Prevention Strategy.

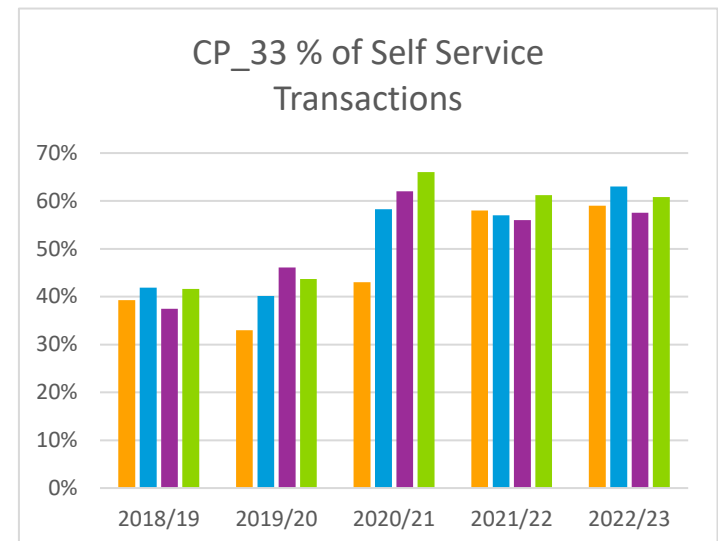
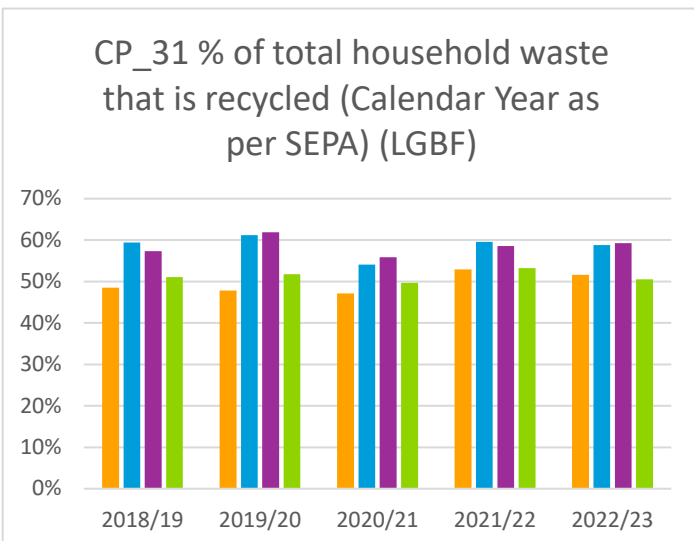
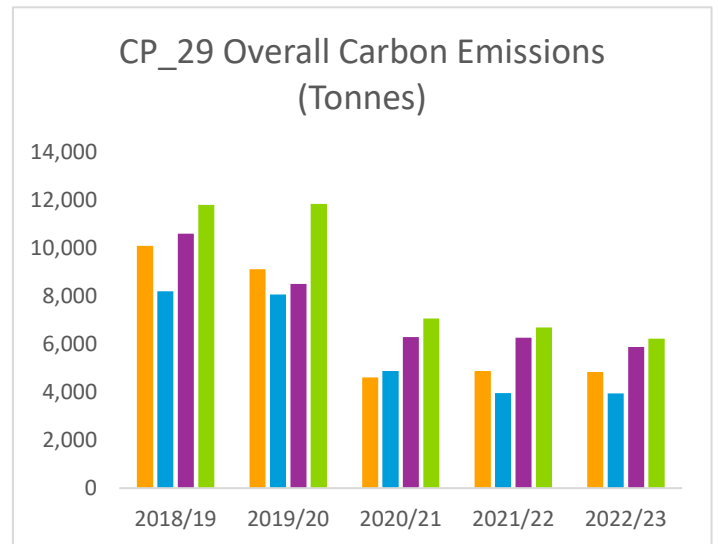
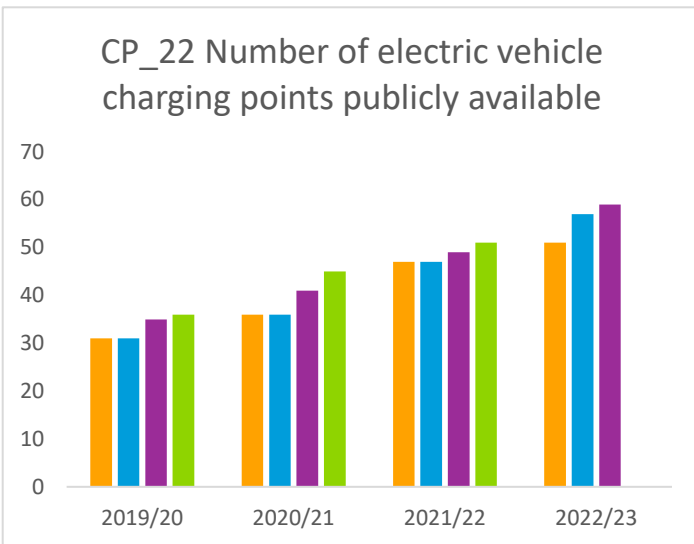
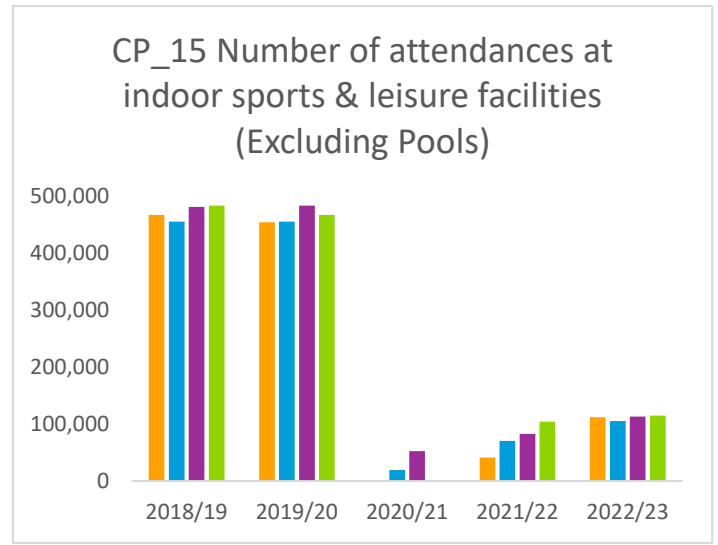
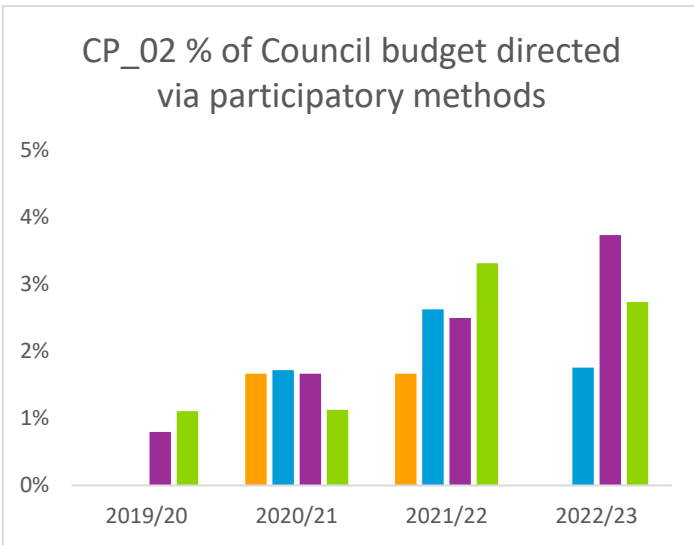
(On target – no remedial note required)

 CP-SUB-71 We will develop Decriminalised Parking Enforcement to manage town centre traffic.

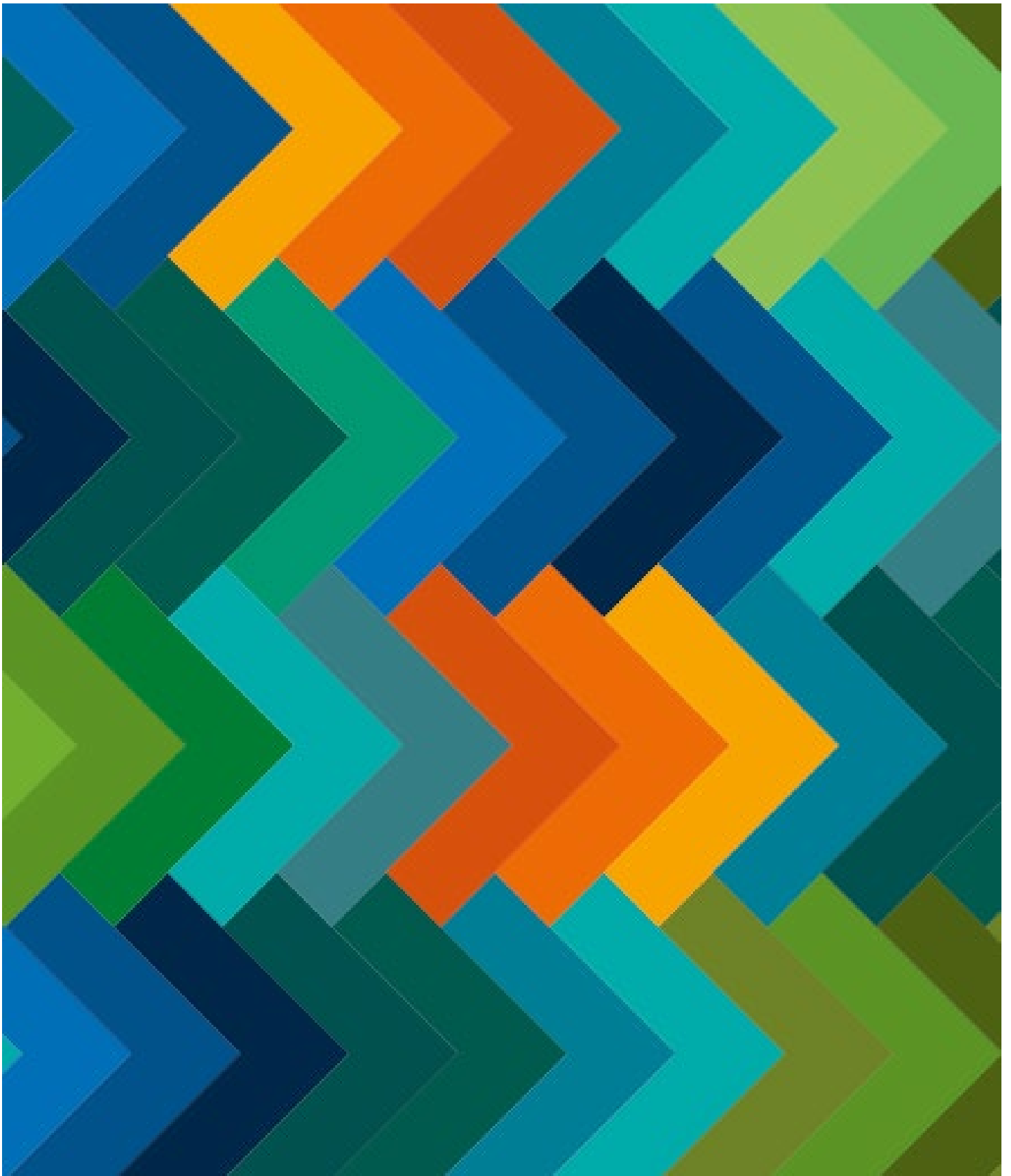
The final Decriminalised Parking Enforcement (DPE) application was submitted to Scottish Government in line with the formal statutory process with an anticipated outcome expected to allow the transfer of powers to North Ayrshire Council in November 2023.

## Trend Charts

Key: Q1 Q2 Q3 Q4












For further information please contact:

**The Corporate Policy, Performance and Elections Team**  
Tel: 01294 310000  
Email: [NorthAyrshirePerforms@north-ayrshire.gov.uk](mailto:NorthAyrshirePerforms@north-ayrshire.gov.uk)













































## Appendix 2 – Council Plan Performance Indicators









PI Status	
	Significantly Adrift of Target
	Slightly Adrift of Target
	On Target
	Data Only
	Data Not Available

### Priority - Aspiring Communities

























PI Code & Description	2019/20			2020/21			2021/22			2022/23		
	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status
CP_02 Percentage of Council budget directed via participatory methods	1.11%	0.89%		1.13%	1.2%		2.32%	1.1%		2.74%	1%	
CP_03 Percentage of residents who agree they have access to opportunities to participate in their local community	47%	47%		47%	47%			47%		36%	47%	
CP_04 Percentage of children achieving their developmental milestones at the time the child starts primary school	N/A	79%		72%	80%		78.5%	78%		Data available in July 2024		

PI Code & Description	2019/20			2020/21			2021/22			2022/23		
	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status
CP_05 Average total tariff score of pupils living in SIMD 30% most deprived areas	685.8	718		744.7	724		720	710		Data available in Feb 2024	TBC	
CP_06 Average tariff score: All Leavers	857.4	895		912	900		905.6	880		Data available in Feb 2024	TBC	
CP_07 Percentage of school leavers entering positive destinations (LGBF)	92.5%	96%		95.2%	96.2%		96%	93.5%		Data available in Feb 2024	TBC	
CP_08 Percentage of children living in poverty (after housing costs)	27.9%	26.5%		24.7%*	26.5%		29%			Data available June 2024		
CP_09 Percentage of working age population in employment	70.2%	70%		69%	64.7%		66.3%	70%		71.3%	68%	
CP_10a Percentage of procurement spent on local enterprises	19.98%	23%		21.39%	23.5%		22.93%	24%		26.04%	25%	

PI Code & Description	2019/20			2020/21			2021/22			2022/23		
	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status
CP_11 Percentage of people earning less than the living wage (LGBF)	16%	24%		16.2%	23%		11.7%	22%		Data available in Feb 2024	TBC	
CP_12a Cumulative Number of unemployed disabled residents supported	109	100		114	80		135	120		135	120	
CP_12b Cumulative number of unemployed disabled residents supported into employment	18	20		18	16		34	20		36	20	
CP_14 Percentage of households in fuel poverty	28%	25.5%		28%	28%		Data available 2024	28%		Data available 2025	TBC	
CP_15 Number of attendances at indoor sports & leisure facilities (excluding pools)	1,859,843	1,964,100		71,913	736,915		298,806			445,115		
CP_16 Percentage of people aged 65 and over with long-term care needs who receiving personal care at home (LGBF)	69.42%	66%		69.51%	66%		69.6%	66%		Data available in May 2024	TBC	

PI Code & Description	2019/20			2020/21			2021/22			2022/23		
	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status
CP_17 Emergency Admissions (Number)	19,150	20,257		16,283	20,257		17,966	20,257		17,273	20,000	
CP_18 Percentage of new tenancies to applicants who were assessed as homeless sustained for more than a year	84.07%	82%		92.48%	85%		86.92%	85%		88.38%	86%	

## Priority - Inspiring Place







Code & Short Name	2019/20			2020/21			2021/22			2022/23		
	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status
CP_19 Proportion of operational buildings that are suitable for their current use (LGBF)	90.89%	93%		91.05%	93%		91.1%	93%		Data available in May 2024	TBC	
CP_20 Overall percentage of road network that should be considered for maintenance treatment	37.3%	38.1%		37.1%	38.1%		33.9%	37.5%		34.8%	33.8%	
CP_21 Proportion of properties receiving superfast broadband (LGBF)	94.1%	97%		94.7%	97%		94.9%	97%		Data available in May 2024	100%	
CP_22 Number of electric vehicle charging points publicly available	36	30		45	42		49	43		59 (As at Q3 (calendar year))	60 (As at Q3 (calendar year))	
CP_23 Number of new build Council housing units reaching completion (cumulative)	381	351		437	755		681	630		831	866	
CP_24 Number of empty homes brought back into use (cumulative)*	603	500		724	600		1,058	600		1,181	600	

Code & Short Name	2019/20			2020/21			2021/22			2022/23		
	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status
CP_25 Percentage of Council dwellings that meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (LGBF)	99.36%	99.4%		98.83%	99.5%		49.3%	99.5%		Data available in May 2024	TBC	
CP_26 Tourism Visitor Numbers	1,599,400	1,534,968		315,620	1,534,968		858,300	1,534,968		1,403,020	1,600,000	
CP_27 Street Cleanliness Index - Percentage Clean (LGBF)	94.6%	94%		91.34%	94%		86.7%	94%		84.6%	90%	
CP_28 Hectares of vacant & derelict land in North Ayrshire	1,180	1,244		1,204	1,194		1,198	1,144		Data pending	1,094	
CP_29 Overall carbon emissions (tonnes)***	37,508	39,320		22,846	35,127		21,791	21,247		20,896	21,000	
CP_30 Total installed capacity of low carbon heat and electricity generation across the Council's estate	9,700	9,700		10,720	9,800		11,680	11,000		Data pending	11,800	
CP_31 Percentage of total household waste that is recycled (calendar year as per SEPA) (LGBF)	56.3%	59%		52.1%	52.1%		56.3%	53.1%		55.3%	56.9%	

\*CP\_24 Number of empty properties brought back into use (cumulative) – An error was found in the 2019-2023 calculations for this PI. This has been rectified as at September 2023. This has resulted in an increase in the number of empty properties recorded within this measure and a change in status for previous years to on target (green).



Priority - A Council for the Future

Code & Short Name	2019/20			2020/21			2021/22			2022/23		
	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status
CP_32 Percentage of Customers delighted with the overall Customer Service	81%	77%		Surveys suspended due to COVID-19 and due to resume in 2023/24.								
CP_33 % of Self Service Transactions	41.26%	40%		58%	45%		58.33%	50%		60.07%	50%	
CP_34 Employee Engagement Level - Council Wide	70.67%	70%		No Survey Planned								

## Appendix 3 - Council Plan Action Tracker

\*2021 status based on information available rather than specific sub-actions.

\*\*Council Plan Delivery Plan was in development during Q1.

Priority	Outcome	Ref #	Existing Overall Action	2019-20				2020-21*	2021-22				2022-23				2023-24				
				Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Year End Estimate	Q1**	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
Aspiring Communities	What we' ll do to make active and strong communities	CP_01	We will build stronger relationships between the council, communities and partners.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
		CP_02	We will co-produce a local charter with our communities which sets out the things we jointly commit to do for each other, to help each other create a better North Ayrshire.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Complete								
		CP_03	We will extend our participatory approach, offering communities more opportunities to lead in local decision-making.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Complete			
		CP_04	We will support communities to achieve what's important to them through strong local networks.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					
	What we' ll do to ensure our children and young people	CP_05	We will expand our early learning and childcare provision to make sure all eligible children are able to access 1140 hours of free care each year.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	▲	▲	▲	●	●	●				
		CP_06	We will support our children and young people to become successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens.	✓	✓	✓	▲	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					

\*2021 status based on information available rather than specific sub-actions.

\*\*Council Plan Delivery Plan was in development during Q1.

Priority	Outcome	Ref #	Existing Overall Action	2019-20				2020-21*	2021-22				2022-23				2023-24			
				Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Year End Estimate	Q1**	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
What we' ll do to have an inclusive, growing and enterprising local economy		CP_07	We will offer opportunities to our young people and their families to play a more active role in school life and encourage more participation in learning opportunities.	✓	✓	▲	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	▲	✓	✓	✓				
		CP_08	We will work with all young people to build their resilience, supporting their mental health and physical wellbeing.	▲	✓	✓	✓	✓		▲	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
		CP_09	We will work with schools, colleges, universities, businesses and partners to deliver education, skills and training, helping people into work and sustaining employment.	▲	●	●	▲	▲		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
		CP_10	We will make sure that everyone has the ability and knowledge to participate in the digital world.	✓	✓	✓	▲	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
		CP_11	We will support our local businesses to become more innovative and competitive.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
		CP_12	We will promote fair employment practices.	▲	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
		CP_13	We will develop and implement a Community Wealth Building (CWB) strategy.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
What we' ll do to make sure North Ayrshire		CP_14	We will continue our work with partners, including the Scottish Government, to explore the feasibility of a Scottish Basic Income Pilot.	✓	✓	✓	▲	✓	Complete											
		CP_15	We will let people decide how best to manage their own care needs and support people to live in their own homes for as long as possible.	▲	▲	▲	▲	✓		✓	▲	▲	▲	▲	●	✓	▲			

\*2021 status based on information available rather than specific sub-actions.

\*\*Council Plan Delivery Plan was in development during Q1.

Priority	Outcome	Ref #	Existing Overall Action	2019-20				2020-21*	2021-22				2022-23				2023-24				
				Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Year End Estimate	Q1**	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
What we will do to ensure North Ayrshire		CP_16	We will work with individuals and communities to support positive lifestyle choices which improve health and wellbeing.	▲	✓	✓	▲	✓		✓	✓	▲	▲	⬮	⬮	⬮					
		CP_17	We will work with partners to support our vulnerable residents and communities.	▲	✓	✓	▲	✓		✓	▲	▲	✓	⬮	✓	✓					
		CP_18	We will extend the 'Housing First' pilot to address homelessness.	✓	✓	▲	▲	▲		✓	✓	▲	▲	✓	✓	✓					
Inspiring Place	What we' ll do to make North Ayrshire well-connected with effective infrastructure	CP_19	We will provide well-maintained, integrated travel and transport networks, supporting alternative and sustainable transport.	✓	✓	▲	▲	✓		✓	✓	▲	✓	✓	✓	⬮					
		CP_20	We will work with partners to make sure there is sustained investment in our roads, ports and harbour infrastructure to ensure that travel is resilient and reliable.	✓	✓	✓	▲	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Complete			
		CP_21	We will work with partners to extend public wi-fi and improve our digital connectivity.	✓	✓	✓	✓	⬮		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
		CP_22	We will provide an appropriately sized, fit for purpose, energy-efficient and digital- enabled property portfolio, including our schools.	✓	✓	✓	▲	✓		✓	▲	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
		CP_23	We will attract investment, through the Ayrshire Growth Deal and other means, to support regeneration and job creation at our key development sites of i3 Irvine, Hunterston, Lochshore, Ardrossan Marine Quarter, and the Irvine Great Harbour.	✓	✓	▲	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
		CP_24	We will support our communities to maximise the use of community assets (such as schools) and encourage Community Asset Transfers.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Complete			

\*2021 status based on information available rather than specific sub-actions.

\*\*Council Plan Delivery Plan was in development during Q1.

Priority	Outcome	Ref #	Existing Overall Action	2019-20				2020-21*	2021-22				2022-23				2023-24			
				Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Year End Estimate	Q1**	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
What we' Il do to provide our residents with homes and houses that meet their needs		CP_25	With our social landlord partners, we will build new, modern, energy-efficient lifelong homes for life, tailored to the needs of tenants.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Complete			
		CP_26	We will actively promote a mix of homes by facilitating private housing development.	✓	✓	✓	⚠	⚠		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	⛔				
		CP_27	We will work with property owners and landlords to make sure our private housing is suitable for the needs of our residents.	✓	✓	✓	✓	⚠		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Complete			
		CP_28	We will form a partnership with other Councils to introduce a low-cost energy offer.	✓	✓	✓	✓	Off Programme	No longer being pursued following a decision by Nottingham City Council to sell their not-for-profit energy company to British Gas following significant financial losses.											
What we' Il do to make North Ayrshire a vibrant, welcoming and attractive environment		CP_29	We will provide well-kept public places and town centres which will benefit our residents, visitors and businesses.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	⛔				
		CP_30	We will, where possible, bring empty properties back into use.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	⚠	✓	✓	✓				
		CP_31	We will work with communities to improve the quality of the local environment through a participatory approach.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Complete			
		CP_32	We will develop North Ayrshire as a coastal and island destination, attracting tourism investment and visitors.	✓	✓	✓	✓	⚠		✓	✓	⚠	✓	✓	✓	✓				

\*2021 status based on information available rather than specific sub-actions.

\*\*Council Plan Delivery Plan was in development during Q1.

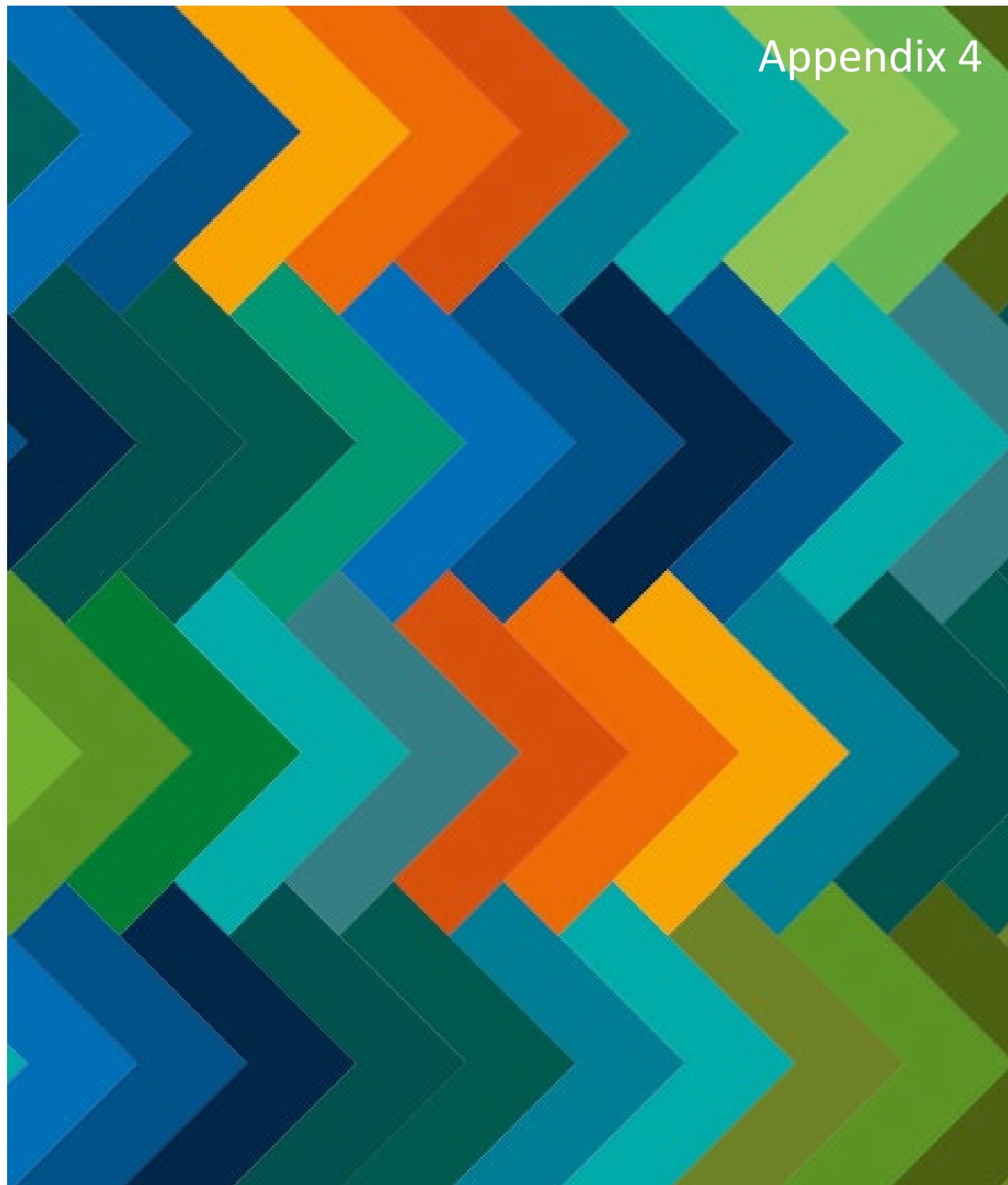
Priority	Outcome	Ref #	Existing Overall Action	2019-20				2020-21*	2021-22				2022-23				2023-24			
				Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Year End Estimate	Q1**	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
What we'll do to make sure we all live in a sustainable environment		CP_33	We will support a circular economy by re-using, recycling and generating energy from the waste we manage.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Complete				
		CP_34	We will develop additional low carbon renewable energy schemes and networks.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
		CP_35	We will protect our communities by delivering the Local Flood Risk Management Plan, the Shoreline Management Plan and the Millport and Upper Garnock Valley Flood Protection Schemes.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
A Council for the Future	An accessible Council that puts residents and communities at the heart of what we do	CP_36	We will work with communities and key stakeholders to radically review what we do and how we do it, to deliver cost effective services.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
		CP_37	We will provide joined up services across the Council and with partner agencies and communities.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	⚠	✓	✓	✓	✓				
		CP_38	We will use technology to improve access to and delivery of our services.	⚠	⚠	⚠	⚠	✓		✓	✓	⚠	✘	✓	✓					



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Priority	Outcome	Ref #	Existing Overall Action	2019-20				2020-21*	2021-22				2022-23				2023-24			
				Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Year End Estimate	Q1**	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
A powerful and respected voice	A powerful and respected voice	CP_39	We will make our case nationally, regionally and locally levels to secure investment to support delivery of our priorities.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		⬮	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Complete			
		CP_40	We will review what we do and how we do it to ensure we deliver the best possible services.	⚠	✓	✓	✓	✓	This action was removed as approved by Cabinet in August 2021 as it duplicates CP_36 and CP_37.											
		CP_41	We will empower and invest in our workforce to develop new and innovative ways of working.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				



North Ayrshire Council

Annual Performance Report 2022-23



North Ayrshire Council  
Comhairle Siorrachd Àir a Tuath

## Welcome to our Annual Performance Report 2022-23

*This report provides an at a glance summary of how we've supported our residents of North Ayrshire over the past year. You can find full details in our magazine style Council Plan Progress Reports published on our website (<https://www.north-ayrshire.gov.uk/performance>).*

In June 2023, our new Council Plan 2023-28 was approved by Council. As a result, this Annual Performance Report is the final annual report relating to our 2019-24 plan and our vision remains to achieve a North Ayrshire that is fair for all.

We are proud to serve our people of North Ayrshire and would like to say thank you to everyone who has supported the delivery of our services including our communities, Third Sector, public and private partnerships and of course our employees.



Councillor Marie Burns  
Leader of the Council



Craig Hatton  
Chief Executive

# About Us

## Elected Members

- 12 Scottish National Party (SNP)
- 10 Scottish Conservative and Unionist
- 6 Scottish Labour Party
- 3 Labour and Co-Operative Party
- 2 Independent

## Employees

- 6,249.29 Full Time Equivalent employees
- 72% Female
- 28% Male

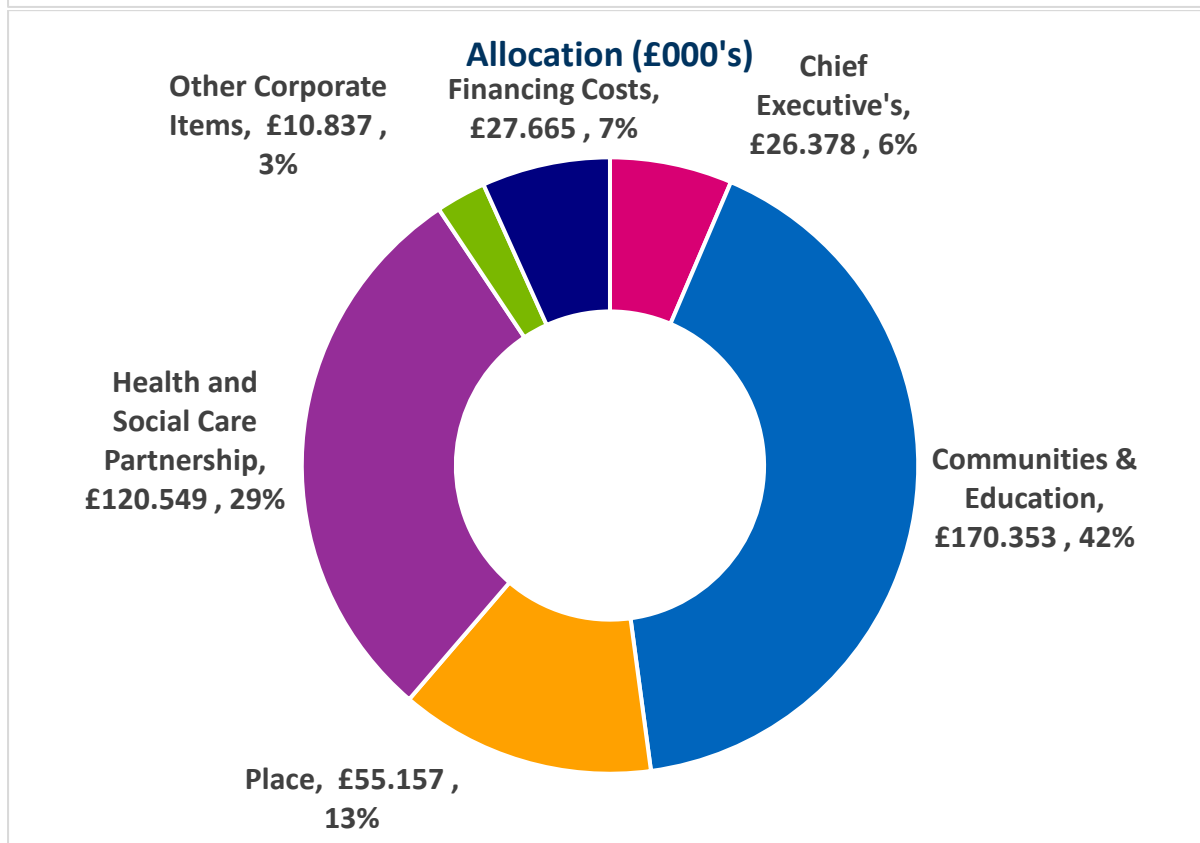
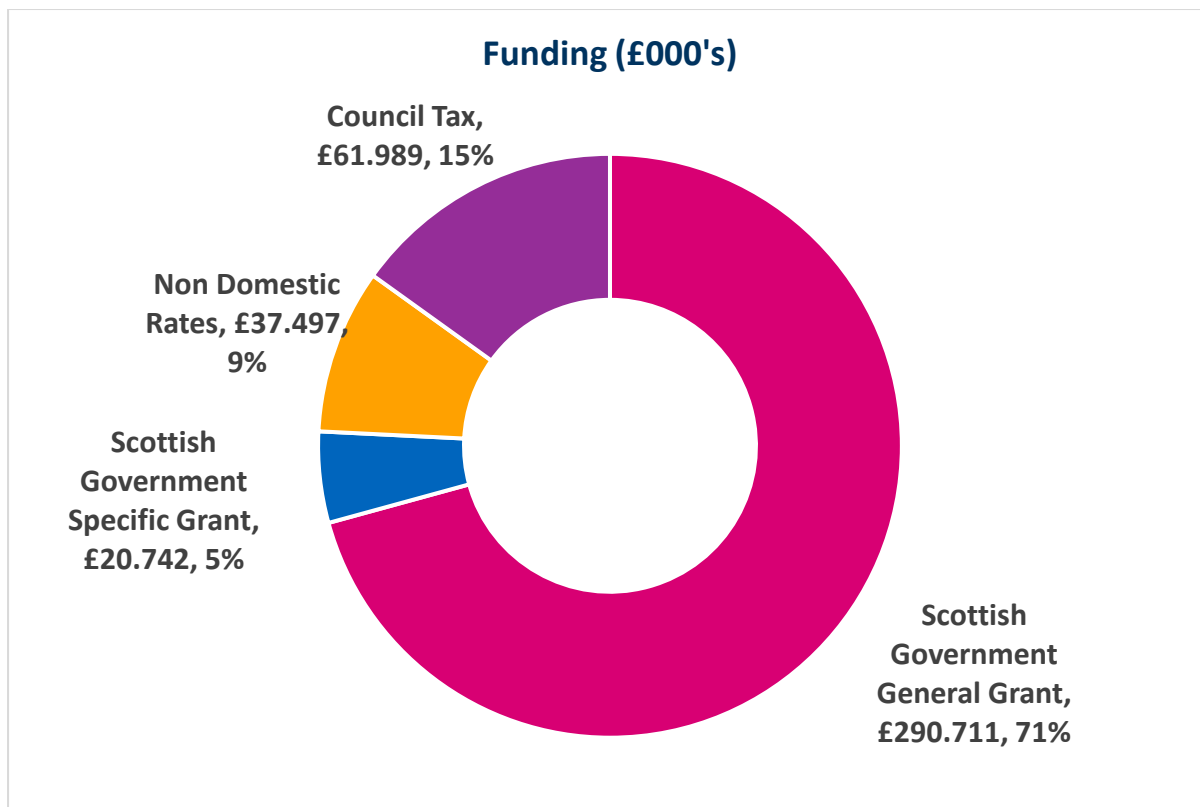
## Key Facts

- 134,220
- Life Expectancy:
  - Female: 79.7 years
  - Male: 74.4 years
- 19,669 children and young people attend our schools and early years centres (including partner early years centres)
- 22.7% of children are looked after by our Council (14% at Scotland level)
- 29% of children in North Ayrshire live in poverty (after housing costs)
- 28% of households are in fuel poverty
- 71.2% of residents are in employment
- 40.9% of our residents live in the most deprived Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation areas

## Key assets include:

- 42 Local Authority Early Years Provisions
- 14 Partner Early Years Provisions
- 48 Primary Schools
- 8 Secondary Schools
- 1 Additional Support Needs School
- 1 Through School (Early Learning Centre, Primary & Secondary School combined)
- 13,135 Council Homes
- 1,044km carriageway
- 1,020km footpaths
- 23,735 streetlights
- 16 beaches (including 3 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI))
- 275 Hectares of woodland
- 11,680kW Total installed capacity of low carbon heat and electricity generation across our Council's estate

# Financial Overview



## Our Council Plan

Our Council Plan is our commitment to our communities. It underpins everything we do for our people in North Ayrshire.

The Council Plan 2019-24 has three priorities: 'Aspiring Communities', 'Inspiring Place' and 'A Council for the Future'.

### Aspiring Communities

- Our Child Poverty and Cost of Living Board was established in June 2022, with a £1.4m Early Intervention Fund allocated to the Board in March 2023.
- We held five mini public enquiries which have informed our Child Poverty Action Plan and Council Plan.
- Our Energy Smart Scheme was allocated **£1.726m** in our 2022/23 budget, with an additional **£450,000** approved in August.
- **18,962 National Entitlement Cards and Young Scot NECs** have been used to date – the third highest in Scotland.
- **128** community groups were successful in their participatory budgeting bids. Each group will receive a share of **£109,777**.
- To strengthen the Community Hub model, **14 sites across North Ayrshire** now have Fairer Food community larders embedded within community facilities.
- Our first **Annual Promise Conference** welcomed 130 people.
- 170 people attended our Reducing the **Cost of the School Day** conference.
- 100 stakeholders from across Scotland attended our first **Community Wealth Building conference**.
- During 2022/23, the Fair Work Ayrshire Team engaged with **236 businesses**.
- **3,642** inclusive Active School sessions were delivered to **5,976** of our young people.
- Cabinet approved the allocated of **£2.154m** of Scottish Government Covid Recovery Fund for a range of support to low-income households.
- A **£434million** Capital Investment Programme has been approved by Cabinet.
- Work on the **£48million** flood protection scheme for Millport has begun.

### Inspiring Place

- The formal opening of our **£4.2million Lochshore Hub** took place in September 2022, attracting approximately 1,000 attendees with a free family fun day.
- We held our first ever **Making Waves Festival** in Irvine on 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> of July.
- We have awarded the tender to deliver two Council-owned solar farms. The £12.8million project will see the **former landfill sites at Nethermains in Kilwinning, and Shewalton in Irvine** transformed into two **solar farms**.
- We have established a **Community Renewable Energy Generation Funding Scheme**. The scheme empowers communities to undertake renewable energy initiatives.
- The first year of advertising on roundabouts across North Ayrshire has been positive. Of the 24 roundabouts locations initially granted planning consent, **23 locations were sold** within one week of release.



- Secured **partnership of National Manufacturing Institute Scotland and University of Strathclyde** as having a presence as lead operator of a national innovation centre for manufacturing.
- Developed **academic partnerships with University of Stirling to support our blue economy** ambitions through the International Marine Science Centre project and Hunterston.
- Our **Council Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) 2023-2028** has been finalised which supports the Scottish Government's Affordable Housing Supply Programme (AHSP). A total of 831 new Council units have been completed since our development programme commenced.
- Renovation works to improve and **restore the 144-year-old Millport Town Hall** building have begun.

## A Council for the Future

- We successfully delivered the Local Government Elections on Thursday 5 May 2022 with a turnout of **44%**
- **1,400** people completed the 2023/24 Budget and Council Plan Engagement Survey, in addition to 37 community representatives across six locality events.
- Our procurement process has been revised to ensure **more local businesses are able to quote** for lower value goods and services through the Quick Quote process.
- We have received **Recruit with Conviction Ambassador status**.
- We jointly held the first ever **Hate Crime Conference** in Ayrshire, which was delivered by the Ayrshire Equality Partnership (AEP)
- We achieved the **Disability Confident: Level Three Leader Award**.
- We committed to the **Miscarriage Association's Pregnancy Loss Pledge**.
- We have signed up to the **Gambling Charter** so that we can best support and help our workforce to manage issues caused by gambling.

## How do we compare?



You can see how our performance compares to other Scottish local authorities through the national [Local Government Benchmarking Framework](#) online tool.

The Corporate Policy, Performance and Elections Team welcome any feedback you may have. We strive to make our Council and reports as accessible as possible and appreciate opportunities to discuss how this can be achieved. For further information please contact:

**The Corporate Policy, Performance and Elections Team**  
 Tel: 01294 310000  
 Email: [NorthAyrshirePerforms@north-ayrshire.gov.uk](mailto:NorthAyrshirePerforms@north-ayrshire.gov.uk)

# Local Government Benchmarking Framework

## Analysis of 2023 Data Release

(Includes 2021-22 and specific data for 2022-23)

September 2023



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## Introduction

The Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) provides an opportunity to benchmark our performance with other local authorities in Scotland. It is administered by the Improvement Service in partnership with the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE) and highlighted within the Accounts Commission's Statutory Performance Information Direction 2021 which defines how local authorities should demonstrate they are achieving Best Value for the people they serve. As a result, many of the indicators are used within both our previous 2019-24 and current 2023-28 Council Plans.

The 2021-22 data is still caveated due to the impact of the pandemic. The Improvement Service states: "This dataset covers the 2nd year of the Covid pandemic. The Impact of Covid has altered the core operating and delivery landscapes for local authorities, and the performance and expenditure data within the LGBF will need to be interpreted against this context. This will be important to consider both for comparison with previous years, and also comparison across councils."

The impact of the pandemic can certainly be seen in the trend charts contained in this report. As a result, though this report details our performance as at 2021-22 compared with similar local authorities, it is still relatively light touch with improvements planned for future reporting.

The LGBF brings together a range of 105 performance indicators covering nine key themes:

- Adult Social Care
- Children's Services
- Corporate Services
- Culture and Leisure
- Economic Development
- Environmental Services
- Financial Sustainability
- Housing
- Tackling Climate Change

These can be explored in full using the [LGBF Dashboard](#).

## Our Approach

The Direction 2021 Statutory Performance Indicator 1 includes a requirement for our Council to report information that demonstrates how we are improving local services and local outcomes. This particularly relates to using the LGBF to enable comparison with similar bodies and over time, linked to the desired outcomes agreed with our partners and communities. As such, the Direction 2021 gives scope to identify the key LGBF measures that relate directly to our Council Plan priorities to help inform decision making. South Lanarkshire Council took this approach and was highlighted by the Accounts Commission in the [Local Government in Scotland Overview 2023](#).

The following PIs have been identified by the Corporate Policy, Performance and Elections Team as relating directly to our current [Council Plan 2023-28](#) priorities. These are listed in addition to those directly included our Council Plan Performance Management Framework and our Council Plan 2019-24, which was active during this 2021-22 reporting period.

LGBF Indicator Group	PI Code	Description	Council Plan 2019-23 Framework	Council Plan 2023-28 Framework
Children's Services	CHN11	Percentage of pupils entering positive destinations	Yes	Yes
Children's Services	CHN17	Percentage of children meeting developmental milestones		Yes
Children's Services	CHN24	Percentage of children living in poverty (after housing costs)		Yes
Adult Social Care*	SW3a	Percentage of people aged 65 years or over with long-term care needs receiving personal care at home	Yes	
Tackling Climate Change	CLIM1	CO2 emissions area wide per capita		Yes
Tackling Climate Change	CLIM2	CO2 emissions area wide: emissions within scope of LA per capita		
Economic Development	ECON1	Percentage of unemployed people assisted into work from council operated / funded employability programmes		
Economic Development	ECON10	Immediately available employment land as a percentage of total land allocated for employment purposes in the local development plan		
Economic Development	ECON11	Gross Value Added (GVA) per capita		
Economic Development	ECON12a	Claimant Count as a percentage of Working Age Population		
Economic Development	ECON12b	Claimant Count as a percentage of population aged between 16 and 24 years		
Economic Development	ECON4	Percentage of procurement spend spent on local enterprises		
Economic Development	ECON5	Number of business gateway start-ups per 10,000 population		

<b>LGBF Indicator Group</b>	<b>PI Code</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Council Plan 2019-23 Framework</b>	<b>Council Plan 2023-28 Framework</b>
Economic Development	ECON7	Proportion of people earning less than the real living wage	Yes	Yes
Economic Development	ECON9	Town Vacancy Rates		
Environmental Services	ENV3c	Street Cleanliness Score	Yes	Yes
Environmental Services	ENV4b	Percentage of A class roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment		
Environmental Services	ENV4c	Percentage of B class roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment		
Environmental Services	ENV4d	Percentage of C class roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment		
Environmental Services	ENV4e	Percentage of unclassified roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment		
Environmental Services	ENV6	Percentage of total household waste arising that is recycled	Yes	Yes
Housing Services	HSN1b	Gross rent arrears (all tenants) as at 31 March each year as a percentage of rent due for the reporting year		Yes
Housing Services	HSN3	Percentage of council dwellings meeting Scottish Housing Standards	Yes	Yes
Housing Services	HSN5a	Percentage of council dwellings that are energy efficient		Yes
Economic Development*	ECON8	Proportion of properties receiving superfast broadband	Yes	
Corporate Services	CORP 3b	Percentage of the highest paid 5% of employees who are women		
Corporate Services	CORP 3c	The gender pay gap (%)		
Corporate Services	CORP 7	Percentage of income due from council tax received by the end of the year		Yes
Corporate Services	CORP 8	Percentage of invoices sampled that were paid within 30 days		
Corporate Services	CORP 9	Percentage of Scottish Welfare Fund Crisis Grant decisions within one day		
Corporate Services	CORP 10	Percentage of Scottish Welfare Fund Community Care Grant decisions in 15 days		
Corporate Asset	CORP-ASSET1	Percentage of operational buildings that are suitable for their current use	Yes	Yes

\*Please note, the list above includes two LGBF PIs that were included in the Council Plan 2019-24 Performance Management Framework for completeness. Adult Social Care is reported through the Health and Social Care Partnership. Superfast Broadband is part of the national R100 programme and we cannot directly impact on progress. These two indicators will not be included in future reporting.



## Analysis

Family groups enable local authorities to make as close to a like for like comparison as possible with other councils by grouping those with similar traits depending on the type of indicator. Grouping is based on levels of deprivation (people services) or rurality (other services). Following a review of previous reporting, a more visual chart-based approach and analysis focussing on family groups is taken for this report. This more in-depth consideration of each indicator is made possible by focussing on the indicators directly linking to our priorities, in line with the Direction 2021.

On the following charts, North Ayrshire Council's performance is indicated by a thick dark blue line. For ease of viewing, only the data labels relating to North Ayrshire Council are included in the graphs. Full details, including the meta data behind each measure which explains how it is captured, is available through the [LGBF Dashboard](#).

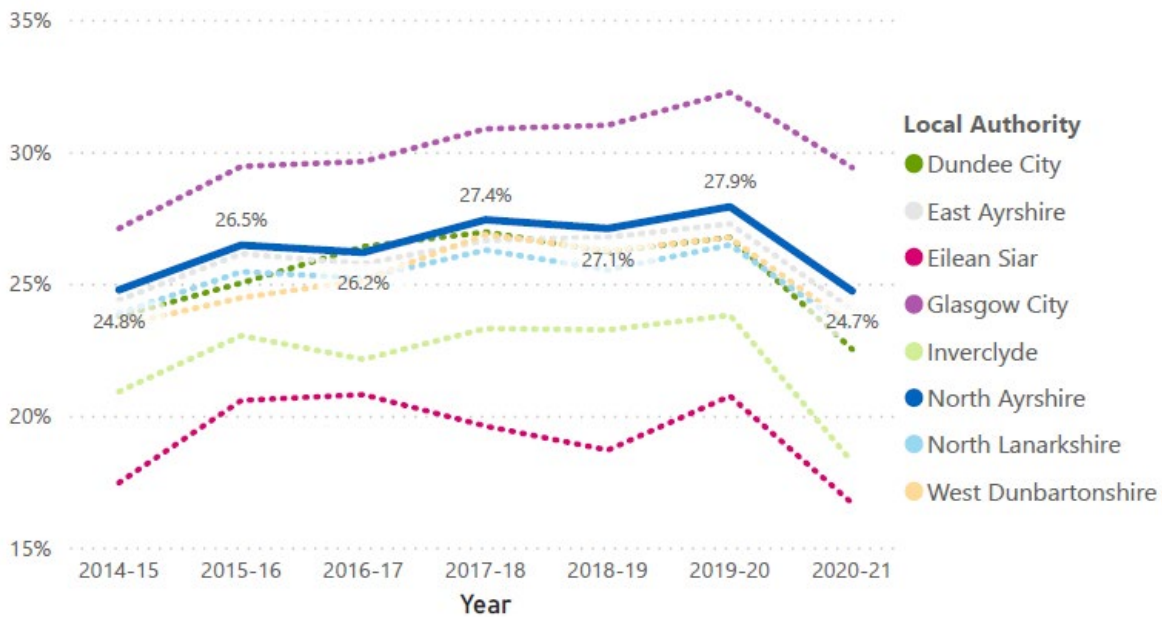
The Improvement Service is currently exploring how to publish data more timeously, therefore though this report intends to cover 2021-22 data as released during 2023, some information may relate to more recent periods. Data is as downloaded in September 2023 unless otherwise stated.

### People Services

This section provides an overview of North Ayrshire's performance within our 'People Services' Family Group. This includes our priority indicators relating to Children, Social Work and Housing. Local authorities included in this comparison are:

- North Ayrshire Council
- Comhairle nan Eilean Siar
- Dundee City Council
- East Ayrshire Council
- North Lanarkshire Council
- Inverclyde Council
- West Dunbartonshire Council
- Glasgow City Council

*Proportion of children living in poverty (after housing costs)*



(Please note, the axis of this chart is 15- 35% for clarity.)

Despite 2020-21 figures appearing to show a decrease in child poverty, unfortunately this due to a change in methodology during the lockdown periods as detailed in our Council Plan Mid-Year 2022-23 report “These figures are sourced from Loughborough University and are based on the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) figures which come with a caveat that they are impacted by Covid-19 (whereas 2019-20 figures were unaffected). Due to the pandemic, the method for gathering this information changed from focus groups to telephone calls (meaning it wasn’t possible to verify if actual documents such as payslips etc. were referred to during discussions) and the sample size was also affected. As a result, the UK Government states “We recommend that all users consider using the caveat: ‘Data collection for FYE 2021 was affected by the coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic. Figures for FYE 2021 are subject to additional uncertainty and may not be strictly comparable with previous years.’”

Data released in 2023, relating to 2021-22, shows an increase from 24.7% to 29% of children living in poverty (though the figures are not directly comparable due to methodology). North Ayrshire Council established our Child Poverty and Cost of Living Board in June 2022 and published our North Ayrshire Child Poverty Action Plan 2023-26 in June 2023. In addition, Wellbeing is at the heart of our new Council Plan 2023-28.

We are working closely with our communities and partners to address the drivers of poverty and help find a sustainable route out of poverty for our most vulnerable families. This will be reported in our six-monthly Council Plan Progress Reports and annual Child Poverty Plan Reports.

*Gross rent arrears (all tenants) as a percentage of rent due for the year*



(Please note the axis for this chart is 0-10% for clarity.) There has been an increase in the percentage of rent due. There was a slight increase prior to the initial lockdown period of March 2020, but has increased by three percentage points over two years to 6.63%. This is lower than other family group members (where information is available) and in line with the trend for East Ayrshire and Dundee City Councils.

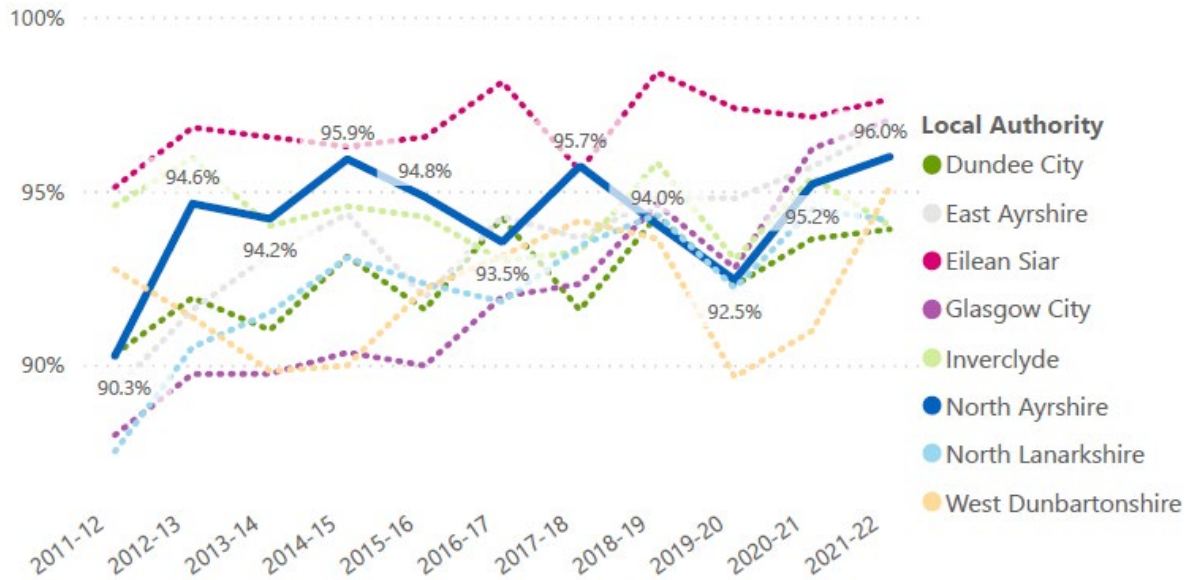
*Proportion of children meeting developmental milestones*



This indicator relates to the proportion of children meeting developmental milestones as reported by our Health and Social Care Partnership. The chart axis shows 70-90% for clarity. Overall

performance appears to be in line with the majority of our family group, with only East Ayrshire and Dundee City Councils maintaining performance into 2021-22, rather than declining.

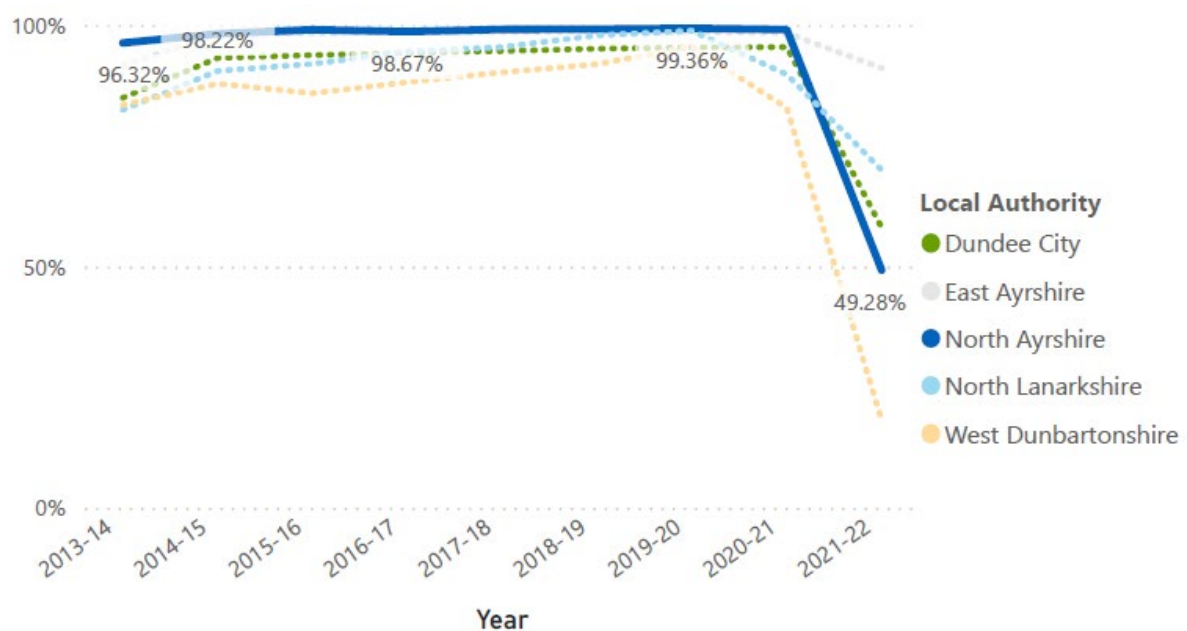
*Proportion of pupils entering positive destinations*



Though performance has varied over the past decade, the overall trend is positive. Though 2019-20 may appear to predate the pandemic, this time period relates to academic years. As such, it would have been deeply affected by the lockdown periods.

Data is sourced from Scottish Government School Leaver Attainment and Initial Destinations information. Though data is included for 11 years, the source data notes state due to changes in the curriculum over the past five years, trends over time may not be comparable.

*Proportion of council dwellings meeting the Scottish Housing Quality Standards*

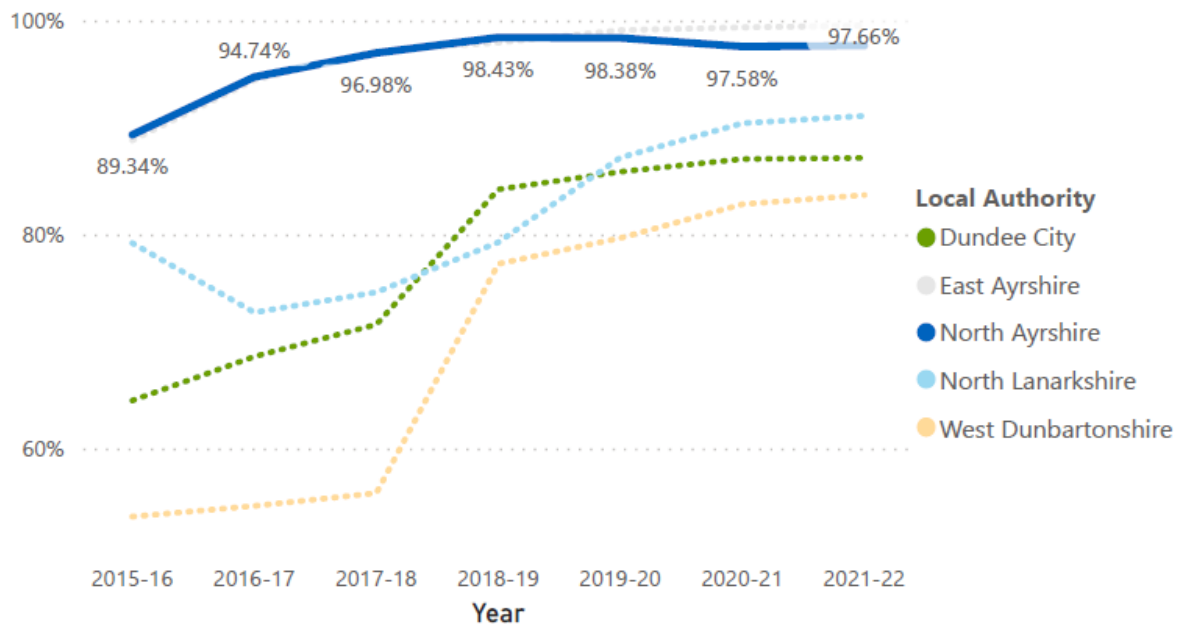


The energy efficient elements of the Scottish Housing Quality Standards were replaced by the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESH) that had to be met by landlords by 2020. The sudden drop in performance can be seen nationally with a sharp decline in the Scottish average from 90.3% in 2020-21 to 68.5% in 2021-22.

The Improvement Service states:

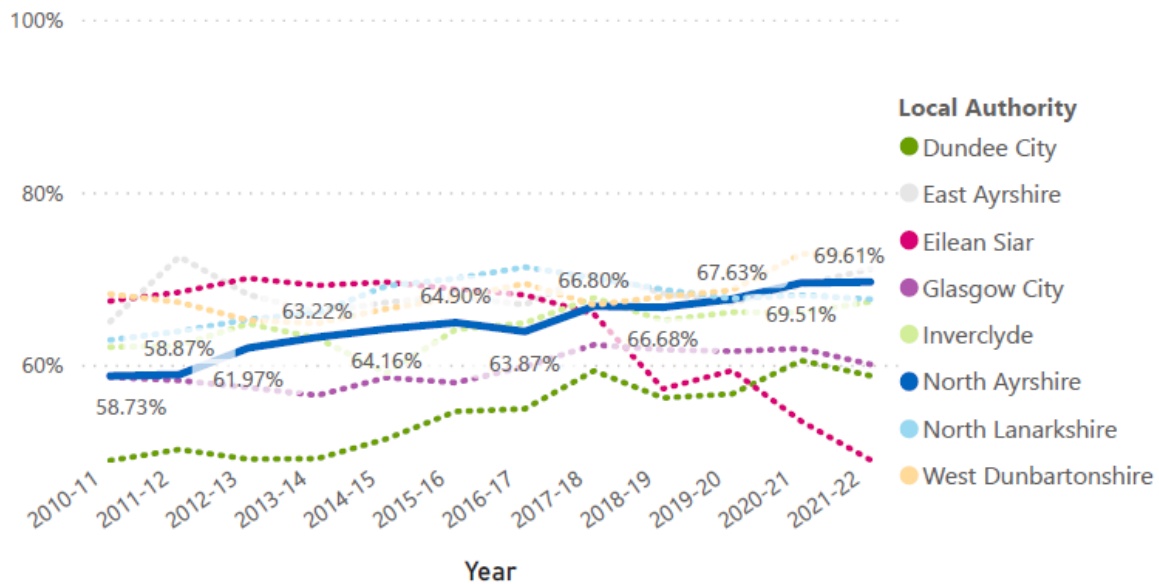
*“The covid pandemic has had a significant impact on councils’ ability to deliver housing services as normal. The pandemic affected landlords’ ability to deliver core services such as repairing homes, letting empty homes, assisting people experiencing homelessness and a range of other services. Landlords have had to curtail their planned investment programmes, including those to build new homes and to achieve the Scottish Housing Quality Standard and the Energy Efficiency Standard in Social Housing.”*

### Proportion of council dwellings that are energy efficient



North Ayrshire Council is performing well compared to other local authorities in our family group. East Ayrshire has slightly better performance at 99.53%. We are significantly higher than the Scottish average of 87.6% and are currently ranked 4<sup>th</sup> in Scotland for 2021-22. Though this represents a slight decrease in ranking as we have been ranked 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> since 2016-17, our performance is consistent.

*Percentage of people aged 65 years and over with long-term health needs who are receiving personal care at home*



This measure was included in our previous Council Plan 2019-23. North Ayrshire Council is continuing to improve performance in this area, providing the third best performance in our family group after West Dunbartonshire and East Ayrshire Councils (72.9% and 71.13% respectively). It should be noted, that due to data completeness issues, some data for this indicator has been modelled by the Improvement Service.

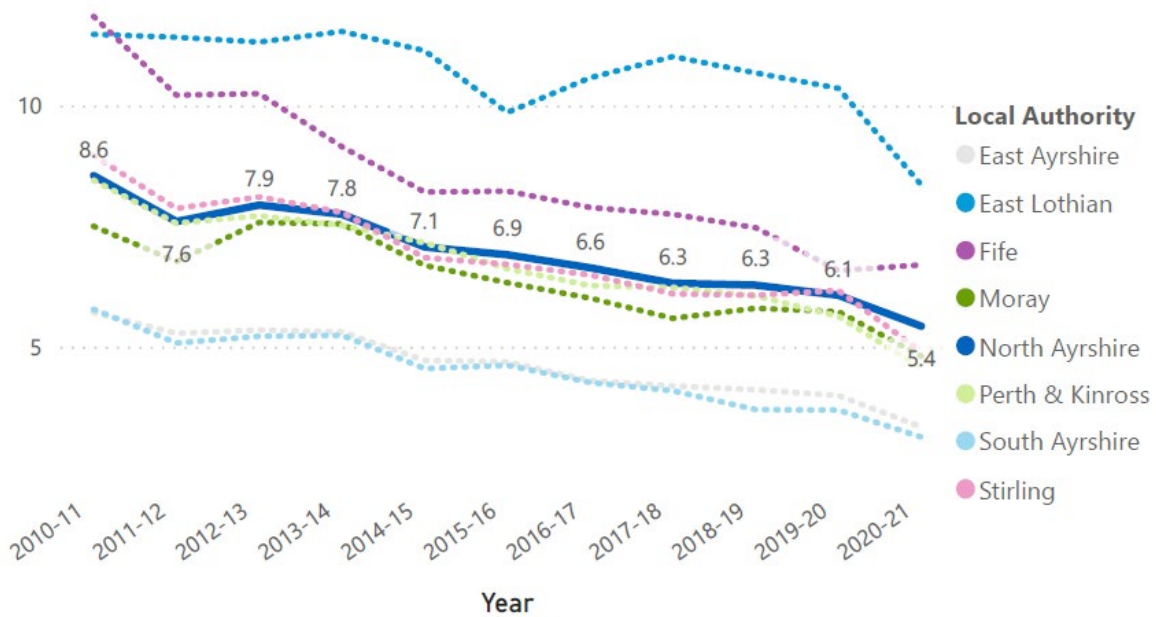
### Other Services

This section provides an overview of North Ayrshire’s performance within our ‘Other Services’ Family Group. This includes indicators relating to Corporate Services, Culture & Leisure, Economic Development, Environmental Services, Financial Sustainability and Tackling Climate Change. Local authorities included in this comparison are:

- North Ayrshire Council
- Perth and Kinross Council
- Stirling Council
- Moray Council
- South Ayrshire Council
- East Ayrshire Council
- East Lothian Council
- Fife Council



*CO2 emissions area wide per capita (tonnes)*



This measure looks at the CO2 emissions that are area-wide, not only in the scope of North Ayrshire Council. It is useful for context. Lockdown periods did impact emissions in areas such as transport during 2020-21.

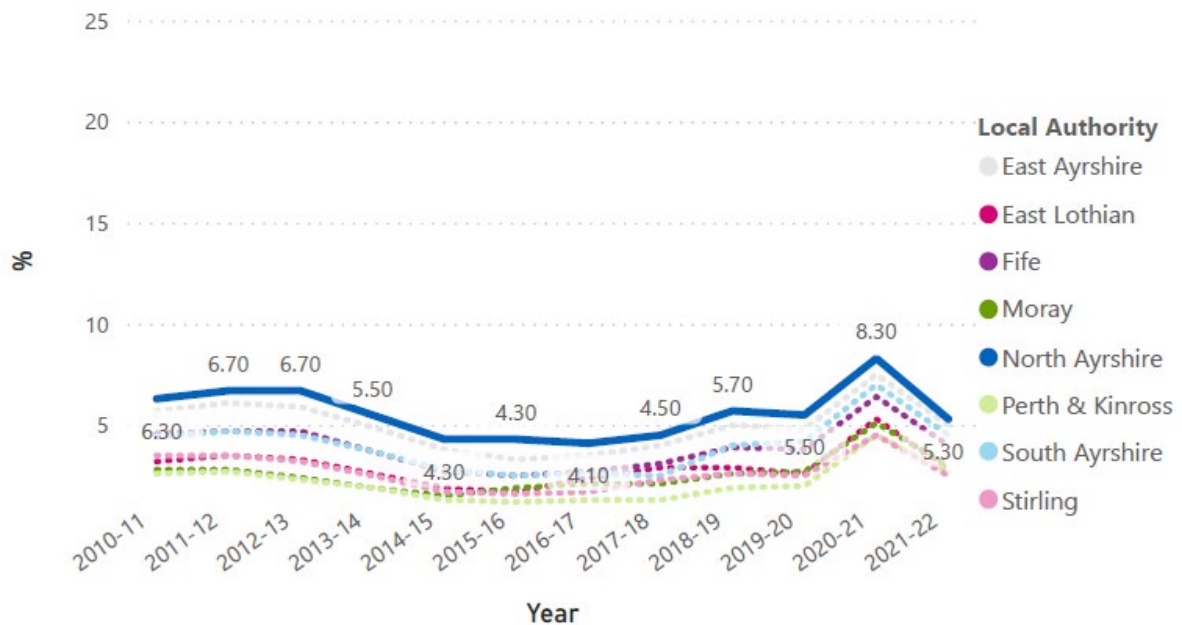
*CO2 emissions area wide: emissions within scope of local authority per capita (tonnes)*



This measure shows the emissions within the control of North Ayrshire Council. There has been a strong decrease in emissions over the past 11 years nationally across all 32 local authorities. North Ayrshire Council has a commitment to be Net Zero by 2030, this has recently been reiterated within our new Council Plan 2023-28, with Climate Change being one of our four priorities for the next five years.



*Claimant count as a percentage of working age population*



This data is based on information available as at July 2023. North Ayrshire had the highest claimant count rates as a percentage of working age population within our family group 2021-22. A rise due to the pandemic is clearly visible in 2020-21. 2021-22 levels are also higher than the Scottish Average (4.5%). During the first months of 2023-24, North Ayrshire’s claimant count was 4.6%, compared to an average of 4% for our family group and 3.2% at Scotland level. This is related to a decrease in the number of claimants (a reduction of around 3,100 claimants between 2020-21 and 2022-23), rather than an increase in the working age population.

*Claimant count as a percentage of population aged 16 to 24 years*



The claimant count for our young people aged 16 to 24 years is slightly higher at 2021-22 than for the overall claimant count. Most recent figures available show an improvement to 5.5%, though

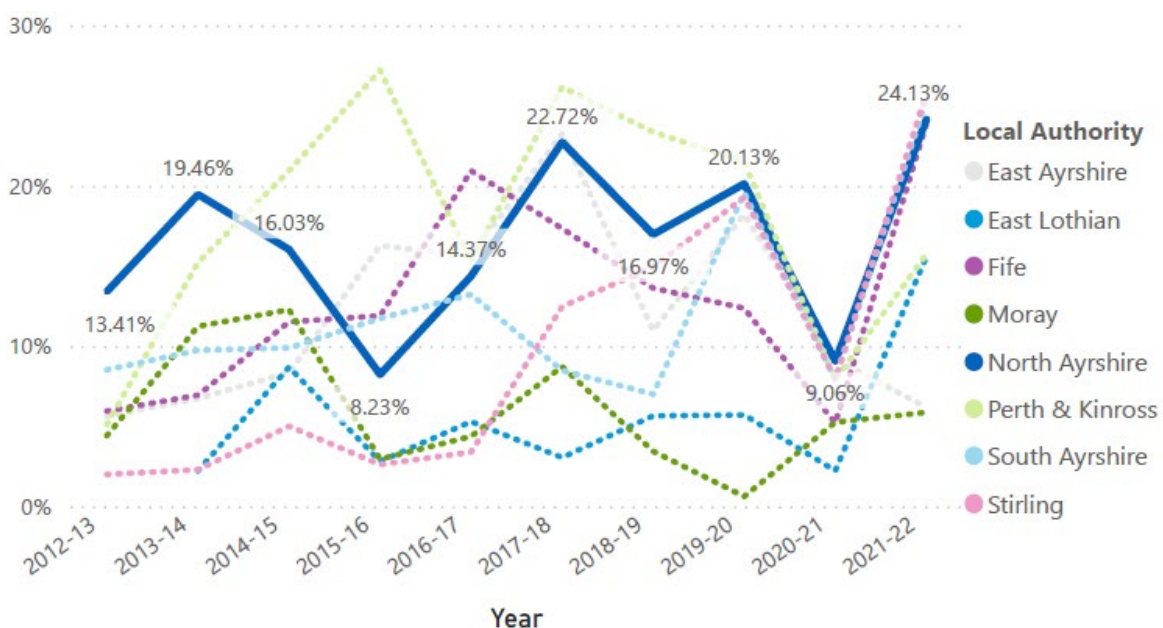
higher than the family group average of 4.6% and Scottish average of 3.6%. Again, this is related to a reduction in the number of claimants rather than an increase in population (approximately 1,400 claimants in 2020-21, reducing to approximately 700 in 2023-24).

*Proportion of people earning less than the living wage*



The proportion of people earning less than the living wage is continuing to decrease in North Ayrshire. Currently only East Ayrshire Council is performing better within our family group (9.20%). At 11.7% for 2021-22, we are performing better than the Scottish average of 14.4%. We are currently ranked 5<sup>th</sup> across all Scottish local authorities in this area, an improvement from 12<sup>th</sup> in 2020-21, 9<sup>th</sup> in 2019-20 and 19<sup>th</sup> in 2018-19 which appears to show real progress in this area.

*Percentage of unemployed people assisted into work from Council programmes*



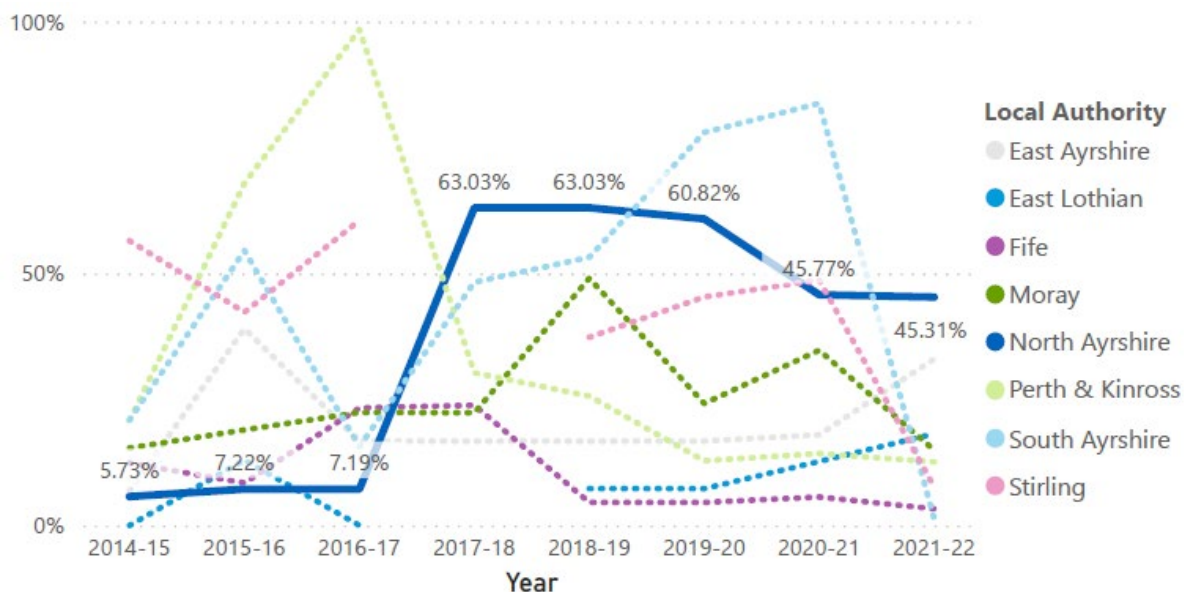
The percentage of unemployed people assisted into work from our employability programmes has an overall positive long-term trend. This measure can be impacted by how far an individual is from gaining the skills required to obtain employment, as well as the current unemployment rate. 2020-21 performance was impacted by a slight increase in the employment rate and a decrease in the ability to help residents into work due to the pandemic. During 2021-22, the number of unemployed people reduced from 3,400 to 2,300 and the performance of our Employability and Skills Team recovered following the pandemic, with 555 people helped into employment. This combination is shown as a spike in the chart above.

### Gross Value Added (GVA) per capita



Gross Value Added (GVA) is something we can help influence as a local authority, however it relies on all industry within North Ayrshire and is monitored for context. Currently North Ayrshire has a GVA of £17,553, below the Scottish average of £25,758 however, it shows a slight long term positive trend. Significant work is ongoing around our Ayrshire Growth Deal and Community Wealth Building Strategy which should continue to influence this.

*Immediately available employment land as a percentage of total land allocated for employment purposes*



As well as ensuring our residents have the skills for good quality jobs available in North Ayrshire, we also work to ensure there is suitable employment land for businesses wishing to grow or invest in our area. We have a greater amount of currently available employment land as a percentage of total allocated employment than other local authorities in our family group and the Scottish average (27.2%). We need to maintain a balance between having enough good quality employment space available for demand, without creating an excess.

It is difficult from this data alone to determine whether performance is currently positive. In addition, it should be noted, that due to data availability issues, some data for this indicator has been modelled by the Improvement Service.

### Proportion of procurement spent on local enterprises

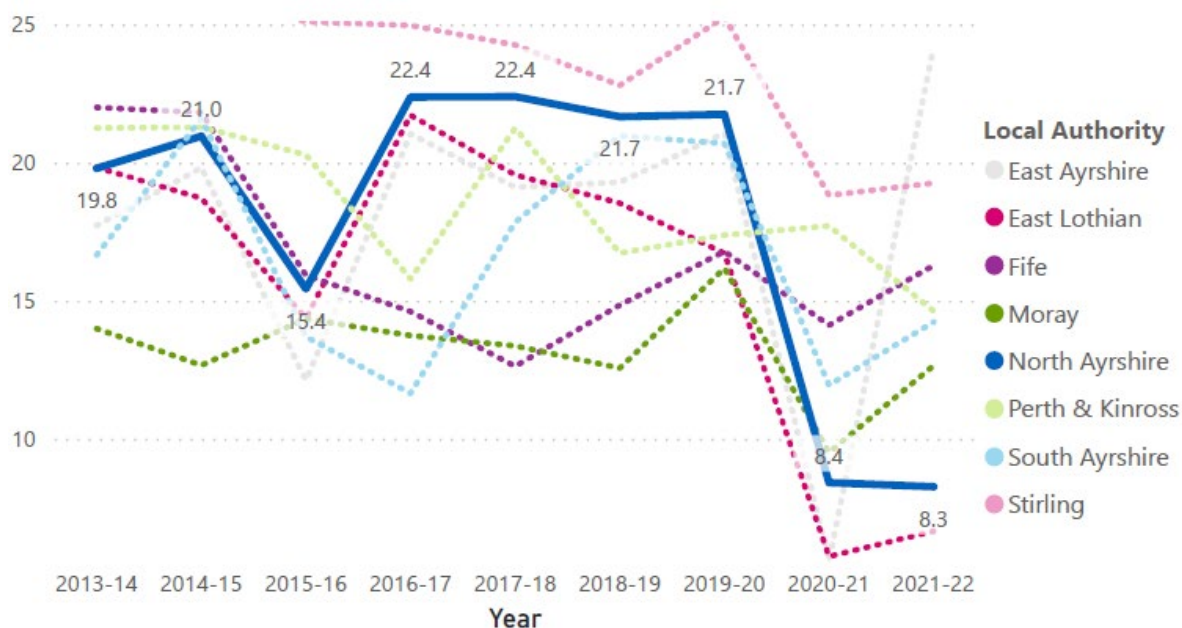


This indicator is a useful comparison for benchmarking purposes, however it does not capture all spend as detailed in our 2020-21 Mid-Year Council Plan Progress Report. “The LGBF calculation excludes certain spend, most notably it excludes all supplier spend below £1,000 and excludes all suppliers not categorised as core trade organisations. This is therefore not an accurate reflection of the economic activity within North Ayrshire. As we have access to the source data used by the LGBF we are able to capture all spend data and refine the calculation at a local level to better capture our spend with local enterprises and shorten the time delay in reporting.”

Our in-house local procurement spend measure (CP\_10a) shows an increase from 22.93% at 2021-22 to 26.04% at 2022-23. Embracing Community Wealth Building through providing additional support for local suppliers including a revised Quick Quote process for lower value procurement is supporting this area.

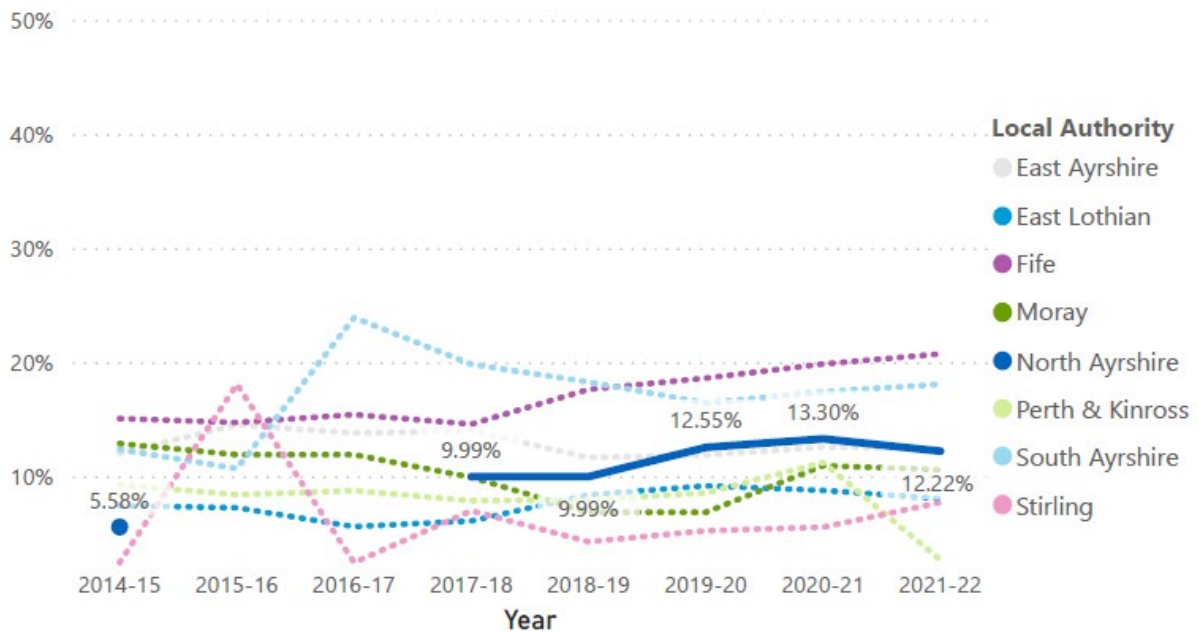


### Number of business gateway start-ups per 10,000 population



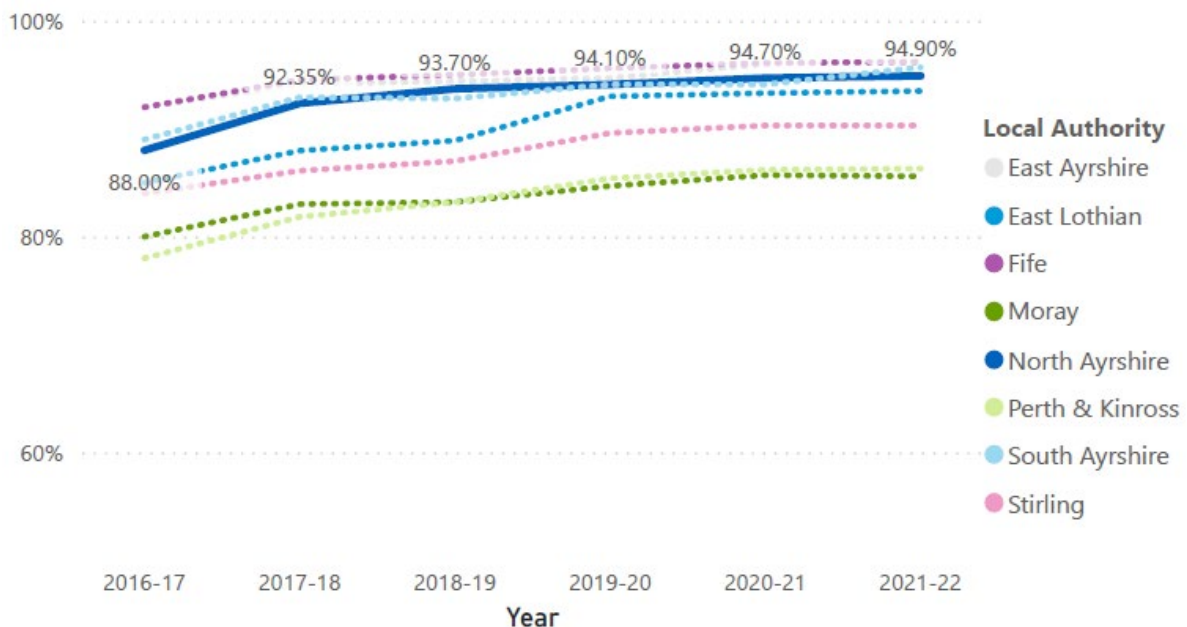
The number of business gateway start-ups per 10,000 population has decreased during the pandemic and had not recovered as at 2021-22. 2022-23 figures (not included above) show 11 start-ups per 10,000 population for North Ayrshire, compared to a family group average of 16.2 and Scottish average of 14.3. Population can affect this indicator but has remained constant during the past two years. The increase in 2022-23 is due to an increase in the number of start-ups from 114 in 2020-21 to 148 in 2022-23. There is still some work required to return to pre-pandemic levels of 293 start-ups in 2019-20, however the current cost of living crisis is having a detrimental impact on businesses across the UK.

### Town Vacancy Rates



Town vacancy rates have remained relatively consistent. It has been higher than the Scottish average since 2019-20, though only slightly so in 2021-22 (North Ayrshire vacancy rate is 12.2% compared to 11.4% at Scotland level). It should be noted, that due to data completeness issues, some data for this indicator has been modelled by the Improvement Service.

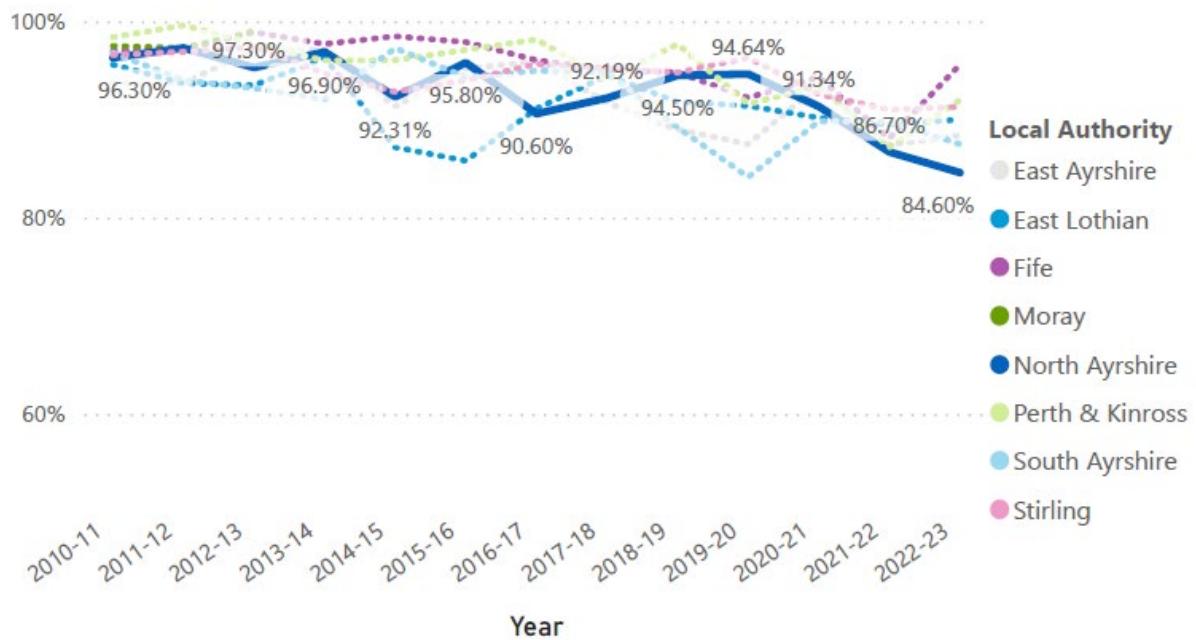
### Proportion of properties receiving Superfast Broadband



This measure is directly linked to the national R100 programme. It was included in our Council Plan 2019-24 for context but is not directly influenced by North Ayrshire Council.

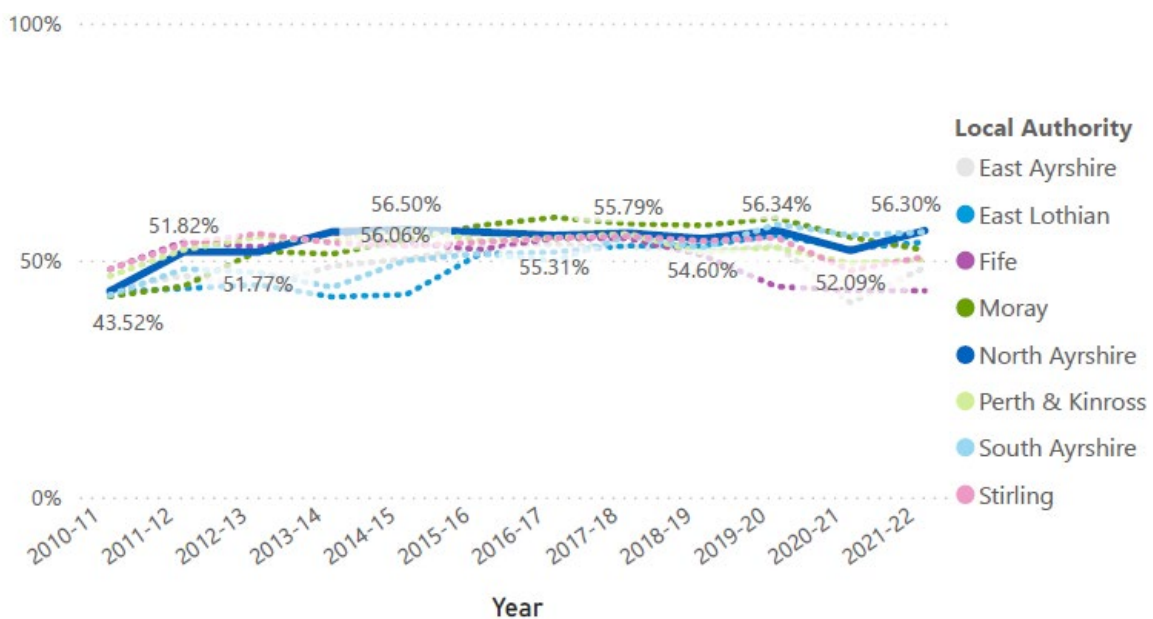


### Street Cleanliness Score



Street cleanliness was impacted by the pandemic as resources were diverted to other services such as waste collection. Work is ongoing to recover performance and had reached 86.3% as at September 2022. To help address performance, larger capacity street bins and an evaluation of our existing street cleaning schedule has been completed, as detailed in our 2022-23 Mid-Year Progress Report. A pilot is underway to target poorer performing streets with an increase in the frequency of cleaning supported by litter educational campaigns in these areas.

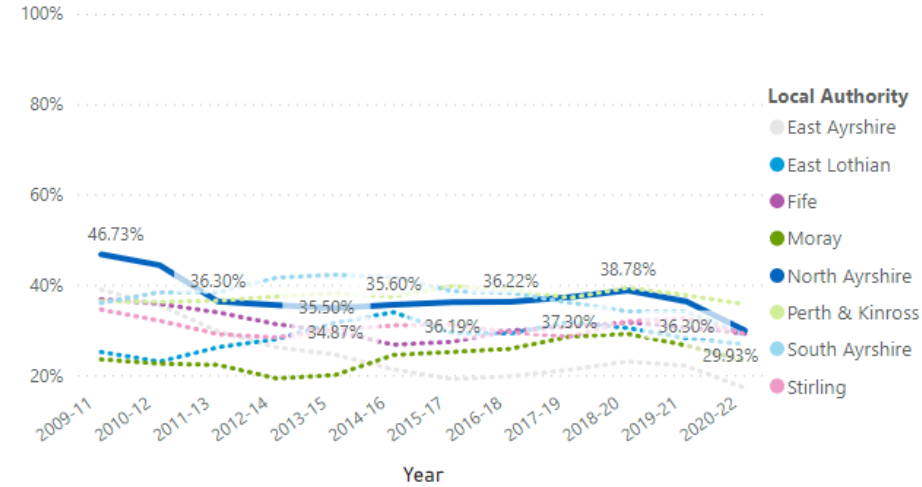
### Proportion of total household waste arising that is recycled



North Ayrshire Council continues to perform well in this area, most recent local data shows performance at 55.3% for 2022-23. We were one of the few local authorities to maintain collections throughout the pandemic.

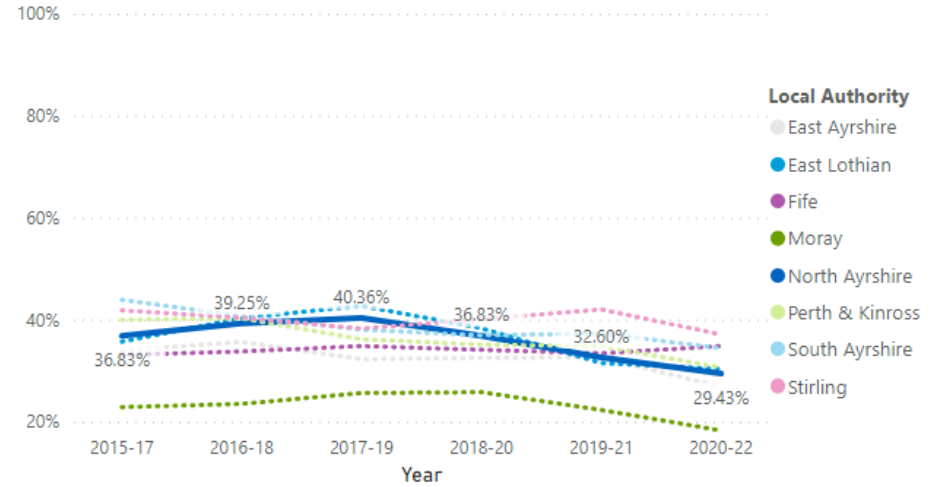
**Percentage of roads considered for maintenance treatment**

**Percentage of A class roads considered for maintenance treatment**



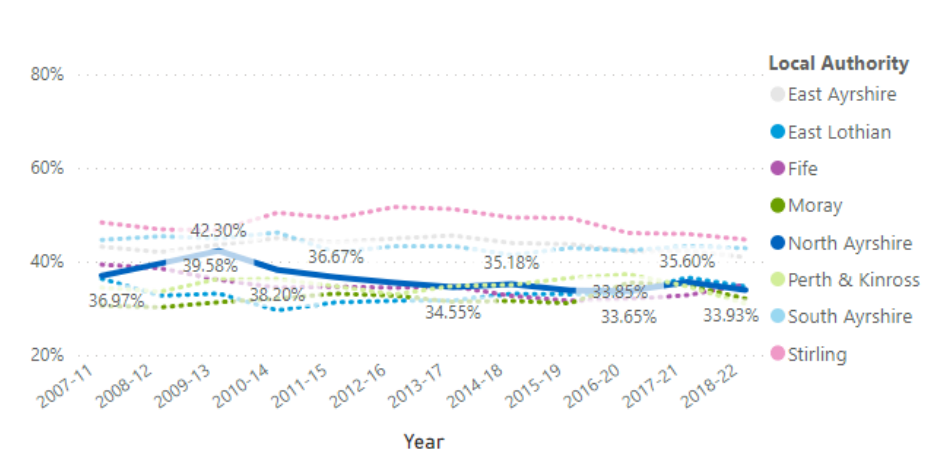
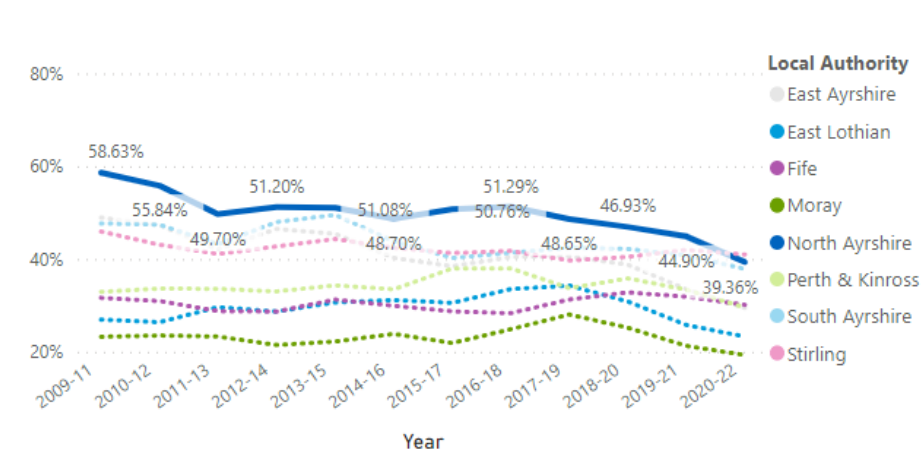
**Percentage of B class roads considered for maintenance treatment**

**Percentage of B class roads considered for maintenance treatment**



**Percentage of C class roads considered for maintenance treatment**

**Percentage of unclassified roads considered for maintenance treatment**



The percentage of roads to be considered for maintenance treatment is shown in the four charts on the previous page and reflects the mixture of rural and urban areas in North Ayrshire. Most recent information, from 2022-23 and used as a baseline within our new Council Plan 2023-28, shows 34.8% of our road network overall should be considered for maintenance treatment.

*Proportion of the highest paid 5% of employees who are women*



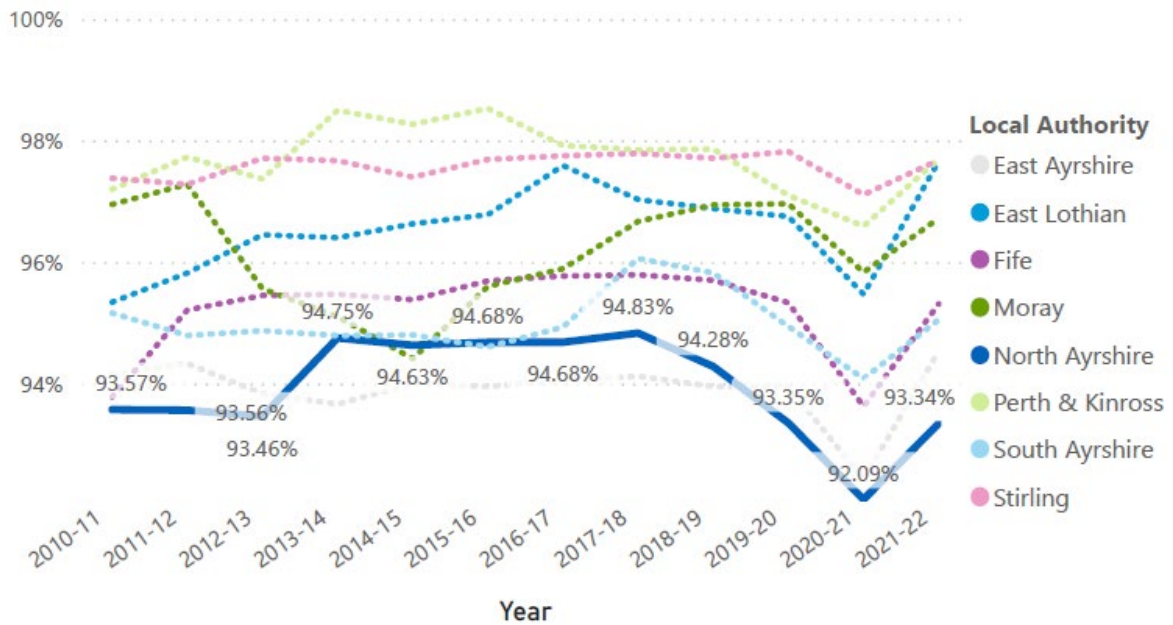
There is overall a long-term positive trend in this area, increasing from 46.4% in 2010-11 to 61.17% in 2021-22.

*Gender pay gap*



Our Equality Mainstreaming report 2020-22 detailed how we are working to reduce horizontal and vertical segregation in our workplace. This also showed a reduction in our gender pay gap to 0.22% in December 2022.

*Percentage of income due from Council Tax received by the end of the year*



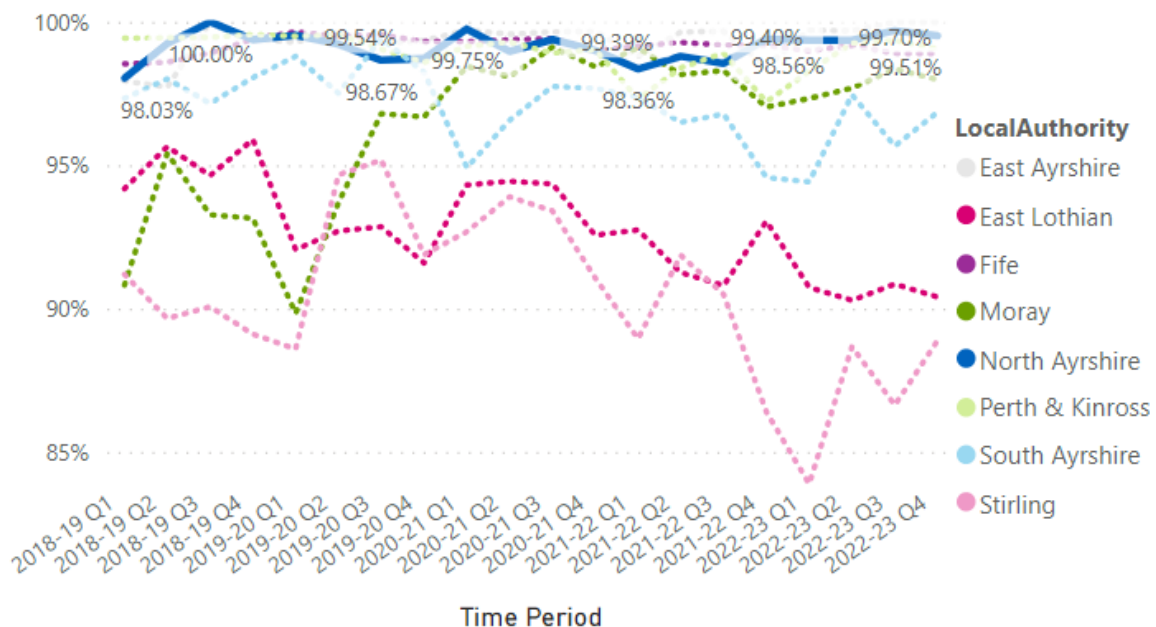
(Please note: For clarity the chart axis range is 95% - 100%.) North Ayrshire Council is performing least well within our family group. Perth and Kinross Council has the strongest performance with 97.7% of income due from Council Tax received by the end of the year compared to 93.34% for North Ayrshire. This represents £58.5million out of £62.7million (excluding relief and rebates) of Council Tax owed in 2021-22. We are currently ranked 31<sup>st</sup> out of the 32 local authorities.

*Percentage of invoices sampled that were paid within 30 days*



(Please note: For clarity the chart axis range is 75% to 100%.) North Ayrshire Council has the strongest performance within our family group. This is also higher than the Scottish average of 92.2% for Scotland compared to 95.77% for North Ayrshire Council. We are currently ranked 4<sup>th</sup> in Scotland for the speed of our payments.

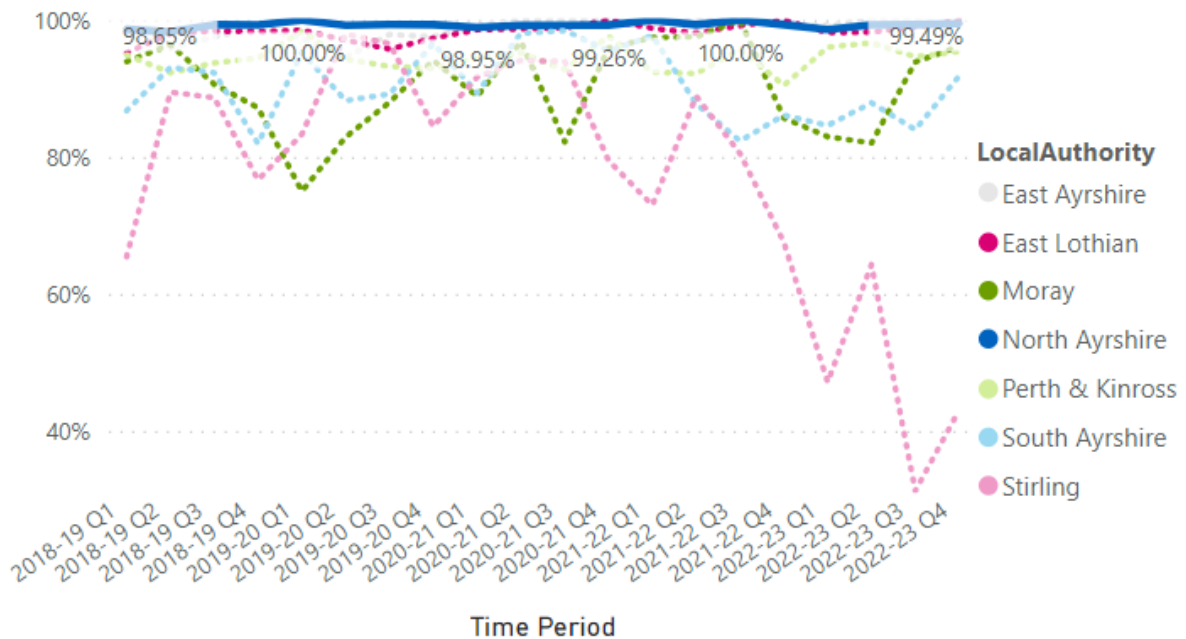
*Percentage of Scottish Welfare Fund Crisis Grant decisions made within one day*



The Improvement Service is developing the LGBF to ensure more timeous data is available. Most recent data relates to the end of March 2023, when 99.5% of Scottish Welfare Fund Crisis Grant decisions were made within one day, only behind East Ayrshire Council with 99.5% in our family group. This is above the Scottish average of 91.8%. This shows strong performance and our commitment to helping our most vulnerable residents in North Ayrshire.

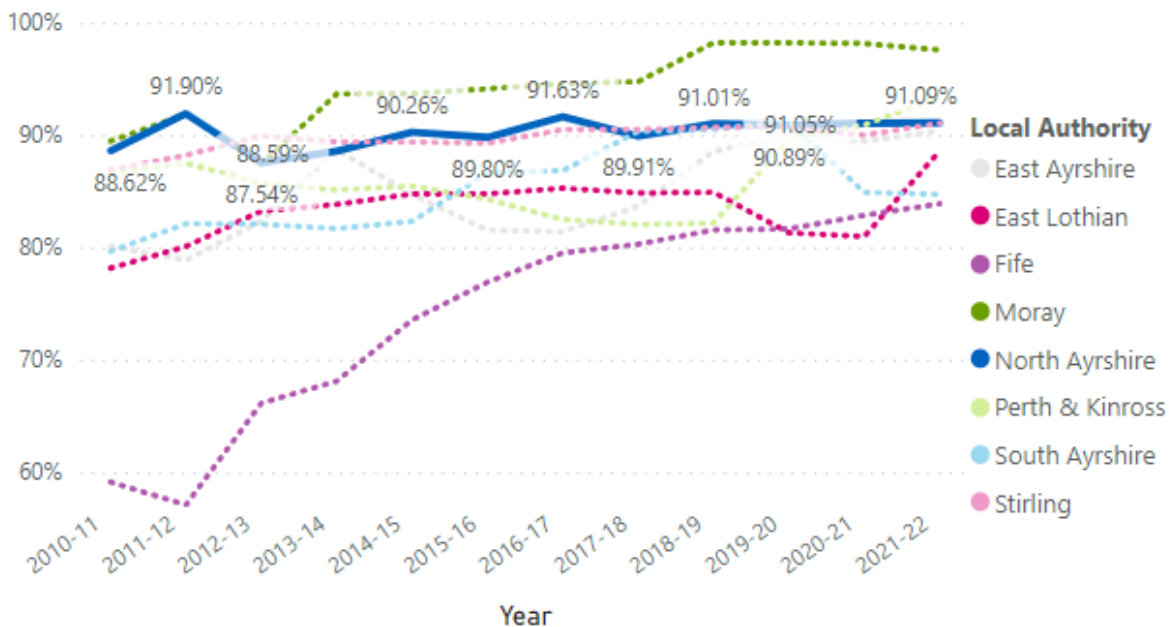


*Percentage of Scottish Welfare Fund Community Care Grant decisions made within 15 days*



As at the end of March 2023, 99.49% of Scottish Welfare Fund Community Care Grant decisions were made within 15 days, second in our family group behind East Ayrshire with 100%. This performance has been consistent since 2018-19 and is above the Scottish average of 87.3%. We are currently ranked joint 4<sup>th</sup> with Inverclyde Council.

*Percentage of operational buildings suitable for their current use*



In North Ayrshire Council, 91.09% of our operational buildings are suitable for their current use. This is higher than the family group average of 90.1% and the Scottish average of 85.3%. The number of operational buildings within North Ayrshire Council has decreased from 334 in 2010-11, to 258 in 2021-22. Moray Council, who are performing strongest in this area, have considerably fewer operational buildings, 165 as at 2021-22.



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**NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL****25<sup>th</sup> January 2024****Audit and Scrutiny Committee**

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**Title:** **North Ayrshire Council Plan 2023-28:  
Performance Management Framework**

**Purpose:** To consider the Council Plan 2023 – 2028 Performance Management Framework.

**Recommendation:** The Audit and Scrutiny Committee notes the Council Plan 2023-28 Performance Management Framework attached at Appendix 1.

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## **1 Executive Summary**

- 1.1 [Our Council Plan 2023-28](#) is the overarching strategy of our Council and details our Council's strategic priorities. We have a statutory duty to publish information that enables effective scrutiny of our performance.
- 1.2 This report asks the Audit and Scrutiny Committee to consider the Council Plan 2023-28 Performance Management Framework (PMF) (Appendix 1). This will be used alongside updates on actions (listed in our Council Plan), case studies, contextual information and priority Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) indicators to demonstrate progress against our Council Plan priorities in our six monthly Progress Reports.

## **2 Background**

- 2.1 Our Council Plan is our Council's most important strategic document setting out our vision of 'a North Ayrshire that is fair for all' and key priorities. Our new Council Plan 2023-28 was approved by Council on 21<sup>st</sup> June 2023. It was agreed that the supporting framework would be developed and presented to Cabinet for approval following the summer recess.
- 2.2 Many of the challenges North Ayrshire experiences are complex and longer-term solutions are required to address them sustainably. As a result, each Council Plan is designed to build on the progress of the previous plan and a degree of continuity can be identified in each. In consideration of this, 13 indicators remain relevant and continue from the previous Council Plan.

### 3 Our Performance Management Framework

- 3.1 Actively managing performance through the collection of accurate and relevant information and setting informed targets is crucial to the successful delivery of our Council Plan and demonstrating Best Value. The Statutory Performance Information Direction 2021 states local authorities must publish information that compares with previous years as well as with other local authorities in order to demonstrate Best Value. Information must be presented in an accessible style for all of our citizens and communities.
- 3.2 As agreed at Council, performance will be measured through regular reporting to Cabinet and the Audit and Scrutiny Committee.
- 3.3 The framework measures are included at Appendix 1 alongside current baselines and targets. It contains a range of 26 performance indicators directly linked to our priorities and our Council's performance. However, our Council does not operate in isolation, and impact cannot be shown through numerical measures alone. Therefore the framework is part of a suite of information provided through our Council Plan reporting to allow effective scrutiny of our delivery. This includes:
- **The Inclusive Growth Dashboard Summary** – A locally developed tool that provides contextual data on trends within North Ayrshire and is independent of the Council Plan PMF. This includes indicators such as child poverty rates, employability and area-wide climate measures. A summary will be provided in reporting to provide context to our performance.
  - **LGBF Priority Indicators** – LGBF measures that directly link to our priorities. Ten are included directly in the PMF and a benchmarking report is provided on all priority LGBF indicators annually.
  - **Action Updates** – Published within our Council Plan and linked directly to the delivery of our strategies throughout our Council, these provide qualitative updates on progress and impact on our residents.
  - **Case Studies** – Capturing real lived experience to help show the impact of our Council, including through partnership working.
- 3.4 We will review our Performance Framework regularly to ensure the information continues to be relevant and takes account of any external changes or opportunities.
- 3.5 In summary, the aim has been to produce a Council Plan Performance Management Framework which is strategic, transparent and has the potential to evolve over the lifetime of the Council Plan. Most importantly it will help demonstrate how we are *working together to improve the lives of our people in North Ayrshire* and deliver a **North Ayrshire that is fair for all**.

### 4 Proposals

- 4.1 The Audit and Scrutiny Committee agrees to approve the Council Plan 2023-28 Performance Management Framework attached at Appendix 1.

## **5 Implications/Socio-economic Duty**

### **Financial**

5.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

### **Human Resources**

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

### **Legal**

5.3 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

### **Equality/Socio-economic**

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

### **Climate Change and Carbon**

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

### **Key Priorities**

5.5 The Performance Management Framework provides a robust basis for scrutinising the delivery of our Council Plan strategic priorities for the next five years.

### **Community Wealth Building**

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

## **6. Consultation**

6.1 Consultation was undertaken with Chief Officers.

Aileen Craig  
Head of Service (Democratic)

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



# Our Council Plan Performance Management Framework

August 2023



## Contextual Indicators

These indicators provide context to the environment in which we operate. They form part of the Inclusive Growth Dashboard which will be summarised in Council Plan 2023-28 reporting.

Description	LGBF	Baseline 2022/23 (or most recent)	Ambition
Population	No	<b>134,220</b> (June 2021)	Increase
% of Children living in poverty after housing costs (LGBF)	Yes	<b>29%</b> (2021/22)	Decrease
% of Households in Fuel Poverty	No	<b>28%</b> (2020/21)	Decrease
% of working age population in employment	No	<b>73.6%</b> (December 2022)	Increase
Proportion of people earning less than the living wage (LGBF)	Yes	<b>11.7%</b> (2021/22)	Decrease
Area-wide CO2 Emissions (LGBF)	Yes	<b>5.43%</b> (2020/21)	Decrease

## Council Plan Performance Indicators

These performance indicators are directly influenced by the work of our Council. When considered alongside the contextual indicators, actions and case studies within reporting, they form a clear basis for effective scrutiny.

Description	LGBF	Baseline 2022/23 (or most recent)	Target 2023/24	Target 2027/28
Number of residents participating in community learning and development activity including youth work	No	<b>17,804</b>	<b>18,700</b>	<b>20,600</b>
Percentage of children achieving their developmental milestones at the time the child starts primary (LGBF)	Yes	<b>78.5%</b> (2021/22)	<b>79%</b>	<b>80%</b>
Average total tariff score of pupils living in the 20% most deprived SIMD areas	No	<b>711</b> (2021/22)	<b>714</b>	<b>TBD*</b>

<b>Description</b>	<b>LGBF</b>	<b>Baseline 2022/23 (or most recent)</b>	<b>Target 2023/24</b>	<b>Target 2027/28</b>
Overall average total tariff (Average tariff score: All Leavers)	No	<b>905</b> (2021/22)	<b>908</b>	<b>TBD*</b>
Average total tariff for Care Experienced Young People	No	<b>457</b>	<b>465</b>	<b>TBD*</b>
Percentage of school leavers entering positive destinations (LGBF)	Yes	<b>96%</b> (2021/22)	<b>96.4%</b>	<b>97.5%</b>
Number of unemployed people progressing into employment supported by our Employability Service	No	<b>437</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>550</b>
Percentage of procurement spent on local enterprises	No	<b>22.93%</b> (2021/22)	<b>26%</b>	<b>27%</b>
Number of new build housing units reaching completion (all tenures) (Actual not cumulative)	No	<b>562</b>	<b>295</b>	<b>530</b>
Number of empty homes brought back into use (Actual)	No	<b>123</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>200</b>
Hectares of vacant and derelict land in North Ayrshire	No	<b>1,198</b> (2021/22)	<b>1,094</b>	<b>1,000</b>
Street Cleanliness (Street Cleanliness Index - percentage clean) (LGBF)	Yes	<b>84.6%</b>	<b>87%</b>	<b>87%</b>
(Overall) % of road network that should be considered for maintenance treatment	No	<b>34.8%</b>	<b>34.8%</b>	<b>34.8%</b>
Provided floor space of commercial/industrial space within our Council portfolio (sq ft)	No	<b>400,991</b>	<b>404,755</b>	<b>435,600</b>
Percentage of Council budget directed via participatory methods	No	<b>2.74%</b>	<b>1.5%</b>	<b>2.5%</b>
Number of Council assets under community management (cumulative)	No	<b>49</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>65</b>
Total installed capacity of low carbon heat and electricity generation across the Council's estate (kW) (cumulative) (LGBF)	Yes	<b>11,680</b> (2021/22)	<b>12,000</b>	<b>25,000</b>



<b>Description</b>	<b>LGBF</b>	<b>Baseline 2022/23 (or most recent)</b>	<b>Target 2023/24</b>	<b>Target 2027/28</b>
Overall carbon emissions (tonnes)	No	<b>20,896</b>	<b>19,500</b>	<b>15,300</b>
Proportion of council dwellings that are energy efficient (LGBF)	Yes	<b>97.7%</b> (2021/22)	<b>98.1%</b>	<b>99 %</b>
Length of new or improved active travel routes per annum (metres)	No	<b>1,090</b>	<b>2,000</b>	<b>2,000</b>
Number of trees planted under the North Ayrshire 2030 Tree Planting Strategy	No	<b>35,627</b>	<b>40,000</b>	<b>80,000</b>
Proportion of operational buildings that are suitable for their current use (LGBF)	Yes	<b>91.09%</b> (2021/22)	<b>92.1%</b>	<b>92.5%</b>
Percentage of total household waste that is recycled (calendar year as per SEPA) (LGBF)	Yes	<b>56.3%</b> (2021/22)	<b>57%</b>	<b>57%</b>
Percentage of Council dwellings that meet the Scottish Housing Standards (LGBF)	Yes	<b>49.28%</b> (2021/22)	<b>72.5%</b>	<b>99%</b>
Gross rent arrears (all tenants) as at 31 March each year as a percentage of rent due for the reporting year (LGBF)	Yes	<b>7.14%</b>	<b>6.5%</b>	<b>4.5%</b>
Percentage of income due from council tax received by the end of the year (LGBF)	Yes	<b>93.34%</b> (2021/22)	<b>94%</b>	<b>94%</b>

\*The 2027/28 indicator and targets will be confirmed in response to the outcomes of the current independent review of qualifications and assessment.



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**NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL****25 January 2024****Audit and Scrutiny Committee**

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**Title:** Internal Audit Reports Issued**Purpose:** To inform the Committee of the findings of Internal Audit work completed between November and December 2023.**Recommendation:** That the Committee considers the outcomes from the Internal Audit work completed.

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**1. Executive Summary**

- 1.1 The Council's local Code of Corporate Governance requires effective arrangements to be put in place for the objective review of risk management and internal control. Internal Audit is an important element in this framework as it reviews internal controls and offers Elected Members and officers an objective and independent appraisal of how effectively resources are being managed.
- 1.2 The remit of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee includes the monitoring of Internal Audit activity. The submission and consideration of regular reports assists the Committee in fulfilling this remit.

**2. Background**

- 2.1 This report provides information on Internal Audit work completed between November and December 2023. Internal control reviews have been completed in respect of the areas detailed in Appendix 1 to this report. The aim of these reviews is to provide assurance that the internal control framework within the areas examined is appropriate and operating effectively.
- 2.2 The findings from each audit assignment have been notified in writing to the Chief Executive, the Section 95 Officer and the relevant Executive Director and Head of Service on the completion of each assignment. Where appropriate, this has included an action plan with recommendations for improving internal control. Appendix 1 includes the report and action plan from each audit.
- 2.3 The findings from two separate audit assignments are detailed at Appendix 1 to this report and the levels of assurance for each are noted in the table below:

<b>Audit Title</b>	<b>Assurance Level</b>
Employee Services HR Payroll System and Processes	Payroll Administration – Reasonable Service Administration – Limited
ICT Supplier Management	Reasonable

2.4 With regard to the HR Payroll review, limited assurance was provided around operational service administration. This is as a result of errors identified in the recording of absence information by services, as well as the volume of overpayments and manual corrections made by Employee Services as a result of delayed payroll notifications from services. Testing was carried out across all services, and as there was no pattern or particular services identified where this is causing an issue, an action has been raised for Employee Services to issue reminders generally to all services to ensure the timely and accurate provision of information. Automated process are being implemented to assist with these weaknesses, including weekly absence reports to help highlight where there may be errors in the recording of absence, and regular reporting to Heads of Service to highlight overpayments in their service areas.

### **3. Proposals**

3.1 It is proposed that the Committee considers the outcomes from the Internal Audit work completed between November and December 2023.

### **4. Implications/Socio-economic Duty**

#### **Financial**

4.1 None.

#### **Human Resources**

4.2 None.

#### **Legal**

4.3 None.

#### **Equality/Socio-economic**

4.4 None.

#### **Climate Change and Carbon**

4.5 None.

#### **Key Priorities**

4.6 The work of Internal Audit helps to support the efficient delivery of the strategic priorities within the Council Plan 2023-2028.

## **Community Wealth Building**

4.7 None.

### **5. Consultation**

5.1 The relevant Services are consulted on Internal Audit findings during each audit assignment.

Mark Boyd  
Head of Service (Finance)

For further information please contact **Laura Miller, Senior Manager (Audit, Fraud, Safety and Risk)**, on **01294 324524**.

### **Background Papers**

None.

## EMPLOYEE SERVICES - HR/PAYROLL SYSTEM AND PROCESSES

### 1 Background

- 1.1 CHRIS21 is the HR Payroll system used by North Ayrshire Council. The software is supplied by Frontier.
- 1.2 Regular payroll transaction testing is carried out annually, therefore these have been omitted from this audit.
- 1.3 Employee Services are responsible for running payruns based on information provided by Services. The onus is for managers to provide Payroll with timely and accurate information and it is employees' responsibility to ensure that they have been paid the correct amount.
- 1.4 As of October 2023, there were 7,584 employees on the payroll system.

### 2 Objectives and Scope

- 2.1 The objective of this audit was to establish:
  - coverage of CHRIS 21
  - contract details of service levels and data protection
  - segregation of duties and access controls
  - security of sensitive data, and
  - ensure change requests are timely and accurate.

### 3 Findings

#### COVERAGE

- 3.1 There are nine modules currently in use within the HR Payroll system. These relate to HR information, payroll, fleet management, self-service and Public Sector returns.
- 3.2 Every NAC employee with corporate IT access has access to their own basic information and their payslip via the HR21 self-service module. Employees without IT access submit requests in writing by either email or post.

#### CONTRACT

- 3.3 The Frontier system was upgraded in November 2018. Due to the complex nature of the Council's Terms and Conditions of employment, there are few alternative software providers who provide a capable and affordable system. As a result, there is no plan to replace the HR Payroll system at this time.
- 3.4 The contract is listed on the Licences Subscriptions Software Support Register (LSSS Register). LSSS contract referencing is no longer used in procurement, however at the time the Contract was placed on the Register, this was acceptable. A STAR will be required to remove the Contract from the Register, and this is currently being completed by the Service. **(Action a)**



- 3.5** There are 19 Frontier invoices on Integra related to the CHRIS 21 system covering training, maintenance and consultancy costs. Maintenance costs are linked to the Retail Price Index (RPI) either at 2% or the actual if higher. Maintenance costs have increased from 3 years at 2% to 5% for the year ending 2023, and 10% for year ending 2024. With current inflation fluctuations this cost will continue to increase.

### **ACCESS CONTROLS AND SECURITY**

- 3.6** At the time of the audit there were 475 CHRIS users with access to the HR21 self-service module, where they can view their payslips and P60's .
- 3.7** Policies and user guidance on the different CHRIS modules are available on Connects. A user guide for the HR21 self-service module is available via the HR21 homepage.
- 3.8** IT CHRIS user report analysis identified two security levels: level 5 'all other staff', and level 9 'executive staff' with a default user allocation of level 5. This is to ensure that there is an appropriate hierarchal access control to system records. There are 865 forms available on CHRIS; at the time of the audit it was confirmed that the Workforce Systems team are creating a screen tracker document to allow them to track what screens are in use. The purpose of this development is to enhance system security, eradicate screen duplication, support customisation requests, and ensure only active screens are within user profiles.
- 3.9** During the audit the software provider issued an update to user passwords to strengthen security controls. The new password settings are compliant with the Council's password configuration standards.
- 3.10** Access is assigned based on job roles, however there are two generic logins that could not be matched with active employees. **(Action b)**

### **CHANGE REQUESTS**

- 3.11** Contractual changes are undertaken solely by the Employee Services team within CHRIS.
- 3.12** Employees with access to HR21 can update personal information such as home address, emergency contact and bank details directly. Employees without IT access are required to place their request in writing via email or by post to the Employee Services team.
- 3.13** Absences are recorded within the HR Payroll System. Managers are required to complete an online form which is routed to either the Employee Services team, (Place and Chief Executives) or the relevant Service admin team. Audit testing of a sample of absence records identified errors in dates such as incorrect start of the sickness absence and incomplete return dates. **(Action c)**
- 3.14** Employee Services track and manage absence related amendments through system reports.

- 3.15** There were 220 overpayments recorded in 2022/23 financial year with a recorded value of £231,780. The main cause of overpayments is late information relating to sickness absence, termination of employment and contractual changes. As a result, debtors invoices are raised and other retrieval costs are incurred by NAC. From a sample of 10 overpayments, 6 were due to late notification by the Service and a further 4 by clerical errors from the Service. Carrying out pay corrections can be resource intensive for the Payroll team and can require escalation to senior team members to seek advice and guidance on the best approach where cases are complex. In addition to the impact to the Payroll team, additional teams with Financial Management are required to take action. From the sample 1 case required 3 Employee Service staff to intervene. **(Action d)**
- 3.17** As a result of incorrect information being provided, the Employee Services team require to process supplementary payments to employees where contractual earnings have not been received. For the financial year 2022/23 there were 417 supplementary payments produced with a value of £327,033.
- 3.18** A cross service sample of 26 supplementary payments identified that 10 were because of the Service not completing the employee absence records. A further 9 were new start pay advances, which can be requested as a support when starting a new job and are recovered over their next 2 pays. In 1 case there was a software error which is being monitored, 2 were Service errors and 4 were Employee Services errors, which after review resulted in changes of procedure to prevent reoccurrence.
- 3.19** The administration of these payroll corrections is time consuming and labour intensive. On average the samples tested took 17 days to resolve, dependent on how quickly information is returned - a complicated maternity correction taking 58 days to resolve required 5 employee services staff's intervention. **(Action d)**

## **4 Internal Audit Opinion**

- 4.1** Overall, reasonable assurance was obtained with regard to administration of payroll processes. Where issues have been identified processes have been amended to mitigate risks.

Limited assurance was obtained to the timely administration by services to provide accurate and timeous information to ensure the efficient and accurate payroll runs.

## Definitions of Assurance Levels:

<b>Substantial</b>	A sound system of governance, risk management and control exist, with internal controls operating effectively and being consistently applied to support the achievement of objectives in the area audited.
<b>Reasonable</b>	There is a generally sound system of governance, risk management and control in place. Some issues, non-compliance or scope for improvement were identified which may put at risk the achievement of objectives in the area audited.
<b>Limited</b>	Significant gaps, weaknesses or non-compliance were identified. Improvement is required to the system of governance, risk management and control to effectively manage risks to the achievement of objectives in the area audited.
<b>None</b>	Immediate action is required to address fundamental gaps, weaknesses or non-compliance identified. The system of governance, risk management and control is inadequate to effectively manage risks to the achievement of objectives in the area audited.

NB The level of assurance given is at the discretion of Internal Audit.

**KEY FINDINGS AND ACTION PLAN**  
**EMPLOYEE SERVICES - HR/PAYROLL SYSTEM AND PROCESSES**

<b>Action</b>	a
<b>Finding</b>	A STAR is required to remove the Contract from the, now out of date, LSSS Register.
<b>Action Description</b>	Complete a Single Tender Action Request (STAR) and provided to the Procurement Team.
<b>Risk</b>	Continued use of this programme is non-compliant with NAC procurement standards.
<b>Priority (1, 2, 3)</b>	1
<b>Paragraph Reference</b>	3.4
<b>Managed by</b>	Fiona Walker, Head of Service (People and ICT)
<b>Assigned to</b>	Jackie Hamilton
<b>Due Date</b>	31/03/2024
<b>Management Comment</b>	A STAR is currently being prepared to remove the Contact from the LSSS register and ensure a contractual arrangement is in place with Frontier for another term.

<b>Action</b>	b
<b>Finding</b>	Generic accounts unassigned to individuals were identified.
<b>Action Description</b>	Investigate generic accounts and ascertain requirement for them to continue. Ensure Frontier user account is compliant with NAC identification processes.
<b>Risk</b>	Noncompliance with the Council's IT and GDPR policies.
<b>Priority (1, 2, 3)</b>	2
<b>Paragraph Reference</b>	3.10
<b>Managed by</b>	Fiona Walker, Head of Service (People and ICT)
<b>Assigned to</b>	Jackie Hamilton
<b>Due Date</b>	Complete
<b>Management Comment</b>	There are two generic logon IDs, which are required by both the Software provider and the Payroll Team. The Software provider's logon ID is locked unless they request access to it. The Payroll Team's logon on ID is view only to allow them to interrogate payroll records for previous financial years. A generic view only logon ID is used to avoid any corruption to the historical data. Based on the purpose of these logons there is limited risk to the Council's IT and GDPR policies.

<b>Action</b>	c
<b>Finding</b>	Inaccurate absence information recorded on CHRIS
<b>Action Description</b>	Managers should be reminded of the requirement to record absences completely and accurately.
<b>Risk</b>	Pay entitlements may be impacted by erroneous information resulting in both over and under payments of earnings. Additional officer time processing corrections.
<b>Priority (1, 2, 3)</b>	1
<b>Paragraph Reference</b>	3.13
<b>Managed by</b>	Fiona Walker, Head of Service (People and ICT)
<b>Assigned to</b>	Jackie Hamilton
<b>Due Date</b>	Complete
<b>Management Comment</b>	Senior Managers & Heads of Service are issued with an automated report on a weekly basis providing details of absences within their area. Senior Managers should review the data within the report and where they identify any issues advise the relevant admin team of required correction. The Employee Service team have created a report to check for errors in dates entered within the HR Payroll System. The report is run on a weekly basis, where discrepancies are found the error will be directed to the relevant service responsible for data entry to correct.

<b>Action</b>	d
<b>Finding</b>	637 payroll overpayments and manual corrections, with a value of £558,813, were identified by Employee Services in the 2022/23 financial year.
<b>Action Description</b>	Employee Services should use information records to report to Heads of Service on performance annually/bi-annually to improve standard of payroll notifications.
<b>Risk</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overpayments are incurred and not recovered.</li> <li>• Additional time is required to correct errors, including complicated manual calculations</li> <li>• Additional recovery costs are incurred.</li> </ul>
<b>Priority (1, 2, 3)</b>	1
<b>Paragraph Reference</b>	3.15 and 3.19
<b>Managed by</b>	Fiona Walker, Head of Service (People and ICT)
<b>Assigned to</b>	Jackie Hamilton
<b>Due Date</b>	31/3/2024
<b>Management Comment</b>	A screen is being developed in the HR Payroll system to record details of overpayments (currently recorded within a spreadsheet). This development will allow for an automated report to be issued to Heads of Service on a 6-monthly basis providing details of overpayments within their Service including the reason and amount. Heads of Services will be advised in advance of this process commencing and requested to reinforce the importance to their managers of submitting timely and accurate information.

### Priority Key used in Action Plan

<b>1 (High)</b>	Control weakness where there is a material impact on the achievement of the control objectives, generally requiring prompt attention.
<b>2 (Medium)</b>	Control weakness which needs to be rectified, but where there is no material impact on the achievement of the control objectives.
<b>3 (Low)</b>	Minor weakness or points for improvement.

## ICT SUPPLIER MANAGEMENT

### 1 Background

- 1.1 The audit program was based on the Public Sector Cyber Resilience Framework refresh document. Section 3 of this framework covers Supplier Management, the main objective being to ensure the Council understands and manages security risks that arise as a result of dependencies on external suppliers and third party services.
- 1.2 The audit included 3<sup>rd</sup> party suppliers that IT Services are responsible for managing and also a small sample of recent contracts for cloud-based systems.
- 1.3 The audit involved testing within IT Services and Procurement.
- 1.4 The Procurement Manual provides clarity on how NAC should procure its goods, works and services to ensure best value is achieved. The manual must be used by all staff involved in the Procurement process. A list of NAC contracts and framework agreements are detailed within NAC's corporate contract register. A framework agreement is a general term for agreements with suppliers that set out terms and conditions under which specific purchases (call-offs) can be made throughout the term of the agreement.
- 1.5 The Senior Manager (Corporate Procurement) advised a Terms and Conditions of Contract for Information Communication Technology (ICT) Services has recently been finalised and is now available on the Conditions of Contract Procurement page of Connects. This is based on the Scottish Government ICT Terms and Conditions.

### 2 Objectives and Scope

- 2.1 The objectives of the audit were to ensure that:
  - The Council has defined the respective duties and responsibilities of third-party suppliers and the supply chain and these are understood and agreed by all parties.
  - There is visibility and control on third-party users that can access Council systems, services and information data and these are appropriately verified, authenticated and authorised.
  - The Council has security embedded within procurement procedures.
  - The Council has security embedded in cloud-based services.
- 2.2 The supply chain assurance section of the Cyber Resilience Framework for ICT Supplier Management will be included in an upcoming Business Continuity audit.

### 3 Findings

#### Roles and Responsibilities

- 3.1 The Terms and Conditions of Contract for ICT Services has recently been finalised and is now available on the Conditions of Contract Procurement page of Connects. This will be issued for all relevant contracts involving ICT Services that



are not part of a framework agreement. The Terms and Conditions of Contract for ICT Services is based on the Scottish Government ICT Terms and Conditions and adequately covers the requirements of the cyber resilience framework for ensuring the roles and responsibilities of each party are included as part of the contract.

### **Access Control**

- 3.2** During the audit, IT Services updated their documented process for third parties requiring temporary access to Council systems and servers to support our IT operations. This access is granted via a Virtual Private Network (VPN) connection which needs to be set up by IT Services. Access is restricted to the minimum access necessary. Once set up the third party will need to request the VPN connection is opened and unless additional time is requested, the connection will be automatically closed at 6pm the same day. VPN connections are decommissioned when no longer required. All such requests are now on Hornbill, the IT Services Portal.
- 3.3** The initial request to set up a VPN connection requires the third party to sign the third Party Acceptable Use Policy. IT Services provided a list of current VPN third party users and advised most of them were historically set up and may not be able to provide evidence they have signed the 3<sup>rd</sup> party Acceptable Use Policy (AUP). Internal Audit and IT Services agreed that all current suppliers on the VPN list would be asked to sign up to the third party AUP to ensure this evidence was up to date and available. A Microsoft Form is now completed for such purposes which provides an electronic audit trail of who has signed this form and when. There are 29 suppliers on the VPN list and 11 of them have at least 1 user that has signed this policy and 18 of them have no users that have signed this policy. IT Services are actively chasing suppliers to ensure their users sign up to the third party AUP.
- 3.4** There are a number of non-Council employees that require permanent access to the Council network and systems and as such, an active directory account is set up which grants network access. A request to set up an active directory account is logged on Hornbill and the Hornbill reference number is logged against the active directory account along with the email address of the person who requested the account to be set up. This ensures there is an adequate audit trail for such accounts.
- 3.5** IT Services advised that the relevant NAC manager is responsible for notifying when a non-NAC active directory account is no longer required. IT Services also have an automatic process in place to disable active directory accounts that have not been used within 90 days. IT Services provided an active directory report of all non-NAC users and their last logged on date. This testing found 1 Care at Home (CAH) user who only has email on a mobile phone and never logs onto a NAC device that has not used their email within the last 90 days. IT Services are looking into an automated process to remove CAH leavers.

### **Security in Procurement**

- 3.6** The auditor reviewed the Procurement Manual which specifies which procurement process to follow depending on the procurement value. Although it

covers procurement exercises that are below an estimated contract value of £10,000, the Procurement Manual does not refer to the Information Governance Procurement Framework (IGPF) for such low value procurements to ensure information governance and IT, cyber and information security requirements are considered. **(action a)**

- 3.7** For procurement exercises that are above an estimated contracted value of £10,000, the Procurement Manual requires a Request for Procurement Action (RPA) form to be completed. Section 5 of the RPA incorporates the Information Governance and ICT Security requirements of the IGPF. If Information Governance implications are identified, the IGPF must be completed. If ICT security implications are identified, an IT, Cyber and Information Security Schedule should be included in the procurement exercise. This schedule ensures the supplier declares compliance with baseline security standards and obligations. If the supplier has identified any areas of non-compliance, the Council's ICT Security Officer will undertake a risk assessment where detailed mitigating controls and evidence have been provided.
- 3.8** There is no version control on the IGPF so it is unclear when it was last updated. Although it is called the Information Governance Procurement Framework, section 1 covers Information Governance, section 2 covers IT, Cyber and Information Security and section 3 covers Information Technology Considerations so the title does not refer to the ICT cyber security considerations. The IGPF should be reviewed in consultation with Corporate Procurement and updated to ensure it is still fit for purpose. This update should incorporate who to contact for help or advice when completing this framework. Consideration should also be given to renaming the framework. **(action b)**
- 3.9** There is a risk that services purchasing IT related services and data hosting solutions as well as enhancements or upgrades to existing provisions do not follow the proper procurement process and the IGPF is not followed which could result in information governance and IT, Cyber and Information Security requirements not being considered. As more IT systems move to cloud-based services, there is a greater need to consider information governance and ICT cyber security requirements. The IGPF is only available on the Procurement pages of Connects and is not included in the IT Services or Information Governance Connects pages. Once the IGPF is refreshed, services should be reminded that for all purchases, regardless of value, there is a requirement to complete the IGPF. Internal Audit recommends this should be done via News in Brief and a MetaCompliance message. **(action c)**
- 3.10** Information Governance advised they started a review of the IGPF in October 2023 which will review the current process by removing duplication and adding further guidance to signpost services to the relevant teams, contacts and processes. An action plan has been produced after an initial meeting with Procurement. The findings of this audit will be incorporated into this review.
- 3.11** There were 2 IT contracts selected for audit testing and neither had a completed IT, Cyber and Information Security Schedule in the Procurement folder. The Information Governance Procurement Framework states "where a supplier has not received this schedule as part of a procurement exercise it may be included within the contractual arrangements." Both contracts were mini competitions from

the Crown Commercial Services Frameworks and IT Services and Procurement advised that IT security requirements were included within the contractual arrangements and this schedule was not required. Although the proper procurement process was followed, there was no evidence in the Procurement folder to note why this schedule was not included in the tender documentation. It is recommended the IGPF checklist is updated to include a section to record where the IT, Cyber and Information Security Schedule is not required and the reason for this. **(action b)**

### Security in Cloud Services


- 3.12 The auditor selected 2 contracts for the provision of cloud-based systems, and both were a Crown Commercial Service G-Cloud 13 Call-Off Contract. The supplier had completed the IT Cyber Information Security Schedule which confirmed compliance with the NCSC's 14 principles of the Cyber Security Requirements for Cloud Service providers. In addition, the call-off contract ensures compliance with the same cloud security principles.
- 3.13 The Public Sector Cyber Resilience Framework recommends the Cloud Service Provider should specify and document the physical geographic locations of data, including any locations in which data is processed or backed up. It should be noted that the 2 call-off contracts in the sample do not record the location of the data being processed and backed up in the contract documentation. **(action b)**

## 4 Internal Audit Opinion

- 4.1 Overall, reasonable assurance was obtained with regard to the testing carried out for ICT supplier management. The biggest risk is the Information Governance Framework not being followed which could result in data security and ICT cyber security requirements not being considered. Implementation of the audit actions should strengthen the controls around this process.

### Definitions of Assurance Levels:

<b>Substantial</b>	A sound system of governance, risk management and control exist, with internal controls operating effectively and being consistently applied to support the achievement of objectives in the area audited.
<b>Reasonable</b>	There is a generally sound system of governance, risk management and control in place. Some issues, non-compliance or scope for improvement were identified which may put at risk the achievement of objectives in the area audited.
<b>Limited</b>	Significant gaps, weaknesses or non-compliance were identified. Improvement is required to the system of governance, risk management and control to effectively manage risks to the achievement of objectives in the area audited.
<b>None</b>	Immediate action is required to address fundamental gaps, weaknesses or non-compliance identified. The system of governance, risk

 management and control is inadequate to effectively manage risks to the achievement of objectives in the area audited.

NB The level of assurance given is at the discretion of Internal Audit.

## KEY FINDINGS AND ACTION PLAN ICT SUPPLIER MANAGEMENT

<b>Action</b>	a
<b>Finding</b>	The Procurement Manual does not refer to the Information Governance Procurement Framework (IGPF) for procurements with an estimated value of under £10,000 to ensure information governance and IT, cyber and information security requirements are considered.
<b>Action Description</b>	Once the IGPF has been updated, the Procurement manual should be updated to signpost the refreshed framework for all procurements, the RPA should be updated to reflect the refreshed framework and the Procurement page on Connects should be updated to signpost the refreshed framework for all purchases regardless of value.
<b>Risk</b>	Data security and ICT cyber security requirements have not been considered which could result in a data breach or a cyber security breach.
<b>Priority (1, 2, 3)</b>	2
<b>Paragraph Reference</b>	3.6
<b>Managed by</b>	Mark Boyd, Head of Service (Finance)
<b>Assigned to</b>	Suzanne Quinn, Senior Manager (Corporate Procurement)
<b>Due Date</b>	07/05/24
<b>Management Comment</b>	The Corporate Procurement Unit will update The Procurement Manual, RPA and relevant information on the procurement Connects page to refer to the updated IGPF one week after the IGPF has been refreshed.

<b>Action</b>	b
<b>Finding</b>	There is no version control on the IGPF so it is unclear when it was last updated. Although it is called the Information Governance Procurement Framework, section 1 covers Information Governance, section 2 covers IT, Cyber and Information Security and section 3 covers Information Technology Considerations, so the title does not refer to the ICT cyber security considerations. The Public Sector Cyber Resilience Framework recommends the Cloud Service Provider should specify and document the physical geographical location of data, including any locations in which data is processed or backed up. It should be noted that the 2 call-off contracts in the sample do not record the location of the data being processed and backed up.
<b>Action Description</b>	The IGPF should be reviewed in consultation with Corporate Procurement and updated to ensure it is still fit for purpose. This update should incorporate who to contact for help or advice when completing this framework. The update should also prompt the user to only consider suppliers where the geographical location is compliant with GDPR regulations of data and ensure this information is captured during the procurement process. Consideration should also be given to renaming the framework. The IGPF checklist should be

	updated to include a reason if the IT, Cyber and Information Security Schedule is not required.
<b>Risk</b>	Services do not know who to contact for advice from the experts. The jurisdiction where the data is stored is not known and may not have adequate protections for personal data.
<b>Priority (1, 2, 3)</b>	2
<b>Paragraph Reference</b>	3.8, 3.11, 3.13
<b>Managed by</b>	Aileen Craig, Head of Service (Democratic) and Fiona Walker, Head of Service (People & ICT)
<b>Assigned to</b>	Brendan Quigley, Senior Manager (IT Services) and Lauren Lewis, Information Governance & Data Protection Manager
<b>Due Date</b>	30/04/2024
<b>Management Comment</b>	IT Services and Information Governance will work together with the Corporate Procurement Unit to review and update the IGPF.

<b>Action</b>	c
<b>Finding</b>	There is a risk that services purchasing IT related services and data hosting solutions as well as enhancements or upgrades to existing provisions do not follow the proper procurement process and the IGPF is not followed which could result in information governance and IT, Cyber and Information Security requirements not being considered. As more IT systems move to cloud-based services, there is a greater need to consider information governance and ICT cyber security requirements. The IGPF is only available on the Procurement pages of Connects and is not included in the IT Services or Information Governance Connects pages.
<b>Action Description</b>	Once the IGPF is refreshed, services should be reminded that for all purchases, regardless of value, there is a requirement to complete the IGPF. Internal Audit recommends this could be done via News in Brief and a MetaCompliance message. In addition, a link to the IGPF should be added to the IT Services and Information Governance pages on Connects.
<b>Risk</b>	Data security and ICT cyber security requirements have not been considered which could result in a data breach or a cyber security breach.
<b>Priority (1, 2, 3)</b>	2
<b>Paragraph Reference</b>	3.9
<b>Managed by</b>	Aileen Craig, Head of Service (Democratic) and Fiona Walker, Head of Service (People & ICT)
<b>Assigned to</b>	Brendan Quigley, Senior Manager (IT Services) and Lauren Lewis, Information Governance & Data Protection Manager
<b>Due Date</b>	30/04/2024
<b>Management Comment</b>	IT Services and Information Governance will work together with the Corporate Procurement Unit to issue communication in relation to the updated IGPF and to remind services that the IGPF should be completed for all purchases, regardless of value.

	A link to the IGPF will be added to the IT Services and Information Governance pages on Connects.
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**Priority Key used in Action Plan**

<b>1 (High)</b>	Control weakness where there is a material impact on the achievement of the control objectives, generally requiring prompt attention.
<b>2 (Medium)</b>	Control weakness which needs to be rectified, but where there is no material impact on the achievement of the control objectives.
<b>3 (Low)</b>	Minor weakness or points for improvement.