

**Argyll and Bute Council  
Annual Report  
2013-14**

**Realising Our Potential Together**



## Promoting Equality

Argyll and Bute Council is committed to promoting equality.

Our key principles are that

- No-one is disadvantaged because of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation
- The differences between people are valued and good relations between groups are promoted
- People are treated fairly and with equal respect
- Informed assessments are made on the impact of policies and services
- People are involved in the decisions that affect them and are encouraged to participate in public life

We carry out equality impact assessments on our policies and service developments or changes to make sure no-one is adversely impacted.

If you would like this document in another language, Braille or easy-read format, or if you require the services of an interpreter, please contact us.

Ma tha sibh ag iarraidh an sgrìobhainn seo ann an cànan no riochd eile, no ma tha sibh a' feumachdainn seirbheis eadar, feuch gun leig sibh fios thugainn.

Jezeli chcieliby Państwo otrzymaO ten dokument w innym języku lub w innym formacie albo jeeli potrzebna jest pomoc Uumacza, to prosimy o kontakt z nami.

यह दस्तावेज़ यदि आपको किसी अन्य भाषा या अन्य रूप में चाहिये, या आपको आनुवाद-सेवाओं की आवश्यकता हो तो हमसे संपर्क करें

یہ دستاویز اگر آپ کو کسی دیگر زبان یا دیگر شکل میں درکار ہو، یا اگر آپ کو ترجمان کی خدمات چاہئیں تو برائے مہربانی ہم سے رابطہ کیجئے۔  
ਜੇ ਇਹ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਜਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ ਹੈ, ਜਾਂ ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਗੱਲਬਾਤ ਸਮਝਾਉਣ ਲਈ ਕਿਸੇ ਇੰਟਰਪ੍ਰੈਟਰ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ, ਤਾਂ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੋ।

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## 1 Foreword

Welcome to Argyll and Bute Council's annual performance report for 2013-2014. Here you will find information on the Council's finances and the services we deliver to our communities.

Argyll and Bute is a unique and wonderful place to live, work and visit. Geographically, we are Scotland's second largest local authority area and we boast the highest number of inhabited islands (23).

The key challenge, for the Council and our partners, as set out in our Single Outcome Agreement, is to develop our economy through a growing population.

In 2013-14 Argyll and Bute Council achieved significant progress in creating opportunities for business prosperity, regenerating our communities, attracting investment and valuing our natural resources.

Our ambitious, multi-million pound regeneration schemes are developing towns across Argyll and Bute. The support we provide in helping unemployed people into work has been recognised as sector-leading. We are working with individuals and communities in making possible planning application approval rates that exceed the Scottish average.

The Council has secured millions of pounds of funding that is delivering benefits for the economy and communities of Argyll and Bute.

The area's natural resources offer opportunity for our economy, the quality of life of our residents and the education of our young people. Argyll and Bute Council secured two league champions' awards for biomass and hydro projects at the inaugural Scottish National Renewables Energy League awards. Our stunning scenery continues to attract varied film productions, and visitors from across the world. Our schools are developing outdoor education initiatives that are helping our pupils develop skills and confidence.

We look forward as a Council to building on this progress and creating, with our partners, a prosperous future for Argyll and Bute Council.

Councillor Dick Walsh  
Leader of Argyll and Bute Council

Sally Loudon  
Chief Executive

## 2 Our Vision and Values

Our vision – Realising our potential together  
Nì sinn chèile gach nì a tha nar comas

Our values, shown below, are informed by our partners, customers and employees. Our values underpin what we do and how we do it.

We involve and listen to our customers and communities  
We take pride in delivering Best Value Services  
We are open, honest, fair and inclusive  
We respect and value everyone

Our Vision and Values form the basis for our Corporate Plan. This is available from Council Service Points and online at [www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/performance](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/performance)

### 3 Money Matters

#### 3.1 Introduction

This summary financial information provides an overview of the Council's financial position and the key issues that have arisen during the financial year. They provide information on revenue and capital income and expenditure for the year, assets and liabilities, borrowing and reserves with a comment on the future outlook. The full set of annual accounts are available on the Council's website at

[http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/sites/default/files/financial\\_statements\\_2013-14\\_signed.pdf](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/sites/default/files/financial_statements_2013-14_signed.pdf)

During 2013-14 the Council's net worth reduced by £5.4m. This resulted from a surplus in the provision of services of £2.2m and an increase in the value of long term assets of £4.4m offset by an actuarial loss on the pension fund assets/liabilities of £12.0m. In terms of departmental expenditure this was under budget by £1.3m. The Council spent £32.7m investing in fixed assets during the year.

The financial outlook for 2014-15 and 2015-16 is one of relative financial stability. The Council adopted a 2 year budget for 2014-15 and 2015-16 in February 2014, based on achieving 1% cashable efficiency savings for each of these financial years.

#### 3.2 Revenue Expenditure

This relates to the day to day costs of service delivery. This includes the cost of employing staff, operating and maintaining buildings, the cost of goods and services purchased from suppliers and the cost of financing borrowing. Statutory adjustments are required to ensure the General Fund balance reflects statutory requirements in relation to pension costs and the cost of borrowing.

	Actual 13/14	Budget 13/14	Budget Variance	Actual 12/13	Variance 12/13	Actual Variance Year on Year
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Net cost of services	233.1	243.9	10.7	231.5	7.7	1.6
Other operating income and expenditure	1.1	2.2	1.2	3.0	(2.2)	(1.9)
Finance and investment income and expenditure	22.0	(0.0)	(22.1)	19.9	(16.6)	2.2
Total expenditure	256.3	246.0	(10.2)	254.4	(11.1)	1.9
Taxation and non specific grants	(258.5)	(255.3)	3.2	(274.2)	3.4	15.7
<b>(Surplus)/deficit on provision of services</b>	<b>(2.2)</b>	<b>(9.3)</b>	<b>(7.1)</b>	<b>(19.8)</b>	<b>(7.7)</b>	<b>17.6</b>
Statutory adjustments	3.8	9.3	5.5	8.2	(2.3)	(4.4)
<b>(Increase)/decrease in General Fund Balance</b>	<b>1.6</b>	<b>0.1</b>	<b>(1.5)</b>	<b>(11.6)</b>	<b>(9.9)</b>	<b>13.2</b>

The net cost of service provision was £233.1m with total expenditure of £256.3m which was offset by taxation and non-specific grants totalling £258.5m. This left a surplus on the provision of service of £2.2m which after

statutory adjustments of £3.8m resulted in a decrease in the general fund balance of £1.6m.

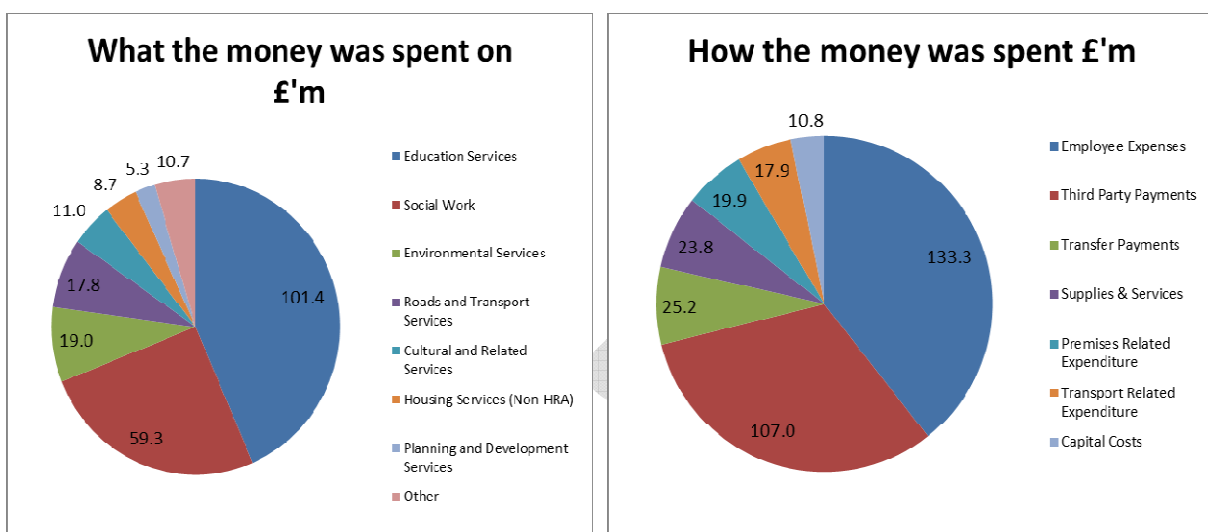
Total expenditure increased by £1.9m from 2012-13. Expenditure on services increased by £13.5m. This was offset by a reduction in police and fire service costs of £11.9m following the transfer of these from local government in April 2013.

The departmental expenditure for 2013-14 was an underspend of £1.3m compared to budget excluding Joint Board requisitions and severance costs. When all expenditure and income is included the final outturn was an underspend compared to budget of £3.9m.

What the money was spent on – This shows how much the council spent on each service. The total net cost of services in 2013/2014 was £233.2m.

- Education services is the largest proportion of net cost of service £101.4m (43.5%). This provides 73 primary schools, 5 secondary schools, 3 3-18 schools, 2 joint campuses – educates 10,675 pupils of which 5,680 primary and 4,979 secondary and 16 special needs and employs 868 full time equivalent teachers.
- Social work services is next largest at £59.3m (25.4% of net cost of services). This provides services for 24 adult care residential units, 3 adult care day centres, 7 learning disability resource centres, 3 children's services residential units, 2 hostels, 134 looked after and accommodated children, 355 learning disability clients, 513 clients in care homes and 1,248 adults receiving free personal and nursing care.
- Environmental Services spent £19.0m (8.2% of net cost of services). This provides services relating to 131 burial grounds undertaking an average of 565 burials per annum, 2,500,000m<sup>2</sup> of grass cutting, waste collection from 47,800 households and 19,570 tonnes of waste disposal.
- Roads and Transportation services spent £17.8m (7.6% of net cost of services). This includes provision of 1,406 miles of roads, winter maintenance, 954 bridges and 138 car parks.
- Cultural and Related services represent £11.0m or 4.7%. This relates to services including 1 museum, 7 halls, 13 libraries (4 of which are mobile) with a stock of around 200,000 books and 5 sports and leisure centres.
- Housing Services (non-HRA) represent £8.7m or 3.4%. This relates to services including 147 leased tenancies for homeless individuals, 600 instances of housing support and advice per quarter.
- Planning and development services represent £5.3m or 2.3%. Services include 1,260 building warrants received in the year, 1,098 planning applications determined, 1 airport, 101 business start-ups supported in the year.
- Other services amount to £10.7m (4.6%) and this includes corporate and democratic core, trading services, non-distributable costs and central services to the public. This includes registrars of births, deaths

and marriages which undertook 2,680 registrations including 465 civil marriages and 13 civil partnerships in 2013/2014.

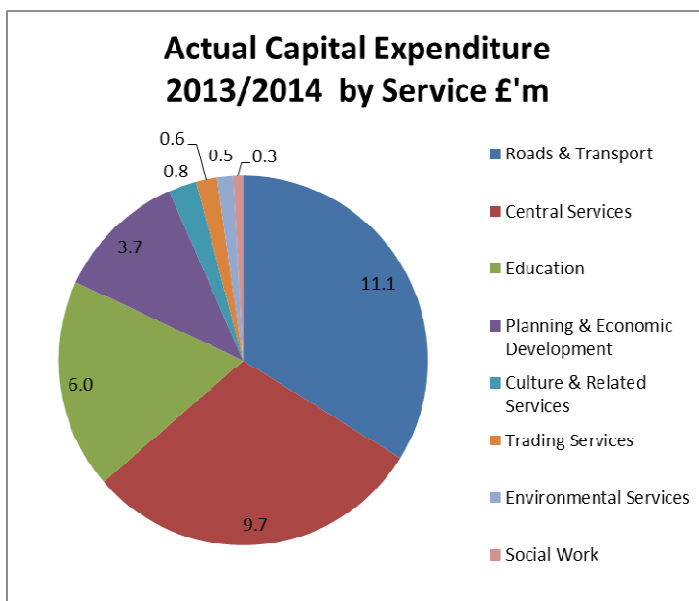


How the money was spent. This sets out the different types of costs incurred by the Council. In addition to the net cost of services of £233.2m, income amounted to £104.8m resulting in gross expenditure of £338.0m. Employee expenses represent the largest proportion at £133.3m (39.4% of gross expenditure). The other significant cost is Third Party payments (which are payments to external parties such as contractors and voluntary organisations) represent £107.0m (31.7%). Other costs are all less significant - Transfer Payments £25.2m, Supplies and Services £23.8m, Premises £19.9m, Transport £17.9m and capital costs £10.8m which range from between 7% and 3% of gross expenditure.

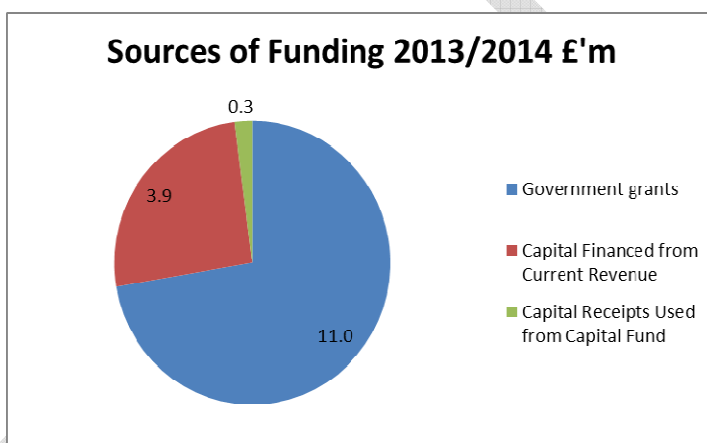
### 3.3 Capital Expenditure

This is money spent on acquiring, maintaining or enhancing fixed assets such as land, buildings and equipment. Capital expenditure is funded from capital receipts, grants, revenue contributions. The net amount of capital expenditure each year is funded by borrowing. The table below shows the gross capital expenditure for 2012/2013 and 2013/2014 and the funding from capital receipts, government grants and other contributions and revenue contributions. The net capital expenditure (expenditure less income) is funded from borrowing.





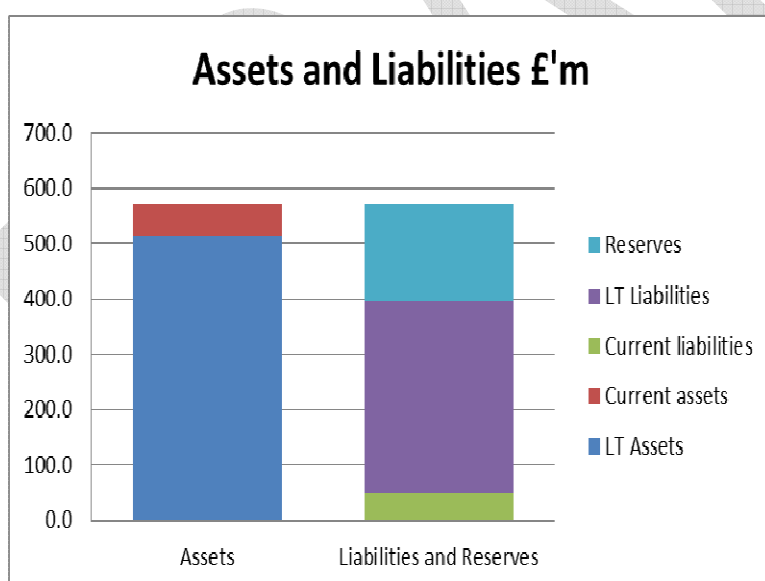
Gross capital expenditure was £32.7m. £11.1m related to roads and transportation, £9.7m to central services, £6.0m to education services, £3.7m to planning and economic development and the remaining £2.2m to culture & related, trading, environmental and social work services.



£11.0m of the £15.2m capital funding is from government grants, this represents 72.3% of the total funding. The remaining funding is from capital financed from current revenue £3.9m or 25.7% and capital receipts used from capital fund £0.3m or 2.0%.

### 3.4 Balance Sheet

Summary of balance sheet	31 March 2013 £m	31 March 2014 £m
Long Term Assets - Property, plant and equipment, heritage assets and long term debtors. The increase is a result of revaluation, capital expenditure less disposal and depreciation.	500.4	514.5
Current Assets – Stock, short term debtors, assets held for sale, short term investments and cash. The decrease is a result of a lower level of cash in the bank at 31 March 2014.	63.7	57.7
Current Liabilities - Short term borrowing, creditors, provisions and other short term liabilities. The increase is a mainly due to some borrowing now being payable within 12 months.	-42.9	-48.2
Long Term Liabilities – These are not due for payment for at least 12 months and comprise borrowing, payments due under the NPDO, provisions and pensions liability. The increase is mainly due to an increase in pension liability.	-340.4	-348.6
<b>Total reserves</b>	<b>180.7</b>	<b>175.3</b>



The balance sheet shows the value at the balance sheet date of the assets and liabilities recognised by the Council. The net assets of the Council (assets less liabilities) are matched by the reserves held by the Council.

The net assets of the council reduced by £5.4m from £180.7m at 31 March 2013 to £175.3m at 31 March 2014.

The value of long term assets has increased from £500.4m at 31 March 2013 to £514.5m at 31 March 2014, an increase of £14.1m (2.8%). This comprises

the net of an overall upward revaluation of fixed assets, capital expenditure in the year, less the value of fixed assets disposed.

Total current assets decreased from £63.7m at 31 March 2013 to £57.7m at 31 March 2014 a decrease of £6.0m. The main reason for this was a decrease in Cash and Cash Equivalents of £5.8m from £11.9m at 31 March 2013 to £6.1m at 31 March 2014.

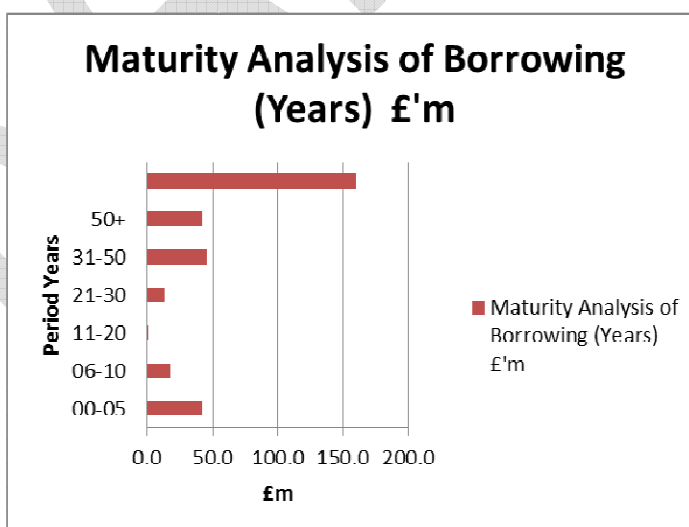
Total current liabilities have increased from £42.9m at 31 March 2013 to £48.2m at 31 March 2014 an increase of £5.3m. Short term borrowing has increased by £7.7m from £3.7m at 31 March 2013 to £11.4m at 31 March 2014, partly offset by Short term creditors which have decreased by £2.3m from £35.3m to £33.0m.

Overall, long term liabilities have increased from £340.4m at 31 March 2013 to £348.6 at 31 March 2014. The increase of £8.3m is primarily due to the increase in the valuation of the pension scheme liability from £99.9m to £118.3m partly offset by a reduction in Borrowing Repayable beyond 12 Months of £8.4m.

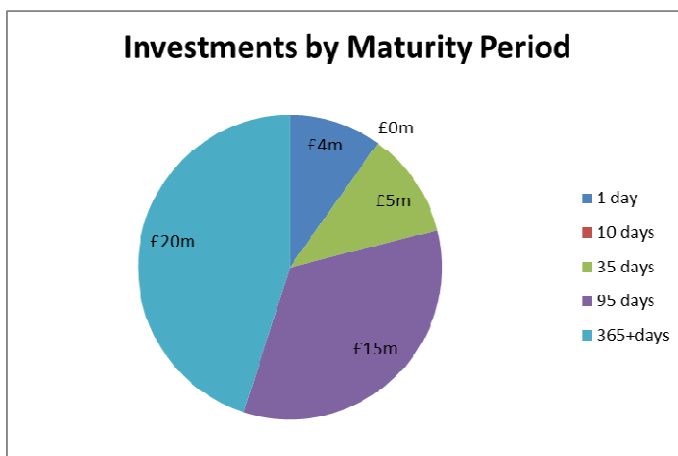
### 3.5 Borrowing and Investments

Treasury management is taking care of our borrowing, cash flow and investments. We have to make sure that these bring the best possible returns so that the council can continue to deliver its essential services, while at the same time managing and planning for any risks.

The Council borrows money to finance capital expenditure. Borrowing allows the Council to spread the cost of capital expenditure over a number of years. The maturity profile reflects when loans are due for repayment. At 31st March 2014, the total sum of money borrowed from external sources was £161.8m. Most of this was financed by the Public Works Loan Board (£108.1m) with the rest coming mainly from the money market.



At 31 March 2014 the Council had investments of £44m. The chart shows when these are due for repayment.

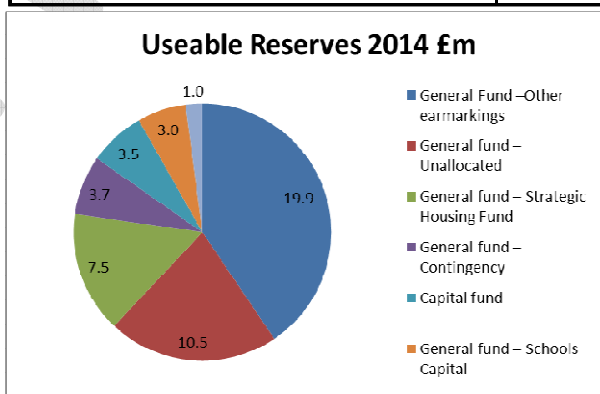


The Council has an investment strategy which is to optimise the rate of return allowing for the requirements to have cash available to make payments and to ensure that the money invested is repaid to the Council in full. To achieve these objectives the Council places cash with a number of different banks for periods ranging from overnight to one year, depending on the credit rating of the bank and the limits that have been set within the investment strategy relating to each institution.

### 3.6 Reserves

Reserves can be usable or unusable. Usable reserves are those backed by actual resources and can be applied to fund expenditure or reduce local taxation. Unusable reserves are required purely for accounting purposes—they do not represent resources available for the council to use. The council has total reserves of £175.3m but most of these £126.3m are unusable reserves which are purely for accounting purposes and do not represent resources available for use. Usable reserves were £49.0m at 31 March 2014.

	31 March 2014
	£m
<b>Unusable reserves</b>	<b>126.3</b>
Capital fund	3.5
Renewal and repairs fund	1.0
General fund – Contingency	3.7
General fund – Strategic Housing Fund	7.5
General fund – Schools Capital	3.0
General Fund – Other earmarkings	19.9
General fund – Unallocated	10.5
<b>Total reserves</b>	<b>175.3</b>



### 3.7 Future Outlook

The financial outlook for 2014-15 and 2015-16 is one of relative financial stability. The Council adopted a 2 year budget for 2014-15 and 2015-16 in February 2014. This will see budgetary savings based on achieving 1% cashable efficiency savings for each of these financial years. The 2 years of financial stability will allow time to carry out a longer term review of the resources available to the Council and how they are used to deliver on

priorities and objectives. The 3 year capital plan has been agreed by the Council for the periods to 2015-16, with a gross spend of £50.2m in 2014-15 and £44.2m in 2015-16.

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## **4 Adult Care**

Our Adult Social Work service directly provides or commissions support, protection and care for older people and vulnerable adults. Our services are structured around four key areas:

- a. Supporting vulnerable adults and older people for example through residential care services, day centre provision and home care.
- b. The assessment and care management function carried out by area team staff
- c. Supporting adults with a learning disability
- d. Supporting adults who have a mental health difficulty, and/or sensory impairment

### **4.1 2013-14 Highlights**

#### **4.1.1 Older People**

- a. Home Care services were externalised in the majority of Council areas during January 2013 as part of preparing services to meet future, growing demand. Adult Services created new posts of local Home Care Quality Assurance Officers to ensure proactive monitoring of the quality of service delivery. This has been well received by service users and carers
- b. Adult Services have achieved continued high performance in the provision of Free Personal Care at home. Feedback from people who use our services confirms a high level of satisfaction with home care services.
- c. In line with national developments in care, we are moving away from requiring people to be supported in care homes to providing care for people in their own homes. This has continued during 2013-14 and has been supplemented by the development of purpose designed extra care housing in Helensburgh, Lochgilphead and on Mull. This provides the additional option for people to be cared for at home, with the support of home care, Telecare, Community Nursing and day services, rather than having to be admitted to a care home. Increasingly it is people with high dependency levels who use care homes. Those service users who are admitted to care homes are increasingly high dependency with much shorter length of stay resulting in significantly fewer bed days being used and surplus bed capacity being maintained.
- d. In partnership with the NHS, independent sector, care and voluntary groups we have completed a joint commissioning strategy as part of the national Re-shaping Care for Older people priority. This continues to re-design services across health and social care with emphasis on care at home and commissioning work from the independent sector.

#### **4.1.2 Learning Disability**

- a. We implemented new conditions of service for the day service staff that allows the service to provide greater flexibility both in terms of working hours and meeting the needs of Self- Directed Support legislation which was implemented on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014.
- b. The model of care at the Greenwood Hostel in Campbeltown was re-designed in order to meet the requirements of supported accommodation rather than a residential care unit. Conditions of service for staff were re-negotiated in order for them to be deployed as Community Outreach workers to support the Greenwood facility and the general community in Campbeltown.
- c. Increasingly service users can receive the care they need in the comfort of their own homes rather than in residential care settings.

#### **4.1.3 Mental Health**

- a. The social work mental health teams have moved to work alongside NHS mental health staff and so to provide a single point of contact for service users. This progress was built on through the implementation of the Joint Community Mental Health Team Operational Guidelines and provides the foundation for further integration of services in 2015.
- b. As part of the planned upgrade of the psychiatric hospital in Lochgilphead there has been a significant reduction in patients residing in the hospital and re-housed instead in the community with support from social work and health services.

#### **4.1.4 Other**

- a. Delayed Discharge performance continued to be excellent with Argyll and Bute achieving nationally recognised levels of performance in relation to the total number of delayed discharges and a reduction in bed days lost due to delayed discharge.
- b. The development of Telecare services continues to assist vulnerable people to live at home when combined with other care services. The Telecare service is both cost effective and consistent with people's wishes to be cared for at home.

#### **4.2 Areas for improvement**

- a. At a time of significant service developments, communication with the community and elected members is an issue that will require continued efforts at operational and strategic levels in order that the service informs, consults and engages. Adult Services will work with colleagues in health to develop more preventative and anticipatory services to prevent avoidable admission to hospitals and onwards to care homes. In preparation for the integration of Health and Social Care services, the requirement for joint planning and commissioning of services will be at the forefront of community engagement and involvement in service design.

### 4.3 Further Information

The Council website contains a section specifically for social care and health at [www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/social-care-and-health](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/social-care-and-health)

#### Quarterly Performance Report and Scorecard

The Community Service Quarterly Performance Report and Performance Scorecard contain details of performance in relation to Social Work. This can be accessed at [www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/performance](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/performance) or by contacting us via the contact details at the end of this report.

The Care Inspectorate is the independent regulator of social care and social work services across Scotland. Inspection and scrutiny reports relating to Argyll and Bute are available at [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com)

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## **5 Central Services**

- 5.1 Central Services is allocated a budget of £TBC and for the purpose of this report is made up of four services: Customer and Support Services, Governance and Law, Improvement and HR and Strategic Finance.

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## 6 Customer and Support Services

Customer and Support Services provide a range of front line contact facilities for Council customers for a growing range of services through a network of customer service points in all the main towns, a telephony based service and the Council's web site. It is also responsible for the collection of local taxes, administering housing and Council tax benefits, and the registration of births, deaths and marriages. It also provides a range of services to internal Council departments including provision of ICT, creditor payments, procurement and commissioning of goods and services.

The Council's Customer Service Centre (CSC) was established in 2007 as part of the corporate strategy to centralise the management of initial customer contacts to the Council. Its purpose is to try and resolve customers' enquiries at the first point of contact.

### 6.1 2013-14 Highlights

- a. Further expansion of services provided through the CSC offering a guaranteed call back service when calls to the Council are at their peak, extension of the automatic switchboard service to education freeing up staff to deal with more complex calls, an improved integration tool which saves time when logging roads and street lighting faults, a tailored app for mobile services making it easier for customers to contact the Council when on the move, and online copy birth, death and marriage certificates. Value of online payments increased to just under £2m in the year.
- b. In the first year of operating, the Tell Us Once service was used by over 500 customers when reporting a death or birth saving them from making further contacts to other Council departments or agencies.
- c. Registration error rates reduced from 2.1% in 2012 to 1.5% in 2013, well below target.
- d. Council website was improved to display better on mobile devices
- e. Wireless access extended to libraries and children's homes and hostels. The community learning service is now able to use remote schools to deliver training out of school hours.
- f. The Procurement and Commissioning Team achieved savings of £4.627m
- g. We achieved 63% in our Procurement Capability Assessment undertaken by Scotland Excel, an improvement of 10% on last year.
- h. We introduced a specialist travel and accommodation purchasing team which processed 3,500 bookings and made savings of over £58,000 in the year on top of approximately 40% time savings.
- i. Collection rates for Council Tax, Non-Domestic Rates and Sundry Debt were maintained across all areas
- j. We implemented the new policy for charging double Council tax on long term empty properties which aims to encourage properties to be brought back into use

- k. Average time to process a Housing Benefit change of circumstance reduced by 2.7 days to 8.3 days.
- l. New online ebilling system for Council tax introduced along with a portal for landlords to see details of their housing benefit payments.
- m. Implementation of the Scottish Welfare Fund and Council tax reduction scheme from April 2013 successfully achieved.
- n. Multi-agency welfare reform working group making good progress.
- o. Business case agreed for joining Scottish Wide Area Network in March 2016.
- p. New multi-media and video conferencing system implemented in the Council chamber with minimal disruption to users.
- q. New contract put in place for disposal of old IT equipment which generates revenue.
- r. Public Sector Network accreditation achieved for the Council's corporate wide area network allowing secure connections to other public sector agencies.
- s. ICT strategy updated and linked to national public sector and local government ICT strategies.
- t. Upgrade of Oracle financial management system completed which will now allow progress to commence on improving purchase to pay systems
- u. Achieved third place in Scottish local authority benchmarking of customer satisfaction with ICT services.
- v. Commenced a shared services pilot with Highland Council to provide web-conferencing and presence services.

## **6.2 Areas for improvement**

- a. Improvement of purchase to pay system deferred to allow upgrade of Oracle financial management system to take priority.
- b. Commissioning of upgraded server room in Helensburgh delayed due to technical issues. Once completed, it will significantly increase the resilience of the IT services.
- c. Welfare Reform workload adversely impacted benefit processing times during first quarter of 2013-14

## **6.3 Further information**

### Quarterly Performance Report and Scorecards

Performance information about Customer and Support Services is reported quarterly in the Customer Services Performance Report and Performance Scorecard. These can be viewed at [www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/performance](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/performance)

## 7 Governance and Law

Governance and Law provides a range of largely, but not exclusively, internal services such as support to Council services, Councillors and the framework against which the corporate objectives of the Council and Community Planning Partnership are pursued. It includes Legal Services – commercial and corporate – and has responsibility for delivering elections and support to community Councils.

### 7.1 2013-14 Highlights

- a. Comprehensive Review of the Scheme for Community Councils and two rounds of elections
- b. Improved performance in response times for Freedom of Information requests
- c. Assisted with development of an action plan to address concerns identified by the Accounts Commission
- d. Introduction of elected member development programme for Councillors
- e. Supported the Short Life Working Group on revised Political Management Arrangements
- f. Improved the functionality of the elected members' portal
- g. Increased recovery of sundry debtor accounts due to the Council

### 7.2 Areas for improvement

- a. Increase usage of the elected members' portal

### 7.3 Further information

#### Quarterly Performance Report and Scorecards

Performance information about Governance and Law is reported quarterly in the Customer Services Performance Report and Performance Scorecard.

These can be viewed at [www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/performance](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/performance)

## 8 Improvement and HR

Improvement and Human Resources (IHR) provides a range of professional services to support employees and managers.

The HR team delivers advice and guidance to Council managers and employees on all aspects of employment. The service works closely with trades union representatives to ensure that the Council discharges its duties as an employer. IHR also provides the Council's corporate communications function, dealing with the media on a daily basis and supporting services to communicate with the public. The improvement and organisational development team delivers training to our staff and operates an accredited SVQ centre. The planning and performance team oversee the Planning and Performance Management Framework and provide research and information. The Business Improvement team manages corporate change and improvement projects. Health and Safety and civil contingencies provide a clear framework to manage risks. The service also ensured strong links with partner organisations through community planning to support effective partnership working for the benefit of the people of Argyll and Bute.

### 8.1 2013-14 Highlights

- a. We streamlined pay frequencies, reducing the number from six to two. This reduced duplication contributed to a 20% service cost saving and is delivering a more efficient service.
- b. Business Process Re-engineering led to the streamlining of processes and procedures to make us more efficient. Implementation of the "virtual" office through Civica Document Management and Workflow System (DMS) has enabled the team to develop wider roles making us more flexible and adaptable.
- c. The roll out of online pay slips to the majority of employees improved their access to information and reduced costs.
- d. As a direct result of our streamlining and efficiencies our payroll administration costs are now reduced to £196k from £424k in 2011/12; the "payroll admin cost per employee paid" in 2012/13 is now £28 compared to £64.94 in 2011/12 – a 57% decrease.
- e. A comprehensive Health and Safety Review project was completed to schedule.
- f. A new risk assessment methodology was generated with 24 risk assessment workshops held for 150 managers.
- g. New Health and Safety Liaison arrangements were introduced with the trade unions.
- h. We delivered the Argyll and Bute Manager Training Programme to assist managers in developing and supporting their teams.

## 8.2 Community Resilience

- a. As a result of the review of lessons learned from the severe weather in January 2012, and to support and promote the Scottish Government in their Community Resilience campaign, Argyll and Bute Council realised the need to improve resilience during weather related emergencies. The Council set out to examine and improve our own resilience, and also to offer support to individuals and communities in their preparations for any future severe weather events.
- b. We worked with Scottish Government, third sector and other category one responders who were aiming to improve Community Resilience throughout the Argyll and Bute Council area. We jointly produced a 'Guide to helping your community prepare an Emergency Plan' which has been distributed to all 54 community Councils in Argyll and Bute.
- c. Members of the project team, which included Council officers, Argyll Voluntary Action and Police Scotland colleagues, led the way in encouraging community Councils to produce their own Community Resilience Plan. The project was awarded a Silver COSLA Award and the Council was commended in the House of Commons Scottish Affairs Select Committee Report.
- d. The Community Resilience project is now managed by the Council Civil Contingencies Unit, who are continuing to support community Councils in the development and finalising of their plans. Many plans are already completed; we now look forward to supporting Police Scotland in organising exercises to test plans.

## 8.3 Areas for improvement

- a. Develop new communications channels including Corporate Facebook.
- b. Improve health and safety guidance regarding work carried out by contractors. Develop tools to ensure consistent literature and reporting to improve and strengthen the Council brand.
- c. Improve health and safety guidance and information available to services.
- d. Deliver a Modern Apprenticeship Programme for the Council.
- e. Improve access to Learning and Development opportunities across the organisation

## 8.4 Further information

### Quarterly Performance Report and Scorecards

Performance information about Improvement and HR is reported quarterly in the Chief Executive's Performance Report and Performance Scorecard.

These can be viewed at [www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/performance](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/performance)

## 9 Strategic Finance

The service purpose is to maintain high standards of financial management and control whilst contributing to corporate management and leadership and supporting officers and members in an effective and responsive manner. It does this through provision of accounting and budgeting services, treasury management and internal audit. The Head of Strategic Finance is the Council's chief financial officer. The service is also responsible for risk management.

### 9.1 2013-14 Highlights

- a. Annual financial statements completed on time and free of any audit qualifications
- b. Effective processes in place for preparing and monitoring revenue and capital budgets

### 9.2 Areas for improvement

- a. There is scope to improve reporting of the Council's financial position to the public/Council tax payer.
- b. There were delays to the completion of the internal audit plan for 2013-14.

### 9.3 Further information

#### Quarterly Performance Report and Scorecards

Performance information about Strategic Finance is reported quarterly in the Chief Executive's Performance Report and Performance Scorecard. These can be viewed at [www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/performance](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/performance)



## 10 Children and Families

Children and Families directly provides or commissions support, protection and care for vulnerable children, young people and their families. The Children and Families service portfolio covers four key areas:

- a. Early Years
- b. Children and Families Operations
- c. Children and Families Resources
- d. Criminal Justice

### 10.1 2013-14 Highlights

- a. Positive Early Years, Education Scotland and Care Inspectorate inspections
- b. The development of Early Years Collaborative across Argyll and Bute Community Planning Partnership.
- c. Early Years Collaborative conference and impact on practitioners
- d. Development of social media in Early Years
- e. Development and implementation of Early Effective Intervention screening process for all domestic violence and all children reported missing.
- f. The implementation of Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC) across all partners to help children get the help they need timeously.
- g. The development of one assessment and care planning format across all services – Universal Child Assessment and Plan.
- h. Looked after young people remaining in Argyll and Bute through increase use of Argyll and Bute's fostering and residential service
- i. Development and actions taken by the Corporate Parenting Board
- j. Development of support forums for Looked After Children and young people
- k. The planning and consultation for increased early level learning and childcare for three and four year olds from 475 to 600 hours.
- l. Development of Integrated Children's Services Plan and consultation with 3000 children and young people.

### 10.2 Early Years

The quality of the Early Years Services across Argyll and Bute remains of a high standard demonstrated by inspection reports from Education Scotland and Care Inspectorate. Our Early Years Team's focus has to be to improve quality and consistency through structured support and challenge.

Early Years Collaborative has been a key priority for local authorities across Scotland. The overall vision of the Early Years Collaborative is to make Scotland 'the best place to grow and live'. In Argyll and Bute the partnership has appointed a Programme Manager to lead a programme of change across Argyll and Bute. The NHS, with the Council's education and social work



services are developing a family pathway which will assure that children are assessed and supported at each stage in their life journey. Early years Collaborative has allowed practitioners to work together to achieve small changes that we have extended across Argyll and Bute. The key focus of the collaborative is to drive and assist wholesale change across all partners delivering Early Years Services and delivery based around achievement of a child's developmental milestones.

### **10.3 Children and Families Operational**

Social work operational services provide direct support through locality specific area teams to vulnerable children and their families, focussing on child protection, Looked After Children and children with disability.

In 2013 a refreshed vision has seen partners working together to achieve the best for children, young people and their families. Improvement in processes has resulted in better response to child protection concerns and the development of a screening group for domestic violence referrals. Services are improving how they assess, plan and support vulnerable children, young people and their families.

The development of effective screening processes has helped to support improved outcomes across Children and Families.

### **10.4 Children and Families Resources**

The Foster and Adoption Service has undergone a period of modernisation. It is leading the way in using the Social Work information system to improve Foster Service monitoring and reporting. Argyll and Bute continue to support high quality foster carers. Over the last year fostering has seen the number of placement requests reduce slightly while the number of foster carers has increased.

In recent inspections the residential services demonstrated an improvement in service with all achieving a grading of very good or above.

In relation to creating real outcomes for children and young people, the number of children placed outwith the authority has remained low this year against an overall increase in the number of children placed within a family setting. Key areas in the future will focus on the development of more family placements and direct support to kinship carers ensuring services work to find lifelong placements for children through permanency. The Children and Young People Act will have a significant impact on services for children and young people leaving care the and Kinship Carers service will need to be redesigned to meet the expected increase in demand.

## **10.5 Criminal Justice Team**

In 2013/14 new Environmental Risk Assessment procedures were enhanced by local operational agreements between Criminal Justice, Police and Housing colleagues. Argyll and Bute Criminal Justice Services developed multi agency guidance and procedures for the risk management of violent offenders that was rolled out across the Partnership area. The High Risk Strategic and Operational Groups are functioning well with the operational group providing a forum to resolve local practical issues and share matters with partners.

As an alternative to custody, Community Payback Orders - Unpaid Work Orders prove an effective means for offenders to repay society for their misdeeds which also contributes to the process of rehabilitation and reintegration. Unpaid work orders are increasing in numbers and often form part of a supervision package. Unpaid Work activity in Argyll and Bute has attracted positive press coverage in Helensburgh and Lomond and individual acknowledgements of work well done in other areas. In 2013/14, 12,222 hours of unpaid work were ordered in Argyll and Bute. Using a minimum wage calculation averaging £6 p/h this equates to approximately £73,332 of labour put back into the community.

The removal of Bute court business to Greenock Sheriff Court has been concluded with little impact upon criminal justice services following local agreements reached between the Rothesay criminal justice team and counterparts in Inverclyde.

The Scottish Government has announced its preference for a local delivery model for the redesign of community justice services with a national body providing strategic oversight. A second phase of consultation is underway to define relationships and refine detail to a locally delivered service within the context of the Community Planning Partnership. The Criminal Justice Partnership and associated Councils support the local delivery model and will be working towards supporting the redesign along these lines over the next year.

## **10.6 Children and Families Development**

The Joint Children's Service Inspection Report indicated a number of strengths across the partnership and an improvement in the Children and Families service. Grades are outlined below:

<b>How well are the lives of children and young people improving?</b>	
Providing help and support at an early stage	<b>Very Good</b>
Impact on children and young people	<b>Good</b>
Assessing and responding to risks and needs	<b>Adequate</b>
Planning for individual children	<b>Adequate</b>
<b>How well are services working together to improve the lives of children, young people and families?</b>	
Planning and improving services	<b>Adequate</b>
Participation of children, young people, families and other stakeholders	<b>Good</b>
<b>How good is the leadership and direction of services of children and young people?</b>	
Leadership of improvement and change	<b>Good</b>
Improving the well-being of children and young people	<b>Good</b>

The report was published in November 2013 and the Community Planning Partnership submitted an action plan which is being monitored through the Integrated Children's Services Plan (ICSP). The ICSP is overseen by Argyll and Bute Children - a multi-agency strategic group responsible for delivering services across Argyll and Bute.

Children and Families have undertaken a service review to reconfigure staffing across all areas. Staff have helped to develop a new model which will be delivered in October 2014.

The Integrated Children's Services Plan went through an extensive consultation with children, young people and their families. It was published in April 2014 and is the driver mechanism for the Council to deliver the Single Outcome Agreement for Children's Services.

### 10.7 Areas for improvement

- a. The implementation of the Children and Families Service Review
- b. Consistency across Children and Families area teams in improving assessment and care planning
- c. Progressing secure long-term placements through Permanence Orders
- d. The publication and delivery of the Integrated Children's Services Plan

## 10.8 Further Information

### Argyll and Bute Council Website

The Council website contains a section specifically for social care and health at [www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/social-care-and-health](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/social-care-and-health)

### Chief Social Work Officer's Report

Each year the Council's Chief Social Work Officer produces a report outlining key performance, challenges and developments across the Social Work Service. This Report is available on the Council website at [http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/Council and-government/performance](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/Council%20and%20government/performance)

### Quarterly Performance Report and Scorecard

The Community Services Quarterly Performance Report and Performance Scorecard contains details of performance in relation to Social Work. These can be accessed at [www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/performance](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/performance) or by contacting us via the contact details at the end of this report.

### The Care Inspectorate

The Care Inspectorate is the independent regulator of social care and social work services across Scotland. Inspection and scrutiny reports relating to Argyll and Bute are available at [www.scswis.com](http://www.scswis.com)

Child Protection Committee website: [www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/cpc](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/cpc)

## 11 Community and Culture

Community and Culture includes provision of museums, libraries, leisure centres and venues operated by the Council. We also provide community learning and youth work services, support for community development, strategic housing services, homelessness services, housing support and sports development.

The service operates four swimming pools, seven halls, and nine libraries and museums.

### 11.1 2013-14 Highlights

#### 11.1.1 Housing

- a. Implementation of revised HomeArgyll allocation policy and development of integrated online housing options system
- b. Implementation of recommendations from private rented sector research including the establishment of Area Property Action Groups
- c. Implementation of Home Energy Efficiency Programme Area Based Schemes to combat fuel poverty and energy efficiency
- d. Implementation of IT support through a public network to support learning.
- e. Assistance with making community centres more accessible
- f. 163 new build affordable homes delivered
- g. Repair grants for private home owners increased from 33 to 118
- h. Argyll and Bute Advice Network web based service directory increased partners to 61 agencies
- i. 275 households helped to sustain their tenancies
- j. Advice given to 550 empty home owners with 60 properties being brought back into use.

#### 11.1.2 Culture and Libraries

- a. Progressed plan to create online catalogues of the archive collection for improved access.
- b. Culture, Arts and Heritage Strategy/Action Plan completed and adopted by Council
- c. Worked to develop the Place Partnership programme with Creative Scotland to link to the "Cultural Assembly" arising from the Cultural Strategy; this will provide a forum for cultural and arts organisations to work together for the benefit of our communities.
- d. Interior of Campbeltown Museum painted and new display case for archaeological exhibits installed.
- e. Macmillan Cancer Information and Support Service units opened in Campbeltown and Rothesay Libraries. This is a partnership project

involving libraries, Macmillan Cancer Support, NHS Highlands and Argyllshire Voluntary Action

- f. There were 293,359 visits to libraries in person – a rise of 10% from 2012/13.

### 11.1.3 Community Development

- a. With support from the Community Development team, 116 local organisations benefited from awards of Third Sector Grants, with 43% awarded to organisations who did not receive a grant in the previous two years. In addition, six organisations delivering services across Argyll and Bute received funding as part of a three year agreement.
- b. The Community Development team led on a major consultation exercise for the Community Planning Partnership (CPP) on the Single Outcome Agreement 2013-23. Fifteen events took place, including workshops and debates including five island locations; an online survey was undertaken with over 500 responses; and a report was produced and presented to the CPP Management Committee in April 2014.
- c. 42 community engagement resources, including electronic voting equipment and a variety of items to use for exercises are now available on free loan to partners and organisations. Uses over the year have been, on average 26 per quarter for example at area community planning group meetings.
- d. Associations for the Council's four community centres in Campbeltown, Lochgilphead, Dunoon and Rothesay completed a joint project to develop and improve the sustainability of their centres with funding of approximately £45,000 secured in 2013. Consultants supported the management committees to create business plans and deliver some key objectives identified in the plans. These committees are now taking forward actions within the plans.
- e. 1,129 capacity building sessions for third sector organisations were carried out throughout the year.
- f. Improved partnership working with Job Centre Plus to deal with volume of demand for employability support

### 11.1.4 Adult Learning

- a. Year-on-year increases in numbers of adults accessing learning that in turn increases employability from 1,033 in 2011-12, and 1,496 in 2012-13, to 1,725 in 2013-14. This prepares people for welfare reforms which require applicants to claim benefits online.
- b. Joint early intervention work with Job Centre Plus piloted in Campbeltown and now about to be rolled out in Helensburgh and Oban – new claimants are seen jointly by both agencies to identify potential digital access, literacies and other learning needs at a very early stage.
- c. A total of 71 people achieved or were working towards SQA accredited Core Skills Units supported through the adult learning teams



- d. We have helped an increasing number of adults gain internal and external accredited outcomes - 221 in 2011-12; 371 in 2012-13; and 411 in 2013-14
- e. Numbers of adults accessing activities that improve literacy and numeracy has increased year-on-year over the last three years - from 871 in 2011-12, and 1,160 in 2012-13, to 1,404 in 2013-14
- f. Literacy tutors from across Argyll and Bute who work with the Council's Adult Literacies Team attended a tutor training conference in Inveraray in March 2014 to celebrate their hard work and learn new skills and techniques.

### **11.1.5 Leisure and Youth Services**

- a. Argyll and Bute Community Sport Hub programme continues to develop resources and structures in partnership with sportsotland. A recent "Celebration of Sport" event in Rothesay attracted over 650 visitors – almost 10% of the population of Bute.
- b. Active Schools Argyll and Bute were chosen as one of three trailblazer authorities for the new School Sport Award scheme which has been successfully rolled out to 10 pilot schools and will be launched nationally in August 2014.
- c. The Leisure Service has expanded the range of services offered to our communities by increasing its delivery of sports activities. Gymnastics has been introduced in Dunoon, with all available sessions fully booked from the beginning and this is now planned for other areas as soon as staff can be trained to deliver sessions.
- d. Archery is now available in Campbeltown, Rothesay and Mid Argyll and demand for sessions is high and growing and more staff will be qualified as leaders in the near future.
- e. Youth Services held a hugely popular and impressive Argyll and Bute Awards event in Oban to "Celebrate Youth Achievement". It was very well attended and the young people were very deserving of the recognition of their achievements.

### **11.1.6 Leisure Performance**

- a. The Leisure Service is providing a range of services in our pools, halls and gyms to over 440,000 customers annually and is achieving a satisfaction rate for staff friendliness and helpfulness of over 93%.
- b. The ABC learn to swim scheme in partnership with Scottish Swimming has provided over 56,000 sessions for children being taught to swim in our four pools
- c. Argyll Active continues to make a real difference to the people eligible through the GP referral scheme. Over 300 people have been supported to improve their health and work is ongoing to expand the service to include people receiving housing support, those experiencing addiction problems and young people suffering disadvantage.

### **11.1.7 Service Audits**

Following external audits conducted in 2013, our Internal Audit team confirmed that, with the exception of some low level issues, all recommendations had been met or are on track to be met. The audit also found the administration of the direct debit membership to be satisfactory.

### **11.1.8 Queens Baton Relay – Event Planning**

A team led by Community and Culture's Sport and Leisure Services staff coordinated the planning and delivery of this complex and demanding event for the Queens Baton Relay when it passed through Argyll and Bute.

### **11.1.9 Active Schools and Sport Development**

- a. The extra - curricular programmes have continued to increase during the past year reaching 112,000 sessions. During the year more than 700 extra - curricular clubs were delivered and the range of activities continues to grow.
- b. Over 400 volunteers are now delivering extra - curricular clubs with additional volunteers also supporting the delivery of Active Schools events/programmes.
- c. Sports partnerships are working well to increase participation and development of players in football, shinty, rugby, swimming and golf. Work with NHS Scotland, Children 1<sup>st</sup> and Sports Coach UK ensure that clubs and coaches reflect best practice in sport.

### **11.1.10 Youth Work**

The Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme continues to increase and develop. The range and complexity of expeditions now have 50 volunteers who are supporting young people in the schemes. Nearly 500 young people participated in award activities last year. A successful Duke of Edinburgh's Award conference was held in Ford, Mid Argyll, as part of the volunteer development programme.

## **11.2 Areas for improvement**

- a. Ensuring our customers have accurate, accessible and up to date information on our organisation and the services that we provide by improving electronic communications with customers through website and social networks
- b. Ensuring a healthy workforce and a healthy working environment for all by managing attendance, leading to higher levels of attendance and providing high quality services.



### 11.3 Further Information

#### Argyll and Bute Council Website

The Council website contains sections specifically for Community Life, Leisure and Libraries at [www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/community-life-and-leisure](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/community-life-and-leisure)

#### Quarterly Performance Report and Scorecards

Performance information about culture and sport is reported at the Performance Review and Scrutiny Committee meetings in the Community Services Performance Report and Performance Scorecard. These can be viewed at [www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/performance](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/performance) or by contacting us via the contact details at the end of this report.

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## 12 Economic Development and Strategic Transportation

Economic Development and Strategic Transportation has refocused its core business to help deliver the approved Single Outcome Agreement. Priority is now given to taking forward the key outcomes of growing our economy through an increase in our population, providing the necessary infrastructure to secure sustainable growth, and improving skills.

### 12.1 2013-14 Highlights

- a. Our Business Gateway supported 101 start-up businesses against a target of 100 and 566 existing businesses were supported against a target of 240 (236% of the target achieved).
- b. Economic Development Action Plans were prepared as working documents for each of the four administrative areas of Argyll and Bute
- c. We received a total of 167 enquiries about filming in Argyll and Bute and 27 productions were located here with an approximate spend of £450,000
- d. 984 customers were referred to the Employability Team and partner organisations resulting in 436 job starts.
- e. We delivered on-road cycle training to 95% of our primary schools – which is significantly higher than the national average of 37.6%.
- f. Argyll and Bute Council secured two league champions' awards for biomass and hydro projects at the inaugural Scottish National Renewables Energy League awards.

### 12.3 Supporting Business Growth and Regeneration

Our Business Gateway provides a free, confidential advice and support service for businesses.

101 start-ups were supported against a target of 100, and 566 existing businesses were supported against a target of 240 (236% of the target achieved).

The one year survival rate of business start-ups supported was 79% against a local target of 75% and a national target of 76%.

Customer satisfaction is high, reported at 86% against a target of 85%.

“Business Gateway has been a great help and support from the beginning. Discussing plans with my adviser gave me a confidence boost. With no previous experience of setting up a business, being able to access expert advice and help on how to establish my business was critical.”

For further information see

<http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/business-and-trade/business-gateway-service>

## **12.4 Economic Development Action Plan, 2013-2018**

The current Economic Development Action Plan (EDAP) 2013-2018, focuses the Council's resources on the economic development activities that will have the greatest beneficial economic impact on local communities and Scotland as a whole. During 2013-14 EDAPs were prepared as working documents for each of the four administrative areas of Argyll and Bute, in order to capture and address local economic opportunities for 2014/18.

## **12.5 Employability**

A total of 984 customers were referred to the Employability Team and partner organisations through the government's Work Programme during 2013-14 resulting in 436 job starts. At the end of the financial year, the Council's Employability Team with partners was converting 77.75% of the jobs starts into sustainable job outcomes.

During 2013-14 the Employability Team for the Argyll and Bute area has further developed its recruitment agency Move into Work ([www.moveintowork.co.uk](http://www.moveintowork.co.uk) - free to all users) designed to work with both employers and those looking for sustainable employment throughout Argyll and Bute. This development has enabled the team to assist with the delivery of our mainstream Department of Work and Pensions contracts and to assist employers through supported recruitment, short-listing, interviews and, importantly, in-work-support for any new employees

## **12.6 Campbeltown, Helensburgh, Oban, Rothesay and Dunoon (CHORD) regeneration and Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI)**

The council's ambitious programme of investment in our key coastal towns has seen some major benefits over the past year.

In Campbeltown the Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) project is generating improvements to the town's heritage and conservation sites by renewing and restoring historic buildings.

The Kinloch Road regeneration project is complete and saw regeneration along the main route into Campbeltown, including a major road realignment, a housing development (in partnership with ACHA) and the provision of a new 3<sup>rd</sup> generation all weather pitch.

In Helensburgh the regeneration work is focused on public space improvements to two separate but linked areas. The West Bay Esplanade work is almost complete. The redevelopment work aims to create a better link between the front and the town centre, an environment more suitable for leisure and better access for pedestrians to local businesses. The town centre element seeks to improve the focal point of the town, Colquhoun Square, making it a more attractive space for people to gather as well as improving

access to local businesses and developing a more effective traffic management system.

The Rothesay THI has seen an investment of over £2.5M from the Heritage Lottery Fund, Historic Scotland, LEADER and Argyll and Bute Council. Bute boasts one of the biggest conservation areas in Scotland. This project seeks to arrest the town's decline and to make it a better place to live, work and visit by repairing the exterior of four priority buildings and enhancing a number of shop-fronts in and around Guildford Square.

## **12.7 Tourism**

Tourism activity cuts across a number of sectors and brings significant benefits to the Argyll and Bute economy. The Council's Economic Development and Strategic Transportation team (EDST) plays a leading role with the tourism industry in the provision of visitor information, marketing, promotion, strategic development and partnership working.

The Council is a major partner in the Argyll and the Isles Strategic Tourism Partnership. The Council has agreed to provide £150,000 over a three year period from 1st April 2014 to 31st March 2017 to support Argyll and Bute as a prime Scottish tourism destination for wildlife, adventure, heritage and food and drink tourism. For further information see [www.exploreargyll.co.uk](http://www.exploreargyll.co.uk)

## **12.8 Agriculture**

EDST is a key partner in the Argyll and Bute Agricultural Forum. During 2013/14 an agricultural survey was concluded and the outcomes used to inform the development of the new draft strategy for 2013-2018 which has a focus on next generation, sustainable development and diversification into tourism and renewables.

For further information please visit <http://www.foodfromargyll.com> and <http://www.tasteofruraleurope.eu/>

## **12.9 Broadband**

The Highlands and Islands Next Generation Broadband project is rolling out superfast broadband across most of Argyll and Bute (with the exception of Helensburgh and Lomond) and is being delivered by BT and Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE). The first phase of the roll out began in 2013/14. The Rest of Scotland Next Generation Broadband project is being delivered to the Helensburgh and Lomond area by BT and the Scottish Government. These projects together with commercial rollout by BT are expected to reach approximately 83% of premises by the end of 2016. Coverage is expected to be available to some premises from summer 2014. The Council is working with HIE, BT and our communities to ensure that we maximise the roll out across our areas. Community Broadband Scotland is also working with those

communities which may not benefit from the main roll out to look at alternative models for delivering superfast broadband.

## 12.10 Mobile Telephones

The Mobile Infrastructure Project (MIP) is a £150m UK Government backed project to fund improvements to the coverage and quality of mobile services in “Not Spot” areas (i.e. those with no mobile phone coverage by any network operator). The project is being delivered by Arqiva on behalf of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). A number of candidate locations have been identified within Argyll and Bute. The A82 is identified as a strategic road for improved coverage. EDST are working with Arqiva and DCMS and are awaiting confirmation from the MIP Project Board that these locations can proceed to the stage of identifying specific sites.

The Scottish Government is pursuing a pilot project on Coll which is based on the Government providing the funding and development support to secure the erection of a mobile phone mast. The community will take ownership of the mast and would be responsible for its running costs. Planning permission has been granted and EDST have agreed to meet a proportion of the maintenance costs for the first five years following construction.

## 12.11 Attracting Investment

Inveraray Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS): EDST supported the Council in securing a Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS) Historic Scotland Grant of just under £1 million for Inveraray. The total funding available for investment in the built fabric training is £2,021,429 with additional funding being provided from the Council and Argyll Community Housing Association (ACHA).

The **Social Enterprise Team**: Feedback from our funding survey revealed that £800,000 worth of grant funding to groups was identified through our monthly Funding Alert bulletin. This bulletin along with a suite of investment tools is available to all groups and businesses at <http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/community-life-and-leisure/grants-and-funding>

The **Strategic Transportation unit** secured £944k external capital for transportation infrastructure projects across Argyll and Bute. £95k was awarded in capital grant through Cycling Walking Safer Streets and £256k was secured through Sustrans Community Links. A further £18k was secured through Sustrans School Cycle Parking and Smarter Choices Safer Places funding streams. Bids totalling £575k were also successfully submitted to Strathclyde Passenger Transport for transport infrastructure projects in Helensburgh and Lomond.

The Strategic Transportation unit have also continued their involvement with the Argyll Timber Transport Group and assisted in securing £40k from the Scottish Roads Research Board to fund a study involving the collection of

future timber volumes travelling on the public road network from existing woodland and indicative woodland creation data.

£175k was also awarded last year through the Scottish Timber Transport fund to co-finance road improvements to the the B840 Cladich to Ford and the B8024 Tarbert to Kilberry which are key timber haul routes.

The Council, working with the Friends of Hermitage Park, secured £2,087,000 Heritage Lottery funding through a stage one approval from Parks for People to regenerate Hermitage Park in Helensburgh, Argyll and Bute's only urban park.

Working with Argyll and Bute Renewables Alliance and key partner Scottish and Southern Energy (SSE), the Council has helped secure over £2 million funding for the reinforcement of the transmission system serving the Kintyre Peninsula. This will provide a more secure electricity supply and provide local jobs.

**The European Team** has been actively contributing towards the Scottish Government's development of the 2014-2020 European Structural and Investment Fund programmes in order to ensure recognition of Argyll and Bute's priorities and opportunities to attract funding. The four funds covered are the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund.

The Argyll and the Islands LEADER programme awarded just over £131,000 to seven projects in 2013-14. The Argyll and the Islands LEADER Local Action Group is currently developing the Local Development Strategy and Action Plan for the Argyll and the Islands LEADER 2014 – 2020 Programme.

For further information see <http://www.argyllandtheislandsleader.org.uk>.

The Council is the lead partner in the Argyll and Bute and South Ayrshire Fisheries Local Action Group which committed its funding to six Argyll and Bute and one South Ayrshire fisheries community projects. Over the period 2013-14 this accounted for £417,475 of funding between the two local authority areas, of which £285,776 was for Argyll and Bute projects.

Argyll and Bute Council's ambitious £18.9m Tax Incremental Finance (TIF) proposal plans for the Lorn Arc was approved by the Scottish Government in January 2014.

The scheme is expected to attract £125M of private investment. The proposals have the potential to create over 1,000 jobs and bring huge private sector investment to the Oban area in the years to come.

The Lorn Arc project focuses on developing sustainable growth in the marine science, marine tourism, aquaculture and renewable energy sectors, as well as stimulating the wider economy. The Lorn Arc covers the areas of Oban, Dunstaffnage, Dunbeg, North Connell and Barcaldine.



The Council will implement a programme of strategic infrastructure investment over the next six years, starting with a £2.75M project to improve the Lorn Road/Kirk Road.

Beyond that the Council aims to invest the remainder of the £18.9M in the Dunbeg Gateway, the Halfway House roundabout/Dunbeg development road, the south Oban development zone, the North Pier, the Barcaldine business space, and access improvements and the creation of a new business park around Oban Airport.

### 12.12 Filming in Argyll and Bute

The EDST offer free and confidential advice to the film, television and photographic industry. This includes information on locations, ownership, crew and facilities. EDST work closely with Creative Scotland, the national film agency for Scotland, and in partnership with the Scottish Locations Network.

During 2013 the Council received a total of 167 enquiries and 27 productions with an approximate spend of £450,000. TV productions such as Coast, Great British Bake Off, The One Show, a McDonald's advertisement and the film Silent Storm starring Damien Lewis used Argyll as a location during this period. As well as the economic benefit to the area, tourism interest can also be generated through the resultant media exposure.

See <http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/business-and-trade/filming-argyll-and-bute>

### 12.13 Renewable Energy

Argyll and Bute Council collected two league champions' awards for biomass and hydro projects at the inaugural Scottish National Renewables Energy League awards. EDST along with community planning partners has been developing the Community Renewable Opportunity Plan (CROP) the purpose of which is to provide advice and guidance to enable communities to secure the social, environmental and economic benefits that renewable energy can provide. This will be an online tool and will be available for use by the community autumn 2014.

For further information see <http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/planning-and-environment/renewable-energy-action-plan>

### 12.14 Oban and the Isles Airports

Argyll and Bute Council operate three licensed airports at **Oban**, **Coll** and **Colonsay**. These airports are licensed for scheduled passenger flight services - as Public Service Obligation (PSO) air services - to the islands of Coll, Colonsay and Tiree.

In 2013 there was a 3.4% rise in passenger numbers. The PSO air services are used by local businesses, the coastguard in search and rescue

operations, for training and leisure events, and to transport pupils from the islands of Coll and Colonsay to Oban High School.

### 12.15 iCycle

To help our young people enjoy cycling on our roads safely, the Road Safety Unit in partnership with North Ayrshire Council developed a new cycle training toolkit.

[www.icycle.org.uk](http://www.icycle.org.uk) has been rolled out to all schools in Argyll and Bute and North Ayrshire. Evaluation by Transport Scotland showed that significantly more young people felt more confident cycling (88%) following training and significantly more young people were cycling on main roads (75%). iCycle was shortlisted in the category of Most Innovative Transport Project of the Year for the Scottish Transport Awards 2014.

### 12.16 Marine service

Argyll and Bute Council owns and manages 41 piers and harbours with the principal harbours at Oban, Campbeltown, Rothesay and Dunoon. In addition the Council own six ferries that serve four routes, serving the Cuan to Luing route, The Ellenabeich to Easdale route, the Port Appin to Lismore route and the Port Askaig to Feolin route. These ferries operate lifeline ferry routes to the islands which assist maintain a sustainable population and encourage and support tourism.

The Scottish Ferries Plan had made a commitment to introduce a new two year summer only pilot ferry service between Campbeltown and Ardrossan via Brodick. This was successfully implemented in May 2013, in part due to the Council's active role in lobbying the Scottish Government, and subsequently was extended for a further year. Transport Scotland is actively monitoring usage and 2014 has seen a marketing campaign that will enhance tourism to Kintyre and beyond.

187 Maintenance, repairs and improvement schemes carried out in 2013/14 amounted to £2.4 million including the development of Campbelown harbour to enable vessels serving the renewables sector the opportunity to berth.

### 12.17 Where we will improve

- a. Seek to better market and promote our economic opportunities throughout Argyll and Bute
- b. Improve cross service working on securing a better economic future for our main towns
- c. Pilot new workshops for new and existing businesses, based on client feedback/surveys to evidence demand
- d. Roll out more specialist advice provision – subject to European funding being secured – to provide more businesses with access to expert help to assist growth



- e. Develop a proposal to maintain business grant funding - subject to European funding being secured

Further Information

The Business Gateway service has a dedicated section of the website at <http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/business-and-trade/business-gateway-service>

Quarterly Performance Report and Scorecards

Performance information about Economic Development and Strategic Transportation is reported at the Performance Review and Scrutiny Committee meetings in the Development and Infrastructure Services Performance Report and Performance Scorecard. These can be viewed at [www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/performance](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/performance) or by contacting us via the contact details at the end of this report.

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## 13 Education

In 2013-2014 Argyll and Bute Council delivered education services to more than 10,670 pupils in diverse island and mainland schools with around 850 full time equivalent teaching staff.

Our work has continued to develop and deliver an education service that will enable our young people to reach their potential and move from their school years into positive roles in the wider world.

### 13.1 2013-14 Highlights

We have achieved progress in wide ranging areas of our service, to develop and improve benefits for our young people. Here are some of the highlights.

- a. Continued development of the Curriculum for Excellence in all schools
- b. Introduction of the new qualifications framework within the senior phase of secondary schools
- c. Positive Education Scotland school inspections
- d. A comprehensive programme of School Reviews based on self-evaluation
- e. The formation of an Assessment Forum to take forward the Services Assessment Strategy
- f. Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies (PATHS ), a curriculum for promoting emotional and social competence and reducing behavioural difficulties at the early years, has been rolled out across some schools.
- g. Improved Assessment programmes for Looked After Children to ensure their identified needs are appropriately met
- h. Innovative use of learning technologies to deliver Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) across our schools
- i. Effective integrated working with our partners in the Getting it Right for Every Child methodology
- j. Development of a DVD and support materials to enhance our practice and improve the child's planning meetings.
- k. Continued reduction in the overall number of young people placed out with Argyll and Bute for their education
- l. Continuation of our comprehensive support and mentoring programme for newly appointed head teachers
- m. Success in meeting the national expectation of two hours of Physical Education per week for pupils
- n. All schools have been fully staffed despite supply and recruitment challenges
- o. Continued success of schools in achieving recognition as ECO schools.

## 13.2 Realising the potential of our young people

Argyll and Bute schools have continued to perform well in the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) examinations. The authority remains in line both with the national and 'family' - Angus; Dumfries and Galloway; Highland; Scottish Borders; and South Ayrshire councils - averages in most measures. 30% of S5 pupils gained 3+ level 6 passes, the highest result for three years and which is above the national average. Information for session 2013 -14 will be available in August 2014. The table at point 4.5.4 provides information on the new qualification framework.

The Scottish Qualifications Framework levels pre-2013/14 are:

Level 7	Advanced Higher @ A-C
Level 6	Higher @ A-C
Level 5	Standard Grade @ 1-2 plus Intermediate 2 @ A-C
Level 4	Standard Grade @ 3-4 plus Intermediate 1 @ A-C
Level 3	Standard Grade @ 5-6 plus Access 3

The following tables show attainment levels for Argyll and Bute schools in the 2012-13 academic session, with comparisons offered against the Scottish average and a 'comparator family' average. These comparator Councils are: Angus; Dumfries and Galloway; Highland; Scottish Borders; and South Ayrshire.

	Argyll and Bute	Comparator Family	AverageScotland
<b>By the end of S4</b>			
5+ @ level 5	39%	42%	38%
5+ @ level 4	80%	84%	82%
5+ @ level 3	93%	96%	95%
<b>By the end of S5</b>			
3+ @ level 6	30%	28%	28%
5+ @ level 6	13%	11%	13%
<b>By the end of S6</b>			
1+ @ level 7	15%	17%	17%

	10-11	11-12	12-13	
<b>By the end of S4</b>				
5+ @ level 5	38%	42%	39%	
5+ @ level 4	79%	83%	80%	
5+ @ level 3	92%	95%	93%	
	10-11	11-12	12-13	Trend
<b>By the end of S5</b>				
3+ @ level 6	27%	25%	30%	
5+ @ level 6	13%	11%	13%	
1+ @ level 7	16%	21%	15%	

During academic session 2013-14 young people in secondary schools were the first group to follow new national qualifications in S4.

The Scottish Qualifications Framework levels from 2013 -14 will be:

Level 7	Advanced Higher @ A-C
Level 6	Higher @ A-C
Level 5	National 5 @ A-C plus Intermediate 2 @ A-C
Level 4	National 4 plus Intermediate 1 @ A-C
Level 3	National 3 plus Access 3

### Curriculum for Excellence

To support our high educational standards, we are committed to the values, principles and purposes of Curriculum for Excellence which aims to achieve a transformation in Scottish education by providing a coherent, more flexible and enriched curriculum for 3-18. The aims of Curriculum for Excellence are that every child and young person should know that they are valued and will be supported to become a successful learner, an effective contributor, a confident individual and a responsible citizen.

### **13.3 Continued development of Curriculum for Excellence in all schools**

We continue to increase the number of early level classes in small schools in preparation for the increase in Early Learning and Childcare hours in August 2014, and in helping participating schools to evaluate the service they provide.

Continued support has been offered within some schools involving all staff in discussions to audit their current curriculum, identify local and national areas of good practice and areas for development.

Curriculum for Excellence is being fully implemented across the senior phase of all our secondary schools who are working to ensure its principles are implemented appropriately in their location. For some schools this is resulting in significant changes. For example in Dunoon Grammar School a working group of staff has looked at the school's curriculum and at best practice across Scotland. The school is now consulting with a view to introducing an asymmetrical weekly structure, which means the end of the school day varies throughout the week. On shorter days the early finish will create further opportunities for pupils to work with college, university and local business partners.

The outdoor environment continues to provide our schools with enormous potential for learning. One example of work in using outdoor learning opportunities is Craignish Primary's active boat club which helps pupils to develop skills and confidence in and out of the water. Outdoor activities such as this support learning across the curriculum, for example a recent sailing day incorporated literacy, numeracy and science as well as the skills normally associated with outdoor activity.

### **13.4 Introduction of new qualifications within the senior phase**

Argyll and Bute schools continue to track and monitor pupil progress through SQA courses, and to challenge and support them and enable them to perform to their full potential. Preliminary examination results indicate that pupils are on track to successfully complete their courses.

All secondary schools have in place a curriculum design which includes a broad general education involving the curriculum areas. Individual secondary schools have different models for senior pupils which reflect both the learning needs of their pupils and their individual local circumstances.

### **13.5 Positive School Evaluations**

Education Scotland (formerly known as Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education – HMIE) is responsible for inspecting and evaluating our schools and education provision. Positive evaluations from external inspectors

demonstrate our commitment to delivering a high quality educational service to learners of all ages. During the 2013-14 academic session 68.25% of evaluations were graded either good or above.

### **13.6 School Review Process**

2013-14 was the third full session in the implementation phase of the new School Review process. This involves staff, pupils, colleagues from other schools and the school's partnership Quality Improvement Officer (QIO) working together to take forward an in-depth audit of the work of the school. Three schools took part in a review and are now building on strengths identified as well as working on areas for improvement. The impact of this process has been:

- an increased capacity for improvement across schools
- an improved quality of discussion by educational practitioners
- a developing culture of working together for improvement
- improved understanding of school self-evaluation processes and the impact these should have
- improved understanding, at all levels of the education service, of a school's strengths and areas for improvement.

Several Education Scotland reports have commented on accuracy of review findings and the positive impact that the School Review process has had on school improvement. We continue to develop the review process in line with findings of the Validated Self Evaluation exercise carried out in partnership with HMIE in October 2012.

Following the Validated Self Evaluation exercise carried out in partnership with HMIE in October 2012, areas for further development of the school review process were identified. These are currently being progressed and worked on.

### **13.7 Assessment Forum**

We set up a new cross authority Assessment Forum. The work of this group, which has included agreeing authority policy and procedures, is assisting in improving consistency in assessment, recording and reporting practice.

The Education Service continued its quality assurance programme in relation to moderating learning experiences and achievements in interdisciplinary learning. This is assisting schools in demonstrating improved approaches to meeting the needs of learners and has provided improved experiences in classrooms for pupils.

A team of local Area Quality Assurance and Moderation facilitators were trained by Education Scotland. This team will continue to support quality

assurance and moderation programmes, ensuring high expectations are consistently applied across the authority.

### **13.8 Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies (PATHS)**

We have rolled out PATHS, a curriculum for promoting emotional and social competence and reducing behavioural difficulties in the early years. This has been implemented in four preschool establishments and has included evaluation with parents and staff. Results have had a positive impact on emotional and social competencies of our youngest learners.

### **13.9 Assessment of Looked After Children**

Assessment of Looked After Children at the primary stage has been tracked and monitored by schools and the Educational Management Team. Support from educational psychologists has been targeted at all Looked After Children including assessment of reading, spelling and the view Looked After Children hold of themselves as learners. This information is being used to support improved outcomes for individual children as well as informing planning across the authority.

### **13.10 ICT**

Our Learning Technologies Action Plan is being used to progress the 'connected vision' for learning technologies in Argyll and Bute schools. To promote the use of Learning Technologies to support Learning and Teaching (LandT) we have:

- a. Created a core set of Digital Skills to support LandT, offered continuous professional development opportunities to all teaching staff and shared resources in schools.
- b. Supported schools in ICT programming and robotics projects
- c. Provided opportunities for young people to develop skills necessary for using mobile devices and apps
- d. Established a Learning Technologies Development Group to promote how technologies can transform learning and teaching and raise attainment.
- e. Produced a self-evaluation tool to support schools in their improvement planning.
- f. Supported innovative practice for emerging Learning Technologies resources including:
  - g. Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) initiative
  - h. Lync Video Conferencing
  - i. Use of Mobile devices (currently iPads)
  - j. Increased safe and responsible use of Learning Technologies by engaging with parents across Argyll and Bute.



### **13.11 Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC)**

Our work has continued to develop and further embed the GIRFEC practice model in the Education Service. This includes multi-agency GIRFEC training sessions taking place, and a number of staff are studying the GIRFEC professional module at Stirling University; the Area Principal Teachers are working with colleagues from Health and Social Work to develop the role of GIRFEC Advisors; a Universal Child's Plan has been developed and tested, and work has begun to create an electronic version for use by schools.

### **13.12 Child's planning meeting – DVD**

Through the multiagency GIRFEC implementation group, we have developed a DVD to support staff in ensuring that 'Child's Planning' meetings deliver the maximum benefit for children, young people and families. The DVD includes the views of young people.

### **13.13 Continued reduction in young people placed out with Argyll and Bute**

Currently 22 children and young people from Argyll and Bute are educated in specialist placements. This represents a 26% reduction over the last three years in the number of placements out with Argyll and Bute. Every effort is made, following Getting it Right for Every Child principles, to effectively support children and young people within their local schools, families and communities. We have successfully implemented early intervention approaches in schools to support the emotional health and wellbeing of children and young people. School staff use creative approaches to ensure that those children with the most complex needs are provided with an appropriate curriculum in their local school.

### **13.14 Support for Newly Appointed Head Teachers**

The Newly Appointed Head Teachers Conference ensured that newly appointed head teachers were aware of the wide range of support available to them in leading their schools, from drawing on the experience of longer serving colleagues to consulting with key education professionals and corporate education services.

### **13.15 Success of meeting two hours Physical Education per week**

97% of Argyll and Bute Schools are now achieving the Scottish Government quality PE target, and work continues to ensure the Council can deliver this in all our schools.

### **13.16 School Staffing**

All schools across the authority have been fully staffed during session 2013 and 2014. The education service continues to face significant challenges in recruiting suitably qualified staff to posts across Argyll and Bute. The service is looking at ways to address issues in recruitment and retention of permanent and supply staff.

### 13.17 ECO Schools

In Argyll and Bute our young people make good use of the outdoor learning environment and develop skills related to sustainable developments and global awareness. The following table represents the achievements of our schools within the national Eco Schools Scotland Programme.

Bronze	Silver	Green Flags
1	16	62

### 13.18 School Leaver Destinations

In addition to qualifications gained at school, it is equally important that pupils leaving school go on to meaningful positive destinations such as employment, training, further education (college) or higher education (university).

During academic session 2013-14 we offered 16 Skills for Work courses to 524 young people; 33 wider qualifications to 1,364 young people; and nine higher education courses through Argyll College/University of Highlands and Islands to 14 young people.

In addition 16 senior pupils were on a Flexible Learning Plan and seven pupils took part in the EXite (Exit into employment) pilot programme at Dunoon Grammar School. This is aimed at supporting S4 pupils who had disengaged from learning. These young people typically sit in the bottom 20% of attainment performance. In conjunction with the Corporate Parenting Board, the Education Service has developed a range of supports for our Looked After Children to ensure they have an equality of educational opportunities.

Work placement opportunities are offered to senior pupils and 524 spent time based with local businesses and organisations developing their employability skills.

Positive destinations figures for the academic year 2013-14 will be released by the Scottish Government in February 2015. Performance for the academic year 2012-13 is therefore shown below:

Destination	Argyll and Bute			National		
	2011-12 %	2012-3 %	% point change	2011-12 %	2012-3 %	% point change
Higher Education	39.7	37.9	-1.8	37.3	36.5	-0.8
Further Education	20.9	21.4	0.5	26.8	27.8	1.0
Training	3.6	3.7	0.1	4.6	5.0	0.4
Employment	24.9	28.1	3.2	19.8	20.4	0.6
Voluntary Work	0.3	0.1	-0.2	0.4	0.5	0.1
Activity Agreement	0.6	1.0	0.4	0.9	1.3	0.4
Positive Destinations	90.1	92.5	2.4	89.9	91.4	1.5
<b>TOTAL LEAVERS</b>	935	875	---	50,892	52,801	---

### 13.19 Areas for Improvement

We will:

- Engage more effectively with parents, communities and partners to reach our educational objectives
- Provide further support to enable staff to engage in quality discussions on learning and teaching in order to raise attainment
- Specify clearly the roles, remits and reporting arrangements of working groups and the expected outcomes of work

### 13.20 Further Information

#### Individual schools

The Council website contains a section specifically for schools, education and learning at [www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/education-and-learning](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/education-and-learning)

Here you will find information on individual schools including contact details, links to individual school websites and recent school inspection reports. Work is also planned to give all schools a new, modern and easy to use website.

#### Education website

The national education website (<https://blogs.glowscotland.org.uk/ab/SAL/>) provides information on the work of Argyll and Bute Council's Education service and access to a range of resources that are used for administration and curricular purposes.

#### Performance information

Each year the Council prepares a Standards and Quality Report for the preceding academic year. In addition performance information about education is reported quarterly at the Performance Review and Scrutiny Committee meetings, in the Community Services Performance Report and

Performance Scorecard. These are available by visiting [www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/performance](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/performance) or by contacting us via the contact details at the end of this report.

Education Scotland.

Since 1 July 2011 Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education (HMIE) has merged with Learning and Teaching Scotland (LTS) to form a new agency – Education Scotland - responsible for supporting quality and improvement in Scottish education. HMIE Education Authority and individual school inspection reports remain available online both on the Argyll and Bute Council website and at [www.educationscotland.gov.uk](http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk)

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## 14 Facility Services

Facility Services provides a range of support to all other Council services through teams which manage assets, catering, cleaners, pool cars, school transport, property design and improvement, property maintenance, energy consumption and estates services. The service has responsibility for the Council's Corporate Asset Management processes together with the design and delivery of property related capital projects. In addition, Facility Services manages and supports public transport contracts and community transport initiatives.

### 14.1 2013-14 Highlights

#### Property Services

- a. Property Services Review completed on time and delivered the required savings.
- b. Customer Care revision training for front line Property Services staff completed.
- c. Outline Business Case for Campbeltown Office Rationalisation completed.
- d. Mid Argyll customer service point/office rationalisation delivered.
- e. Successful implementation of the Community Services and Facility Services Capital Programme.
- f. Annual Asset Management returns of Core Facts Information for the School Estate and Statutory Performance Indicators for condition, suitability and access collated and submitted in accordance with Government requirements.
- g. Delivery of asset management work plan in accordance with schedule set and monitored by the Strategic Asset Management Board.
- h. Central Repairs Account budget managed to 100% commitment at financial year end covering all property emergencies and delivering full statutory programme and priority planned maintenance.
- i. Helensburgh Office Rationalisation Project continues on programme for use in late spring 2015.
- j. Delivery of the Council's Renewables Sourcing Strategy (RSS).
- k. Adoption of the Council's Asbestos and Legionella Management Plans.
- l. Major asbestos re-survey programme of the Council estate continues to be on time and within budget.

### Property Services Key Performance Indicators

The following Key Performance Indicators demonstrate that the Council's strategically important buildings are in an acceptable condition and are being used efficiently. In addition they indicate the Council's commitment to reducing our carbon footprint in accordance with the adopted Carbon Management Plan. The indicators highlight that strategically important buildings are generally in a good condition.

	2013/14 performance	Target	Benchmark
Maintain 80% of properties included in the SPI/Core Facts return to a satisfactory standard (B rated or above)	87%	80%	83%
Carbon emissions savings as a result of tangible projects.	5,807	8,943 by FQ4 14/15	None available

### Integrated Transport

- a. Increased efficiencies and savings from retendering School and Public Transport contracts in Bute and Cowal.
- b. Increased savings by bringing small schools transport contracts in-house.
- c. Reviewed and updated transport contract terms and conditions in conjunction with the Commissioning and Procurement Manager.

### Integrated Transport Key Performance Indicators

In most areas of work performance, Integrated Transport has met and indeed exceeded the targets set. This can be evidenced in the table below:

	2013/14 performance	Target	Benchmark
Number of new bus shelters during 2013/14	7	5	4
Increase the use of the light vehicle fleet to over 60%	67%	60%	63.5%
Maintain the average age of the light vehicle fleet below 5 years	3.5 years	4.7 years	4.7 years

### Catering and Cleaning Service

- a. Successful implementation of the cleaning elements of the Catering, Cleaning and Janitorial Service Review.

- b. School meals uptake remains above the Scottish average for both free and paid meals.
- c. The Primary school meals service gained the Soil Association Food for Life Catering Mark Bronze Award.
- d. Pupil consultation through a programme of focus groups has led to Primary School menu improvements.

#### Catering and Cleaning Service Key Performance Indicators

	2013/14 performance	Target	Benchmark
Free school meal uptake in Primary schools	96%	87%	80%
Paid school meal uptake in Primary schools	48%	43%	41%
Free school meal uptake in Secondary schools	91%	60%	60%
Paid school meal uptake in Secondary schools	48%	40%	34%

#### **14.2 Areas for improvement**

- a. Delivery of the Carbon Management Plan target of 20% saving on CO2 emissions to a revised date of March 2015

#### **14.3 Further Information**

##### Argyll and Bute Council Website

General information about Facility Services can be found at <http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/service-information/facility-services>

The Catering Service web pages contain information about school meal menus and nutrition. This information can be viewed at [www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/education-and-learning/school-meals](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/education-and-learning/school-meals)

Information about school transport can be found at <http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/education-and-learning/school-transport>

Details of public and community transport, including timetables and links to external service providers can be viewed at <http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/transport-and-streets/public-and-community-transport>

##### Quarterly Performance Report and Scorecards

Performance information about Facility Services is reported quarterly in the Customer Services Performance Report and Performance Scorecard. These can be viewed at [www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/performance](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/performance)



## 15 Planning and Regulatory Services

Planning and Regulatory Services is an outward looking service which seeks to harness development opportunities, support businesses, protect the public and improve the economic, social and environmental well being of the area by ensuring development takes place in a sustainable manner. The service has a major part to play in achieving international, national and local objectives through the delivery of its five key statutory functions: Development Management, Building Standards, Development Policy, Environmental and Animal Health and Trading Standards.

### 15.1 2013-14 Highlights

#### 15.1.1 Planning and Building Standards

- a. Submission of the Local Development Plan for examination by the Scottish Government Reporters Unit.
- b. Local Inquiry into the Core Path Plan concluded.
- c. The Argyll and the Isles Coast and Countryside Trust officially launched and received charitable status.
- d. Phases 1 and 2 of the stabilisation works to the Royal Hotel, Rothesay, a key listed building, were completed.
- e. The Council's GIS (geographic information system) team was named runner-up in the Gazetteer Exemplar Awards (October 2013).
- f. The Planning Performance Framework, a key measure of the Planning Service's performance over the past financial year, has received very positive feedback from the Scottish Government.
- g. Housing Land Audit for Argyll and Bute approved.
- h. Development Management Performance is above both the Scottish average and the Rural Authority Benchmarking Club.
- i. The Development Management service has continued to embrace a culture of negotiation, improvement where necessary and approval rather than refusal, with approval rates in excess of 96% - above the Scottish average.
- j. Continued improvement in the speed of processing Building Standards Warrants whilst retaining excellent levels of customer satisfaction.
- k. Implementation and review of Building Standards Balanced Scorecard which received positive feedback from the Scottish Government Building Standards Division.
- l. Building Standards attainment of the Customer Service Excellence Award.

### 15.1.2 Regulatory Services

- a. Successfully delivered the Regulatory Services Balanced Scorecard and Protecting Consumers Action Plan
- b. Improved performance in Regulatory Services for high risk visits and service requests, achieving 100% of all high risk visits across Regulatory Services.
- c. The average % of customer satisfaction for 2013-14 was 93% (above our target of 90%).
- d. Continued to contribute to the national agenda and the changes which are ongoing for Regulatory Services in a number of areas.
- e. Successfully secured the shellfish monitoring contract with the Food Standards Agency.
- f. Implemented new arrangements to support Argyll and Bute Citizens Advice Bureau for 2014-15, and are participating in a review of advice services through the Argyll and Bute Advice Network.
- g. Outbreak Control Procedures with NHS Highland in 2013-14 worked well in responding to public health incidents.
- h. External audit from Food Standards Agency Scotland on our shellfish monitoring work was positive.

### 15.2 Planning and Building Standards

Across the board Planning Performance in 2013/14 has been strong and consistently above our own target and level attained by our benchmarking peers.

	12-13	13-14	Trend (Percentage Points)
All Local Planning Applications: % processed in 2 months, in the context of a 20% rise in number of planning applications	69%	75%	6% rise
% of all pre-aps processed within 20 days	67%	80%	13% rise  Note: an improvement has been established.
% of valid applications registered and neighbour notified within 5 working days	99%	90%	9% drop
% Building Warrants responded to within 20 days	95%	96%	1% rise

- Our 'Planning for Firm Foundations' pre-application service in 2013/14 was our busiest year ever with 15% more submissions than during the previous 12 months. Development Management continues to foster a culture of negotiation and certainty through plan led decision making which is reflective of our 96% approval rate and low rate of decisions being overturned at appeal.
- We have also been successful in processing 'legacy files' (old planning applications) in 2013/14 reducing the total number from 244 to 19.
- Fee income also exceeded budget in 2013/14.
- Argyll and Bute Council was one of only a small number of local authorities to receive no 'red traffic lights' in relation to the Scottish Government's review of our Planning Performance Framework. Qualitative feedback was also very positive.

### 15.3 Regulatory Services

Regulatory Services include environmental health, trading standards; animal health and welfare and licensing standards services.

- a. Our reactive workload has increased. However we have ensured that 100% of all high risk venues have been visited and any necessary work carried out.
- b. Trading standards achieved their agreed targets for the four key measures of consumer requests, business requests, debt counselling and high risk visits.

	Target	11-12	12-13	13-14	Trend
Environmental Health - % Service requests resolved within 20 working days	90%	95%	94%	87%	7% reduction  Note: the number of requests has increased by 256% over the last four years.
Food Hygiene—% of high risk visits completed	100%	100%	100%	100%	Maintained
Animal Health - % high risk visits completed	100%	100%	100%	100%	Maintained
Trading Standards % high risk visits completed	100%	88%	99.2%	100%	0.8% increase
Trading Standards % business advice requests resolved within 14 days	80%	72%	86%	92%	6% increase
Trading Standards -% consumer complaints resolved within 14 days	80%	88%	84%	82%	2% increase

#### 15.4 Where we will improve

- a. Due to conflicting priorities we were unable to produce a Built Heritage Strategy as planned. This work has now been re-scheduled and resources committed.
- b. We have been unable to progress with the rating of “unrated” food businesses due to long-term absence in the environmental health team and also difficulties attracting suitable qualified staff to Argyll and Bute.

#### 15.5 Further Information

##### Argyll and Bute Council Website

The Council website contains a section specifically for planning, building standards and the environment at [www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/planning-and-environment](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/planning-and-environment). Trading Standards and Licensing Standards can be obtained from [www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/law-and-licensing](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/law-and-licensing)

Quarterly Performance Report and Scorecards

Performance information about Planning and Development is reported quarterly in the Development and Infrastructure Services Performance Report and Performance Scorecard. These can be viewed at [www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/performance](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/performance) or by contacting us via the contact details at the end of this report.

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## 16 Roads and Amenity Services

The purpose of the Roads and Amenity Service is to ensure that Argyll and Bute's roads infrastructure enables the safe and convenient movement of people and goods across a geographically diverse and sparsely populated area. The service also supports the physical appearance of Argyll and Bute by managing open spaces, cemeteries, street cleaning, refuse collection and waste management. Priority is given to services which are likely to contribute greatest to economic growth and improved quality of life.

The Council looks after:

- 1406 miles of road,
- 954 bridges,
- 138 car parks

We also:

- cut and maintain 2,500,000m<sup>2</sup> of grass
- manage 131 cemeteries
- collect waste from around 47,800 island and mainland households

### 16.1 2013-14 Highlights

- £24.5 million invested in a three year programme for roads reconstruction which has provided a noticeable improvement to the condition of the road network, particularly the strategic road network following the Council's decision in 2011 to increase investment in upgrading its road network following successive poor winters. The programme has had a focus on fixing the roads rather than just filling the pot holes.
- Service responded well to the severe weather events over the Festive and New Year period which resulted in well over 200 tonnes of sea washed debris having to be cleared and significant repairs to sea defences and road infrastructure damaged/washed away during the storms.
- Plans progressed in introducing co-mingled recycling to mainland households within the Oban area, and in Mid Argyll and Cowal. This will allow kerbside collections of recycling paper, card, plastic bottles/tubs/trays, cartons and cans in same blue bin.
- New tracking system installed in the Council fleet to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of vehicles.

### 16.2.1 Infrastructure

- a. In 2012/13 the Council confirmed a three year Capital investment of £21M for roads reconstruction. This was subsequently complemented by two further investments bringing the three year programme to £24.5M.
- b. The summary table below highlights the positive and visible impact of the works undertaken to date. On completion of this year's capital programme the Council will have upgraded over a third of its "A" class roads and almost 415km of roads in total since 2011/12.

### 16.2.2 Resilience

- a. Whilst the winters of 2013-14 appeared relatively mild by comparison to previous years, there were still a number of storms that resulted in coastal flooding which damaged the physical infrastructure and deposited debris on to several sections of the coastline. Roads and Amenity staff worked tirelessly to ensure that the impact of these storms was minimised to the people living, working and travelling within Argyll and Bute. The clean-up operations and repairs to sea defence walls and sections of carriageway were significant and a combination of in-house teams and contractors pulled together to clear debris and carry out the necessary repairs.

### 16.2.3 Environmental

- a. Amenity staff have now completed their first full year working longer hours through the summer 'growing' season than in the winter. These revised work schedules have contributed to a more efficient service. Extensive consultation was carried out during 2013 regarding further changes to the Amenity Service. Through the consultation process, stakeholders and community groups have been able to put forward their preferences and help shape the future service delivery.
- b. Street sweeping measures continue to show a good level of performance. This is reflected in both the Council's internal validation and also the external validation carried out by North Ayrshire Council on behalf of Keep Scotland Beautiful.
- c. We have maintained levels of biodegradable waste to landfill, with a total of 19,570 tonnes in 2013/14. We have increased percentages of waste composted, recycled and recovered to well over 40%.
- d. Plans have been put in place to introduce co-mingled recycling to mainland households within the Oban area, Mid Argyll and Cowal. These changes are expected to come into place late 2014.
- e. In 2013 measures were put in place to prepare for the responsibility for parking enforcement passing from Police Scotland to local authorities in



2014. The enforcement of decriminalised parking aims to improve road safety and traffic movement, while also increasing the availability of on street parking spaces.

#### **16.2.4 Vehicle Fleet**

- a. Levels of MOT test results for HGV vehicles continue to remain above the national average.
- b. New vehicle tracking system installed within the Council fleet to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of vehicles.

#### **16.3 Where we will improve**

- a. Introduce co-mingled/additional recycling collections.
- b. Develop and integrate IT systems to provide inventory data and be able to issue works instructions directly to front line workers via hand held computers. This will help to deliver a more responsive and efficient service.
- c. Introduce Decriminalised Parking Enforcement which has been designed to provide effective traffic management to support our local economy by ensuring parking turnover, helping our town centres remain vibrant, busy places.

#### **16.4 Further Information**

##### Argyll and Bute Council Website

The Council website contains several sections relating to roads and amenity services. These are best accessed from the homepage at [www.argyll-bute.gov.uk](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk)

##### Quarterly Performance Report and Scorecards

Performance information is reported quarterly in the Development and Infrastructure Services Performance Report and Performance Scorecard. These can be viewed at [www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/performance](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/performance) or by contacting us via the contact details at the end of this report.

## 17 Further Information

We keep you up to date with our performance so that you can have an understanding of how we deliver your services. If there is specific information on performance that you wish to find out or you wish to comment on this annual report, please contact us or view the web site: [www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/performance](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/performance)

In addition to this Annual Report and the Quarterly Performance reports and Scorecards, the Council and external scrutiny bodies make available performance and inspection information at various times throughout the year. Selected performance related publications that may be of interest include:

[Argyll and Bute Corporate Plan 2013 – 2017](#)  
[Audited Financial Statements](#)  
[Annual Efficiency Statement](#)  
[Defined Indicator Report](#)  
[Assurance and Improvement Plan](#)  
[Best Value Audited Reports](#)  
[Education Standards and Quality Report](#)  
[Chief Social Work Officer's Report](#)  
Single Outcome Agreement and [Annual Report](#)

You can also view all agenda reports and minutes of meetings, including Area Committees, the Community Planning Partnership, the Performance Review and Scrutiny Committee and Full Council online at [www.argyll-bute.gov.uk](http://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk).

## 18 Have Your Say

We strive for continual improvement and value feedback both positive and where there is room for us to improve. If you have a suggestion or comment about our services we would be delighted to hear from you.

If you would like to know more about the performance of the Council and the services that we provide you can contact us at the details below

**Telephone**

01546 605522

Text using our customer service text messaging system

07624808798

**Email**

[performance@argyll-bute.gov.uk](mailto:performance@argyll-bute.gov.uk)

**Write**

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