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3 June 2020

## **NOTICE OF MEETING**

A meeting of the **BUSINESS CONTINUITY COMMITTEE** will be held **BY SKYPE** on **THURSDAY, 11 JUNE 2020 at 10:30 AM**, which you are requested to attend.

Douglas Hendry  
Executive Director

### **BUSINESS**

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
3. **MINUTES**  
Minute of the Business Continuity Committee held on 14 May 2020 (Pages 3 - 8)
4. **DISCRETIONARY HOUSING PAYMENTS (DHP) - POLICY AMENDMENT TO CREATE A DHP HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION FUND**  
Report by Section 95 Officer (Pages 9 - 22)
5. **UPDATE ON EVENT GRANT FUNDING TO EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS**  
Report by Section 95 Officer (Pages 23 - 26)
  - (a) **STRATEGIC EVENTS AND FESTIVALS FUND - PROJECT UPDATE**  
Report by Interim Executive Director with responsibility for Development and Economic Growth (Pages 27 - 34)
  - (b) **COUNCIL'S SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES FUND 2020/21**  
Report by Chief Executive (Pages 35 - 38)
6. **THE EXPANSION OF FUNDED EARLY YEARS LEARNING AND CHILDCARE IN SCOTLAND**  
Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Education (Pages 39 - 54)
7. **CARE EXPERIENCED CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**  
Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Education (Pages 55 - 62)
8. **DEFERRED ENTRY - RETAINING AT STAGE AND SCHOOL LEAVING DATES**  
Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Education (Pages 63 - 70)
9. **RAPID RE-HOUSING TRANSITION PLAN - ANNUAL UPDATE**  
Report by Interim Executive Director with responsibility for Development and

Economic Growth (Pages 71 - 98)

**10. ECONOMIC RECOVERY PLAN UPDATE**

Report by Interim Executive Director with responsibility for Development and Economic Growth (Pages 99 - 108)

**E1 11. ROTHESAY PAVILION POSITION STATEMENT**

Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Commercial Services (Pages 109 - 114)

The Committee will be asked to pass a resolution in terms of Section 50(A)(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 to exclude the public for items of business with an "E" on the grounds that it is likely to involve the disclosure of exempt information as defined in the appropriate paragraph of Part I of Schedule 7a to the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

The appropriate paragraphs are:-

**E1 Paragraph 6** Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (other than the authority).

**Paragraph 9** Any terms proposed or to be proposed by or to the authority in the course of negotiations for a contract for the acquisition or disposal of property or the supply of goods or services.

**BUSINESS CONTINUITY COMMITTEE**

Contact: Contact: Sandra Campbell 01546 604401

**MINUTES of MEETING of BUSINESS CONTINUITY COMMITTEE held in the BY SKYPE  
on THURSDAY, 14 MAY 2020**

**Present:** Councillor Aileen Morton (Chair)

Councillor Rory Colville	Councillor Yvonne McNeilly
Councillor Robin Currie	Councillor Gary Mulvaney
Councillor Lorna Douglas	Councillor Douglas Philand
Councillor Kieron Green	Councillor Sandy Taylor

**Also Present:** Councillor John Armour                      Councillor Jim Lynch  
Councillor Jim Findlay                                      Councillor Jean Moffat  
Councillor Bobby Good                                      Councillor Alastair Redman

**Attending:** Pippa Milne, Chief Executive  
Douglas Hendry, Executive Director  
Kirsty Flanagan, Interim Executive Director  
Louise Connor, Head of Education, Teaching and Learning  
David Logan, Head of Legal and Regulatory Support  
Laurence Slavin, Interim Head of Financial Services  
Anne MacDougall, Interim Head of Financial Services  
Jane Fowler, Head of Customer and Support Services  
Fergus Murray, Head of Development and Economic Growth  
Tricia O'Neill, Governance Manager  
Fergus Walker, Revenue and Benefits Manager  
Joanna MacDonald, Chief Officers, HSCP

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence intimated.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest intimated.

**3. MINUTES**

The Minute of the Business Continuity Committee held on 16 April 2020 was approved as a correct record.

**4. COVID-19 RESPONSE UPDATE**

The Committee considered a report which provided a high level overview of some of the key decisions and actions that have been taken across Council services in response to the pandemic, incorporating emergency legislation, government guidance and working in partnership with other responding agencies.

**Decision**

The Committee noted the Council's response to the Covid-19 pandemic and noted the range of actions that have been taken across Council services in response to the pandemic.

(Ref: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Legal and Regulatory Support dated 12 May 2020, submitted)

**5. BUDGET:**

**(a) BUDGET OUTLOOK 2021-22 TO 2025-2026**

The Committee gave consideration to a report summarising the budget outlook covering the period 2021-22 to 2025-26, taking into consideration the budget decisions taken at the Council Budget meeting held on 27 February 2020.

**Decision:**

The Business Continuity Committee agreed to note the current estimated budget outlook position for the period 2021-22 to 2025-26.

(Ref: Report by Section 95 Officer, dated 4 May 2020, submitted.)

**(b) BUDGET UPDATE**

Consideration was given to a paper presenting the estimated impact of COVID on the delivery of previously agreed savings options and the additional cost pressures and savings arising. The paper also provided an update on progress to identify possible areas for service redesign to deliver future savings.

**Decision:**

The Business Continuity Committee agreed:-

1. to note the estimated budget gap for the period 2021/22 – 2025/26 before the potential impact of COVID on savings and cost pressures;
2. to note the impact COVID may have on the delivery of agreed savings options up until the end of June 2020 and the anticipated cost pressures and potential savings created by COVID up till the end of June 2020;
3. to note there is an assumption that all additional costs incurred by the Council as a consequence of COVID-19 will be fully funded by the Scottish Government; and
4. to note that officers are considering areas for potential service redesign and agree that progress will be reported to future meetings of the Business Continuity Committee/Policy and Resources Committee with final proposals to be presented to Members in December 2020 to enable these to be reflected in budget consultation.

(Ref: Report by Section 95 Officer, dated 6 May 2020, submitted.)

**(c) HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE YEAR END AND OVERSPEND 2019-2020**

The Committee gave consideration to a request from the Chief Financial Officer of the IJB that consideration is given to payback arrangements relating to the overspend on Social Work services within the HSCP for 2019/20. The final year end

outturn for Social Work is an overspend of £1.165m.

**Decision:**

The Business Continuity Committee agreed to approve that the repayment of 2017/18, 2018/19 and 2019/20 Social Work overspends are deducted from the Council's payment to the HSCP on a five year phased basis.

(Ref: Report by Section 95 Officer, dated 5 May 2020, submitted.)

**(d) CAPITAL BUDGET POSITION**

Consideration was given to a report following up on an action in relation to the Capital budget agreed at the Council's Budget meeting in February that stated "due to the scale of risk to capital programme funding in future years, request that officers provide an overview report to the Policy and Resources Committee in May 2020".

**Decision:**

The Business Continuity Committee agreed:

1. to note that there is a risk as to the funding of the capital programme in future years; and
2. that a decision on how to address the funding gap is deferred until there is confirmation as to whether a funding announcement will be made in the Spring and further note that this decision would allow officers time to estimate the impact of COVID-19 on the current capital programme.

(Ref: Report by Section 95 Officer, dated 27 April 2020, submitted.)

**6. COUNCIL TAX ON EMPTY PROPERTIES - TEMPORARY AMENDMENT DUE TO COVID-19**

The Committee gave consideration to a report seeking a temporary amendment to the policy for charging double Council Tax on long-term empty dwellings under regulation 4 The Council Tax (Variation for Unoccupied Dwellings) (Scotland) Regulations 2013, relating to the impact Covid-19 has had on the local economy in respect of both the housing market and the availability of licensed trade persons to undertake works that would bring properties back into circulation.

**Decision:**

The Business Continuity Committee agreed:

1. to approve a temporary policy amendment to allow management the discretion to remove the double charge of Council Tax for a maximum of 6 months between 1 April 2020 and 30 September 2020 where there is conclusive evidence that efforts have been made, or are being made, to bring the empty properties back into use and that the homeowners' ability to bring the home back into use is affected by Covid-19;
2. to approve a temporary policy amendment to allow management the discretion to remove the double charge of Council Tax for a maximum of 6 months between 1 April

2020 and 30 September 2020 in exceptional circumstances where there is conclusive evidence of financial hardship of the taxpayer caused by Covid-19; and

3. to approve a temporary policy amendment that the Council does not apply any new double charges of Council Tax on long-term empty dwellings where it becomes long-term empty between 1 April 2020 and 30 September 2020 and that a charge equal to the normal level of Council Tax charged is applied to the property until 30 September 2020.

(Ref: Report by Section 95 Officer, dated 27 April 2020, submitted.)

## **7. EMPLOYABILITY FINANCIAL UPDATE**

A report providing an update on the current financial position of the Argyll and Bute Council's Employability Team was considered by the Committee.

### **Decision:**

The Business Continuity Committee agreed:

1. to note the content of the report;
2. to note that based on the in-year 2019/20 financial outturn, it is likely that there will be a deficit in 2020/21 and that due to the current pandemic, less job outcomes will be realised during 2020/21 and this will also adversely affect the financial position; and
3. that once the new delivery arrangements are in place in April 2021, under the No One Left Behind (NOLB) policy direction, a detailed review of the affordability of employability service provision across Argyll and Bute will be conducted. This review will need to take into account the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, associated financial support packages and the flexibility to repurpose the Argyll and Bute Council allocation of Phases 2 and 3 of the NOLB to support economic recovery.

(Ref: Report by Interim Executive Director with responsibility for Development and Economic Growth, dated 29 April 2020, submitted.)

## **8. SECONDMENT POLICY**

Consideration was given to a report presenting a Secondment Policy for approval.

### **Decision:**

The Business Continuity Committee agreed to approve the Secondment Policy for implementation.

(Ref: Report by Interim Executive Director with responsibility for Customer and Support Services, dated 30 April 2020, submitted.)

## **9. TEMPORARY DEPARTURE FROM SCHEME FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMUNITY COUNCILS**

The Committee gave consideration to a report seeking a temporary departure from the Scheme for the establishment of Community Councils in light of the current Covid-19

pandemic to facilitate Community Council's in continuing to fulfil the important role of representing and supporting local communities at this time.

**Decision:**

The Business Continuity Committee agreed:

1. a temporary departure from the Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils within Argyll and Bute, as outlined at paragraph 3.1 of the report, in relation to Annual General Meetings, Meetings, Decision Making and Membership; and
2. that such departures will be kept under review and any requirement for further or revised measures will be subject to a further report to Members.

(Ref: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Legal and Regulatory Support, dated 23 April 2020, submitted.)

**10. REMOTE LEARNING AND SQA**

A report providing details of how our primary and secondary establishments are delivering learning and teaching through digital resources in response to the current Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic was considered. An update on current SQA arrangements for all qualifications that were to be undertaken by young people in the 2020 examination diet which has been cancelled due to COVID-19 was also provided.

**Decision:**

The Business Continuity Committee agreed to note the contents of the report and attached appendix. The Committee also welcomed the scale of support from parents and pupils with regard to remote leaning in the current climate due to Covid-19.

(Ref: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Education, dated 14 April 2020, submitted.)

**11. SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT TOWN CENTRE CAPITAL FUND - PROJECT UPDATE**

There Committee were asked to note the work undertaken on the eleven Town Centre Fund Projects which are supported by the £1.24m Town Centre Capital Funding from Scottish Government for 2019-20.

**Decision:**

The Business Continuity Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

(Ref: Report by the Interim Executive Director with responsibility for Development and Economic Growth, dated 30 March 2020, submitted.)

**12. PLANNING AND REGULATORY ARRANGEMENTS - COVID-19**

The Committee were asked to note the arrangements being put in place for the operation of the functions of the Planning, Protective Services and Licensing (PPSL) and the Licensing Board on an interim basis during the response period to the Covid-19 pandemic.

**Decision:**

The Business Continuity Committee noted the arrangements for the functions of the PPSL Committee and the Licensing Board on an interim basis during the response period to the Covid-19 pandemic.

(Ref: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Legal and Regulatory Support, dated 5 May 2020, submitted.)

The Committee resolved in terms of Section 50(A)(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 to exclude the press and public for the following two items of business on the grounds that they were likely to involve the disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1 and 6 & 9 respectively of Part 1 of Schedule 7A to the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

**13. COUNCIL CONSIDERATION OF ABSENCE**

The Committee considered a report which advised that in terms of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, Section 35, if a Councillor fails to attend a meeting for a continuous period of 6 months then they cease to be a Councillor unless prior approval to the absence has been taken by Council.

**Decision:**

The Business Continuity Committee approved the absence from Council business of a Councillor due to health related issues until 18 December 2020, or until their return to business, whichever is the earlier.

(Ref: Report by Executive Director with responsibility for Legal and Regulatory Support dated 23 April 2020, submitted)

**14. STRATEGIC HOUSING FUND - ASSOCIATED FUNDING REQUEST**

Consideration was given to a report outlining a request from Colonsay Community Development Company for additional funding from the Strategic Housing Fund (SHF) in order to enable an affordable housing project in Argyll and Bute.

**Decision:**

The Business Continuity Committee agreed to the recommendation, as outlined at section 3.1 of the report.

(Ref: Report by Interim Executive Director with responsibility for Development and Economic Growth, dated 14 May 2020, submitted.)

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**ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL**  
**FINANCIAL SERVICES**

**BUSINESS CONTINUITY COMMITTEE**  
**THURSDAY 11 JUNE 2020**

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**DISCRETIONARY HOUSING PAYMENTS (DHP)**  
**POLICY AMENDMENT TO CREATE A DHP HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION FUND**

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**1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1 In March 2013 Council approved a policy for awarding Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) to claimants in receipt of Housing Benefit (HB) who are deemed to be in high, medium or low levels of hardship.
- 1.2 This policy has been updated over the last seven years as welfare reforms have been introduced to support claimants financially and to cope with their circumstances. This includes support to make changes to their lifestyles that help them sustain tenancies and improve their longer term outcomes.
- 1.3 There are some claimants affected by the Benefit Cap reforms whose circumstances have not improved and in most cases they are not ready for the employment market when the maximum DHP entitlement period expires after 52 weeks. The Council's current policy removes DHP support at this stage and it is left to Housing Services, Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) and the Job Centre Plus (JCP) to continue providing support whilst rent arrears accrue.
- 1.4 It is proposed that the Council establish a fund within the DHP policy to provide these claimants in exceptional circumstances with further financial support and security in their tenancy. The claimant would be required to sign an agreement with the Council to take a proactive approach to preparing themselves to be ready for the workplace when it is more suitable for them.
- 1.5 In these exceptional circumstances it is proposed that DHP entitlement is extended beyond the current 52 week limit until such times as the prospect of employment for the claimant is realistic and the cap is removed.
- 1.6 The proposal is a positive action to mitigate child poverty in Argyll and Bute.

**DISCRETIONARY HOUSING PAYMENTS (DHP)  
POLICY AMENDMENT TO CREATE A DHP HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION FUND**

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**2 INTRODUCTION**

- 2.1 In March 2013 Council approved a policy for awarding DHP to claimants in receipt of HB and who are deemed to be in high, medium or low levels of hardship. The policy was updated in August 2014 to allow DHPs to be paid to all under-occupancy cases irrespective of priority. This was further updated in August 2015 for claims from those in receipt of Disability Living Allowance (DLA), and to ensure that help with rent deposits / rent in advance does not encourage claimants to move to a property which they cannot afford on an ongoing basis.
- 2.2 In October 2016 the DHP policy was updated to reflect new guidance from DWP about assistance to households affected by the benefit cap. This provided a DHP entitlement for claimants affected by the benefit cap for a 13 week period which could be extended to 26 weeks where evidence is forthcoming from JCP that the household has been actively engaging with them to try to move into employment. The maximum length of DHP entitlement is set at 52 weeks for all households in receipt of DHP.
- 2.3 This policy change, combined with Housing Services, JCP and RSLs working together to help claimants back to work has been hugely successful as an initial 39 Benefit Cap cases has been reduced to 9 over the intervening 30 month period.
- 2.4 However there is a need to propose a policy change which would allow DHP to be paid for more than 52 weeks for certain households on the Benefit Cap that have been harder to move into employment.

**3 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 The Business Continuity Committee approves the proposed amendment to the policy for awarding DHP attached at Appendix 3.

**4 DETAIL**

**THE BENEFIT CAP**

- 4.1 The Benefit Cap is a UK government welfare reform that places a limit on the total amount of benefit a claimant can be paid per week. Originally introduced as part of the Welfare Reform Act 2012 it reduced the total benefit income receivable by a household to a maximum of £26,000 per annum £500 per week for a family and £18,200 per annum £350 per week for an individual. This was based on average earnings at that time. The Cap was reviewed in July 2015 and the threshold was reduced to £20,000 per annum for a family and £13,400 per individual as part of

the wide reaching welfare reform agenda that saw the introduction of Universal Credit (UC).

- 4.2 Where the projected household income from benefits exceeds the cap HB is reduced until the cost of financial support to the household no longer exceeds the cap. The DWP take extracts from the benefit systems and send the council details of claims to be capped in our area. Claimants in receipt of disability related benefit like DLA (Disability Living Allowance) or PIP (Personal Independence Payments) are exempt from the cap. Claimants in receipt of WTC (Working Tax Credit) are also exempt from the cap. In order to receive WTC a member of the household must find work for a minimum 16 hours per week.
- 4.3 When the DWP instruct the Council to reduce the HB entitlement the claimant must be left a minimum HB entitlement of £0.50 per week. This entitlement allows the claimant to claim support from DHP to cover the gap between their rent and their HB entitlement. They can only receive DHP for any period that they have an entitlement to HB or UC.

### **DHP**

- 4.4 DHP is a form of temporary financial support to give households in hardship a top up to their HB entitlement to the value of their rent. It allows householder's rent to be covered by HB and DHP together allowing them to sustain their tenancy whilst they take action to make changes to their lifestyles to improve their situation. This allows the household to become more financially stable, and the claimant to become more able to manage their circumstances without the need for these interventions in the longer term.
- 4.5 The objectives of the DHP policy include:-
- alleviating poverty,
  - encouraging and sustaining people in employment,
  - tenancy sustainment and homelessness prevention,
  - safeguarding residents in their own homes,
  - helping those who are trying to help themselves,
  - keeping families together,
  - supporting vulnerable people in the local community,
  - supporting young people in the transition to adult life,
  - supporting victims of domestic violence who are trying to move to a place of safety.
- 4.6 The policy has served the Council, RSLs and claimants well to date. When the changes to the Benefit Cap were implemented were 39 households being capped in Argyll and Bute. This has reduced to 9.
- 4.7 The Council's Housing Services team working with RSLs and the JCP have managed to reduce the number of households affected by the cap incrementally by supporting claimants to make the right choices at the right time to come off the cap. The DHP policy was modified in September 2016 to include a requirement for DHP recipients to engage with the JCP to ensure as much as possible would be done to incentivise work for the claimants. Other actions include benefit reviews, supporting claimants to undertake training courses and providing development opportunities to prepare them for employment opportunities when they arise. These

measures have all worked well.

4.8 Unfortunately not every household has been able to take the action to come off the cap and 9 households remain affected. The current DHP policy only allows for DHP support to be granted for benefit cap claimants as follows:-

- Automatic award for 13 weeks on submission of application form
- Further 13 weeks granted if the claimant supplies proof of engagement with a work coach at the JCP.
- Further support from week 26 to week 52 where exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated.

4.9 Whilst the current DHP policy has worked well for most claimants affected by the cap there are some it has not helped. The policy needs to be widened to allow some households in specific circumstances, who are beyond the 52 week limit, to take the action required to remove themselves from the cap.

### **ANALYSIS OF HOUSEHOLDS AFFECTED BY THE CAP IN APRIL 2020**

4.10 The table below illustrates the 9 households that remain on the Benefit Cap at April 2020.

Claim no.	No of Deps	No of Non-Deps	Value of Benefit Cap (£ per week)	Potential Annual DHP cost (£)	DHP application history	Landlord
1	6	0	118.37	6,170.63	Exhausted awards	Council
2	4	0	65.18	3,397.83	Exhausted awards	RSL
3	3	0	60.94	3,176.80	Exhausted awards	RSL
6	4	0	60.78	3,168.46	Exhausted awards	RSL
4	2	0	16.98	885.17	Exhausted awards	RSL
5	4	0	5.95	310.17	Exhausted awards	RSL
7	2	1	17.69	922.18	No	RSL
8	6	0	15.19	791.85	No	RSL
9	3	0	13.99	729.30	No	Private Sector

On average a reduction of £42 per week is being taken from HB within a range of £5 per week and £119 per week for those still affected by the cap. This is a large reduction in weekly income. Also note that all households have children in them ranging from 2 children to 6 children with a total of 34 children residing in households suffering significant reductions in HB because of the Cap.

4.11 The 6 claims in the table marked as having “exhausted awards” are those that have been supported by DHP but the award has now been removed in line with the existing policy. The other claimants have not claimed DHP from the Council yet. They are either able to cope with the reduction or are not yet aware of their entitlement.

4.12 Most capped households are suffering significant reductions in weekly HB and

running up rent arrears with landlords. It is a significant problem for landlords and in some circumstances there is not much they can do to support their tenants because they are at a time of their lives where the prospect of employment is extremely limited.

- 4.13 Covid-19 adds further pressure to these families as employment is likely to be even harder to come by in the future. The Scottish Government has written to UK government asking them to consider removing the Benefit Cap temporarily. This would help our claimants however it is still believed that a change to the Councils policy would really help these vulnerable households in the future.

#### **PROPOSED POLICY AMENDMENT**

- 4.14 The proposal is to amend the DHP policy to allow claimants affected by the Benefit Cap to be supported by DHP for more than 52 weeks where;

1. there are clear and obvious barriers to work for a household such as
  - a. language barriers where English is not the claimants first language
  - b. caring responsibilities within the household making the attainment of employment unrealistic, (i.e. where there are multiple young dependent in the household)
  - c. other non-financial factors affecting the claimants ability to work including mental health illness, being the victim of domestic abuse or in circumstances where the Council has a corporate parenting responsibility.
2. there is a commitment to working with Housing Services, employability teams, community learning and development teams, employment support agencies or the job centre with a view to find a way of moving in to work. This commitment will be captured in a signed development agreement.

- 4.15 This support will be offered in exceptional circumstances and would assessed on a case by case basis. A formal agreement would be drawn up between the claimant and the Council at the current 52 weeks DHP limit which makes it clear what is expected of the claimant for the Council to continue to pay DHP. This will include suitable training and development actions recognising any limitations placed on the claimant by their circumstances. Housing Services would monitor compliance with the agreement and notify the Benefit Service of progress on a quarterly basis when the DHP position will be reassessed.

- 4.16 The impact of the current DHP policy removing support after 52 weeks is outlined in a hypothetical scenario below with a detailed timeline shown in Appendix 1. In contrast Appendix 2 shows a similar timeline for the same claimants' circumstances but with the supportive policy change there to help the household. These appendices outline the significant improvement that this change in policy can have for claimants affected by the Benefit Cap.

- 4.17 It is proposed to amend two parts of the policy. Section 6 deals with the period of the award. The minimum award period of 13 weeks still applies to all cases. As does the requirement for the extension of the initial award period to a 26 week period being conditional on engagement with Job Centre Plus to try to actively

move into employment. A further extension beyond 26 weeks to 52 weeks is also unchanged and is dependent on there being exceptional circumstances. We are proposing that the award can be extended beyond 52 weeks if supported by a signed agreement between the tenant and the Council incorporating a development plan to help the tenant to further prepare themselves for the employment market.

- 4.18 Section 7 deals with priority groups. It is proposed that benefit caps cases are split as follows. Those households who are engaging with DWP Work Coaches would fall into Priority Group D. Those households who are not engaging would fall into Priority Group E which is the catch all group for those not in any other category.

## **SCENARIO**

- 4.19 The hypothetical scenario to demonstrate how the proposed new policy will work looks at the situation for a household in the following circumstances:-

- composition of household is a married couple with 5 children between the ages of 1 year and 13 years old
- the claimant is a foreign national who resides in temporary accommodation where the Council is the landlord.
- rent for such a big property is £120.50 per week and this is covered by HB capped at £0.50 per week plus temporary DHP of £120 per week.
- one parent leaves the household after being found guilty of domestic abuse against their partner and all of the children

- 4.20 This claimant has seen her HB income reduced from £120 per week to £0.50 per week as a result of the Benefit Cap. She has received DHP payments to fill this gap from 1 March 2019 to 28 February 2020 covering a total of 52 weeks.

- 4.21 Appendix 1 shows the way the current DHP policy is applied to the household. At week 52 the DHP has to be removed as per the policy however the following circumstances apply;

- single mother who does not speak fluent English and has 5 children.
- she has no time to study or undertake training to move herself towards work and is due to previous experience of domestic abuse
- without DHP rent arrears accrue at £120 per week and within a year she owes the Council over £6,000 in unpaid rent.
- the tenant is supported by Citizens Advice to appeal the Council's application of the benefit cap and their refusal of DHP at 52 weeks. The Council's decisions are upheld at appeal
- with no prospect of rent payment the Council as landlord, threaten to evict the tenant to try and illicit payment. This puts more stress on the family and causes further damage to the fragile relationship the Council now has with the tenant and her household.
- The consequences of the situation, the threat of homelessness again, the lack of money, the struggle with the Council for support really knocks the confidence of the tenant and the wider family. The overall outcome is significant levels of anxiety and dissatisfaction all round. This affects the overall chance of ever finding employment.
- The Council as landlord is extremely unlikely ever to recover the rent arrears in this case. The family are stuck in a cycle of poverty.

- 4.22 Appendix 2 shows the difference that extending the DHP beyond 52 weeks can have in these exceptional circumstances. In this scenario at 52 weeks;
- The Council work with the household to establish a reasonable development plan for the single mother to participate in which can be accommodated around the important duties she undertakes to care for her children.
  - The DHP extension for at least a further 52 weeks takes the youngest child to 3 years old when they can go into nursery care for 30 hours per week. It is reasonable to expect the mother to be able to undertake paid employment of 16 hours per week minimum when this happens.
  - In advance of this she agrees to undertake a degree of online training per week to build language skills and confidence. This is reviewed every 13 weeks to ensure compliance and to amend the development plan.
  - Rent arrears do not accrue so the household feels more secure in their tenancy. The Council's Housing Services do not need to absorb the rent arrears or take any negative actions as they know the tenant is engaged and planning to move into work when it is possible.
  - The eldest child reaches the age of 15 and is assisted as appropriate to prepare for adult life, looking for work and without the legacy of debt through rent arrears and the feeling of being in a constant struggle.
  - Overall these outcomes are much better for the whole family and will make a significant improvement to their potential in the future.
- 4.23 The funding for the additional DHP awarded after 52 weeks will be known as the DHP Homelessness Prevention Fund.
- 4.24 Glasgow City Council and Dumfries and Galloway Council have similar schemes. The Dumfries and Galloway scheme was a key part of their anti-poverty project, "Tackling Inequalities and Improving Health" that won the CoSLA Gold Award in 2018.
- 4.25 Adopting this policy change will be a very positive move to mitigate child poverty in Argyll and Bute. There are 34 children living in households affected by the benefit cap. If the Council can support them further with DHP in the short term it will be possible to really improve their potential in the future

#### **FINANCIAL IMPACT OF PROPOSED POLICY CHANGE**

- 4.26 The estimated annual cost of this policy change based on the current caseload is £14,000. This will need to be absorbed by DHP in the future.
- 4.27 This will put the Council's existing DHP allocation from the government of £704,000 under pressure. Most of this funding is ring-fenced under agreement with the Scottish Government to support tenants suffering a reduction in the HB due to the abolition of the Spare Room Subsidy (SRS). Remaining monies are used to support claimants in genuine hardship to maintain their tenancies normally in the private rented sector. In 2019/2020 we spent £23,000 supporting 73 claims under these circumstances. It is vital that the Council continue to support other claimants suffering hardship in the future as well as these Benefit Cap claimants.

- 4.28 This additional strain on DHP is money that the Council would have to pay through Housing Services to support these claimants affected by the benefit cap. The unpaid rent would have to be covered by the Council and whilst a debtor account would be issued to the household if they moved on the likelihood of them being able to pay would be minimal.
- 4.29 Tenants of RSLs or other landlords that are affected by the benefit cap are equally important. Tenants would be threatened with eviction for rent arrears of £6,000 in a year. In these cases the Council would have a duty to support the tenant in the eviction proceedings and then rehouse them if the eviction is successful. This would be costly and when intervention and support from social services the NHS and criminal justice are included then these costs rise significantly.
- 4.30 Therefore whilst there is a cost of additional DHP support there are savings to be made through the upfront intervention that the DHP payment provides.
- 4.31 To mitigate the risk of a DHP overspend in 2020/2021 Housing Services have agreed to set aside £25,000 of temporary accommodation grant funding from the Scottish Government to cover any additional costs of paying DHP for Benefit Cap recipients as part of this new DHP Homelessness Prevention fund if required.
- 4.32 The Revenues and Benefits Service monitor DHP spend on a month to month basis and report this to Financial Services Management Team and the Strategic Management Team. The DHP Homelessness Prevention Fund can become a key part of that monitoring procedure.

## 5 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 This paper asks the Business Continuity Committee to approve the updating of the DHP policy to allow more support to be provided in exceptional circumstances for claimants affected by the benefit cap.

## 6.0 IMPLICATIONS

- |     |                  |   |
|-----|------------------|---|
| 6.1 | Policy           | This proposes a change to the policy for awarding DHP affecting benefit cap cases   |
| 6.2 | Financial        | Estimated cost £20,000 per annum for DHP fund. There is funding available in earmarked reserves and Housing Services are prepared to provide financial support to the fund if it is required. |
| 6.3 | Legal            | None  |
| 6.4 | HR               | None  |
| 6.5 | Equalities       | Whilst the policy change is available for all it will particularly help those where English is not their first language   |
| 6.6 | Risk             | Medium financial risk of overspending DHP fund  |
| 6.7 | Customer Service | Increased support for households affected by the Benefit  |

Cap where they have not been able to engage with JCP work coaches or move into the labour market in a 12 month period.

**Kirsty Flanagan**  
**Section 95 Officer**  
**19 May 2020**

Policy Lead: Councillor Gary Mulvaney Depute Leader

**For further information contact:** Fergus Walker, Revenues and Benefits Manager  
[fergus.walker@argyll-bute.gov.uk](mailto:fergus.walker@argyll-bute.gov.uk) Telephone 01586 555237

#### **APPENDICES**

- Appendix 1 – Scenario of Households Customer Journey With Existing DHP Policy
- Appendix 2 - Scenario of Households Customer Journey With Proposed DHP Policy
- Appendix 3 - Proposed changes to DHP Policy document

## APPENDIX 1 – SCENARIO OF HOUSEHOLDS CUSTOMER JOURNEY SUPPORTED BY THE EXISTING DHP POLICY

COUNCIL CONSIDERATION/ WEEKS OF THE YEAR	CIRCUMSTANCES	STAGE 1:	STAGE 2	STAGE 3	STAGE 4	STAGE 5
		Tenancy Week 1 to Week 13	Tenancy Week 13 to Week 26	Tenancy Week 26 to Week 52	Tenancy Year 1 to Year 2	Year 2 to Year 3
HOUSEHOLD	Family (Mum and Dad and 5 children aged between 1 and 13) From Eastern Europe but have moved to Argyll and Bute. Both parents are unemployed	No material change in Household circumstances	No material change in Household circumstances. Dad trying to find job seeing work coach at JCP	Dad moves out of the family home. Forced by authorities after found guilty of Domestic Abuse of Mum and the children	Family (Mum and 5 children. Children aged 2 to 14). Mum does not speak good English. Work is not a reasonable prospect due to her own vulnerability and the caring responsibility she has for her family.	Family (Mum and 5 children. Children aged 3 to 15). Mum does not speak good English. Work is becoming a better prospect as youngest child gets 30 hours per week free nursery provision
FINANCIAL	Receiving range of benefits including Full Housing Benefit (HB) at £120.50 per week, matches rent liability	Benefit Cap introduced by UK Government in Week 1. Reduces HB entitlement to the minimum £0.50 per week meaning that a gap of £120 per week between HB and rent.	DHP awarded £120.50 per week RENT covered by £120 pw DHP + £0.50 pw HB No rent arrears	DHP awarded £120.50 per week RENT covered by £120 pw DHP + £0.50 pw HB No rent arrears	DHP stops HB continues at £0.50 per week but now gap in rent of £120 per week. Result RENT ARREARS of £6,240	Rent arrears are escalating by the end of the year debt reaches £12,480
TENANT ACTION		Assist by landlord to submit DHP claim to Council on grounds of hardship, caused by benefit cap	At week 13 claim DHP extension. Attended appointments at JCP with work coach to a search for job	DHP claim for extension under exceptional circumstances is made and awarded.	Rent arrears, getting chased for money from landlord. Being advised to get into work when not possible to do so. Submits appeal to Tribunal Service for application of benefit cap and removal of DHP - it fails. Stress, impact on whole family, education, health, desperation uses lawyer to threaten judicial review re Council's reasonableness.	Loses appeal to tribunal service, no prospect of winning judicial review. 16 hours work per week would be enough to get WTC and be removed from the benefit cap but tenant needs supported to learn English and develop the skills required to get a job, struggling to engage due to history of problems
EXISTING DHP		DHP Paid week 1 to 13	DHP Paid week 13 to 26	DHP Paid week 26 to 52	DHP stops at 52 weeks	No DHP
LANDLORD ACTIONS	Council - Homeless	Assist tenant to claim DHP in order to avoid rent arrears accruing.	Assist tenant to claim DHP in order to avoid rent arrears accruing.	Assist tenant to claim DHP in order to avoid rent arrears accruing.	Eventually serves tenant "notice to quit" to threaten eviction in the hope that tenant may pay some rent or move on to stop accumulating rent arrears. No change though, no point in evicting tenant as they come back and present as homeless and Council must rehouse.	Ongoing dialogue with tenant but awkward given history. Rent arrears is growing problem but unsure what to do.

## APPENDIX 2 – SCENARIO OF HOUSEHOLD CUSTOMER JOURNEY SUPPORTED BY THE NEW PROPOSED DHP POLICY

COUNCIL CONSIDERATION/	CIRCUMSTANCES	STAGE 1:	STAGE 2	STAGE 3	STAGE 4	STAGE 5
		Tenancy Week 1 to Week 13	Tenancy Week 13 to Week 26	Tenancy Week 26 to Week 52	Tenancy Year 1 to Year 2	Year 2 to Year 3
HOUSEHOLD	Family (Mum and Dad and 5 children aged between 1 and 13) From Eastern Europe but have moved to Argyll and Bute. Both parents are unemployed	No material change in Household circumstances	No material change in Household circumstances. Dad trying to find job seeing work coach at JCP	Dad moves out of the family home. Forced by authorities after found guilty of Domestic Abuse of Mum and the children	Family (Mum and 5 children. Children aged 2 to 14). Mum does not speak good English. Work is not a reasonable prospect due to her own vulnerability and the caring responsibility she has for her family.	Family (Mum and 5 children. Children aged 3 to 15). Mum does not speak good English. Work is becoming a better prospect as youngest child gets 30 hours per week free nursery provision
FINANCIAL	Receiving range of benefits including Full Housing Benefit (HB) at £120.50 per week, matches rent liability	Benefit Cap introduced by UK Government in Week 1. Reduces HB entitlement to the minimum £0.50 per week meaning that a gap of £120 per week between HB and rent.	DHP awarded £120.50 per week RENT covered by £120 pw DHP + £0.50 pw HB No rent arrears	DHP awarded £120.50 per week RENT covered by £120 pw DHP + £0.50 pw HB No rent arrears	No rent arrears	No rent arrears
TENANT ACTION		Assist by landlord to submit DHP claim to Council on grounds of hardship, caused by benefit cap	At week 13 claim DHP extension. Attended appointments at JCP with work coach to a search for job	DHP claim for extension under exceptional circumstances is made and awarded.	Tenant, Landlord sign agreement. Additional 52 weeks DHP awarded until youngest child becomes 3 years old and goes into nursery. This is on basis that claimant agrees to doing small bits of education/development when it is suitable for her during the week or at weekends. Confidence building, English language lessons, the use of computer technology etc. Can be 2 - 5 hours per week. Good relationship with landlord maintained.	Youngest child goes into nursery giving Mum some time to manage the overall household, engage fully with JCP re work and undertake short-term educational programs to improve employability. After 13 weeks picks up a job as a for 16 hours per week. The Benefit Cap is removed, full housing benefit restored and all the benefits of routine and work really help the family. Good relationship with landlord is maintained and with no legacy of debt and reduced levels of stress all members of the family have a fresh start and a better chance of success.
NEW DHP POLICY ACTIONS		DHP Paid week 1 to 13	DHP Paid week 13 to 26	DHP Paid week 26 to 52	DHP awarded for additional period of 13 weeks. Realistically this will be extended for at least a further year but full review to be undertaken each quarter to ensure continued engagement of tenant in the plan.	No DHP
LANDLORD ACTIONS	Council - Homeless	Assist tenant to claim DHP in order to avoid rent arrears accruing.	Assist tenant to claim DHP in order to avoid rent arrears accruing.	Assist tenant to claim DHP in order to avoid rent arrears accruing.	Support the tenant with coordinating educational support, support from social services where appropriate etc, record and monitor actions against agreement and provide feedback to Benefits for DHP reviews.	No rent arrears, good relationship with tenant, able to move the family into suitable more permanent tenancy with RSL with reduced risk of rent arrears accruing in the future.

## APPENDIX 3

Sections highlighted in **Yellow** are proposed changes.

### 6. PERIOD OF AWARD

The period of award of a DHP will normally be:

- for a minimum period of 13 weeks unless there are exceptional circumstances where it can be for a shorter period,
- for households subject to Benefit Cap restrictions the initial award of 13 weeks will be extended to 26 weeks where evidence is forthcoming from Job Centre Plus that the household has been actively engaging with them to try to move into employment. **Payment between 26 weeks to 52 weeks can be made in exceptional circumstances for benefit cap where a full review of the claim has been carried out prior to the extension. Payment beyond 52 weeks can be extended on a case by case basis. The claimant must sign a development agreement with the Council and comply with that plan to be paid an extended DHP award under the new DHP Homelessness Prevention Fund.**
- For not more than 26 weeks except where the claimant is subject to under-occupancy restrictions, or there are other exceptional circumstances,
- Where there are exceptional circumstances, a full review of the claim must be carried out prior to any extension. Such an extension may be for a further period of up to 26 weeks, making a total of a maximum of 52 weeks for any continuous award.
- For claimants subject to under-occupancy restrictions, an initial award can be made for up to a full 52 weeks if that appears appropriate and the award may also be backdated to 1 April 2013 or such later date when the under-occupancy restriction commenced. The award may be extended following a full review of the claim for a further period of up to 52 weeks.

### 7 AWARDING A DHP

In deciding whether to award a DHP, the Benefits Unit will work together with other key stakeholders (e.g. the Council's Housing and Welfare Rights Service and Registered Social Landlords) to consider the following main factors:

- The household's financial circumstances;
- The tenancy;
- Prevention of Homelessness;
- The household's medical circumstances;
- The priority group in which the applicant falls.

Each of these factors is considered in more detail below. These factors will be taken together and an overall assessment made which balances the degree of financial hardship and the likelihood that support will help to prevent homelessness and specific relevant tenancy factors. Using this overall assessment, applicants will be classed as high, medium or low priority within each priority group.

Each month there will be an assessment of which groups can be supported. In

general all high priority applicants will rank above medium priority applicants irrespective of which group A to E they fall into. Within a priority level (high, medium or low) applicants in group A would rank above group B and so on.

The intention would be to support all groups A to E high priority cases and as many of the medium priority cases possible. It is unlikely that any low priority cases will receive support.

**PRIORITY GROUP D**

- To help secure and move to lower-cost, alternative accommodation (e.g. rent deposit)
- To help with short-term rental costs while the claimant seeks employment
- Households within 12 months of the pension credit age and subject to under-occupancy restrictions.
- Households subject to benefit cap restrictions who have taken up an appointment with a DWP work coach to review the routes to work available to them **and/or have signed a support agreement with the Housing Options team**
- Claimants subject to LHA reforms

**PRIORITY GROUP E**

- To help with short term rental costs for any other reason

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**ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL****BUSINESS CONTINUITY COMMITTEE****FINANCIAL SERVICES****11 JUNE 2020**

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**UPDATE ON EVENT GRANT FUNDING TO EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS**

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**1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1 The report provides an overview of the position on event grant funding provided to external organisations in 2020-21.
- 1.2 There are two separate papers on the agenda: Strategic Events and Festivals and Councils Supporting Communities Fund.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 The Business Continuity Committee are asked to note the different approaches in terms of the timing of distributing funds and the carry forward to future years and give consideration to the recommendations in the two separate papers on the agenda.

**3. DETAIL**

- 3.1 The Council has two Funds that provide grants to support events and festivals across Argyll and Bute:
  - Strategic Events and Festivals Fund – aimed at events more strategic in nature, with capacity to attract people from outwith the area. Amounts allocated are generally higher than those allocated via the Supporting Communities Fund.
  - Supporting Communities Fund – aimed at more local and smaller scale activities including community events, sporting events and gatherings of people.
- 3.2 For 2020-21, nine events were allocated funding from the Strategic Events and Festivals Fund totalling £90,000 and 51 groups were allocated funding from the Supporting Communities Fund totalling £98,199.
- 3.3 For the Strategic Events and Festivals Fund, the first tranche of funding (usually 90%) is distributed to the organisations 8 weeks prior to the event date. The remaining 10% is paid upon our receipt of evidence of spend and a fully completed Economic Assessment form. No monies have been paid out from this Fund in 2020-21.
- 3.4 For the Supporting Communities Fund, the funding, which is on a much smaller scale and therefore carries less risk, is distributed to the organisations once the awards are agreed at the Area Committees in March each year.
- 3.5 There are two reports on the agenda in relation to the treatment of grant awards that will not be spent within financial year 2020-21 due to the impact of COVID-19.

- The Strategic Events and Festivals report advises that 5 of the 9 events have been cancelled with the grants being conditional on the event being held within the year. These events are of a larger scale and will have a significant amount of preparation and on discussion with event organisers it is clear that expenditure has been incurred in preparation for the summer events. The paper recommends that in order to support the organisations that have had to cancel their event, the Council pays a grant to cover costs incurred by the organisation up to a maximum of 75% of the original grant award.
- The Supporting Communities Fund report advises that correspondence has been received from several groups concerned they will be unable to spend their funding this year due to the Government restrictions as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. It proposes the funding distributed in 2020-21 can be carried forward into 2021-22 if the restrictions are not relaxed to an extent that they can continue with their event in 2020-21. This will provide flexibility should events be delayed into the following year. It is further recommended that no applicant group can apply for funding in 2021-22 for a project/event/activity which duplicates that which has been funded in 2020-21.

3.6 As Section 95 Officer, I am supportive of the recommendations in both the reports and am of the view that, although there is a differing approach both approaches are considered to be reasonable in relation to the scale of the grant awards, the risks associated with them and the economic impact.

3.7 The Strategic Events and Festivals report also asks the Committee to approve a third round budget allocation for 2021-22 of £90,000. The Council is currently incurring additional costs bringing in less income due to the COVID-19 pandemic which could continue into the medium term, however, approving this small budget of £90,000 in advance of setting the Council's 2021-22 budget in February 2021 is recommended as these strategic events will play a critical role in the economic recovery of the area and they also contribute significantly to supporting local businesses and communities by bringing in additional income.

#### **4. IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 Policy – Both Funds support the economy with Argyll and Bute.

4.2 Financial – Budget has already been allocated for the Events in 2020-21.

4.3 Legal – For Strategic Events and Festivals, awards letters been distributed and grants are currently conditional on the event being held. For Supporting Communities Fund, contract extensions would be required.

4.4 HR – None.

4.5 Fairer Scotland Duty – The Supporting Communities Fund supports community groups in tackling poverty, reducing inequality and building a fairer and more inclusive Scotland.

- 4.5.1 Equalities - None
- 4.5.2 Socio-Economic Duty – The Funds seek to support economic growth of the areas.
- 4.5.3 Islands Duty – The Funds seeks to support islands communities.
- 4.6 Risk – By offering a partial grant towards costs already incurred in relation to strategic events, this will contribute positively to the economic recovery of the area. There is a risk that by carrying forward the supporting communities funding for a further year that there is difficulty in recovering any monies not spent but this is assumed to be a low risk.
- 4.7 Customer Service – None

**Kirsty Flanagan**  
**Section 95 Officer**  
**29 May 2020**

**Policy Lead for Financial Services and Major Projects: Councillor Gary Mulvaney**

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**ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL****BUSINESS CONTINUITY COMMITTEE****DEVELOPMENT AND  
ECONOMIC GROWTH****11 JUNE 2020**

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**STRATEGIC EVENTS AND FESTIVALS FUND – PROJECT UPDATE**

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**1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to ask members to give consideration to a Round 3 Strategic Events and Festivals Fund for 2021/22, and to provide an update on the Round 2 (2020/21) events, as agreed by Policy and Resources Committee on 17<sup>th</sup> December 2019.
- 1.2 A third round of grant funding would support strategic events and festivals that are to be held in 2021/22. The process adopted for Round 2 proved to be robust and successful and as such would be adopted for any subsequent rounds. Should a Round 3 be supported, it is intended to issue a call for applications in autumn 2020, for consideration by Policy and Resources Committee in winter 2020/21. However this timeline will be continually reviewed in light of Covid 19.
- 1.3 The Round 2 events, planned to be held between June and December 2020, face a set of extraordinary circumstances and challenges brought about by the coronavirus, COVID-19 pandemic and the need to social distance.
- 1.4 At the time of writing, event organisers of five events have formally confirmed the cancellation of their event (Fife Regatta, Mull of Kintyre Music Festival, Jura Music Festival, Cowal Highland Gathering and Bute Noir). The hosting of Argyllshire Gathering (Oban Games) is presently undecided. Tiree Wave Classic organisers are looking to reschedule their event, and both Mull Rally and Helensburgh Winter Festival are still planning to go ahead on their original dates as planned.
- 1.5 The event's organisers that have cancelled to date are responding to the advice and guidance set out by UK and Scottish government, namely that no mass gatherings should take place <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-19-guidance-for-mass-gatherings>. The Scottish government does not currently have powers to cancel events, but is encouraging and advising event organisers to act responsibly to support the efforts of emergency services and the wider public sector to prepare for increased numbers of cases of COVID-19 (coronavirus). <https://www.gov.scot/news/large-gathering-guidance/>

- 1.6 In acting in such a responsible manner, a significant strain is imposed on the sustainability of each event, and in some cases there is a genuine risk to the continuance of these events in the future.
- 1.7 Strategic Events and Festivals Funding is currently conditional on events taking place and as such, in cases where an event has been cancelled there is no requirement to make payment of grant. The unprecedented situation and resultant difficulties faced however warrants the consideration of adoption of a more flexible position. This paper recommends that in order to support the organisations that have had to cancel their event, that the Council pays a grant to cover costs incurred by the organisation, up to a maximum of 75% of the original grant award. The net costs already incurred should take into consideration any funding that has been received from the COVID-19 responses by the UK and Scottish Governments.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

- 1.8 Members of the Business Continuity Committee are invited to:
- a) Agree that there will be a third round of grant funding for a Strategic Events and Festivals Fund, relating to events to be held in 2021/22, and approve a third round budget allocation of £90,000;
  - b) Agree that the Round 3 2021/22 call for applications will be issued in August 2020; if this timeline is undeliverable this will come back to Members.
  - c) Note the current status of Round 2 events; and,
  - d) Approve that, for cancelled events, and in order to support the organisation through these unprecedented times, the Council pays a grant to cover costs incurred by the organisation, up to a maximum of 75% of the original grant award.

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**ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL**

**BUSINESS CONTINUITY COMMITTEE**

**DEVELOPMENT AND  
ECONOMIC GROWTH**

**11 JUNE 2020**

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**STRATEGIC EVENTS AND FESTIVALS FUND – PROJECT UPDATE**

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**2.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to ask members to give consideration to a Round 3 Strategic Events and Festivals Fund for 2021/22, and to provide an update to members on the Round 2, 2020/21, Strategic Events and Festivals Fund.
- 2.2 At their meeting of 17<sup>th</sup> December 2019, Policy and Resources Committee agreed that the total Round 2 grant pot of £90,000 be shared between nine events over financial year 2020/21.
- 2.3 The events are scheduled to be held between June and December 2020 and are therefore faced with the unprecedented set of extraordinary and challenging circumstances brought about as a result of the coronavirus, COVID-19 pandemic, with five of nine having had to cancel to date.
- 2.4 Through acting responsibly and adhering to government guidance, which asks that mass gatherings be avoided,(see para 1.4 above) the event organisers have been forced to make extraordinarily difficult decisions, which in some cases is likely to put excessive strain on the financial stability of the organisation and provides an uncertain outlook for Argyll and Bute events beyond 2020.
- 2.5 It is the purpose of this report therefore to not only provide an update on the current status of each event but to also recommend a partial release of grant for cancelled events where expenditure has already been incurred by the organisation. In doing so, this, coupled with UK and Scottish Government COVID-19 resilience funding support will hopefully increase the likelihood that the events will survive, and when combined with the potential for a Round 3 Fund provides a more positive outlook for events from next year.

**3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 Members of the Business Continuity Committee are invited to:
- a) Agree that there will be a third round of grant funding for a Strategic

- Events and Festivals Fund, relating to events to be held in 2021/22, and approve a third round budget allocation of £90,000;
- b) Agree that the Round 3 2021/22 call for applications will be issued in August 2020; if this timeline is undeliverable this will come back to Members.
  - c) Note the current status of Round 2 events; and,
  - d) Approve that, for cancelled events, and in order to support the organisation through these unprecedented times, the Council pays a grant to cover costs incurred by the organisation, up to a maximum of 75% of the original grant award.

#### **4.0 DETAIL**

- 4.1 The overarching aim of the Strategic Events and Festivals Fund is to support event organisers to enhance and grow their events with the result that more visitors are attracted to Argyll and Bute, providing substantial economic benefit to the respective areas. The economic benefit from future events held post COVID-19 will play an even more important role in the economic recovery for the area. This report therefore requests that members give consideration to holding a third round of grant funding for a Strategic Events and Festivals Fund and to providing a Round 3 Fund of £90,000 to be delivered over 2021/22.
- 4.2 In previous years the request for consideration of holding a further round of grant funding for a Strategic Events and Festivals Fund went before the Policy and Resources committee. Given the current situation this is not possible, however timing requires that a decision is made in respect of a Round 3 Fund as soon as possible.
- 4.3 Following Round 1 a lessons learned exercise was undertaken and the process was amended and approved by Policy and Resources Committee in 2019. The process adopted for Round 2 proved to be robust and successful and no amendments are therefore being proposed to the process for Round 3, with the exception that events that have been forced to cancel due to COVID-19 and received no SEF Round 2 funding will score an additional point should they make a grant application to Round 3 for 2021/22.
- 4.4 As was the case with Round 2 it is intended to issue a call for applications to Round 3 in autumn 2020, for consideration by Policy and Resources Committee in winter 2020/21. However, this timeline will be continually reviewed in light of COVID-19, and if it requires to be amended a further report will be brought back to members.
- 4.5 The Round 2 Fund of £90,000 was agreed to be distributed to the organisers of nine events, as identified within the following table, and be released over financial year 2020/21.
- 4.6 Due to the extraordinary impact of the coronavirus, COVID-19 pandemic and the unprecedented challenges created as a result, the organisers of five Round 2 events have had to make the difficult decision to cancel their event for 2020/21.

An update on the current status of each can be found as follows:

Event	Status	20/21 Grant	Scheduled For:
William Fife Regatta	Cancelled	£4,500	June
Bute Noir	Cancelled	£3,500	July
Mull of Kintyre Music Festival	Cancelled	£11,000	August
Oban Games (Argyllshire Gathering)	Under consideration	£5,000	August
Cowal Highland Gathering	Cancelled	£30,000	August
Jura Music Festival	Cancelled	£5,000	September
Tiree Wave Classic	Under consideration	£5,000	October
Mull Rally	Going ahead	£21,000	October
Helensburgh Winter Festival	Going ahead	£5,000	November

- 4.7 Grant is conditional on an event being held, so in cases where events have had to be cancelled there is currently no requirement or method to make payment from the Strategic Events and Festivals Fund. The loss of any event from the area is likely to have significant impact on the local economy, especially those events which are longstanding. The cancellation of events will in some cases also have a serious impact on the financial stability of the organisation that runs the event, which in turn jeopardises the ability of the respective event to continue beyond this year. The set of unprecedented circumstances however warrants the adoption of a more flexible approach to offer support towards event costs in such difficult times.
- 4.8 On discussion with event organisers it is clear that expenditure has been incurred in the early part of this year in preparation for summer events, and organisers have voiced their concerns about the sustainability of events going forward. The COVID-19 pandemic has created an exceptional set of circumstances for the organisations that could never have been predicted and therefore it is acknowledged that some organisations will have legitimately incurred expenditure in relation to their now cancelled event.
- 4.9 In order to support the organisations who have cancelled their event, it is recommended that the Council pays a grant to cover costs incurred by the organisation, up to a maximum of 75% of the original grant award. The costs incurred should take into consideration any funding that has been received from the COVID-19 responses by the UK and Scottish Governments.
- 4.10 For those events that are still going ahead as planned the grant will be paid out as per existing arrangements, and against eligible items only. If any events are rescheduled, and are still proposed to be held in financial year 2020/21, it is

proposed to honour the grant, given the special circumstances and the fact that this would still allow for any commitment to be drawn down during the period of the Round 2 Fund.

## **5.0 CONCLUSION**

5.1 As the impact of the coronavirus, COVID-19 pandemic is still unknown, the status of the events may continue to change. The loss of any event from the local economy will be significant, and as such in an effort to support the economic recovery it is recommended that where organisers have incurred legitimate expenditure to date, that the Council pays a grant to cover costs incurred, up to a maximum of 75% of the original grant award.

5.2 The provision of a Round 3 fund for 2021/22 would provide much needed hope and continuity in such challenging and uncertain times.

## **6.0 IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 Policy – The Council's Economic Strategy supports the value of events and festivals for their positive impact on the economy.

6.2 Financial – £90,000 in grant has been made available for a second round of Strategic Events and Festivals Funding for 2020/21. At the time of writing five of the nine successful events will not be held in 2020. This paper asks that a Round 3 is facilitated with a budget of £90,000.

6.3 Legal – Award letters have been issued but grant contracts are yet to be distributed.

6.4 HR – Resourced from existing staff

6.5 Fairer Scotland Duty:

6.5.1 Equalities - protected characteristics - None

6.5.2 Socio-economic Duty – The Fund seeks to support the economic growth of areas

6.5.3 Islands – The Fund seeks to support island economies by encouraging increased levels of visitors

6.6. Risk – The full effects of the impact that the coronavirus, COVID-19 pandemic will have is at this stage unclear, although it is anticipated that the impact will be severe and that some events will be unable to continue. By utilising the Fund to support the sustainability of the organisation, the Fund will positively contribute to the economic recovery of the local area.

6.7 Customer Service - None

**Kirsty Flanagan, Executive Director with responsibility for Development and Economic Growth**

20<sup>th</sup> May 2020

**For further information contact:**

Audrey Martin, Transformation Projects and Regeneration Manager

Tel: 01546 604180

**APPENDICES**

None

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**ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL  
COMMUNITY PLANNING AND  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT TEAM**

**BUSINESS CONTINUITY COMMITTEE  
11 JUNE 2020**

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**COUNCIL'S SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES FUND 2020/21**

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**1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This report seeks agreement for the council's response to groups who this year, due to impacts from Covid-19, wish to carry funding forward into 2021/22.

In particular the issue of restriction of movement and social distancing is impacting on the projects that were awarded funding by Area Committees in March 2020.

The recommendation is that the funding is allowed to be carried forward into financial year 2021/22 to allow community projects to take place at a point in the future and before end March 2022.

It is further recommended that the applicant group will not be able to apply for funding in 2021/22 for a project / event / activity which duplicates that which has been funded for 2020/21. For the avoidance of doubt, the applicant group could make an application for funding in 2021/22 for a project / event / activity which is not a duplication of an existing contract for funding.

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**ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL**

**BUSINESS CONTINUITY COMMITTEE**

**COMMUNITY PLANNING AND**

**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT TEAM**

**11 JUNE 2020**

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**SUPPORTING COMMUNITY FUND**

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**2.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 2.1 Supporting Communities Fund is issued once a year. Projects to be supported in financial year 2020/21 were agreed at Area Committee meetings in March 2020. Awards of funding require the applicant to undertake the activities, event or project between 01 April 2020 and 31 March 2021.
- 2.2 The financial sum available in each of the four areas for the year was £22,500 with variances in each area supplementing this due to return of unspent funds from the previous year.
- 2.3 This report notes the impact of Covid-19 on funded community projects this year and accommodates for the disruption and challenging circumstances faced by groups by extending the time period of the contract.

**3.0 RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 It is recommended that applicants awarded funding from the council's Supporting Communities Fund in 2020/21 are allowed to carry forward their project, activity or event as set out in their application, in to the following financial year. The deadline for spend would move from 31 March 2021 to 31 March 2022.
- 3.2 It is further recommended that the applicant group will not be able to apply for funding in 2021/22 for a project / event / activity which duplicates that which has been funded for 2020/21.

- 3.3 A communication is issued to all successful applicants for 2020/21 advising them of these agreed recommendations and highlighting that their funded project event or activity can be undertaken through different approaches such as on-line to provide as much flexibility as possible to allow it take place.

#### **4.0 DETAIL**

- 4.1 51 groups were allocated funding totalling £98,199.29 from the 2020/21 Supporting Communities Fund. Area Committees approved this spend at their meetings in March 2020.
- 4.2 Awards of funding include community events, sporting events and numerous gatherings of people that will possibly be cancelled or delayed due to the Covid-19 outbreak and government restrictions in place.
- 4.3 Correspondence has been received from several groups concerned that they are unable to spend the funding within the current time period up to end March 2021 due to current circumstances and their projects requiring to take place at certain points in time in the calendar year.

#### **5.0 CONCLUSION**

- 5.1 Extension of the grant funds into 2021/22 would allow applicants to continue with the agreed project and accommodates for the disruption to planned activity due to Covid-19 and the challenging circumstances this creates for community projects at this time. Should they wish to do so, the applicant group could make another application for funding in 2021/22 for a project / event / activity so long as this is not a duplication of an existing contract for funding.

#### **6.0 IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Policy
- 6.2 Financial: Recommendations in the report are limited to the budget allocation available in 2020/21 for the Supporting Communities Fund
- 6.3 Legal: Contract extension would need to be granted with appropriate wording sent to applicants in correspondence with Legal Services.
- 6.4 HR - none

- 6.5 Fairer Scotland Duty: The Supporting Communities Fund supports community groups in tackling poverty, reducing inequality and building a fairer and more inclusive Scotland.
- 6.5.1 Equalities - protected characteristics
- 6.5.2 Socio-economic Duty: None known
- 6.5.3 Islands: there are a number of funded projects on islands.
- 6.6. Risk - risk to the public pound is managed and end of project reports required
- 6.7 Customer Service: none

**Chief Executive Pippa Milne**

**Policy Lead Cllr Rory Colville**

**Community Planning Manager Rona Gold**

8 May 2020

**For further information contact:** Rona Gold on 01436 658862

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ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL  
EDUCATION SERVICE

BUSINESS CONTINUITY COMMITTEE  
11 JUNE 2020

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**THE EXPANSION OF FUNDED EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE IN  
SCOTLAND– ARGYLL AND BUTE EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE UPDATE**

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**1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the progress being made by the Education Service in preparing for the expansion of Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) and the implementation of 1140 hours of funded ELC in Argyll and Bute.

1.2

Specifically the report provides information on:

- Removal of the statutory duty to deliver 1140 hours of ELC from August 2020
- The ongoing progress towards full implementation of 1140hrs.
- Success of implementation to date.

1.3

As we have progressed with implementation the following factors have informed changes to our planned delivery:

- Impact of COVID-19, the Scottish Government have removed the statutory duty to complete the implementation of 1140 hours of ELC available to each eligible child from 1 August 2020.
- Consultation with parents, partners, practitioners and community groups, and
- Ongoing work with property and catering colleagues.

1.4

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that Business Continuity Committee:

- Note that the Scottish Government have of April 2020 removed the statutory duty to complete the implementation of 1140 hours of ELC available to each eligible child from 1 August 2020;
- Note Education and Property Service have continued to progress the expansion plans where possible and will be in a position to resume key projects as soon as restrictions on lockdown are lifted;
- Endorse the significant work the Early Years Team has undertaken in partnership with colleagues from other services in ensuring 1140hrs could be implemented across Argyll and Bute from August 2020 were

- there no COVID-19 restrictions;
- Note the progress of implementation to date;
  - Request that the Executive Director with responsibility for Education brings forward progress updates in relation to the Expansion of Early Learning and Childcare to future meetings as more information is provided from Scottish Government.

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**ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL**  
**EDUCATION SERVICE**

**BUSINESS CONTINUITY COMMITTEE**  
**11 June 2020**

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**THE EXPANSION OF FUNDED EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE IN  
SCOTLAND– ARGYLL AND BUTE EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE UPDATE**

---

**2.0 INTRODUCTION**

2.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the progress being made by the Education Service in preparing for the expansion of Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) and the implementation of 1140 hours of funded ELC in Argyll and Bute.

2.2 Specifically the report provides information on:

- Removal of the statutory duty to deliver 1140 hours of ELC from August 2020.
- The ongoing progress towards full implementation of 1140hrs.
- Success of implementation to date.

2.3 As we have progressed with implementation the following factors have informed changes to our planned delivery:

- Impact of COVID-19, the Scottish Government have removed the statutory duty to complete the implementation of 1140 hours of ELC available to each eligible child from 1 August 2020.
- Consultation with parents, partners, practitioners and community groups, and
- Ongoing work with property and catering colleagues.

**3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

3.1 It is recommended that Business Continuity Committee:

- Note that the Scottish Government have of April 2020 removed the statutory duty to complete the implementation of 1140 hours of ELC available to each eligible child from 1 August 2020;
- Note Education and Property Service have continued to progress the expansion plans where possible and will be in a position to resume key projects as soon as restrictions on lockdown are lifted;
- Endorse the significant work the Early Years Team has undertaken in

partnership with colleagues from other services in ensuring 1140hrs could be implemented across Argyll and Bute from August 2020 were there no COVID-19 restrictions;

- Note the progress of implementation to date;
- Request that the Executive Director with responsibility for Education brings forward progress updates in relation to the Expansion of Early Learning and Childcare to future meetings as more information is provided from Scottish Government.

#### **4.0 DETAIL**

##### **4.1 Progress towards full implementation of 1140hrs**

The Scottish Government announced as a policy commitment the expansion of the provision of funded ELC from 600 hours to 1140 hours by 2020. However, it should be noted that due to the impact of COVID-19, the Scottish Government have of April 2020 removed the statutory duty to complete the implementation of 1140 hours of ELC available to each eligible child from 1 August 2020. Education and Property Service have continued to progress the expansion plans where possible and will be in a position to resume key projects as soon as restrictions on lockdown are lifted. A number of refurbishments are now likely to be delayed until next summer but this will not affect our ability to deliver 1140hours from August should the COVID-19 situation allow.

The priority for the expansion to 1140 hours is to improve children's outcomes and close the poverty-related attainment gap. In addition, the expansion aims to support parents into work, study or training. The Scottish Government's four principles of the ELC expansion are: quality, flexibility, affordability, and accessibility.

Scottish Government has stated that quality is 'at the heart' of the expansion and that achieving a high-quality ELC experience for children is a key objective.

The theory of change for the expansion is that, by delivering ELC that is high-quality, flexible, affordable and accessible, parents will be encouraged to take up their child's entitlement to funded ELC, especially those from the least advantaged backgrounds. In turn, children's development will improve, the poverty-related attainment gap will narrow and more parents will be able to work, study or train.

The 1140 hours of ELC will be offered by a range of providers across Argyll and Bute, including Local Authority, Private, Voluntary, Independent and Childminders.

##### **4.2 Phasing by locality**

###### **Helensburgh and Lomond**

100% of children in the locality have access to 1140 hours from partner, LA and childminder settings. 1140 hours could continue across Helensburgh and Lomond from August.

New setting at Rosneath - when construction restarts works restart it will take 5 weeks to complete. If not completed by August registered children can be accommodated at Kilcreggan or Kiddlywinks.

Refurb at Garelochhead was being prepared for planning, we have agreed to move this project to summer 2021 as 1140 hours is already being delivered. This will allow property to focus on other projects.

### **Bute and Cowal**

100% of children in the locality have access to 1140 hours from partner and LA settings. 1140 hours can continue across Bute and Cowal from August.

Planning application decision is due for Silver Birch Outdoor Nursery in Hunters Quay, Dunoon. This project remains a priority and projected completion is now projected as August.

### **Mid Argyll, Kintyre and Islay**

100% of children in the locality have access to 1140 hours from partner, LA settings and Childminders. 1140 hours can continue across MAKI from August.

Kilmartin school community have agreed a new plan that benefits not just the ELC, but also the school. This will be delivered in summer 2021. Parents can continue to access 1140 hours as a blended placement with other settings.

We are awaiting the planning permission for Kilmory Outdoor Nursery, this remains a priority for completion by August.

Inveraray Primary ELC, the contractor has been identified and can be onsite when restrictions allow. The completion date is now October 2020. 1140 hours is being delivered.

Port Charlotte Primary ELC, due to capacity issues in property a decision was reached to delay the planned work until Summer 2021. 1140 hours is and can be delivered, this work is to relocate the ELC into the main building and remove a temporary structure. We will however go to tender by December 2020 to ensure a contractor is in place.

### **Oban, Lorn and the Isles**

Tiree, Tobermory, Lismore, Iona, Easdale and Dalmally are all delivering 1140 hours and can from August.

With current restrictions it is unlikely that the Health and Social Care Partnership staff based at Willow View can be moved to the alternative accommodation. As a result the completion date for this new standalone setting is not known.

Contact has been made with our partner providers in Oban who can accommodate children who would have been due to attend Willowview.

Dunbeg planning application has been granted. Tender document is being prepared and we are aware modular companies are still operating. Once on site

this project will take up to 7 weeks to complete and remains a priority to open in August to ensure 1140 could be delivered across Oban.

Lochnell Primary ELC is another priority. The building warrant is being sought and billing proceeding to allow us to go to tender. If this work can't be progressed this summer 1140 hours could still be delivered.

Salen Primary English and Gaelic Medium ELC, planning is in place, building warrant being sought and a consultant being used to progress more quickly to tender. If a contractor submits a tender within budget, subject to COVID 19, it is possible to complete this project by end of October. A landscape architect has been commissioned to create a high quality secure outdoor area to allow separation between Gaelic and English medium ELC. Care Inspectorate have agreed to this and increased the registered places from 20 to 24. This solution could run for the full academic year offering 1140hrs if needed.

Taynuilt Primary ELC contractor is in place ready to start subject to COVID 19. This project will require 7 weeks access with no children.

Strath of Appin Primary ELC is ready to go to tender. If tendered within budget and a confidence in the contractor's ability to deliver in a 7 week period we will proceed, COVID 19 dependant. Otherwise we will delay until summer 2021.

It is anticipated that we can offer all children 1140 hours across OLI. Within Oban some parents will not get their first or second choice due to the delay on Willowview.

All parents will have their child's nursery setting confirmed by June. However, the start date and pattern of attendances can only be subsequently confirmed and are COVID 19 dependant.

### 4.3 **Staffing**

We are continuing with recruitment and expect to have all required staff in post by August 2020 with the exception of Willow View which we will begin recruitment for in June.

### 4.4 **Finance**

To support Partner Providers and Child Minders and ensure they are financially viable for 1140 hours we have made an upfront payment for their services until the end of July, in line with national guidance.

From August 2020, in line with the new Early Years National Standards, we will pay our Partner Providers and Child Minders at the start of each calendar month.

We have increased the hourly rate for 3 and 4 year olds in partner providers from £4.45 to £5.31. In addition we have undertaken an exercise to check this rate is sustainable and reflects national policy priorities, including funding to enable payment of the real Living Wage to all childcare workers delivering the funded entitlement. The Early Years Team are supported in this exercise by finance,

procurement and the Research and Engagement Officer and are currently analyzing the seven responses made.

#### 4.5 **Developing Workforce**

To support the quality of deliver of 1140 hours the Early Years Team offers an extensive training catalogue free to staff working in Local Authority and Partner Providers.

#### 4.6 **Partnership Working**

We continue to work closely with colleagues in property to ensure we deliver 24 refurbishments, 4 extensions and one modular build that are required to deliver 1140 hours. The Appendix illustrates these updated plans.

Colleagues in catering continue to work alongside the Early Years team to review plans to ensure that by any new statutory deadline to deliver 1140 hours that all children can receive a two course meal that meets the national requirements.

We are an active member of the Northern Alliance Early Years work stream in which we share learning as part of the expansion of ELC across the Northern Alliance Regional Improvement Collaborative with a focus on quality and more recently on COVID-19.

### 5.0 **CONCLUSION**

5.1 This paper outlines the progress across Argyll and Bute phasing in 1140 hours of ELC for approval of Business Continuity Committee.

### 6.0 **IMPLICATIONS**

- |     |  |  |
|-----|--|--|
| 6.1 | Policy   | The phasing in of 1140 hours will assist the Education Service to implement the relevant sections contained within the Children and Young People Act (Scotland) 2014.  |
| 6.2 | Financial  | Funding from Scottish Government is adequate in allowing Argyll and Bute Council to phase in 1140 hours.   |
| 6.3 | Legal  | The phasing in of 1140 hours is assisting the Education Service to implement the relevant sections contained within the Children and Young People Act (Scotland) 2014. |
| 6.4 | HR   | Workforce development and recruitment is required to continue to deliver the expectations set out in the Delivery Plan.  |
| 6.5 | Fairer Scotland Duty: There are no potential issues around this. |  |

6.5.1 Equalities - protected characteristics

The Delivery Plan aims to respond to the challenge of reducing inequality and improving outcomes for children and their families within the diverse geographical and social context of Argyll and Bute.

6.5.2 Socio-economic Duty 1140 hours must be free at the point of entry. By any new deadline, all children in ELC will receive a free healthy and nutritious meal.

6.5.3 Islands By August we could deliver 1140 hours across our island settings.

6.6. Risk A number of risks exist with workforce recruitment and development, provision of a free meal by 2020 and, as yet unknown levels of uptake within communities.

6.7 Customer Service Our youngest children and eligible 2 year olds will benefit most from the expansion of ELC. There are significant benefits for families with parents/carers able to use the extended hours to enable them to return to employment, reduce childcare costs and access training

**Douglas Hendry**

**Executive Director with responsibility for Education Services**

**Anne Paterson**

**Head of Education: Lifelong Learning & Support and Chief Education Officer**

**Councillor Yvonne McNeilly**

**Policy Lead for Education and Lifelong Learning**

**For further information contact:**

Wendy Brownlie, Education Manager: Early Years, Early Intervention, Health and Wellbeing,

Argyll House, Alexandra Parade, Dunoon.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Argyll and Bute Early Years 1140 Hours Phasing Plan

# ARGYLL AND BUTE EARLY YEARS 1140 HOURS PHASING PLAN



This Phasing Plan outlines our phasing in of 1140 hours, however this plan could be subject to change depending on catering, building and staffing requirements.

### Academic Year 2017/2018

Area	Setting	Phased date
Oban, Lorn and The Isles	Tiree Pre 5 (LA)	Aug-17
Oban, Lorn and The Isles	Tobermory Pre 5 (LA)	Aug-17
Cowal and Bute	Apple Tree Nursery (PP)	Jan-18
Cowal and Bute	Cairndow Community Childcare (PP)	Jan-18
Mid Argyll, Kintyre and Islay	Inveraray Pre 5 (LA)	Jan-18
Oban, Lorn and The Isles	Lismore Pre 5 (LA)	Jan-18
Mid Argyll, Kintyre and Islay	Rhunahaorine Pre 5 (LA)	Jan-18
Cowal and Bute	Rothesay Joint Campus Pre 5 (LA)	Jan-18
Cowal and Bute	Rothesay Playgroup (PP)	Jan-18
Cowal and Bute	Strachur Pre 5 (LA)	Jan-18

### Academic Year 2018/2019

Area	Setting	Phased date
Mid Argyll, Kintyre and Islay	Bowmore English Pre 5 (LA)	Oct-18
Mid Argyll, Kintyre and Islay	Bowmore Gaelic Pre 5 (LA) (EL Class)	Oct-18
Mid Argyll, Kintyre and Islay	Craignish Pre 5 (LA)	Oct-18
Cowal and Bute	Innellan & Toward FC Sunbeams (PP)	Oct-18
Helensburgh and Lomond	Kilcreggan Pre 5 (LA)	Oct-18
Cowal and Bute	Kilmodan Pre 5 (LA)	Oct-18
Cowal and Bute	Lochgoilhead Pre 5 (LA)	Oct-18
Mid Argyll, Kintyre and Islay	Port Charlotte Pre 5 (LA)	Oct-18
Mid Argyll, Kintyre and Islay	Port Ellen Pre 5 (LA)	Oct-18
Mid Argyll, Kintyre and Islay	Gigha Pre 5 (LA)	Nov-18
Mid Argyll, Kintyre and Islay	Kelms Pre 5 (LA)	Nov-18

and Islay		
Mid Argyll, Kintyre and Islay	Small Isles Pre 5 (LA)	Nov-18
Oban, Lorn and The Isles	Iona Pre 5 (LA)	Jan-19
Mid Argyll, Kintyre and Islay	Tayvallich Pre 5 (LA)	Jan-19
Oban, Lorn and The Isles	Easdale Pre 5 (LA)	Mar-19
Helensburgh and Lomond	Arrochar Pre 5 (LA)	Apr-19

### Academic Year 2019/2020

Area	Setting	Phased date
Mid Argyll, Kintyre and Islay	Campbeltown Aqualibrium Early Learning and Childcare (LA)	Aug-19
Helensburgh and Lomond	Cardross Early Learning and Childcare (LA)	Aug-19
Mid Argyll, Kintyre and Islay	Ardrishaig Early Learning and Childcare (LA)	Aug-19
Helensburgh and Lomond	B.A.S.I.C and Corner House Nursery (PP)	Aug-19
Mid Argyll, Kintyre and Islay	Badden Farm (PP)	Aug-19
Mid Argyll, Kintyre and Islay	Campbeltown Nursery (LA)	Aug-19
Mid Argyll, Kintyre and Islay	Carradale Pre 5 (LA)	Aug-19
Helensburgh and Lomond	Clyde Nursery (PP)	Aug-19
Helensburgh and Lomond	Colgrain Pre 5 (LA)	Aug-19
Mid Argyll, Kintyre and Islay	Dalintober Pre 5 (LA)	Aug-19
Oban, Lorn and The Isles	Dalmally Pre 5 (LA)	Aug-19

## Academic Year 2019/2020 cont.

<b>Area</b>	<b>Setting</b>	<b>Phased date</b>
Helensburgh and Lomond	Drumfork Nursery (PP)	Aug-19
Mid Argyll, Kintyre and Islay	Drumlemble Pre 5 (LA)	Aug-19
Helensburgh and Lomond	Garelochhead Playgroup (PP)	Aug-19
Helensburgh and Lomond	John Logie Baird Nursery(LA)	Aug-19
Helensburgh and Lomond	Kanga Rhu (PP)	Aug-19
Helensburgh and Lomond	Kidlywinks (PP)	Aug-19
Mid Argyll, Kintyre and Islay	Lochgilphead Pre 5 (LA)	Aug-19
Helensburgh and Lomond	Lomond School Nursery (PP)	Aug-19
Mid Argyll, Kintyre and Islay	Meadows (PP) – Eligible 2 year olds only	Aug-19
Helensburgh and Lomond	Mulberry Bush (PP)	Aug-19
Helensburgh and Lomond	Nursery Rhymes (PP)	Aug-19
Mid Argyll, Kintyre and Islay	Riverside Rascals (PP)	Aug-19
Mid Argyll, Kintyre and Islay	Southend Pre 5 (LA)	Aug-19
Helensburgh and Lomond	St Joseph's Pre 5 (LA)	Aug-19
Cowal and Bute	Tighnabraich Pre 5 (LA)	Aug-19
Mid Argyll, Kintyre and Islay	Tarbert ELC (LA)	Oct-19
Cowal and Bute	Clyde Cottage Nursery (LA)	Jan-20
Cowal and Bute	Clyde Cottage Voluntary Nursery (PP)	Jan-20
Cowal and Bute	Dunoon Pre 5 (LA)	Jan-20
Cowal and Bute	Kirn Pre 5 (LA)	Jan-20
Cowal and Bute	Patchwork 2-5 Nursery (PP)	Jan-20

**Academic Year 2019/2020 cont.**

<b>Area</b>	<b>Setting</b>	<b>Phased date</b>
Cowal and Bute	Sandbank English Pre 5 (LA)	Jan-20
Cowal and Bute	Sandbank Gaelic Pre 5 (LA)	Jan-20
Oban, Lorn and The Isles	Kilninver Pre 5 (LA)	Jan-20

**Academic Year 2020/2021**

<b>Area</b>	<b>Setting</b>	<b>Phased date</b>
Oban, Lorn and The Isles	Arinagour Pre 5 (LA)	Aug-20
Oban, Lorn and The Isles	Bunessan Pre 5 (LA)	Aug-20
Oban, Lorn and The Isles	Dunbeg Pre 5 (LA)	Aug-20
Oban, Lorn and The Isles	Kilchattan Pre 5 (LA)	Aug-20
Oban, Lorn and The Isles	Little Learners (PP) CLOSING JUNE 2020	Aug-20
Oban, Lorn and The Isles	Lochnell Pre 5 (LA)	Aug-20
Oban, Lorn and The Isles	Luing Pre 5 (LA)	Aug-20
Oban, Lorn and The Isles	Oban First Steps (PP)	Aug-20
Oban, Lorn and The Isles	Park Pre 5 (LA)	Aug-20
Oban, Lorn and The Isles	Rainbow Childcare – Oban (PP)	Aug-20
Oban, Lorn and The Isles	Rockfield English Pre 5 (LA)	Aug-20
Oban, Lorn and The Isles	Rockfield Gaelic Pre 5 (LA)	Aug-20

## Academic Year 2020/2021 cont.

Area	Setting	Phased date
Oban, Lorn and The Isles	Salen English Pre 5 (LA)	Aug-20
Oban, Lorn and The Isles	Salen Gaelic Pre 5 (LA)	Aug-20
Oban, Lorn and The Isles	Soroba Young Family Centre (PP)	Aug-20
Oban, Lorn and The Isles	Stramash (PP)	Aug-20
Oban, Lorn and The Isles	Strath of Appin Pre 5 (LA)	Aug-20
Oban, Lorn and The Isles	Taynuilt Pre 5 (LA)	Aug-20
Oban, Lorn and The Isles	*Willowview Early Learning and Childcare <b>Delayed due to COVID 19</b>	Aug-20 <b>Jan 2021</b>
Helensburgh and Lomond	*Rosneath Early Learning and Childcare (LA)	Aug-20
Helensburgh and Lomond	Stepping Stones (PP)	Aug-20
Mid Argyll, Kintyre and Islay	Kilmartin Pre 5 (LA) <b>New Plan agreed with school community which will delay opening, parents happy to access 3 days plus days at other setting</b>	Aug-20 <b>Aug 2021</b>
Mid Argyll, Kintyre and Islay	* MAKI Pups Outdoor Nursery (PP)	Aug-20
Bute and Cowal	*Silver Birch Outdoor Nursery (LA)	Aug-20

\*subject to Care Inspectorate registration



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**ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL**  
**EDUCATION SERVICE**

**BUSINESS CONTINUITY COMMITTEE**  
**11 JUNE 2020**

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**CARE EXPERIENCED CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

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**1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1.1 The main purpose of this report is to update members of the Business Continuity Committee with information about interventions being taken within Education Services to ensure that Care Experienced Children and Young People achieve the best possible educational outcomes.

1.2 The report also details the expenditure against the grant allocated by Scottish Government to Argyll and Bute for session 2019/20 from the Scottish Attainment Challenge Care Experienced Children and Young People Fund.

1.3 Recommendations

It is recommended that Business Continuity Committee:

- a) Continues to endorse the work undertaken by Argyll and Bute Education Services as part of the Corporate Parenting Board to improve the educational attainment and life chances of Care Experienced Children and Young People.
- b) Notes that the spending plan for the grant allocated by Scottish Government to Argyll and Bute for session 2019/20 from the Scottish Attainment Challenge Care Experienced Children and Young People Fund has been produced and monitored by the Education Lead (Principal Teacher) for Looked After Children, in consultation with key partners and specifically the Social Work Lead for Looked After Children, the Chief Education Officer and Chief Social Worker.
- c) Agrees that the Chief Education Officer, Head of Education: Lifelong Learning and Support continues to provide updates on the improved outcomes for Care Experienced Children and Young People to Corporate Parenting Board and Business Continuity Committee/Community Services Committee.

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**ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL**  
**EDUCATION SERVICE**

**BUSINESS CONTINUITY COMMITTEE**  
**11 JUNE 2020**

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## **CARE EXPERIENCED CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

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### **2.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 2.1 In 2018, as part of the National Improvement Framework for Scottish Education and Attainment Scotland Fund (a targeted initiative focused on supporting young people affected by poverty and deprivation across Scotland), specific funding was directed towards supporting Care Experienced Children and Young People. The term 'care experience' is now a widely used term within the sector to describe any person who has experience of being in care, regardless of their placement length, type or age; this term is used (as opposed to the statutory term 'Looked After Children') to ensure that our practice is inclusive and provides for all groups of young people who experience care.

Argyll and Bute Council was awarded a grant of up to £118,800.00, payable over the current academic year 2019/20 (up to £79,200.00 payable by 14 February 2020 and the remaining amount of up to £39,600.00 by 29 May 2020). An evaluation of spend for financial year 19/20 was submitted and approved by Scottish Government in February. The spend plan for the remainder of the grant had also been approved but due to COVID 19, an update was issued from Government at the end of March, stating that flexibility will be offered in the use of this funding to address changing needs.

### **3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that Business Continuity Committee:

- a) Continues to endorse the work undertaken by Argyll and Bute Education Services as part of the Corporate Parenting Board to improve the educational attainment and life chances of Care Experienced Children and Young People.
- b) Notes that the spending plan for the grant allocated by Scottish Government to Argyll and Bute for session 2019/20 from the Scottish Attainment Challenge Care Experienced Children and Young People Fund has been produced and monitored by the Education Lead (Principal Teacher) for Looked After Children, in consultation with key partners and specifically the Social Work

Lead for Looked After Children, the Chief Education Officer and Chief Social Worker.

- c) Agrees that the Chief Education Officer, Head of Education: Lifelong Learning and Support continues to provide updates on the improved outcomes for Care Experienced Children and Young People to Corporate Parenting Board and Business Continuity Committee/Community Services Committee.

#### 4.0 DETAIL

- 4.1 Argyll and Bute Council was awarded a grant of up to £118,800.00, payable over the current academic year 2019/20 (up to £79,200.00 payable by 14 February 2020 and the remaining amount of up to £39,600.00 by 29 May 2020). The spend evaluation submitted to Scottish Government was as follows:

Item (e.g. staffing, resources, training, intervention etc)	Amount (£)	Additional detail
Staffing	66,941.21	Education Lead post Looked After Health and Wellbeing Liaison Officers
Activities	5,000.00	Enhanced Curriculum activities for our Children's Houses
Transport	4,258.79	Transport to allow extended curriculum provision for pupils on flexible learning plans.
Emotional/Wellbeing Support	2,000.00	Cool2Talk contribution.
Training	1,000.00	Staff training in nurturing and trauma-responsive family support.
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>79,200.00</b>	

- 4.2 The spend plan for the uncommitted remainder of the fund, to cover the period until June 2020, was as follows:

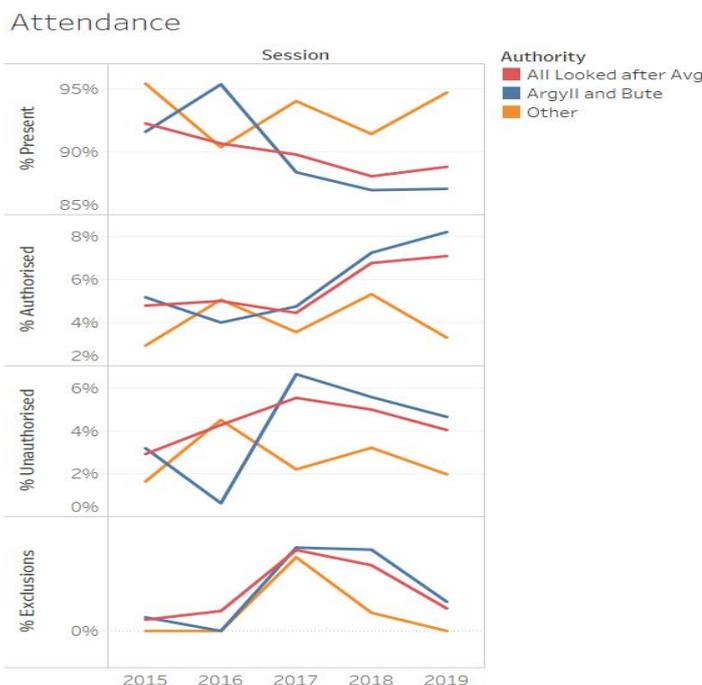
Item (e.g. staffing, resources, training, intervention etc)	Additional detail
Staffing	Education Lead post Looked After Health and Wellbeing Liaison Officers
Activities	Small test of change trial for development of

	Inspiring Internships Programme to allow pupils under 16 to access nurturing work experience placements.
Transport	Transport to allow extended curriculum provision for pupils on flexible learning plans.

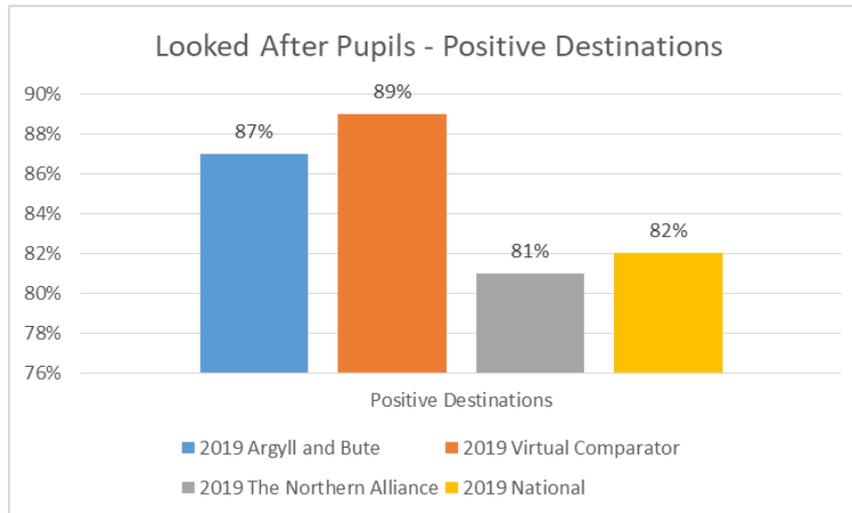
The spend plan for the remainder of the grant had also been approved but due to COVID 19, an update was issued from Government at the end of March, stating that flexibility will be offered in the use of this funding to address changing needs. A further update on this was due from Scottish Government in the week beginning 8.5.20.

4.3 Data on attendance, exclusions and attainment has been provided throughout the last session to the Corporate Parenting Board and to the Community Services Committee. Both qualitative and quantitative data has shown significant improvements in relation to education provision for our Care Experienced Children and Young People, increased scrutiny and tracking of progress, reduced exclusions, increased use of flexible approaches to learning and increased understanding of the impact of trauma amongst staff. Capacity has also been increased to support this cohort through the creation of a new casual Looked After Health and Wellbeing Liaison Officer Post. Recruitment is currently underway to ensure that there is a bank of officers across the authority who can provide trauma-informed mentoring and support for pupils who might struggle to engage with a more conventional curriculum offer. Applications to the post have been of a very high quality.

The following tables (produced in January 2020) show improvements in attendance and exclusions data:



A detailed analysis of SQA and Insight data relating to Care Experienced Young People was included in the Education Performance Data Analysis Report, presented to Community Services Committee on 10.12.19. Additional data from the February 2020 Insight update showed that positive destinations for Looked After Children who left education in 2019 were as follows (figures rounded up or down):



Although below the virtual comparator, we are in line with our service plan success measure and above the Northern Alliance and National figures. This is a greatly improved position. The impact of the dedicated lead for Care Experienced Young People has enhanced greater scrutiny and monitoring procedures.

- 4.4 As of 8<sup>th</sup> May 2020 there are 128 Looked After Children on the rolls of Argyll and Bute education settings (of whom 86 are looked after away from home and 42 at home). This number comprises 31 children who have been placed in Argyll and Bute from other authorities and 97 children who are looked after by Argyll and Bute. An additional 109 children have a status of Previously Looked After. 25 pupils who are Looked After by Argyll and Bute are in education settings outside of Argyll and Bute (in residential, foster or kinship placements). These figures refer to pupils in Early Years, Primary and Secondary settings.
- 4.5 During the lockdown resulting from Covid-19, the remit of the Education Lead (Principal Teacher) for Looked After Children has been extended to include additional duties pertaining to supporting children and families. This has involved adapting the GIRFEC Practice model to ensure a continued focus on wellbeing and the mitigation of shifting risk factors at this challenging time. Duties undertaken include:
- Working with The Education Psychology Team to develop the Argyll and Bute Vulnerability Assessment and Support Framework, to identify and provide support for vulnerable children and young people across agencies including Social Work, Health and Education. This is supported children and young people and their families to access provision in Hubs and with relevant specialists.

- Working with The Principal Educational Psychologist and Lead Officer for Child Protection to ensure that robust child protection and safeguarding procedures are in place so that no child is invisible to education. Offering support for school staff on understanding the ways in which they can continue to carry out statutory duties in relation to child protection: <https://youtu.be/3oSEDRe-HVM>.
- Working with the Lead Officer for Child Protection to communicate key child protection messages directly to all children, young people and families.
- Auditing support for individual children who are currently on the child protection register.
- Working with our IT department and raising awareness around digital poverty and alternatives to online connection.
- Creating a support website and weekly video updates for parents and carers: <https://sites.google.com/ab.glow.scot/carexperiencedlearners/home>

4.6 The impact and benefit of having a dedicated post-holder who has a close focus on the educational attainment and experience of Care Experienced Children and Young People is evidenced in all of the reporting and evaluation provided to the Corporate Parenting Board and Community Services Committee since the current post-holder commenced in January 2019. There is an early indication from national evaluation work around the use of the Care Experienced Children and Young People Fund that this impact is replicated across Scotland where such a post has been created. There is funding within the allocated grant to continue current position of PT Care Experienced Children and Young People.

## **5.0 CONCLUSION**

5.1 Significant improvements were made in relation to scrutiny, audit and outcomes for Care Experienced Children and Young People during Session 2018/19 and have been sustained into Session 2019/20. This work will continue to address raising attainment and closing the gap for Care Experienced Children and Young People in session 20/21 and support additional challenges related to the impact of Covid 19.

## **6.0 IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 Policy – None

6.2 Financial – Appropriate allocation of the Care Experienced Children and Young People Fund Grant

6.3 Legal – The statutory duties of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 and all previous relevant acts will be met.

6.4 HR – None

6.5 Fairer Scotland Duty: Providing equity and inclusion to meet the needs of all young people.

- 6.5.1 Equalities - protected characteristics – All legislative requirements will be met
- 6.5.2 Socio-economic Duty – N/A
- 6.5.3 Islands – No differentiated impact.
- 6.6. Risk – Ongoing scrutiny and audit will provide better outcomes for Care Experience Children and Young People. Sustainability- and future-planning will mitigate future risk.
- 6.7 Customer Service – Improvements in service to meet individual needs are being sought

**Douglas Hendry, Executive Director with responsibility for Education**

**Anne Paterson, Chief Education Officer, Head of Education: Lifelong Learning & Support**

**Councillor Yvonne McNeilly, Policy Lead for Education**

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**ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL**  
**EDUCATION**

**BUSINESS CONTINUITY COMMITTEE**  
**11 JUNE 2020**

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**DEFERRED ENTRY, RETAINING AT STAGE AND SCHOOL LEAVING DATES**

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**1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1.1 A policy detailing school leaving dates has been in place since 2012. Since that time some terminology and post titles have changed and related guidance documents directed at parents and professionals has been updated. This revised School Leaving Date Policy makes changes to wording in line with other documentation. There are no material changes to legal requirements or outcomes for children and young people, the revised policy will assist the Education Service's planning for re-opening schools in Argyll and Bute.

**1.2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that Business Continuity Committee agree the updated policy with immediate effect.

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ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL  
EDUCATION

BUSINESS CONTINUITY COMMITTEE  
11 JUNE 2020

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## DEFERRED ENTRY, RETAINING AT STAGE AND SCHOOL LEAVING DATES

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### 2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.1 The main purpose of this report is to highlight changes in terminology required within the existing School Leaving Date Policy which has been in place since 2012. The original document was developed in consultation with our own Legal Services, reference to good practice in other local authorities including consideration of feedback provided by Govan Law Centre, an organisation frequently involved in representing parents at Additional Support Needs Tribunals. Since 2012, this policy has been very helpful in ensuring clarity around school leaving dates for schools, young people, parents and carers and partners in adult services to support young people as they make effective transitions post school.

### 3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 It is recommended that the Business Continuity Committee agree the updated Policy with immediate effect.

### 4.0 DETAIL

4.1 Ensuring effective transition for children and young people post school is dependent on a clear understanding of when a young person will move on to further education, training or employment. Significant work has been undertaken across services to ensure our guidance on post school transitions is well understood and implemented effectively to support positive outcomes for young people. This work has been undertaken in collaboration with the Association for Real Change (ARC) Scotland who developed the national document *Principles of Good Transition 3*.

- 4.2 The School Leaving Date Policy is an integral part of this work and requires to be up to date and consistent with other guidance.
- 4.3 Since it was originally written, this document has included the authority position on deferred entry and retaining children at stage, however, this was not reflected in the title. As a result, a change to the title is recommended to ensure consistency of practice across all elements considered within this Policy.
- 4.4 The Additional Support Needs Tribunal for Scotland (ASNTS) is now referred to as the Health and Education Chamber of the First-tier Tribunal for Scotland. This change is detailed in paragraph 3.2.
- 4.5 Provision at the preschool stage is now referred to as Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) which was not the case in 2012. These changes are detailed in paragraph 3.5.
- 4.6 The Area Principal Teachers' job requirements and descriptions have been changes and are now Education Support Officers. This change is detailed in paragraph 3.6.
- 4.7 Previously it had been indicated that recommendations for retaining a child at stage would be referred to the relevant education manager. The structure of the central team has changed since 2012, and to ensure consistency of decision making across Argyll and Bute it is recommended that all requests for retention at stage are considered by the Education Management Team. This change is detailed in paragraph 3.6 bullet point 4.
- 4.8 As described above, this Policy supports the wider guidance on post school transition and this is reflected in the change detailed in paragraph 5.

## **5.0 CONCLUSION**

- 5.1 To ensure consistency of approach and equity for all and to assist the Education Service's planning for the re-opening of schools it is recommended that the minor changes to this Policy are endorsed.

## **6.0 IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Policy – as updated
- 6.2 Financial - none
- 6.3 Legal - none
- 6.4 HR - none
- 6.5 Fairer Scotland Duty: - supports consistency of approach and equity

- 6.5.1 Equalities – children and young people with protected characteristics are supported by consistent application of this policy
- 6.5.2 Socio-economic Duty - none
- 6.5.3 Islands - none
- 6.6. Risk – failure to keep policies updated can result in confusion and diversity of practice leading to inequity of provision
- 6.7 Customer Service - none

**Douglas Hendry, Executive Director with responsibility for Education**

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## **APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 - Revised Policy



## Community Services

### **Policy and Procedure on Deferred Entry, Retaining at Stage and School Leaving Dates**

#### **1. Introduction**

This policy states Argyll and Bute Council's position on deferred entry, retaining children and young people at stage and educating young people beyond the age of 16.

#### **2. Setting the context**

There is a strong tradition in Argyll and Bute Council of promoting inclusion. This is clear through the Corporate Plan and the Single Outcome Agreement. The council's values are: we involve and listen to our customers and communities; we take pride in delivery best value services; we are open, honest, fair and inclusive; we respect and value everyone.

The council's key principles are that

- no one is disadvantaged because of their race or ethnic origin, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation, or religion or belief
- 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 encouraged to participate in public life.

#### **3. Background**

A range of local and national guidance along with key legislation was considered before agreeing a policy on a school leaving age for all pupils.

##### **3.1 The Education (Scotland) Act 1980 provides**

- the definition of a 'young person'. In terms of Section 135 this means a person over school age (16 years of age) who is not yet 18 years of age
- the two leaving dates for young persons leaving school in terms of section 33. For the summer term it is 31<sup>st</sup> May, for pupils reaching the age of 16 before 1<sup>st</sup> October of the same year; for the winter term it is the first day of the Christmas holidays for pupils reaching 16 before 1<sup>st</sup> March of the following year

- the right of a parent or young person to make a Placing Request and to appeal the decision to the relevant appeals committee
- the power of a school to exclude a child or young person; and the right of a parent or young person to appeal the decision to the relevant appeals committee.

3.2 The Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Acts of 2004 and 2009 provide the following, (it should be noted that this is not an exhaustive list):

- a framework based on the idea of additional support needs (ASN) for supporting children and young people in their school education, and their families;
- a duty on Councils to make adequate and efficient provision for each child or young person with additional support needs, for such additional support as is required;
- a statutory planning document called a Coordinated Support Plan (CSP);
- a responsibility to request information and take advice from agencies involved with supporting a young person on leaving school to ensure there is adequate support in the period up to leaving school;
- a responsibility to ensure that transition planning is embedded within the education authority's policies and practice;
- a mechanism for resolving disputes for children and young persons with additional support needs through the **Health and Education Chamber of the First-tier Tribunal for Scotland**.

*Please note, the Tribunal does not hear cases where the young person is beyond the age of 18 unless the reference was raised at an earlier stage.*

3.3 The Standards in Scotland's Schools etc Act 2000, states in section 1:

- that it shall be the right of any child of school age, (deemed to be between the ages of five and sixteen years of age in terms of section 31 of the 1980 Act) to be provided with school education.

3.4 The Disability Act 1995 and the Equality Act 2010, stipulate:

- "that a person has a disability for the purposes of this Act if he has a physical or mental impairment which has substantial and long term effect on his ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities."

3.5 Argyll and Bute Information for Parents considering a deferred entry pre-school place for their child outlines the following:

- **Parents of children with a birthday in January or February, have an automatic right to defer school entry and are automatically entitled to another year of funded Early Learning and Childcare (ELC). For children with a birthday between the school commencement date in August and December, parents have an automatic right to school deferral for their child and local authorities have the power to use their discretion to provide them with an additional year of funded ELC. As set out in the ELC statutory guidance that accompanied the Children and Young People**

(Scotland) Act 2014, these decisions should be made on an assessment of the child's wellbeing.

3.6 Delayed entry to primary school / delay within school stage

- In exceptional circumstances, a child who does not fall in to the age ranges detailed above may be granted an additional year of funded ELC as a result of identified additional support needs which have a bearing on their ability to benefit from school education. In these circumstances a decision on delayed school entry will be made by the appropriate Education Manager and the early years team in consultation with parents / carers, the Education Support Officer and where necessary the Educational Psychology Service;
- All pupils will normally progress through school spending an academic year at each stage of schooling;
- In exceptional circumstances, where pupils have missed a significant portion of an academic year due to medical or other factors, and would benefit from remaining at the same stage in schooling for another year, consideration may be given to such a request;
- The recommendation for the retention of a pupil at the same stage for an additional year will be referred by the Head Teacher to the appropriate Education Manager following discussion at a Child's Planning Meeting in consultation with the parents / carers. Decisions on whether a pupil is retained at stage will be taken by the Education Management Team.

3.7 Further Education

A young person nearing school leaving age may transfer to an appropriate full time further education course in advance of his/her normal leaving date. In all cases this will require the prior approval of an Education Manager having considered all aspects of the situation (e.g. transport, free meals, etc.) and provided that:-

- (i) the young person has completed four years of secondary education;
- (ii) the course is a full-time one providing subjects approved by Education Services; and
- (iii) in the view of the authority, the young person, because of his/her circumstances, could benefit from such a placement.

**4. Conclusions**

From the review of the main legislation and the acknowledgement of existing practice operating in Scotland, the following points can be concluded:

- there is a statutory duty to educate all children between the ages of five and sixteen; thereafter, the national policy is to educate for up to a further two years, thereby providing up to thirteen years of education, of which six are spent in the secondary sector;
- there is no legal duty on Local Authorities to provide school education beyond the age of 18. The expectation is therefore that no young person will remain in school beyond the end of their sixth year of secondary school;
- there is no requirement, in the case of pupils with additional support needs, to continue a coordinated support plan beyond the point at which the young person reaches the age of 18;

- there is a duty to ensure all pupils identified as requiring support and who are making the transition from school to the world of young adulthood have in place effective transition arrangements and planning, in line with Argyll and Bute GIRFEC Post School Transition guidance;
- all young people should have support to consider their next steps through Opportunities for All processes.

## 5. Summary

Within Argyll and Bute schools it will be assumed that pupils will remain in schooling at a minimum until their statutory leaving age of 16 years, and not beyond the age of 18 years, **after which young people will be supported to move into a positive destination beyond school**. This means that pupils will either:

- (i) leave school at the statutory leaving age (normally sixteen); or
- (ii) stay on for a fifth year or
- (iii) stay until the end of their sixth year of secondary school.

Only in exceptional circumstances can a young person return to school for a 7<sup>th</sup> year or seek to access courses in our secondary schools as adult learners. In all cases, this will require Heads of Education approval. Access to education through Argyll College should always be explored in the first instance.

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**ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL****BUSINESS CONTINUITY COMMITTEE****DEVELOPMENT AND  
ECONOMIC GROWTH****11<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2020**

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**RAPID REHOUSING TRANSITION PLAN – ANNUAL UPDATE**

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**1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1 The Council approved a Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RTTP) in November 2018 which was then submitted to the Scottish Government on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2018.
- 1.2 The RRTP sets out a 5 year transition plan to deliver:
- Settled mainstream housing for homeless people “as quickly as possible.”
  - A new model of temporary homeless accommodation utilising mainstream furnished housing within communities.
  - A “Housing First” and “Wraparound Care” model for complex homeless cases with multiple needs.
- 1.3 The Scottish Government has allocated £24m from the Ending Homeless Together fund to support local authorities in their transition to Rapid Rehousing and Housing First.
- 1.4 The report itself has to provide information on the following;
- Local Housing Market and Homelessness Context
  - Baseline of Temporary Accommodation Supply
  - Vision for Temporary Accommodation Supply
  - Identify Support Needs to Enable Rapid Rehousing
  - Provide a Rapid Rehousing Plan
  - Provide a Rapid Rehousing Resource Plan
- 1.5 The Plan is owned by the Council and reviewed by the Scottish Government on an annual basis.
- 1.6 It is recommended that Committee:
- a) Note the RRTP activity which took place in 2019/20;
  - b) Agree to the RRTP annual update which sets out activity for 2020/21;
  - c) Agree to the Housing First model proposed within the RRTP which will see the Council discharge statutory homeless duties through a different model.

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ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL

BUSINESS CONTINUITY COMMITTEE

DEVELOPMENT AND  
ECONOMIC GROWTH

11<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2020

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## RAPID REHOUSING TRANSITION PLAN

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### 2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.1 This report details activity in relation to the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan 2019 – 2024 for Argyll and Bute which was agreed by the Council in November 2018.

### 3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 It is recommended that Committee:

- a) Note the RRTP activity which took place in 2019/20;
- b) Agree to the RRTP annual update which sets out activity for 2020/21;
- c) Agree to the Housing First model proposed within the RRTP which will see the Council discharge statutory homeless duties through a different model.

### 4.0 DETAIL

4.1 Housing First is an approach that offers **permanent, affordable housing** as quickly as possible for individuals and families experiencing homelessness, and then provides the supportive services and connections to the community-based supports people need to keep their housing and avoid returning to homelessness.

4.2 Over and above that definition **Housing First**, is a secure tenancy as the first option for complex and/or chaotic homeless cases and Wraparound Support. The support and care provided as part of Housing First are both integral parts of the proposed new homeless model.

4.3 The main aims of the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan is that by March 31<sup>st</sup> 2024

- The number of homeless applicants will reduce from 517 per annum (2017/18) to 300 (2023/24). **460 homeless applications were taken in 2018/19.**
- Units of temporary accommodation are accordingly reduced from 140 to 100 (2023/24). **Due to COVID-19 the Council has increased the**

**number of temporary accommodation units to 188 in the short term.**

- Support for those homeless or threatened with homelessness is integrated between tenancy, mental health and addiction services. **Mental Health Practitioner currently out to advert.**
- People spend as little time as possible in temporary tenancies before finding permanent re-housing and no more than 26 weeks without good reason reducing to 20 weeks by 2024. **In 2018/19 households spent an average of 160 days in temporary accommodation.**
- People sustain permanent tenancies with a reduction in repeat homelessness. **5.7% of households were repeat homeless cases in 2018/19.**

4.4 The RRTP which was approved by Council in November 2018 contained a funding request to the Scottish Government of £3.124m over the 5 year period. In Year one (2019/20) the request was for £374,495. This funding request was based on the Scottish Government asking Council's what they would need to deliver Rapid Rehousing. The Government had a limited budget and the requests from local authorities far exceeded that budget and no local authorities were awarded the amount they had requested. The Council received £95,000 core funding which was paid to the Council in September 2019. In addition £30,000 was carried forward from the previous year in relation to enabling funding to assist with preparing the initial Plan. The Council has **not** been able to progress the following aspects of the RRTP which were proposed in November 2018:-

- The appointment of a Project Manager and Research Assistant for Rapid Rehousing
- The appointment of 8 Homeless Prevention/ Housing First Officers
- The establishment of Peer Support groups across Argyll and Bute

The above proposals will now be removed from the RRTP. The actions within the proposed Plan reflects the reduced level of funding. The fact that the 3 work streams referred to above will not be taken forward will impact on the ability of the Council to achieve a whole system change of culture in the way homelessness is tackled in Argyll and Bute.

#### **Progress in 2019/20**

4.5 Council Housing Services have taken forward 6 key work strands within the original RRTP and have spent £53,979 in 2019/20:-

- **Rent arrears prevention fund** – this fund assists households who are at risk of homelessness due to rent arrears. Claims are assessed based on the household's entitlement to housing benefit over the previous 12 months. If there was a good reason for the household not to have claimed their entitlement e.g mental health issues then the fund will pay the entitlement. This payment will be made directly to the landlord to prevent eviction action. Appropriate support will be put in place to enable the household to sustain their tenancy. Exceptional cases will also be

considered where the fund may be required to pay more than the 12 months entitlement to prevent eviction. As at 31st March 2020 the rent arrears prevention fund has spent £39,157 assisting 27 households to remain in their accommodation. 234 housing support hours per month have been assigned to these households to assist them to sustain their accommodation. This equates to £4,270 per month which is funded through existing Council housing support budgets. The fund will be reviewed in June 2020 with the Housing Associations to ensure best value for the public money involved in this process.

- **Decoration Project** – as at 31st March 2020 the decoration project has assisted 7 households at a cost of £6,405. Many homeless households are on low incomes and although the Scottish Welfare Fund assists in the provision of some essential household items household often cannot afford to decorate their properties or bring them up to a standard where they take ownership of their house and see it as their home. The decoration project aims to assist households to make a house a home and have a greater chance of sustaining that home.
- **Flexible Emergency Fund** - as at 31st March 2020 £4,250 has been paid to contracted housing support providers. The flexible emergency fund principle was established in the 4 main cities across Scotland in 2018. The aim is to empower front line workers to assist households at the point of crisis. This would then enable the support provider to assist the households to access mainstream services. Blue Triangle HA were awarded £750, the HELP project were awarded £1,000 and Carr Gomm were awarded £2,500.
- **Mental Health / Addictions Practitioner** – as at 31st March 2020 no money has been spent on this work strand. The Council continues to work in partnership with the Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) on this project. A job description and line management process for the post has been agreed and the post is currently out to advert. It is anticipated that the salary and employer on costs will be circa £60,000 per annum.
- **Housing First** – as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020 £1,580 has been spent on Housing First related training. An event took place in Inveraray on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2019 which brought Housing Services, Housing Associations and Housing Support Providers together to discuss how to implement Housing First in Argyll and Bute. The event was hosted by Turning Point Scotland, an organisation with vast experience of delivering Housing First in Scotland. The Housing Support contracts will be renewed in September 2020 so the proposal is that Housing First is implemented in October 2020.
- **RRTP Training** – as at 31st March 2020 £2,586 has been spent on RRTP related training. There has been mental health awareness and awareness of hoarding training delivered to partners in 2019/20.

- 4.6 As the funding for the RRTP was not received by the Council until 6 months into 2019/20 the budget of £125,000 has not therefore been fully spent. The remaining money will be carried forward as this grant funding is specifically to deliver Rapid Rehousing. £71,021 of the £125,000 will be carried forward to 2020/21.

### **RRTP Proposed Activity for 2020/21**

- 4.7 The Council's original funding request for 2020/21 was £731,053. The Council has been allocated £105,000 by the Scottish Government in addition to the £71,021 carried forward from previous years. It is proposed that we continue with the 6 areas of activity detailed in 4.5 with the funding allocation as follows:-
- Rent arrears prevention fund - £50,000
  - Decoration project - £35,000
  - Flexible Emergency Fund - £11,000
  - Mental Health /Addictions Practitioner - £50,000 (part year)
  - Housing First / RRTP training - £5,000
  - Establish a Housing First model - £25 000 (creation of 10 tenancies)

### **The Proposed Housing First Model**

- 4.8 Housing First is delivered within the overall RRTP and aims to give the most chaotic and vulnerable homeless households housing as the first step to recovery. Appropriate support will be provided to the households to give them the maximum chance of sustaining their permanent accommodation.
- 4.9 Taking and assessing homeless applications is one of the statutory housing functions carried out by the local authority. In order to qualify for Housing First the household must have been taken on as statutory homeless by the local authority.
- 4.10 It is anticipated that around 10 households per annum will be accommodated through the Housing First route in Argyll and Bute.
- 4.11 The Council currently discharges the duty to provide permanent housing to statutory homeless households through the HOMEArgyll partners – Argyll Community Housing Association, Dunbritton Housing Association, Fyne Homes and West Highland Association. In 2018/19 the Housing Associations allocated 25% of all new tenancies to statutory homeless households.
- 4.12 When a household is accepted as statutory homeless and the local authority has a duty to secure permanent housing for them then they are placed on a list within HOMEArgyll in date order with all the other statutory homeless households awaiting permanent accommodation. It is proposed that if partners (Council Housing Services, Housing Associations and Housing Support Providers) agree that a homeless household should be a Housing First case then the household will be allocated the next available house which meets their needs by the Housing Association.

## 5.0 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The RRTP submitted and approved by the Council in November 2018 detailed a proposed redesign of housing and support services for those people homeless or threatened with homelessness. The Plan also identified the resources required both to transition to any new model and also to implement the new arrangements. The Plan was ambitious but achievable but only if adequately resourced by the Scottish Government. Unfortunately the Council has only received a fraction of the resources to implement the initial Plan. The proposals contained within this report will be delivered within the funding provided and with effective partnership working will result in a move to a model of Rapid Rehousing in Argyll and Bute.
- 5.2 It is important to note that given the reduced levels of resources provided by the Scottish Government in comparison to the original request, the significant impact the current Covid 19 pandemic has and is having on the activities of the Housing Service (increased demand for temporary accommodation and potential increase in the number of homeless applications), and the uncertainty in predicting how both of these will develop in the short and medium term, there is a need to treat with some caution the targets identified in paragraph 4.3. Housing Services will closely monitor progress, and as the RRTP Plan is reviewed annually, the Council can revise these targets if they prove inappropriate given changing circumstances.

## 6.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Policy: Housing First requires a change to the way the Council discharges statutory duty to statutory homeless households.
- 6.2 Financial: The Plan has been refined to maximize the use of the additional resources to implement the plan are sought from the Scottish Government.
- 6.3 Legal: There are no legislative changes.
- 6.4 HR: There is no impact on HR
- 6.5 Equalities: **Fairer Scotland Duty.** Overall the proposals under rapid rehousing will reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage frequently evidenced in homeless cases. However for as long as housing is a scarce resource impact will be positive for the individual/household allocated but negative for all others remaining on the waiting lists.
- 6.6 Risk: Insufficient resourcing from the Scottish government will impact the Council's ability to deliver under the plan. There is the risk that if the public perceive the actions under rapid rehousing to be a fast track route to getting an RSL house, homeless presentations will increase. The implications of Covid 19 will have to be constantly monitored with adjustment made to targets as

necessary.

6.7 Customer Service: Opportunity to improve outcomes for people found to be homeless or threatened with homelessness.

**Interim Executive Director with Responsibility for Housing  
Kirsty Flanagan**

**Policy Lead Councillor Robin Currie**  
18<sup>th</sup> May 2020

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Appendix 1 – Argyll and Bute Rapid Rehousing Plan 19/20 to 23/24



**ARGYLL & BUTE  
RAPID REHOUSING  
PLAN  
2019/20 - 2023/24**

*June 2020*



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## 1. Executive Summary

The basic premise of this Rapid Rehousing Transition plan is to move from a primarily reactive, crisis intervention homeless service to a pro-active, early intervention preventative service.

Simple as this sounds it will require time and resources to implement and require change from the Council's Housing Service as well as our Registered Social Landlord (RSL) and Health & Social Care (H&SCP) partners.

Prevention is the key to a successful Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan. This will minimize the number of households presenting as homeless and enable all partners to work together to ensure that permanent housing secured has the best possible chance of being sustained. The following activities are key to delivering a successful Rapid Rehousing model in Argyll and Bute:-

- Closer integration between support for tenancy, mental health and addictions whether the case is simple but multi-dimensional or complex.
  - Central to the support model is the appointment of health and housing coordinators to assess and ensure the right support is provided by the most appropriate service for the duration of the transitional period.
- Establishing an arrears grant fund to incentivise household budgeting through early intervention.
- Ensuring a "homeless dividend" from the Strategic Housing Investment Programme (SHIP).
- Ensuring protocols are in place to ensure nobody is discharged from a public service into homelessness.
- Greater use of the private rented sector to maximise an all tenure approach to housing provision, building on the increased security provided by Private Residential Tenancies and the First Tier Tribunal.
- Establish a decoration grant to ensure homes are psychologically informed and give the greatest opportunity for tenancy sustainment.
- Establish a Flexible Emergency Fund to enable front line housing support workers to assist households in crisis.
- Reduce time spent in temporary tenancies.
- Establish a rural Housing First model that works for Argyll and Bute.

This plan is written from the perspective that the Council and its RSL partners will continue to build and sustain diverse, mixed communities giving reasonable preference for homeless people but providing opportunities for all.

The Plan is ambitious but has been tailored to be delivered within the level of funding that the Scottish Government has given the Council to deliver the Plan. The Council and its partners have the expertise, commitment and desire to ensure the plan's success.

## 2. Introduction

The Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action group (HARSAG) published *Scotland's transition to rapid rehousing – market area analysis, legislative and culture review* along with *Guidance for Local Authorities and Partners on Rapid Rehousing Transition Plans (RRTP)* in June 2018.

The guidance required that the local authority and partners (Housing Associations, Health and Social Care Partnership etc.) prepare a 5 year transformational plan for homeless services recognising that *“A safe and secure home is the best base to build and live our lives. Reducing the time people spend homeless and in temporary accommodation also reduces the damage to people's health and wellbeing that homeless causes.*

The guidance states; *“Where homelessness cannot be prevented rapid rehousing means;*

- *A settled, mainstream housing outcome as quickly as possible;*
- *Time spent in any form of temporary accommodation reduced to a minimum, with the fewer transitions the better;*
- *When temporary accommodation is needed, the optimum type is mainstream, furnished and within a community.”*

The action group further recognised that some people need more than just a house and have multiple complex needs that must be addressed alongside their homelessness and proposed the Housing First model.

- Housing First provides ordinary, settled housing as a first response for people with complex needs.
- It recognises a safe and secure home as the best base for recovery and offers personalised, open ended, flexible support for people to end their experience of homelessness and address wider needs.

The RRTP is a new planning framework for local authorities and their partners to transition to a Rapid Rehousing and Housing First approach. The local authority developed collaborative and costed plans and submitted them to the Scottish Government before 31<sup>st</sup> December 2018. The RRTP will thereafter be reviewed annually as part of the Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) process.

Argyll and Bute Council welcomes the opportunity to review its homeless service in line with the principles of Rapid Rehousing and Housing First. However to deliver the transformation change required for our remote and rural communities will require short term investment to change the homeless “system” to transform to the new model. Together with our partners in housing associations and the health and social care partnership we can deliver an early intervention service that, as far as is reasonably practicable, prevents homelessness arising and eliminates or vastly reduces the trauma homelessness causes for people.

Rapid Rehousing is an ambitious proposal which should be delivered in the context of creating and sustaining mixed and diverse communities across the whole of Argyll and Bute. There are particular and competing demands on the affordable housing stock, for homeless people, for our aging population and to house the workers essential for our future economic prosperity, as well as for the general needs of those who simply want to live here.

Balancing these competing demands has been a major consideration in creating our Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan.

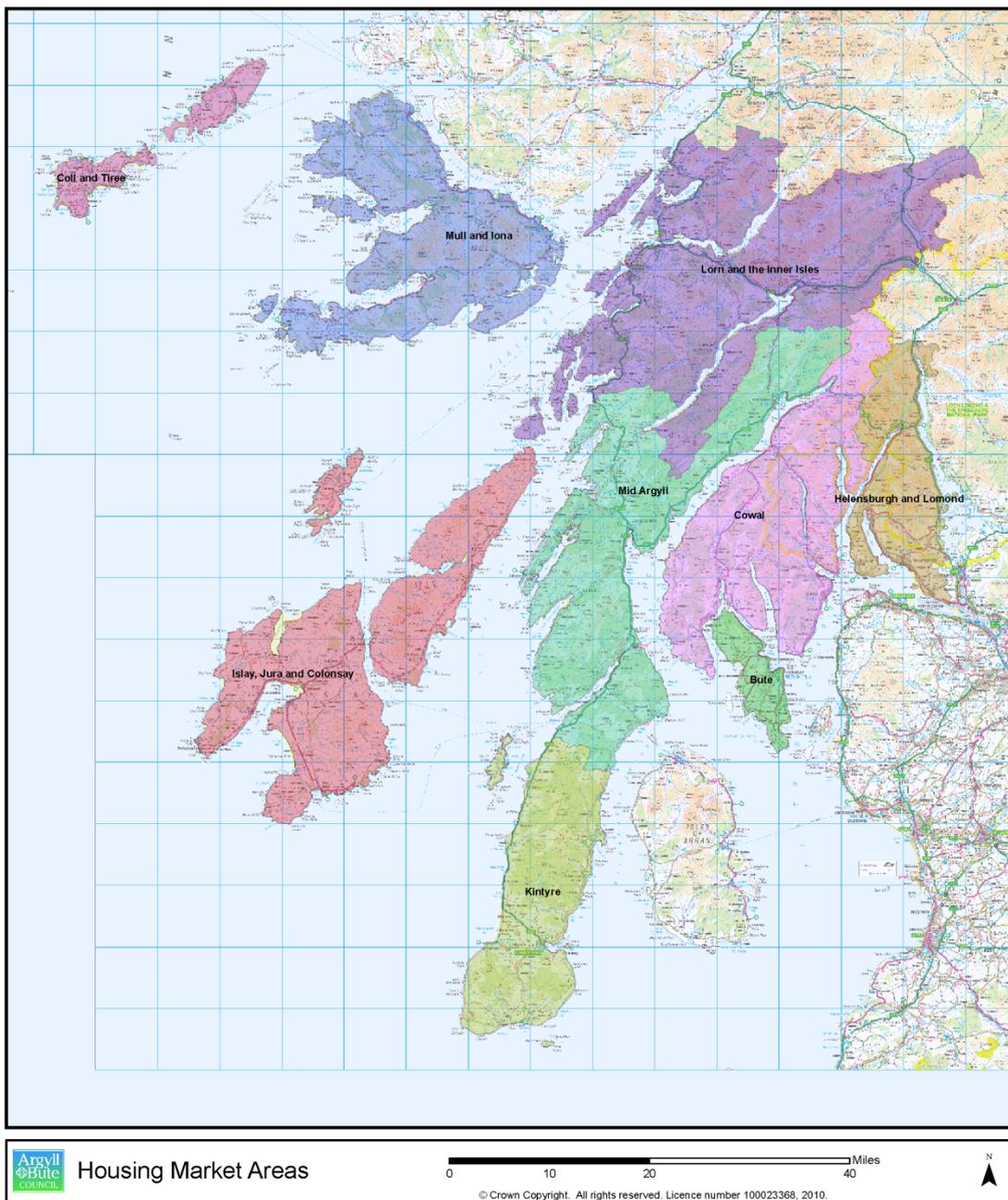
### **3. Local Housing Market and Homelessness Context**

#### **i. Local Housing Market**

Argyll and Bute is the second largest local authority area in Scotland covering an area of 691,000 hectares. The area is home to approximately 88,000 people, just 1.6% of Scotland's population, and with an average of only 13 persons per square kilometer, this is the third sparsest population density of the 32 Scottish local authority areas: and as the main population settlements tend to be at the extremity of the mainland area the population is also highly dispersed.

Over half the population (52%) live in settlements of fewer than 3,000 people or outwith settlements altogether; and 17% of the population live on the 23 inhabited islands. This large and diverse area context is important when considering homelessness services as multiple service solutions are required to deliver on the Scottish Social Housing Charter requirement that homelessness duties are performed so that *homeless people get prompt and easy access to help and advice*. Helensburgh is the largest settlement with a population of 15,610 while at the opposite end of the scale Tighnabruaich has just 520. In addition on the basis that six dwellings together is the minimum number of units to comprise a 'minor settlement' there are some 215 to 220 settlements within the local authority area.

Within this large area 9 distinct Housing Market Areas (HMAs) have been identified for strategic planning purposes although in reality several smaller HMAs exist.



Failures of the housing system differ in each HMA. High demand outstripping supply is an issue in Oban and Lorn, including an acute shortage of 1 bed accommodation which impacts particularly on rehousing opportunities for homeless people. In Kintyre and Bute there is a general over supply and issues of poor quality in the private rented sector. Affordability is a concern in all 9 HMAs.

There was an estimated 48,014 dwellings in Argyll and Bute in 2018 with 9% deemed ineffective i.e. unavailable to meet local needs; comprising second/holiday homes or long term vacant properties. Owner occupation is the predominant tenure at approximately 61% and only 18% in the social rented sector.

Argyll and Bute is a stock transfer authority. The Council is a full partner of HOMEArgyll which

operates the Common Housing Register and Common Allocations Policy. Members of the public can register for social housing online and complete one application for all four Registered Social Landlords (RSLs), (ACHA, Fyne Homes, Dunbritton and West Highland Housing Association). As part of this process applicants are required to complete an online housing options assessment with appropriate advice arising from that.

As of August 2018 there were 2,440 active applicants on the HOMEArgyll waiting list: 1,646 on the general list; 630 on the transfer list; and 164 on the Homeless list (i.e. 7% of the total). The average length of time on the waiting list for open homeless applicants was 61 weeks (but this varied considerably for individual cases).

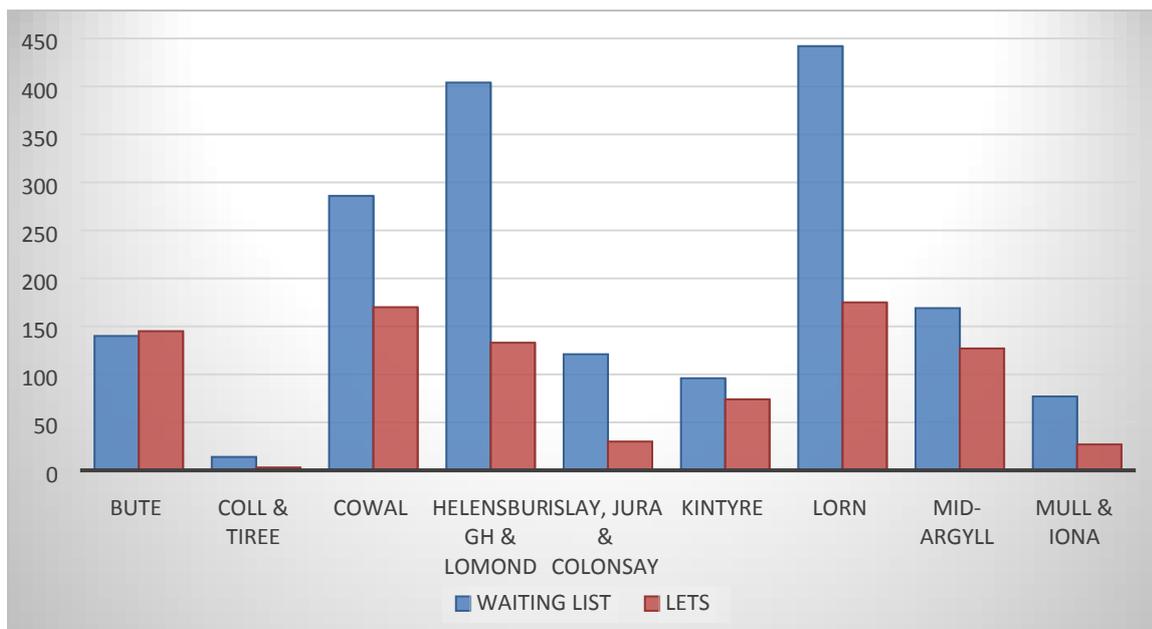
Comparing waiting list demand for social housing with available lets (pressure ratios) provides a provisional indication of potential imbalances in supply and demand and can highlight areas experiencing housing pressures. Overall, there are around 2 applicants per available let in Argyll and Bute, i.e. a pressure ratio of 2:1 however this varies considerably by HMA as the following table illustrates. Based solely on these figures, the most pressurised areas would appear to be Coll & Tiree (5:1) and Islay, Jura & Colonsay (4:1).

#### Pressure Ratios by HMA, 2017/18

HOUSING MARKET AREA	WAITING LIST (excluding transfer list)	LETS	PRESSURE RATIO (APPS :LETS)
Bute	140	145	1:1
Coll & Tiree	14	3	5:1
Cowal	286	170	2:1
Helensburgh & Lomond	404	133	3:1
Islay, Jura & Colonsay	121	30	4:1
Kintyre	96	74	1:1
Lorn	442	175	3:1
Mid-Argyll	169	127	1:1
Mull & Iona	77	27	3:1
<b>Total for A&amp;B</b>	<b>1,749</b>	<b>884</b>	<b>2:1</b>

Source: Annual RSL Returns/HOMEArgyll Waiting list 2018

The following chart gives a graphic indication that in terms of numerical supply and demand, Lorn still exhibits one of the most significant imbalances within Argyll & Bute, followed by Helensburgh & Lomond. Apart from Bute and Kintyre, there appears to be at least some degree of unmet need throughout the authority area.



Arising from this the Housing Supply Targets from the 2018/19 – 2022/23 Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) are as follows;

<b>Argyll &amp; Bute</b>	<b>Annual</b>	<b>5 Year Total</b>	<b>10 Year total</b>
<b>Total HST</b>	<b>240 - 300</b>	<b>1,200 -1,500</b>	<b>2,400 - 3,000</b>
Affordable Housing	110-130	550-650	1,100-1,300
Private Market Housing	130-170	650-850	1,300-1,700

Source; Argyll & Bute Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2018/19 – 2022/23

The SHIP indicates target completions for the RSL core programme at 765 units up to 2021 with the potential for at least a further 189 in active consideration for later years.

Participation in the local housing markets is linked to the general economy and housing affordability. In Argyll and Bute the local economy remains predominantly service-based, with over 87% of employee jobs in the authority area being provided in this sector, compared to only 84% in Scotland as a whole. The Public Services Sector (local government, administration, education and health) constitutes the biggest employment sector in Argyll and Bute, with 35% of jobs compared to only 30% in Scotland as a whole, and 28% across Great Britain. This authority also has almost double the proportion of employees in the Accommodation and Food Services (15.7%) than Scotland, with only 7.8%. However, conversely, the local manufacturing sector at 4.3% is almost half the equivalent sector in Scotland (7.4%).

Unemployment rates\* in Argyll and Bute are below the national averages (5.1% compared to 6.5% for both Scotland and the UK), although due to the continuing high levels of seasonal and part-time employment in the area, rates vary according to the time of year and there are significant geographic variations across local Housing Market Areas and communities within the authority. (\*Covid 19 economic impacts are

likely to have a significant impact on unemployment levels at least in the short term with possible medium and longer term negative impacts. This will need careful monitoring as we enter the recovery phase of the pandemic and may mean a significant rise in homeless presentations)

Comparing average house prices to average incomes and using a price to income ratio of 3.5 as affordable, owner occupation is unaffordable in all 9 housing markets. HNDA analysis suggests over 65% of local households cannot afford the average house price and over 32% cannot even afford the lower quartile price (often seen as the entry level point for first time buyers). This unaffordability in purchasing increases pressure on the social rented sector.

Affordability is also critical in the private rented sector. Argyll & Bute Council commissioned research into the Private Rented Sector in 2013 and consider the findings to remain valid in 2018.

Rental values vary across the 9 housing market areas reflecting the differing dynamics of each local housing system, as does the comparison with the Local Housing Allowance rates. The majority of rental values under the LHA rate are in the low demand areas of Bute and Kintyre.

More recent national figures (in the Scottish Government's official statistics publication "People, Communities and Places: Private Rent Statistics, Scotland, 2010-2017"), suggest that between 2010 and 2017 average rents increased for all property sizes in Argyll and Bute except 1 bedroom shared. In particular, 1 bedroom properties increased by 9.2% over this period. The breakdown of private rent levels by quartile and bedroom size in 2017 are summarised in the following table.

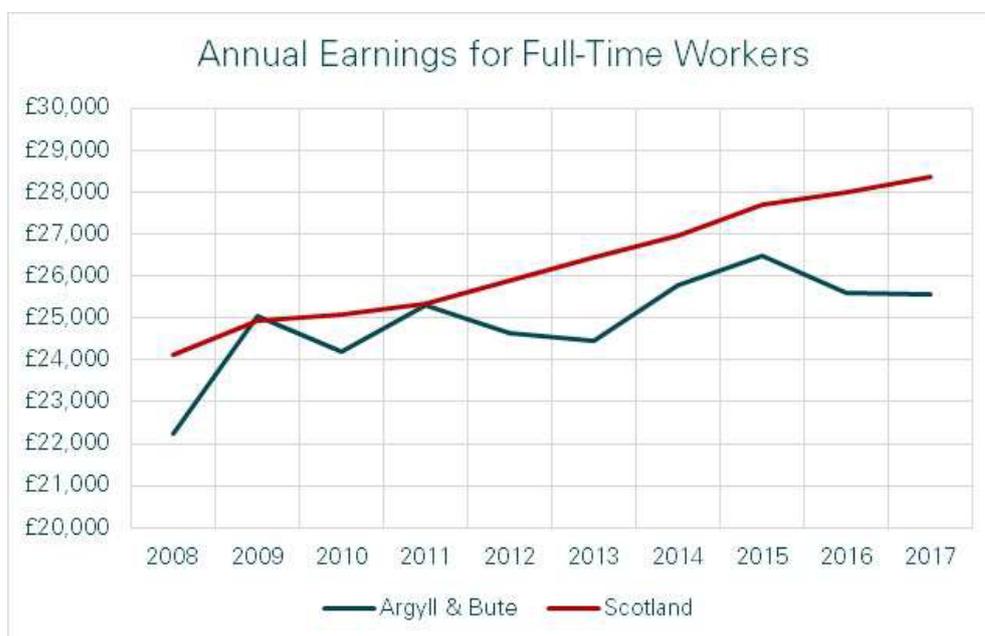
**Broad Rental Market Area Profile: Argyll and Bute, 2017 (£monthly)**

	<b>1 bed</b>	<b>2 bed</b>	<b>3bed</b>	<b>4 bed</b>	<b>1 shared bed</b>
<b>Lower Quartile</b>	£375	£450	£525	£700	£255
<b>Median</b>	£400	£500	£598	£925	£294
<b>Mean</b>	£417	£516	£652	£980	£301
<b>Upper Quartile</b>	£450	£550	£750	£1,250	£345

The Local Housing Allowance levels for Argyll & Bute in 2018 are as follows:

Number of bedrooms	Category	2018/19 LHA Rate (£ per month)
Shared room rate	S1	£264.89
1 bedroom rate	B1	£365.00
2 bedroom rate	C2	£450.02
3 bedroom rate	D3	£521.26
4 or more bedroom rate	E4	£780.00

While the standard affordability assumption is that rental costs should be around 25% of a household’s income, the dedicated research carried out by this Council in 2013 found that many local tenants were required to pay anywhere between 30-40% (or higher in some cases) of their income to meet local private rent levels. Our analysis suggests that at the 2017 market rent for a two bedroom property, a household would require an annual income of at least £21,600. Based on the CACI Paycheck income data for 2017, around 38% of households in Argyll and Bute could not afford to sustain this rent level. Pressures in the private rented sector are further evidenced by the fact that almost a quarter (24%) of the active HOMEArgyll applicants as of August 2018 were currently living in that sector and were seeking to move to a social rented tenancy.



**ii. Homelessness**

Reflecting recent national trends, the number of homeless presentations in Argyll and Bute has declined significantly from a 1,120 high in 2005/06 to 517 in 2017/18, but this itself was an increase of 8.6% over the previous year. Of these 517 homeless presentations 38 had slept rough, 20 of whom having slept rough the night before presentation. 84 people were aged under 25 having been asked to leave the family home.

The majority of closed cases (81%) achieved positive outcomes, with 230 receiving a Scottish

Secure Tenancy, 73 returning to/retaining their previous accommodation, and 31 receiving a Private Rented Tenancy. There were no cases involving the use of B&B or hostel accommodation.

The majority of cases (106) arose after being asked to leave the family homes with a further 103 leaving after a household/relationship non-violent breakdown. This makes up just over 40% of presentations. 44 or 8.5% arose due to arrears of rent or mortgage.

Single people made up the vast majority of applicants 59% of the total, (albeit down by 5% from the year before) followed by single parent who made up 22%. The total number of applications involving children rose from 133 in 2016/17 to 171 in 2017/18, 33% of the total.

Tenancy support is delivered by contracted agencies to individuals and families living in temporary accommodation, under threat of homelessness, living in their own home but having difficulties or have recently been looked after by a Local Authority. 316 new support referrals were made in 2017/18 with 309 departures from support in the same period. 78% of these, 241 cases, were planned departures.

In addition to 517 homeless presentation 1,929 prevention cases were recorded for the year 2017/18. Around 60% of these achieved a positive outcome in terms of accessing or remaining in secure permanent accommodation. This however is below our target of 70%.

#### **4. Baseline Position of Temporary Accommodation Supply**

As a stock transfer authority the Council has only a small number of properties available for its own use. Pressure on affordable housing led to private tenancies being leased by the Council and sublet to homeless households as temporary accommodation in order to maximize the use of the RSL stock for permanent accommodation. This model accounts for the majority of the current provision although in lower demand area use is still made of RSL property.

140 units of temporary accommodation were provided in Argyll and Bute as of March 31<sup>st</sup> 2018 located in the main population centres of Oban, Lochgilphead & Mid Argyll, Campbeltown, Rothesay, Dunoon and Helensburgh. Provision of a range of temporary accommodation over such a wide area presents particular challenges. Accommodation in any one location does little to meet needs in another, and to replicate across six centers adds considerably to costs.

**Private Sector Properties.** **64 properties.** Primarily furnished and decorated flatted accommodation at various mainstream residential locations the all the main towns noted above. Average length of stay 148 days. Average charge £107.19/week.

**Argyll and Bute Council Property.** **8 properties.** 6 Flats located Helensburgh town centre and 2 houses provided in Lochgilphead. Furnished and decorated. Average length of stay 178 days. Average charge £100.51/week.

**Housing Association Property** **18 properties.**

Primarily flatted accommodation at various locations. Furnished and decorated. Average length of stay 172 days. Average charge £107.19/week.

In the above examples the private and RSL properties are leased by the Council and sublet to homeless households. The owners remain responsible for repair of the structure and fixed components with the Council responsible for furnishing, decoration and damage repair. Tenants may be recharged for deliberate damages. Rents are pegged at LHA rates to ensure affordability.

**Serviced and Supported Accommodation 50 units in 6 properties**

Serviced accommodation is provided in Oban by a specialist RSL and in Helensburgh and Dunoon by private sector providers procured by the Council.

**Oban Solas** 5 bedrooms with shared amenities and social room. Whole building exclusively for homeless clients. Support provided on site. Average length of stay 78 days. Average charge £221.33/week.

**Oban Shore St** 15 self-contained flats. Whole building exclusively for homeless people. On site housing management staff providing informal caring support. Average length of stay 339 days. Average charge £252.07/week.

**Oban Lorn Court** 6 self-contained bedsits with en suite. Shared living/kitchen area. Whole building exclusively for homeless people. Remotely managed. Average length of stay 184 days. Average charge £91.02/week.

**Oban Don Mor** 6 bedsits with en suite, shared kitchen living area. Remotely managed. Whole building exclusively for homeless people. Average length of stay 296 days. Average charge £151.19/week.

**Helensburgh** 8 rooms (single, double and family) with en suite, communal lounge and kitchen and communal outdoor area. 2 additional rooms used for emergencies. 3 additional rooms in private use. Management on site with informal caring support. Average length of stay is 105 days. Average charge £90/week

**Dunoon** 10 rooms - exclusive use for homeless people, bed sits with en-suite, communal kitchen/dining. Management on site with informal caring support. Average length of stay 48 days. Average charge £90/week

The temporary accommodation focus in Argyll and Bute over the past 10 years has been to provide temporary accommodation which is in community settings, of good quality and affordable to our clients. Transitions are kept to a minimum and usually only when moving from an emergency placement to more suitable accommodation. It is our practice to avoid the use of unsuitable accommodation by effective management of the accommodation options available as above.

We do not consider this form of transitional accommodation to be particularly problematic. People presenting as homeless have accommodation in which to live and consider their housing options, time to make choices and take stock after whatever crisis caused their homelessness, thereafter to move on to sustain permanent tenancies.

Exit surveys indicate a high level of satisfaction with the accommodation provided with 84% indicating satisfaction, however one of the early actions in our transition plan will be to execute a more detailed survey of current tenants of their satisfaction with the quality and time spent in our temporary accommodation. To date there is no Housing First capacity in Argyll and Bute.

<b>2017/18 Satisfaction Survey</b>	<b>%</b>
(a) very satisfied	49%
(b) fairly satisfied	25%
(c) neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	12%
(d) fairly dissatisfied	2%
(e) very dissatisfied	0
(f) don't know/no opinion	0

## **5. Vision for temporary accommodation supply**

We recognise the need, when there is no prospect of keeping an individual in their existing accommodation, or where there is no immediately available permanent accommodation, for people to be able to access high quality fit for purpose transitional accommodation before making choices on permanent accommodation options available to them. We will continue to strive to ensure high quality temporary accommodation is available to all who need it in a form suitable for their choice and needs. Time spent in temporary accommodation should be as short a time as is reasonably practicable taking into account the circumstances of each individual's case

Our vision for temporary tenancies is;

1. To provide shelter as and when required preferably in accommodation where the client will reside until permanently housed.
2. To maintain a variety of good quality temporary accommodation in community settings.
3. To minimise and preferably eliminate, transfer from one temporary tenancy to another (other than from emergency accommodation).
4. That time spent in temporary accommodation is no more than 20 weeks by 2024, (as far as is reasonably practicable).
5. Continue to minimise, and preferably eliminate completely, use of B&B.
6. To implement a rural Housing First project in Argyll & Bute by using more RSL homes as temporary tenancies thereafter changing to Scottish Secure Tenancies (flipping).

## **6. Identifying support needs**

In moving to a system of Rapid Rehousing high quality, fit for purpose support services delivered seamlessly across tenancy, mental health and addictions will be critical to

- Prevent homelessness,

- Rapidly rehouse those found to be homeless and to
- Sustain tenancies in the longer term

The proposals below have been developed in partnership with the Argyll and Bute Health and Social Care Partnership.

For some years now the Council has avoided the use of terms such as “ready for housing” or “tenancy ready” adopting the principle that with the right level of support the vast majority of people could sustain a mainstream tenancy. This policy has created some problems in cases where there is a refusal to accept or engage with support services and this has to be acknowledged in the service moving forward.

Currently tenancy support on the Better Futures model is procured by the Council and delivered by contracted agencies. Cross sector support is delivered quite separately i.e. tenancy, mental health and addictions. Housing Officers report an increasing proportion of clients displaying some level of mental health or addiction issues in addition to homelessness and it is acknowledged in this challenging environment of dealing with increasingly complex and chaotic lifestyles, the current model, across all services, could be improved to achieve better recovery outcomes.

About one third of homeless presentations to the Council have no identified support needs and for whom permanent housing provision ends their housing crisis. A further 18% require only tenancy support provided in both temporary tenancy and when rehoused in permanent accommodation, supported until fully settled.

However an estimated 49%, close to half of all presentation, have some form of underlying mental health and/or addiction condition and the proposal for a new model of support is designed to meet those needs.

It is proposed to transform the working relationship between support commissioners and contractors across the Council and H&SCP. Obviously homeless individuals form only a proportion of the overall client base for mental health and addiction services but for that cohort, a joint and seamless service will be offered with the lead organisation on each case based on client's needs.

This transformation will be based on 4 elements of work

1. Having the Lead Professionals for mental health and addiction represented on the Housing Support Steering Group.
2. Establishing locality interest groups to ensure operational officers are aware and informed of each service and deliver multi agency support based on the needs of the individual.
3. Appointment of link officers for Mental Health, Addictions and Housing who, along with the existing housing tenancy support coordinator will
  - a. Ensure in- house and contracted providers are adequately trained to deliver support at the right level to suit client needs.
  - b. Assess needs and ensure psychologically informed support interventions.
  - c. Ensure the organisation best suited to meet the highest level of need has ownership of client support with other agencies in a supporting role

- d. Seek to minimise the number of professionals working with each individual thus enhancing the likelihood of positive engagement.

Existing tenancy support contracts will be amended on renewal to deliver Better Futures plus, requiring delivery of low level mental health and addiction support beyond that currently required in the Better Futures framework.

Cases of complex needs involving tenancy, mental health and addiction issues requiring higher levels of intervention and specialist support will be led by the relevant Health and Social Care service.

Finally those cases of intermediate needs will require professional assessment by the proposed Physical Health & Housing and/or Mental Health, Addictions and Housing professionals who will assign responsibility to one specific service to lead on the support.

<b>Levels and type of support required</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Current Homeless cases</b>		
No support required	172	33%
Tenancy support only	95	18%
Enhanced tenancy support including low level mental health and/or addiction support	45	9%
Medium level mental health and/or addiction support for complex cases in addition to tenancy support	80	15%
High level mental health and/or addiction support for complex cases in addition to tenancy support	130	25%
<b>Total homeless presentations 2017/18</b>	<b>517</b>	<b>100%</b>

The second

strand of the upgraded support service will be to work in tandem with the Argyll and Bute Alcohol and Drug Partnership to establish a Peer Support Network, training people with lived experience through the Reach (Recovery, Empowerment, Aspiration, Choice, Hope) Advocacy Award. Part of this project will include locality client led support groups for all those with current or recent homeless experience.

## 7. Achieving the vision

The Rapid Rehousing Plan for Argyll and Bute will focus on three major elements of work;

1. Prevention
2. Leaving temporary accommodation timeously
3. Sustaining permanent accommodation.

Our aim is for

1. More homelessness to be prevented through assertive outreach.
2. A more integrated support network between housing, physical health, mental health and addiction services to contribute to prevention work and greater tenancy sustainment for those re-housed.
3. Protocols with partners to ensure people leaving public services are not discharged into homelessness.
4. A greater focus on rehousing targets to reduce time spent in temporary accommodation.
5. A greater uptake of first offers of permanent housing by
  - a. better screening of areas of choice,
  - b. transparency in consideration of reasonableness for offers and
  - c. Improving the decorative quality of homes offered
6. Where leaving the current accommodation is necessary or unavoidable, to have high quality, fit for purpose temporary accommodation, available for occupation.
7. Developing an Arrears Alleviation Fund to be developed alongside specific support for household budgeting aimed at a considerable reduction in arrears evictions.
8. Maintaining the current mediation service to reduce homelessness through disputes within families.
9. A greater alignment of the Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) to the needs of those threatened with or actually homeless.
10. Provision of Rural Housing First
11. Establish a Flexible Emergency Fund to enable front line housing support workers to assist households in crisis.
  
12. Provision of a decoration allowance scheme to ensure homes are pleasant and homily from first occupancy.

The detailed action plan is shown at Appendix ii.

The plan requires considerable development in the early stages of Year 1 and 2. Years 3 and 4 are consolidation years to refine the proposals before, in the final year of the transitional plan, realignment of existing jobs to focus on active prevention and outreach leading to a new way of working. This Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan is intended to be a working document for the Council, and our RSL and H&SCP partners. It will subject to continued evolution and refinement and robust annual reviews over the transitional period up to 2024

## **8. Resource planning**

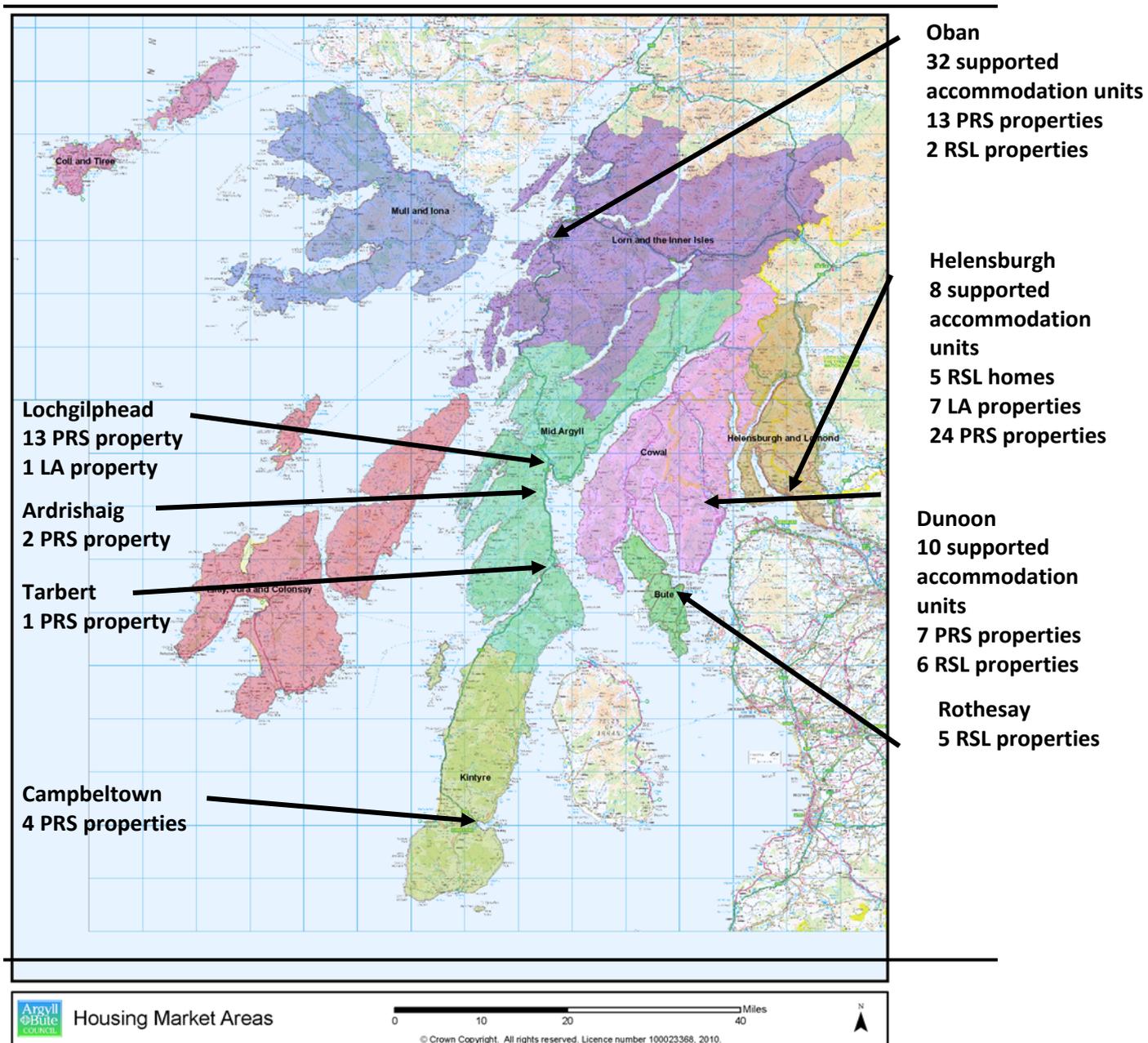
Resourcing the plan is critical to its delivery. Argyll and Bute is a large geographical area and to deliver an assertive outreach programme of prevention and support will require “boots on the ground” across our area. Enhanced support will bring additional cost as will everything from delivering Psychologically Informed Environments, furnishings for “flipped” homes and support for peer group meetings and training.

Elements of the resource plan are commercially sensitive as some services are provided by external contractors and will be subject to re-tendering or negotiation during the course of the transition period. As such the details are excluded from the public plan but have been approved by the Council and submitted to the Scottish Government in full.

The detailed resource plan is shown at Appendix iii.

## Appendix i Temporary Accommodation at March 31<sup>st</sup> 2017

### TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION LOCATIONS ACROSS ARGYLL & BUTE:



THIS DOCUMENT  
IS AVAILABLE ON THE COUNCIL WEBSITE AT:

<https://www.>

This document can also be made available in other formats on request.

Contact:  
Housing Services  
Argyll & Bute Council  
Kilmory  
Lochgilphead  
Argyll, PA31 8RT

Telephone:  
01546 604425  
01546 604785

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[douglas.whyte@argyll-bute.gov.uk](mailto:douglas.whyte@argyll-bute.gov.uk) or



## Appendix 2

### Resource planning

Resourcing the plan is critical to its delivery. Argyll and Bute is a large geographical area and to deliver an assertive outreach service will take people on the ground across our area. Our experience in delivering homeless services point to failure through non-engagement if the authority does not take the lead in a face to face service. Unfortunately all the technological advances, skype, texting, on-line etc. although worthwhile as secondary contact measures, must be subordinate to face to face.

The initial funding request was for £3.1 million. In 2020/21 this equated to a funding request of £731,053.00. The actual grant awarded was £105 000.

Therefore our resource plan is as follows

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total
The Arrears Alleviation Fund will offer small grant for early intervention in arrears cases. We anticipate this initiative could have a significant impact on homeless reduction.					
£15,000.00	£20,000.00	£20,00.00	£10,000.00	£10,000.00	<b>£75,000.00</b>
Discussion with our H&SCP and Housing partners have identified a need for a Mental health/addictions practitioner from health to work alongside the existing housing support coordinator on physical, mental and addiction health matters. We therefore propose 1 support coordination/link officer to ensure full integration of tenancy, mental health and addiction support.					
£60,000.00	£60,000.00	£60,000.00			<b>£180,000.00</b>
For an enhanced level of tenancy support though renewal of existing contacts, requiring low level mental health and addiction support to be added to the Better Futures model it is anticipated contracting costs will increase. In that scenario better support can be delivered to fewer people on existing budgets or the same enhanced support to the same number or more if greater budget is made available.					
A Crisis Alleviation Fund will be paid directly to housing support providers to enable more reactive housing support to be delivered in crisis situations					
£5000	£5000	£5000			
Decoration project. People in crisis are the least able to undertake a decoration project when given permanent housing. If decoration grants form RSLs are inadequate to pay for works, tenancy sustainment is compromised form day 1. This fund would alleviate that stress. 18 homes per annum.					
£20,000	£20,000	£20,000			<b>£60,000.00</b>
Housing First – to decorate and furnish Housing First tenancies. The success of Housing First will be dependent on providing homes for people that they want to remain in for the longer term. This means a reasonable level of finishings such as floor coverings and basic furnishing – enough to provide comfortable homes. This strand of work will be funded from within budgets from other sections of the RRTP					

Maintaining the mediation service to intervene and support families and reduce homeless due to family breakup and disputes. This funding comes from existing resources					
£5,000.00	£5,000.00	£5,000.00	£5,000.00	£5,000.00	<b>£25,000.00</b>
Training budget to support staff in council and which RSL, H&SCP and Support organisations throughout the transition period to transform the service and achieve the changes required. This will be paid through existing training budgets which will limit the amount of training available					
£5,000.00	£5,000.00	£5,000.00	£5,000.00	£5,000.00	<b>£25,000.00</b>
<b>TOTALS</b>					
<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Year 4</b>	<b>Year 5</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>£110 000</b>	<b>£115,000.00</b>	<b>£115,000.00</b>	<b>£20,000.00</b>	<b>£20,000.00</b>	<b>£380,000.00</b>

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**ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL****BUSINESS CONTINUITY COMMITTEE****DEVELOPMENT AND ECONOMIC  
GROWTH SERVICE****11TH JUNE 2020**

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**ECONOMIC RECOVERY PLAN UPDATE**

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**1.0 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 Members will be aware that the Council is currently involved in responding to the Covid 19 pandemic across a number of different policy areas and work streams. This report outlines the steps the council is taking forward to help deliver economic recovery for the Argyll and Bute region. This includes the work we are doing across a number of council services, with our key partners including working with the private sector, Scottish and UK Governments. Our economic recovery forms a key part of our wider recovery framework but it is anticipated that this will take a considerable period of time and also be heavily influenced by national economic recovery plans as they emerge. **Appendix A** of this report contains the draft Argyll and Bute Economic Recovery Plan for members to consider and endorse as appropriate. **Appendix B** lists a number of actions already completed or underway by council services as part of the economic recovery across Argyll and Bute.

**2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the Business Continuity Committee:

- 2.1 Consider the contents of this report and endorse the draft Argyll and Bute Economic Recovery Plan included in **Appendix A** subject to any comments they wish to make.

**3.0 DETAILS**

- 3.1 Members have already been advised on the Council's response to mitigate the negative impacts of the Covid 19 pandemic through other reports considered by the BCC. This report has been written with regard to the economic recovery of Argyll and Bute and outlines the work that has already commenced between the Council and our partners. A key aspect of economic recovery will be continued collaboration with numerous stakeholders across all of the sectors including both the Scottish and UK Governments. Full account will also be taken of any emerging national economic recovery plan but it will be vital to ensure that the particular needs, issues and future opportunities faced by our region are taken fully into account. This may include a need to change our economic priorities depending on what direction the Government of the UK and Scotland take. Influencing the direction of this from an Argyll and Bute perspective will be best done through the production of our own economic recovery plan, informed by collaboration and local partnership working, together with drawing

in local and external expertise wherever we can.

- 3.2 Given the economic shock resulting from the global necessity to respond to the public health implications of the pandemic it will take time to fully understand the short, medium and longer term economic impacts. Work has already commenced to gather data for Argyll and Bute working with our partners to inform future engagement with potential funders including both Governments. The Development and Economic Growth Service of the Council working across council services and with key partners are also taking forward a number of activities as part of the recovery process. The following paragraphs and **Appendix B** provides details on actions taken to date.
- 3.3 The **Argyll Economic Resilience Forum** has been formed following discussions with HIE and council economic development officers. The Forum has held three meetings so far and intends to meet every two weeks for the foreseeable future. Currently chaired by Morag Goodfellow of HIE its first action was to approve its terms of reference (see below) at its first meeting held in April. In addition to the council and HIE, Scottish Enterprise, SDS and Visit Scotland have attended together with private sector representatives from BIDs group, Federation of SMEs, key business sectors such as tourism, aquaculture, agriculture, construction, fisheries and chambers of commerce. It is likely that the membership of the Forum will expand in the months ahead as the economic impacts and recovery requirements of the pandemic become clearer. Topics discussed so far include business liquidity issues, specific grant support for businesses including gaps in support, communication with visitors on when to return to Argyll and Bute, gathering data on the impacts of Covid 19 on our economy and social distancing requirements for businesses as they look to re-start business activities.

**Argyll Economic Resilience Forum Terms of reference:**

1. Provide industry with regular updates on the public sector's response to COVID19
  2. Industry representatives to provide regular updates on business issues and sector responses relating to the impact of COVID19
  3. Act as a sounding board to assist the public sector's response to the COVID19 outbreak, including any future recovery plan
  4. To assist the sharing of relevant local, regional and national information
- 3.4 It is intended that the Forum will play a key role in advising the future direction of the economic recovery of Argyll and Bute in the weeks and months ahead. Economic recovery forms a critical part of the wider recovery of Argyll and Bute in terms of re-instating business as usual, re-opening council offices and services, public health, caring for people and key infrastructure. The wider Argyll and Bute recovery process will be subject to a separate report for Members to consider at the next meeting of the BCC.

- 3.5 In addition to the work of the Forum, Council staff are continuing to deliver services that support business continuity at this time and also prepare for when the lockdown is eased. In particular, tenders are being progressed to enable works to start when this is permitted to do so and other works such as design work have also been commissioned to keep projects moving forward at this time. Existing funding programmes such as Leader are continuing to be monitored and bids are being made to newly emerging funding streams to attract additional finance to Argyll and Bute. In addition a number of wider economic initiatives are also progressing including place making and area regeneration activities, the Lorn Arc, employability, business gateway business advice on improving digital connectivity for example, the Maritime Change Programme, the support of BIDs, progressing housing sites prior to a start on site, active travel projects and responding to Government consultations that are still continuing at this time.
- 3.6 The council continues to receive and take decisions with regard to planning applications and building warrants. The Government has assisted this process with relaxations on certain procedures enabled by changes in Government legislation. The PPSL has also been reconvened to be held remotely for the consideration of licences, regulatory services reports and planning applications. The LDP2 is continuing to be progressed according to the agreed schedule. Work has also been completed on training environmental health officers to undertake business social distancing monitoring and this will be a key role as the economy continues to re-start with an emphasis of public health and safety.
- 3.7 Staff are also continuing to meet potential investors in our economy and assist bringing forward new employment sites. Another key area of work is reviewing the current approved Argyll and Bute Economic Strategy and looking to prioritise our actions to best support our economic recovery.
- 3.8 A key aspect of recovery will be the **Argyll Rural Growth Deal (RGD)**. Work on the RGD is continuing; draft outline strategic proposals were submitted to both Governments for their initial feedback, some of which has just been received back which the team are responding to. It is intended that this will inform a Heads of Terms Agreement with the Council, possible additional partners such as HIE and SE, together with both Governments in the summer, subject to agreement being reached and taking into account ongoing efforts with Covid 19. It is then intended to develop strategic outline business cases to enable the final agreement to be signed by all parties over the next 12 months. Following this individual projects will start to be developed and implemented on the ground.
- 3.9 Council officers continue to have regular dialogue with both Governments regarding the RGD and also with our key partners such as HIE and Scottish Enterprise. Growth Deals across the UK are considered by both Governments to be a key part of the recovery from this pandemic and talks are underway on how positive economic impacts can be delivered in the most effective and timeous way.

- 3.10 To help guide economic recovery in Argyll and Bute a draft economic recovery plan has been produced to reflect the main steps we need to take in order to delivery economic recovery. The draft plan is shown as a diagram that forms **Appendix A** of this report and key actions already taken or are ongoing in **Appendix B**. Comments are welcome from Members on the content of the diagram at this early stage of the Argyll and Bute economic recovery process. It is anticipated that further changes will prove necessary as we start to better understand the impacts of the Covid 19 pandemic and how best to respond to them.

#### 4.0 CONCLUSION

- 4.1 Initial indications show the local economy has received a significant setback due to Covid 19 restrictions in common with much of the global economy. This report concerns the economic recovery of Argyll and Bute. The process of recovery has already commenced with a number of areas making progress in anticipation of the national economic recovery plan that may also have an impact on future economic priorities and direction of travel for our region. Members are asked to consider the contents of the report and endorse the draft Argyll and Bute Economic Recovery Plan in **Appendix A** subject to any comments they wish to make at this time.

#### 5.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 **Policy** – None arising from this report.
- 5.2 **Financial** - None arising from this report
- 5.3 **Legal** - No legal issues
- 5.4 **HR** - This will need to be resourced from existing staff.
- 5.5 **Fairer Scotland Duty:**
- 5.5.1 **Equalities - protected characteristics:** There are no equal opportunities implications.
  - 5.5.2 **Socio-economic Duty:** It is intended that by implementing our economic recovery at this early stage it will best support the social and economic needs of our communities.
  - 5.5.3 **Islands:** None arising from this report; the economic needs of our islands will require to be fully considered as we move forward.
- 5.6 **Risk** - There is a risk that if we do not look to our region's economic recovery now opportunities and assistance will be missed.
- 5.7 **Customer Service** - There are no customer service implications.

**Interim Executive Director with responsibility for Development and Economic Growth - Kirsty Flanagan**

May 2020

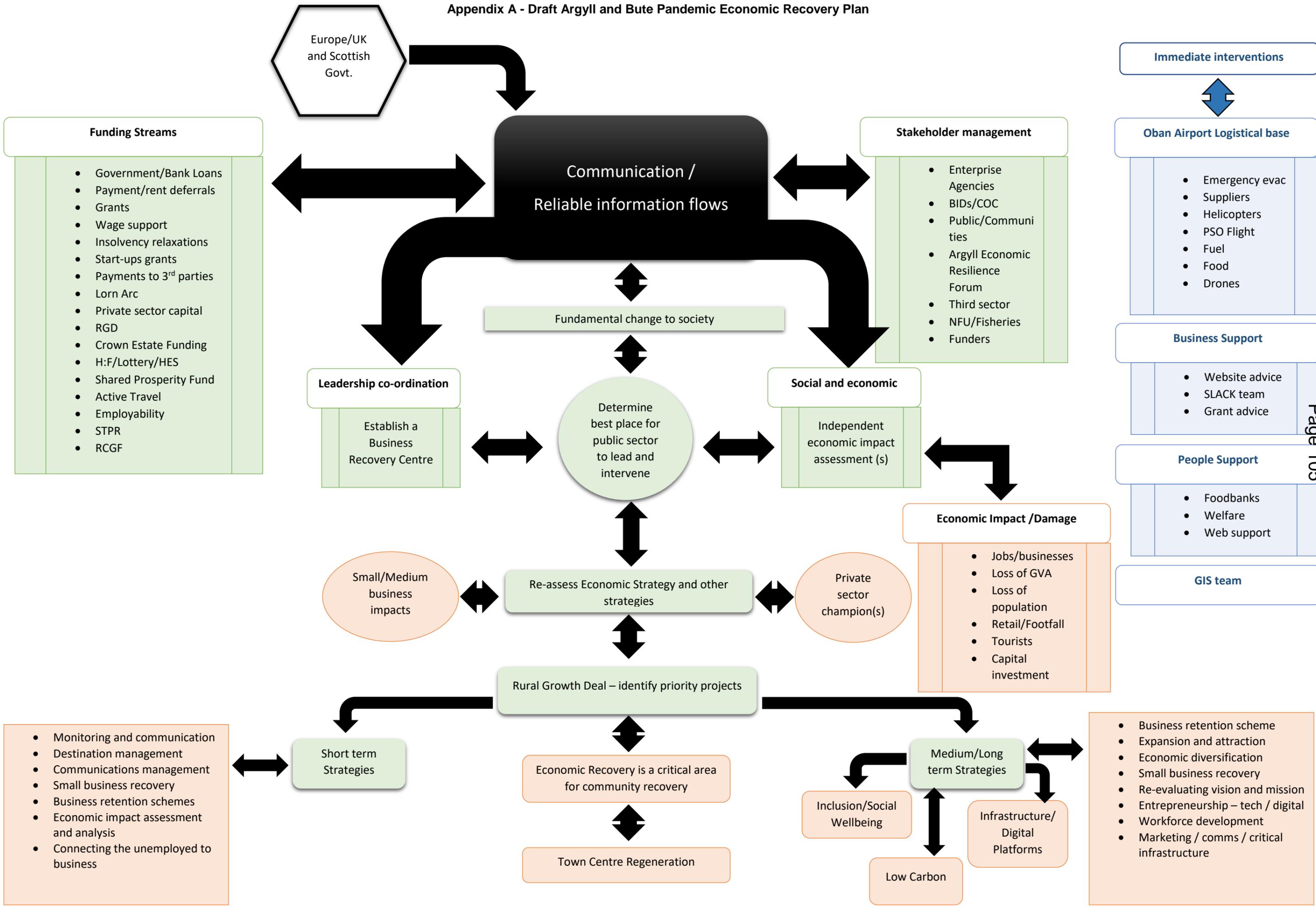
For further information - please contact:

Fergus Murray

Head of Development and Economic Growth 01546604293

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Appendix A - Draft Argyll and Bute Pandemic Economic Recovery Plan



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## **APPENDIX B - Implementing an Argyll and Bute Economic Recovery**

Working across council services we have focused on providing detailed business support and helped process a number of business support funds including:-

[https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/sites/default/files/covid-19\\_infographic.pdf](https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/sites/default/files/covid-19_infographic.pdf)

We continue to speak to local businesses and pass on issues raised to the Scottish Government through official channels such as COSLA and SLAED.

We have articulated the economic situation facing Argyll and Bute at various on line meetings and webinars in an effort to attract additional support for our area.

We continue to receive, process and determine planning applications, building warrants and export certificates.

Working with HIE we have established the Argyll Economic Resilience Forum to help guide our future economic recovery.

We have made all interim payments in terms of our capital projects and have continued with tender processes.

We are assisting communities with existing and further bids to the RCGF for 20/21.

We have started the Lochgilphead CARs project following signing the contract with Historic Environment Scotland.

We have continued to progress our Rural Growth Deal and looked to see how projects with the greatest economic impact can be accelerated working with our key partners.

We have engaged with local businesses on Government social distancing requirements to provide local advice and guidance.

We have boosted our employability support at this time utilising additional government funding.

We are liaising with the Scottish Film and TV Industry to see how filming can restart safely in Argyll and Bute.

We have helped secure additional funding for the Oban and Dunoon BIDs through the Government emergency funding for town centres.

We are preparing Argyll and Bute business sector action plans to aid recovery.

We have agreed a memorandum of understanding with the AITC and made the first interim payment.

We are assisting people made homeless through the Covid 19 economic shock and have secured additional temporary accommodation from Argyll and Bute Tourist businesses.

We have made a detailed submission to The Scottish Government pop up active travel fund.

We are continuing the implementation of the Tourism Rural Infrastructure Fund projects.

We have helped acquire new sites for community based housing.

We have continued our PSO operations for key workers and making the plane suitable for cargo to be delivered to Coll and Colonsay.

We are continuing to progress key projects such as the Maritime Change programme, and the Lorn ARC.

We are discussing community benefits options for on shore and off shore renewable energy projects.

We have responded to the STPR 2 consultation process.

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of Schedule 7A of the Local Government(Scotland) Act 1973

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