

**REPORT BY POLICY LEAD FOR COMMUNITY, CULTURE, GAELIC AND STRATEGIC HOUSING**

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**1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1** This is my third report as Policy Lead for Community, Culture, Gaelic and Strategic Housing and covers the period from 1<sup>st</sup> January to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2015 and aims to highlight developments within my portfolio.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1** It is recommended that members note the content of the report.

**3. DETAIL**

**3.1 COSLA**

- 3.1.1** I have attended a number of COSLA meetings over the last 6 months including the Community and Well Being Executive Group, the COSLA Sports, Arts and Culture Working Group, COSLA Sports Travel Group.
- 3.1.2** Public papers from those meetings can be viewed by Members if they so wish.

**3.2 VISITS**

- 3.2.1** Over the course of the last few months I have visited each of the six area housing offices and have been impressed by the tremendous amount of preventative and support work which is delivered by our staff to some of the most vulnerable people in our communities. Often the housing service, which incorporates the welfare rights service, is the last resort for people who find themselves at risk of losing their home or who are struggling financially. The housing options approach to the prevention of homelessness means that local front line staff have extensive knowledge of all options available in their communities and can also refer people to

specialist support through the Argyll and Bute Advice Network on line referral system. The welfare rights service deals mostly with people who are affected by disability or old age and their intervention to maximise income can transform the circumstances of individuals. Homeless applications have reduced by 46% since 2010 and the number of households with children presenting as homeless has decreased by 11% since last year.

**3.2.2** It was also interesting to meet some of the housing support providers and visit some of the various types of temporary accommodation. Meeting a young homeless person at Blue Triangle accommodation in Oban and hearing his story brought home to me the fact that homelessness can happen to anyone for a whole variety of reasons. Having good quality temporary accommodation provided by the council is an important part of helping people to get back on their feet. Also integral to that is the advice and support provided by our front line staff and the support providers who work with people to help them sort out their accommodation, health, financial, employment and personal well-being issues. All these interventions mean that we are able to show low levels of repeat homelessness and high levels of tenancy sustainment once homeless people are provided with permanent accommodation.

**3.2.3** The work which has been done by the Housing Service on empty homes was also highlighted and it is great to see such progress bringing empty property back into use and improving the look of our built environment. An important development has been the introduction of the Area Property Action Groups, which deliver an integrated council approach amongst officers who have powers to tackle problem buildings.

### **3.3 Home Energy Efficiency Programmes for Scotland (HEEPS)**

**3.3.1** In my last report I told how I raised with the Minister the HEEPS scheme and the fact that in Argyll and Bute the difference between the cost of energy efficiency work on old houses and the grant level was often too great for the work to be done and asked if the grant level could be increased in such circumstances. The Minister had asked for more information so that she could consider our case. I am pleased to say that assistance has now been increased from £7500 to £9000.

### **3.4 Housing-New Developments.**

**3.4.1** I was delighted to be invited, along with Margaret Burgess MSP; the Minister for Housing and Welfare, to officially open ACHA's recently

completed houses at Bowmore, Islay. The total funding for the development amounted to £3,084,922 with Argyll and Bute Council playing a major funding role. The development was built by MacLeod Construction Ltd. During the construction phase, which has taken over a year, 35 workmen were employed, including 5 apprentices and local contractors. This workforce contributed greatly to the local economy through B&Bs, hotels, shops, services, etc.

**3.4.2** It was also a privilege for me to open the six houses at Craignish, Ardfern in April of this year, built for Fyne Homes by MacLeod Construction Ltd. The completion of this development is the first social housing in the area for over 50 years and is a combination of the efforts of the Design Team, some members of the local community and lengthy negotiations with the Church of Scotland who owned the site. Although there was much resistance along the way, Fyne Homes eventually succeeded in building 6 much needed affordable family homes for the area. All of the houses were allocated to members of the Ardfern and Craignish community in accordance with a Local Lettings Initiative.

**3.4.3** In May I was delighted to be asked along to the opening of 8 houses in Connel which were officially opened by John Finnie MSP for the Highlands and Islands. The development at St Oran's Place provides eight new one and two bedroomed homes. They are the first new homes for rent built in the village since the mid-1950s. The development was built by MacLeod Construction to a value of £1.4million. Thirty tradesmen and apprentices worked on the project for 14 months.

**3.4.4** There was a real air of celebration on Iona in June when I spoke at the Sod Cutting ceremony which signalled the start of building homes for rent on the island. These will be the first such homes to be built in over 40 years and has been made possible through a partnership of Iona Housing Trust, Link Group, West Highland Housing Association, Scottish Government and Argyll and Bute Council. I am proud to say that we enabled this partnership earlier in the year. So after many years of trying to get houses built on Iona, we can all appreciate the joy of the community seeing a start being made by local contractors TSL. A good ceilidh is guaranteed for the opening.

## **3.5 Housing-Local Letting Initiative – Catalina Avenue in Oban**

### **3.5.1 Background**

Catalina Avenue in Oban was built by ACHA in 2014. The development comprised 40 properties, including two bedroom houses and one and two bedroom flats. Oban is an extremely high demand area for housing with very little turnover. In the previous year ACHA had only let 29 properties in Oban town. Consultation was carried out and as a result, a local lettings initiative was put in place for all Catalina lets.

### **3.5.2 Local Lettings Initiative Outcome**

The Catalina Avenue local lettings initiative prioritised transfer applicants over other lists. In total 69 lets were made, therefore an additional 29 lets on top of the 40 new build. 61 of the lets were made by ACHA and the others were made by West Highland Housing Association and Fyne Homes.

### **3.5.3 Conclusion**

Demand for housing in Oban is exceptionally high and turnover low, and even with a new build programme ACHA cannot meet demand. There is a Tenants Incentive Scheme run in conjunction with Argyll and Bute Council which pays tenants £500 to downsize, but there had been limited uptake in Oban. It would appear that the incentive of getting a new build house worked well in helping people make the decision to move. Therefore, in areas of high demand, innovative lettings initiatives of this nature can be very effective in getting significant added benefit from the funds invested by ACHA, Argyll and Bute Council and the Scottish Government.

## **3.6 Third Sector and Communities Community Planning Group**

**3.6.1** The Third Sector and Communities CPP Strategic group allows a route to Community Planning from the Third Sector, discussing views and issues important to the Third Sector. The members of the group include representatives from the Council, NHS, Police Scotland, Scottish Fire and Rescue, HIE and the newly formed Argyll and Bute Third Sector Interface.

**3.6.2** The group meets quarterly and, as well as receiving informative updates from each of the partners sharing good news and good practice, the last two meetings have included discussions on various topics including Broadband and Mobile Infrastructure Evaluation and the Argyll & Bute Cultural Assembly, as well as afternoon 'topic' sessions on the Integration of Health and Social Care and European and Leader Funding, which members of the community have joined, either in person or by VC, at 8 sites across Argyll and Bute. At one of the meetings we had 30 people from our communities attending by VC.

**3.6.3** I initiated two events to support voluntary committees running community managed facilities (mainly village halls and community centres) and these were commissioned by the CPP Third Sector & Communities Group, which I Chair, and were delivered in March 2015. The events were held at Centre 81 in Garelochhead and the Corran

Halls in Oban. 60 people representing 36 community managed facilities attended both events. The programmes at the events included presentations and workshops on issues ranging from funding for maintenance costs, health & safety issues, recruiting and retaining volunteers and office-bearers, and examples of good practice. Speakers from organisations, including; the Scottish Council of Voluntary Organisations (SCVO), The Robertson Trust, Lottery, Argyll & Bute Council, ABSEN, AVA, Alienergy, Edinburgh University and Climate Challenge Fund, participated in both events.

- 3.6.4** One result from the Helensburgh and Lomond event is that two local committees running Cove Burgh Hall and Rhu & Shandon Community Centre have signed up to complete the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisation's KeyStone quality award and this is being mentored by Audrey Baird.
- 3.6.5** A contact list for more than 100 community managed facilities has been created to foster networking between committees, facilitate the sharing of information and raise awareness of these vital community facilities.

### **3.7 Community Development**

#### **3.7.1 OLI - Community development support to develop Music and Dance festival.**

Following their successful event in Oban in May this year, the Highlands and Islands Music and Dance Festival is working with Community Development to evaluate the main festival and the Fringe Premier and report back to Event Scotland. The group are now considering a possible expansion of the Festival as well as starting to plan for a Showcase at the Scottish Parliament later in the year.

#### **3.7.2 MAKI – Community Development Training.**

Community Development organised the delivery of Community Action Plan Training in Lochgilphead on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2015. There were 8 attendees from 6 community groups. The training evaluated very well. At the request of attendees Community Development will provide a simple step-by-step guide to Community Action Plan Training. This training will be followed up by the Community Development Officer, to chart progress and to find out if any action plans are initiated as a result of the training and also to find out if there are any further support needs.

#### **3.7.3 Helensburgh and Lomond – Kirkmichael Community Development Group.**

Community Development worked in partnership with the Helensburgh Baptist Church again this summer, to deliver a Gala Day in the Kirkmichael area on Saturday 8 August. The Kirkmichael area is identified in the Social Index of Multiple Deprivation 2012 as being in the

top 5% of areas of multiple deprivation in Scotland. Community Development is supporting an emerging Kirkmichael Community Development Group of local residents and is also leading on organising a multi-agency meeting to focus on Kirkmichael following the events at the Gala Day.

### **3.7.4 Bute and Cowal – Alliance for Action**

**3.7.4.1** Community Development is supporting “Alliance for Action”, a community engagement process commissioned by Highlands and Islands Enterprise and delivered by the Scottish regeneration Forum, which has been active in Rothesay since February 2015 at which time HIE approved the earlier feasibility study outcomes.

**3.7.4.2** The need for change in Rothesay and Bute was recognised in the single outcome agreement and endorsed by the findings of the feasibility study. The Alliance process has been the subject of presentations at the Area Committee and the Council’s Senior Management Team, most recently a presentation was made to the Bute and Cowal Area Community Planning Group.

**3.7.4.3** The Alliance has combined the interests of a variety of groups including business, community and 3<sup>rd</sup> sector representatives.

**3.7.4.4** Its aim is to find a way of achieving more for Rothesay and Bute by encouraging groups to work together on agreed issues. The group has met several times since the beginning of the year. The first public meeting is scheduled to take place on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> of September when the community will be able to identify the issues that they wish to take forward and the priorities that they wish to set.

### **3.8 Third Sector Grants**

**3.8.1** The Community Development Team provided two Third Sector grant reports for each of the local area committee meetings held in August. One report was for the second round of Third Sector grant funding 2015/16 and the other was highlighting how the funding from grants to the Third Sector was spent in 2014/15.

**3.8.2** In total £141,006 (including a carry forward of £1,006 in Helensburgh and Lomond) has been awarded to over 100 (106) organisations delivering projects and activities across Argyll and Bute in 2015/16.

**3.8.3** Only six of ninety-nine groups awarded funding in 2014/15 are still to return their End of Project Monitoring Reports. The project monitoring form has a section asking for comments on the grant process. Not all

applicants have completed this section but, of those received, the comments have largely been very positive. The majority note that the process is simple, straightforward, clear and concise. Thanks are noted for the support received from staff and elected members.

### **3.9 Scottish Older People's Assembly**

**3.9.1** The Scottish Older People's Assembly carried out some work with community development and partners in Helensburgh and Lomond, including Grey Matters, to deliver a local assembly in Helensburgh on Saturday 29 August, 12.30-3pm at the Commodore Hotel. The Scottish Older People's Assembly (SOPA) gives a voice to older people about their concerns and experience of life in Scotland, and informs both the Scottish and UK Governments. This year, SOPA is looking at how it works with local older people and how it can be a more effective advocate for older people's issues. More information about SOPA can be found at <http://www.scotopa.org.uk/>. Older people from out with the Helensburgh and Lomond area were welcome to attend.

### **3.10 Adult Learning and Literacies Service - Digital Skills Assessments for benefits claimants**

**3.10.1** Between March and June 2015, a trial was conducted under the DWP's Flexible Support Fund (FSF), in which Job Centres worked with the Council's Adult Learning and Literacies Service to assess levels of digital skills for a sample of benefits claimants.

**3.10.2** 31 claimants participated in Oban, and 56 in Dunoon, and received an hour of intensive 1:1 tutor time to assess their digital skills and agree an individual 'learning plan' to enable them to become more digitally proficient.

**3.10.3** The assessments were based on claimants' ability in a variety of skill sets that they would need in order to meet the requirements of Universal Jobmatch and basic jobsearching.

**3.10.4** The immediate benefits of the trial were that:-

- Claimants were able to begin to forge a learning relationship with a tutor who could help them to plan further learning and signpost and encourage them.
- Claimants had a better understanding of the digital skills they need to manage their Universal Job Match accounts, understand their current claimant commitments, and prepare for Universal Credit; thereby reducing the potential for sanctions in the future
- Job Centre staff have a better understanding of their clients' skills and abilities, which should lead to improved claimant commitments

and therefore, again, reduced risk of sanctions. However, the findings of the trial suggest that the proportion of claimants without the necessary skills to meet Universal Job Match or to carry out general jobsearch is around 67% and is significant enough to warrant further work and research on the topic.

### **3.11 Leisure Services: Facility Repair/ Refurbishment**

**3.11.1 Queens Hall, Dunoon** is now closed pending major modernisation and improvement works to be undertaken as part of the Dunoon CHORD programme, with a budget of £8.14M. The start date for work on site is subject to the outcome of a compulsory purchase order for one part of the building and a hearing is scheduled for September 2015.

- We have made arrangements to relocate as many fitness classes as possible to other buildings and assisted our regular bookings to make alternative arrangements for the duration of the closure. Any furniture and equipment which was deemed surplus and had no resale value was donated to local voluntary organisations.
- When the building reopens it will incorporate the library, a café, soft play area and health and well-being centre, as well as a modern hall and cultural entertainment space.

**3.11.2 The Pavilion, Rothesay** is scheduled to close at the end of September 2015 for a major £8 million repair and upgrading of the Category A Listed Building, as part of the CHORD programme. The works are programmed for completion by mid-2017. Following completion, it is intended that a long-lease (25 years+) on the building will be taken on by the Rothesay Pavilion Charity. The Charity will take over the operation of the venue thereafter, providing community facilities, cultural and educational activities and events, for the benefit of the community. The Council will provide revenue support to the charity through a Service Level Agreement for an initial period of the first five years of operation.

**3.11.3 Riverside Leisure Centre, Dunoon** is currently in the final design phase for refurbishment works with a budget of £650K. The majority of the budget will be required for replacement of the filtration plant and essential building repairs including such items as pool tiling etc. It is hoped to double the gym floor area and to streamline the reception and café areas, allowing an increased retail area. It is anticipated that the pool will close in February/ March 2016 for a period of 3-4 months. During that time, we will endeavour to secure a temporary gym space and redeploy staff to other facilities where possible.



**3.11.4 Corran Halls, Oban** is currently closed until 5<sup>th</sup> October, except for a few pre-arranged special events. It is undergoing further rewiring work as part two of the contract started last year.

**3.11.5 At Aqualibrium, Campbeltown**, the air handling unit and associated duct work is due to be replaced. The current design has never been able to handle the air extraction adequately which poses health and safety risks, as well as additional operating costs for the facility. A closure period of 6 weeks, commencing late November 2015, is expected for this work and we are currently working out the detail of our service delivery over that time.

## **3.12 Active Schools**

### **3.12.1 2015 Argyll and Bute Youth Games**

**3.12.1.1** The premier school sporting event of the year took place in June, with the arrival in Oban of the 11th Argyll and Bute Youth Games. The Youth Games are supported by both Argyll and Bute Council and Sportscotland. It is organised annually by the Active Schools and Sports Development teams and supported by hundreds of enthusiastic volunteers from schools and community sports clubs.

**3.12.1.2** Over one thousand students from Argyll and Bute secondary schools. from as far afield as; Tiree, Rothesay and Helensburgh arrived, in their team T Shirts, into Oban, by coach and ferry, to compete in sixteen events including; football, rugby, shinty, dance, swimming, athletics, basketball, badminton and hockey. Events were spread across Oban including Mossfield Stadium, Oban High School, Park Primary School and Atlantis Leisure Centre. The Games were opened with a welcome address in Gaelic delivered by students from Oban and Islay High Schools.

**3.12.1.3** With up to ten teams in each event, competition the standards of play were very high and made for a wonderfully friendly atmosphere. Students went off on their long journeys home with some great memories that will hopefully encourage them to continue to participate in sport in future years

### **3.12.1 Annual Residential Young Sports Leaders Conference**

This takes place in Oban at; Corran Halls, High School, and Atlantis Leisure and is supported by Sportscotland and Argyll and Bute Council. 100 students from across Argyll and Bute are trained in a range of sporting qualifications to prepare them to go back and lead volunteering in their schools. This has huge Impact in terms of participation back in their areas and represents great Partnership working between; the High School PE Department, Sports Development, Active Schools and Community Sport Hub.

### **3.13 Leisure, Health and Safety Monitoring**

**3.13.1** Leisure services encompass a high degree of inherent risk which places a significant responsibility on the service to ensure that customers enjoy their activities in a safe and healthy environment, and our staff have a safe working environment. Maintaining these standards requires considerable time and resources dedicated to keep activities compliant with industry standards and legislation.

**3.13.2** We manage the Health and Safety of our facilities by means of an Integrated Management System which clearly guides our teams on how to deliver their services and how to maintain set and measurable standards. To ensure these standards are consistently maintained, we enlist the use of a robust auditing programme which comprises of a 3 tier process and which is programmed within our annual Health and Safety Improvement plan.

**3.13.3** The auditing process comprises of the following:-

- **Corporate**

The council's Corporate Health and Safety department audit our facilities on an annual rotational basis and as part of the council's internal audit process annual audits are undertaken on specific Health and Safety elements within our service.

- **Service Audits**

The Leisure Management team organise internal annual audits of selected facilities. All Health and Fitness coordinators audit all the fitness instructors' class delivery and this is then quality audited by our Health and Fitness Manager.

- **External - by the Royal Life Saving Society UK**

Life Guarding protocols are externally audited by the Royal Life Saving Society UK, in order to maintain and underwrite our accreditation as national training centres.

- **External – QLM – ‘Leisure Safe’ Standard**

An external Health and Safety consultant, QLM, does annual and

programmed audits on our leisure facilities. These audits are conducted according to the 'Leisure Safe' standard which is an industry recognised standard. This year QLM conducted audits on our 4 leisure centres and all 4 centres achieved well above a national pass mark of 65% with the following results:-

- Aqualibrium = 89%
- Rothesay leisure centre = 88%
- Riverside leisure centre = 83%
- Helensburgh leisure centre = 79%

### **3.14 Community Councils**

- 3.14.1** Following a survey of training needs for community councillors, carried out earlier in the year, this year's top 4 training requirements have been identified as Community Engagement, Planning, Governance and Local Government Finance. Work is underway to plan these training events, some of which will be scheduled to coincide with this year's community council by-elections to ensure some of the newly appointed community councillors are afforded an opportunity to undertake training at an early opportunity. In addition to the training survey, a satisfaction survey was carried out with our 56 community councils. The survey results were positive indicating an improvement in all categories (in comparison with the 2012 benchmark). Questions included satisfaction about the support available from the council; how well the council worked with them to achieve their goals; asking community councils to assess their confidence in how effective they are in general - and in terms of effectiveness in influencing issues affecting their areas – as well as how representative they feel they are of the views of their communities.
- 3.14.2** The Community Council Liaison Officer will shortly be undertaking work to put in place a development plan for community councils which, together with the ongoing training provided for community councillors, aims to further improve the relationship with the council and the confidence community councils have in their own effectiveness.
- 3.14.3** This autumn sees the commencement of the annual by-election process. This year there are 39 community councils participating, in an effort to fill a total of 135 vacancies. The nomination period for the by-election opened on 17 August and closed on 3 September 2015.

## **3.15 Gaelic**

### **3.15.1 Gaelic in Education**

**3.15.1.1** Gaelic Medium Education in Argyll and Bute continues to be a development area. This session we have 50 new P1 pupils registered across the Gaelic Classes. P1 Gaelic classes in Rockfield, Salen and Tiree have all enrolled 12 children.

**3.15.1.2** At SQA level our young people have achieved well in Gaelic qualifications. An example is Lily Johnston from Port Ellen who is going on to Sabhal Mòr Ostaig in partnership with Ionad Chaluim Chille Ìle to study Gaelic and Music.

**3.15.1.3** Donald MacLeod, Education Officer, has left the authority and taken up a new post in Perth and Kinross. We wish Donald all the very best in his new post and thank him for his input to Gaelic Education in Argyll and Bute.

**3.15.1.4** Staffing in the Gaelic Classes is becoming more difficult and there has been considerable work undertaken in trying to ensure there are appropriately qualified staff in each school. Currently, there are Gaelic Primary Teacher vacancies in Bowmore Primary and Rockfield Primary schools.

**3.15.1.5** Gaelic "Bookbug" continues to grow in Argyll & Bute with 214 sessions delivered during 2014-15, attended by 1111 adults and 1690 children. The success of Gaelic Bookbug in Mid Argyll resulted in a request from the community for dedicated Gaelic Early Learning and Childcare (ELCC) provision. Following consultation, Argyll and Bute Council has recently established dual language, Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) provision at Ardrishaig Primary. The initial attempt at recruiting a Gaelic Childcare and Education worker was unsuccessful and the post will be re-advertised. The success and impact of the provision will be evaluated during 2015-16.

**3.15.1.6** The Gaelic Education Bill continues to be progressed and whilst very welcome, there are areas which now require further clarification. There are currently a number of areas of concern:

- Lack of available Gaelic Teachers
- Funding to support the implications of the Gaelic Education Bill
- Meeting the needs of the parents.

Guidance for local authorities is required and is being considered by COSLA.

- 3.15.1.7** The Scottish Government's Languages 1+2 Approach continues to be developed in Argyll and Bute and sees Gaelic as a core element of this programme. Teachers are working with Gaelic and French learning materials with children in schools from P1.
- 3.15.1.8** Schools in the Oban Area have been working towards increasing entries for the National Mod 2015 in Oban.
- 3.15.1.9** A small working group of teachers and educational psychologists has been set up to concentrate on creating resources to help children who have significant learning needs. This group have made a good start and hope to share information nationally.

### **3.15.2 Gaelic; Royal National Mod**

- 3.15.2.1** Preparations for the Royal National Mod which is being held in Oban in October are now well underway and I have attended a few of the organising committee's meetings. The Mod starts on 9<sup>th</sup> October and runs for a week and I'm confident that, as always, it will be an enjoyable and resounding success.

### **3.15.3 Gaelic-Furan, Oban.**

- 3.15.3.1** The Gaelic Centre, located in the Corran Halls in Oban, is getting busier all the time and has a wide range of activities and courses to suit all ages. The Furan hot desk facility is also getting busier. Officers from Fèisean nan Gàidheal, Bòrd na Gàidhlig and An Comunn Gàidhealach regularly come in to Furan to work when they are in Oban. An Comunn Gàidhealach have also requested to use the Furan meeting room as their base while the Royal National Mod is in Oban in October. The shelves in Furan are filled with resources suitable for both the learner and fluent speaker and children and adults alike. Increasingly, people are coming into Furan to look through the resources and borrow material for a limited period.

### **3.15.4 Gaelic Language Plan**

- 3.15.4.1** The Council's approved Gaelic Language Plan is being monitored on a regular basis and is now captured on Pyramid, so that updates can be made directly by the services responsible for the actions. I have quarterly meetings with the services and the most recent one identified that some of the actions in the plan need to be updated.

**3.15.4.2** The most recent update was on the agenda for the Community Services Committee on 10<sup>th</sup> September.

### **3.15.5 Gaelic Language Classes**

**3.15.5.1** There has been a good response from employees to learning the Gaelic language and the council is working with Ionad Chaluim Chille Ile to deliver an ongoing programme of classes. Knowledge of the language amongst council employees is an important way of promoting and using the language, day to day, in council business. The council now has a section on the Hub with Gaelic phrases, words and pronunciation that employees can use to familiarise themselves with the language.

### **3.15.6 Gaelic Press Releases**

**3.15.6.1** The Communications Team is continuing to issue regular press releases in Gaelic. These cover a wide range of different topics and are sent to all Gaelic media outlets.

### **3.15.7 Gaelic Web Content**

**3.15.7.1** The Web Manager has been invited to the next meeting of the services group to look at options for improving the Gaelic content of the website, to make it more engaging and to move away from straightforward translation of page contents.

### **3.15.8 Other Actions**

**3.15.8.1** Welcomes in Gaelic are displayed on customer service screens and all adverts in the press have Gaelic in the heading. Recorded messages in Gaelic for the Customer Service Centre are currently being prepared and these will be rolled out in the near future. The council has been working with the Mull Gaelic Partnership to find accommodation for the local Gaelic Officer, a post which was supported by the council through Gaelic Language Act Implementation Funding (GLAIF).

## **4. CONCLUSION**

As Policy Lead for Community, Culture, Gaelic and Strategic Housing, I am pleased to be a part of the work of council services which are taking action to ensure that Argyll and Bute is a great

place to live work and visit. These efforts make a significant contribution to our Single Outcome Agreement.

## **5. IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Policy – None**
- 5.2 Financial – None**
- 5.3 Legal – None**
- 5.4 HR – None**
- 5.5 Equalities – None**
- 5.6 Risk – None**
- 5.7 Customer Service – None**

**Robin Currie, Policy Lead for Community, Culture, Gaelic and Strategic Housing.**

**24<sup>th</sup> September 2015.**