

28<sup>th</sup> June 2018

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**POLICY LEADS REPORT**

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**1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This report provides members with an update on key areas of activity for each Policy Lead Councillor. This aims to provide updates from all Policy Leads at each council meeting so that all members are informed, up-to-date and able to engage with current issues. The last update was provided to Council at its meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> April; this report covers activity from that date until 8<sup>th</sup> June 2018.

Please note that the Economic Development portfolio sits with the council Leader and is included in the Leader's Report.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 Members are asked to consider the report.

**3. POLICY LEAD FOR STRATEGIC FINANCE AND CAPITAL REGENERATION PROJECTS – Councillor Gary Mulvaney**

- 3.1 **Introduction:** This report provides members with an update on my activities as, Depute Leader, Policy Lead for Strategic Finance and Policy Lead for Capital Regeneration during May and June. I have held regular meetings with a range of officers across the policy briefs.
- 3.2 **Strategic Finance:** I have had regular discussions with Kirsty Flanagan, Head of Strategic Finance in terms of finalising the unaudited statutory accounts for fiscal year 2017. These are subject to final audit and approval by the council but currently show a 1% underspend compared to budget, representing £2.6 million - £1.9 million by lower expenditure and £0.7 million though increased income.

One notable factor within this is the required changed accounting treatment of the council's share of the Health and Social Care Partnership's deficit. Despite there being a three year repayment plan agreed by the HSCP, the entire £1.15m overspend is now immediately charged against the council's current year accounts, diminishing our reserves. The significance of this accounting treatment is notable both in the amount for the current year (£1.15 million), and that continuing HSCP deficits will directly impact on our future reserves and affect the resources available to other council services.

### 3.3 Capital Regeneration:

Helensburgh Waterfront Development: This £18million flagship council project continues to make progress. The recent Pre Application Consultation (PAC) generated over 1,300 comments with a community council survey generating 1,100 responses. I met with the Chair of the Helensburgh Community Council in relation to their survey conclusions, and officers are due to present local members with an updated report at their area committee meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> June 2018 prior to the submission of the planning application. Officers advise that the overall timetable for opening the new facility remains on track for July 2021, but clearly with planning, tendering and procurement outstanding, there are a number of substantial milestones to be met.

Dunoon Queen's Hall: This project continues to make good progress with the expected completion date in a matter of days following the council's June meeting. A detailed report was presented earlier this month to Bute and Cowal members.



*Before and after – the Queen's Hall southern elevation showing the new two story glazed curtain wall and roof terrace.*

The first public event – ABBAMania - in the new hall is scheduled for 28<sup>th</sup> July, and this will be followed by The Proclaimers a week later.

Rothesay Pavilion: Contractors CBC Ltd continue to make good progress towards next July's completion date. Project manager Peter MacDonald has moved on to a new role with HIE. Interviews for his replacement have been completed and, at the time of writing, an announcement on appointment is expected soon.

- 3.4 Depute Leader Update:** I continue to meet regularly with the Leader, the Chief Executive and other officers in terms of this role, covering a wide range of subject.

The rural growth deal figures prominently within this sphere as we move to formal submission in late autumn. To make the greatest impact for our area, we need to build the widest possible consensus, across the chamber, within our communities and across the political spectrum.

Along with the Leader and Cllr Taylor, I attended my first Integrated Joint Board meeting and development session since being appointed by the Council. Cllr Green, being the other councillor member, had previously joined the IJB. The meeting was enjoyable and productive, but the scale of challenge should not be underestimated. I was appointed to the Quality and Finance Committee and Cllr Taylor was appointed to the Audit committee.

#### **4. POLICY LEAD FOR CORPORATE SERVICES – Councillor Rory Colville**

- 4.1 Introduction:** I have regular meetings with the Executive Director of Customer Services and the Heads of Service to discuss matters relating to my remit. Since my last report, I have met with the service on 9<sup>th</sup> May and 5<sup>th</sup> June. These meetings serve as a useful forum to discuss any issues and to brief me on any Corporate Services-related matters.

**4.2 Governance and Law:**

GDPR: Data protection law changed on 25<sup>th</sup> May this year. The previous legislation has been in place for twenty years, long before we were using the internet, emails and cloud storage.

The main aim of the new legislation is to enhance the rights of individuals, giving them more control over what happens to their information.

The six general principles under the new regime are consistent with the previous law:

1. Personal information shall be processed lawfully, fairly and in a transparent manner.
2. Personal information shall be collected for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes and not further processed in a manner that is incompatible with those purposes.
3. Personal information shall be adequate, relevant and limited to what is necessary.
4. Personal information shall be accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date.

5. Personal information shall be retained only for as long as necessary.
6. Personal information shall be processed in an appropriate manner to maintain security.

Personal information includes any details that could identify a living person; this will include basic information such as name, email address, phone number, national insurance number, but also less obvious details such as browser cookies, IP addresses. Now, instead of referring to 'sensitive personal data', the new legislation defines 'special categories of data' which include race, ethnicity, political opinion, genetic or health related data and sexual orientation.

All Councillors are Data Controllers and must be registered with the Information Commissioners Office. We already know that personal data must be kept securely, that we must be careful when sharing that data with others and not to keep the information for any longer than necessary – however there are new requirements to address:-

New requirements:

- ✓ Keep a record of your processing activities, this is to show your compliance with the legislation.
- ✓ Give a more detailed Privacy Notice when you collect personal data.
- ✓ Tell subjects of their rights
- ✓ Maintain your registration with the ICO
- ✓ Delete 'old' data you no longer need
- ✓ Report any breaches within 72 hours

Colleagues will have received an email containing the privacy notice, consent form and register of processing, along with advice on using these, but officers from Governance and Law are able to provide further guidance or assistance in the event of any concerns or queries.

#### **4.3 Improvement and HR:**

S1 Jobs Award

The HROD section of Improvement and HR were successful in the recent national S1 Jobs award in the category 'Graduate/Apprentice'. This is a prestigious award and was collected in Glasgow by our HROD Manager, Carolyn McAlpine, our Growing our Own co-ordinator Rebecca Hepburn and Tia Fisher, one of the IHR Apprentices in our Talent Management Team. The service has been focussing on Growing Our Own and investment in developing job and training opportunities for young people in Argyll and Bute, encouraging them to work with the Council. The judges said that our application was a stand out in the category. True strategy and passion on delivery.

### Modern Apprentice Success

The council have offered 42 young people Modern Apprenticeship opportunities since beginning the award winning Growing our Own Initiative in 2014. The scheme is designed to develop Council careers for young people and is about providing them with job and training opportunities to enable them to build rewarding careers in Argyll and Bute.

One recent example of where the scheme has allowed a young person to excel in their chosen career is Ashleigh Conner, Apprentice Mechanic, aged 19 from Campbeltown, who has just passed her Cat C HGV driving test.

Other Apprenticeships on offer across the Council are in IT, Business and Administration, Digital Media, Digital Applications, Waste Management, and Youth Work. As well as industry recognised qualifications, the Council offers additional training opportunities such as Duke of Edinburgh Award training and e-learning in a range of topics.

### Communications – Increased Social Media Output

Social media output has increased significantly in the last quarter, both in reach and in coverage. Using the different social media channels is proving to be a great promotion tool for the area. The Communications Team are picking up on the corporate themes of living and working in Argyll and Bute to promote images and posts, thus reinforcing our corporate messaging and corporate priorities.

### HROD Redesign

The HROD redesign, as part of the service choices programme, has been successfully implemented and a new structure and service model is now in place, having delivered savings of £560K and a reduction of 13.3 FTE. This new model is based on increased digital service delivery, self-service, an increased focus on supporting managers through change and adding value. The performance and improvement team has now been fully integrated into HROD.

### Strategic Workforce Plan

The Council approved the Strategic Workforce Plan at its meeting in April 2018. This document identifies the direction for the Council to ensure that we have a skilled workforce for the future.

## **4.4 Customer and Support Services:**

### ICT

The average time to fix IT faults is 3.43 hours, well below the performance target of 4.5 hours.

I am pleased to report that the Council are now officially Cyber Essentials accredited, as of 18th May 2018. The Council are in receipt of the Cyber Essentials certificate which confirms its commitment to keeping the data of residents, businesses and partner organisations secure from online attacks. Steps are now being put in place to progress the Cyber Essentials Plus assessment, which will involve our systems being tested and verified by independent assessors, to ensure that our IT is suitably secure and meets the standards set by the Cyber Essentials scheme, thus providing reassurance that the Council is protecting the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of data stored on devices which connect to the internet. Cyber Essentials Plus is the UK's highest level of cyber security accreditation and achieving this demonstrates the council's commitment to keeping data from residents, businesses and partner organisations secure from online attacks.

Microsoft Licensing Case Study - having satisfactorily concluded our Microsoft licensing audit after a protracted period, we have produced a case study on this jointly with Insight (our advisers) for use within the local authority sector.

Roll out of the new staff Wi-Fi facility has commenced at five locations – this will benefit staff who work in locations where the mobile signal is poor and they will now be able to connect to the Internet with their own devices at lunchtimes etc. This is limited to no more than 10% of bandwidth at any location to ensure there is no adverse effect on access to core systems.

#### Local Tax Collections

Council Tax collections for 2018/19 as at end April 2018 are 11.08%, up 0.09% on the previous year at this time. Collections for 2017/18 are now 95.76% and this is up by 0.35% on previous year at this time. Collections on 2016/17 are still down by 0.25%. This is improving slowly but these collections were adversely affected by the increase in the premium on long term empty properties and by the reduction in council tax reduction claimed.

Non domestic rates collections for 2018/19 at end of April 2018 were 24.87, down 0.87% on previous year at this time. Collections in the first couple of months can be quite volatile depending on whether people choose to pay up front, or by instalment.

#### Scottish Welfare Fund (SWF)

The programme funding for 2018/19 is £438,720 – an increase of 4.4%. As at the end of April, we have £31,375 on applications received which was 82.4% of the profiled amount. There were 14 claims received but not yet processed. We are continuing to support high priority cases only, with the intention of being able to support at least this level for the full financial year. The increase is very welcome as we are expecting a big increase in crisis

grant claims once we go live with Universal Credit Full Service in September this year.

#### Discretionary Housing Payments (DHPs) and benefit cap

The confirmed funding to date for DHPs for 2018/19 is £564,747. We have requested Council approval for carried forward earmarking of previous underspend of £39,839. The Strategic Management Team has agreed to support the same priority cases in 2018/19 as we have done throughout 2017/18. At the end of April 2018 we have spent or committed £267,322 which is within the funds available. We still have circa 400 under occupancy cases to renew for the new financial year.

We have processed 420 applications for DHP and made 404 awards. There are a total of 13 applications outstanding or requiring further information at the end of April in addition to the bedroom tax cases not yet renewed.

#### Procurement, Commissioning and Creditors

For April we have paid 95.85% of creditors invoices within 30 days which is well above the target of 94.5% and much improved on last year. The service are also continuing to work with HSCP colleagues to assist with the improvement plan for a care home following an enforcement notice and good progress is being made. Discussions are also underway in respect of potential changes to other care home services within the area and this is being carefully monitored.

#### Customer Service Centre

The call abandon rate for April was 12.1% well above the target of 7.5%. This was due to high volumes of calls after the Easter break, compounded by staff vacancies, and large volumes of council tax reminder notices. Average call times are now back below target at 3.43 decimal minutes versus target of 3.50 decimal minutes. The 'resolved at first point of contact' level was 93.1% for the month against a target of 91%. The voice automated switchboard successfully routed 79.8% of calls for the quarter against a target of 78%.

SmartAssistant is now live on the website - this is starting to get used extensively and is reducing numbers of emails from the website. The replacement room booking system is also now live and is a significant improvement on the old system.

## 5. POLICY LEAD FOR HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE – Councillor Kieron Green

- 5.1 Integration Joint Board:** At the April council meeting a number of changes in elected member representation on the Integration Joint Board (IJB) were agreed. Aileen Morton, Gary Mulvaney and Sandy Taylor bring significant experience to the board at a time of great challenge. I also wish to thank the previous members Jim Anderson, Iain Shonny Paterson and Alastair Redman for their contributions over the last year.
- 5.2 Visits and Meetings:** I attended the Health and Care Awards on 27th April 2018 which celebrated the exceptional work being carried out by Health and Social Care staff across Argyll and Bute. I would like to congratulate all of the winners – Jennifer MacIntyre (Nurse/Midwife of the Year), Ann Evans (Therapist of the Year), Richard Gault (Social Care Worker of the Year), Caroline Walton (Admin Secretarial Worker of the Year), Leanne Wallace (Support Worker of the Year), Betty MacIntyre (Pat Tyrrell Award for Caring Behaviours), Avril Coffield (Chief Officers Outstanding Contribution to Health Social Care), Jane Williams (Outstanding Individual), Argyll and Bute Radiography (Outstanding Team) and Kate Paton (Patient/Service User Choice Award). Betty MacIntyre subsequently went on to win Nurse of the Year at the national NHS Heroes awards.

The rescheduled third engagement event on Regional Planning for Health Services in the West of Scotland went ahead on 11th May 2018. We were given more detail about the processes underway to formulate the Regional Plan, and how this will be formally approved by Health Boards and IJBs. There was recognition about the need for political support at local and national levels for changes to services, and the difficulties around maintaining person-centred care with pressures on finances and workforce availability.

The IJB met on 30<sup>th</sup> May 2018 and there were lengthy discussions around finance and Struan Lodge. Monitoring of actions to improve the financial position of the Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) will be ongoing by both the IJB and the Quality and Finance Board. It was agreed to remove Struan Lodge from the Quality and Finance Plan, recognising the pressures on care home places in the Cowal locality.

The Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care, Shona Robison addressed the COSLA Health and Social Care Board on 1st June 2018. She was asked a number of questions around the current review of progress by Integration Authorities across Scotland, as well as finance issues within Health and Social Care. Other significant items discussed at the meeting were the new Scottish Government Suicide Prevention Action Plan which is currently being drafted, the proposed introduction of Safe



Staffing legislation encompassing care homes, and the principles behind an upcoming Scottish Government Diet and Healthy Weight Strategy.

- 5.3 Adult Services:** The Care Inspectorate has reviewed progress at Ardnahean Care Home in Dunoon and raised grades to 3s across all measures. HSCP officers were also satisfied with improvements made and plans to work towards achieving higher grades. Therefore the moratorium on admissions has been lifted.

Jean's Bothy – a Mental Health Hub in Helensburgh has been successful in bidding for Big Lottery funding for a Community Development worker for 2 years.

West Dunbartonshire HSCP are taking the lead on looking at Out of Hours Services at the Vale of Leven Hospital. Argyll and Bute HSCP will be linking into those discussions in due course.

Capacity in home care remains an issue in Oban and Lorn resulting in a number of delayed discharges from Lorn and the Islands Hospital. Further discussions with commissioning regarding increasing provision are ongoing. However recruitment remains an issue for providers particularly in the light of retail and hospitality developments in Oban.

Discussions are continuing with the owners of Lynn of Lorn Care home to ensure a continued quality residential service in the area.

Following Mull and Iona Locality Planning Group deciding to progress with a single GP practice for the islands, a full week of community events on Mull and Iona were held from 14th to 18th May 2018.

Community Teams in Mid-Argyll, Kintyre and the Islands are developing and have implemented a Single Point of Access to their services.

Plans to amalgamate Campbeltown Medical Practice with Kintyre Medical Group remain ongoing, with the provision of dispensing being negotiated.

- 5.4 Children and Families:** The Scottish Government hosted a National Leadership event in Perth on 2nd May 2018. This followed a recommendation by the Child Protection Improvement Programme Report 2017 which specifically identified the importance of leadership across public protection partnerships. This was attended by the Chief Officer Group Public Protection (COG PP) who have drawn up a public protection strategy with strengthened governance.

The Head of Service attended the Befrienders Pearl Anniversary on 12<sup>th</sup> May 2018 to celebrate 30 years of support to children and young people.

The Corporate Parenting Board met on 18th May 2018, receiving an update on progress of the Life Change Trust, presentations by the Independent Care Review and the PACE (Permanence and Care Excellence) Team, and approved the Corporate Parenting Plan subject to final amendments.

Preparation for the Children's Services Joint Inspection is underway with this likely to be between October and December 2018, and having an overarching theme of partnership working.

- 5.5 Planning:** New IT investment development priorities for the HSCP are the establishment of interconnect software to allow HSCP staff to access both NHS and Council systems, merging GP practice IT systems on Mull and Islay to support single practice operation, and progressing the business case for moving the HSCP onto the councils Skype for Business telecoms system. These will support new and more efficient ways of working, with anticipated productivity gains and cost savings.

The HSCP has commenced the process to refresh its next three-year Strategic Plan for 2019/20 to 2021/22. A communications and engagement process is in development and a formal consultation process will be conducted later this year.

- 5.6 People and Change:** HSCP values and behaviours are being developed to help strengthen feelings of integration across Council and NHS staff.

Consultation is progressing on the first HSCP workforce plan which will be focussed primarily on Adult Services. Development will continue to allow this to cover all services provided by the HSCP, partner organisations and the third sector by March 2019.

Further opportunities to promote careers and training within Health and Social Care locally are being explored, including an HSCP presence at careers fairs and modern apprentices.

Engagement with staff around wellbeing, continuous improvement, and leadership visibility is ongoing through events and surveys.

- 5.7 Finance:** The financial year-end outturn for the HSCP for 2017-18 was an overspend of £2.5m, of which £1.1m was within Social Care. This was due to insufficient savings identified at the start of the financial year, delays in delivering aspects of the Quality and Finance Plan, and increases in demand. These factors offset the savings – both one off and reoccurring that were achieved.

There is still an overall budget gap of £1.6m for 2018-19 and so a financial recovery plan remains in place. Further revisions to this were approved by the IJB on 30th May 2018, however with continuing cost and demand pressures on the services delivered by the partnership there remains a significant financial risk associated with the budget for this year. As such the financial position will continue to be closely monitored during the year to mitigate financial risks to the Council and Health Board.

Further service reviews are being carried out by the Children and Families Project Board, which has received new terms of reference to enable improved scrutiny, and by a new Transformation Board which will progress redesigns within Adult and Corporate Services.

## **6. POLICY LEAD FOR ROADS AND AMENITY SERVICES – Councillor Roddy McCuish**

**6.1 Introduction:** This report provides members with an update on my activities as Policy Lead for Road and Amenity Services to date. I have held regular meetings and discussions with a range of officers across the policy briefs and I thank them for all their kind assistance.

**6.2 Infrastructure Design:** Officers are taking forward several Flood Risk Management projects at present. For Campbeltown, Aecom were appointed in 2017 to provide assistance. The appraisal of the outline options to reduce flood risk has continued during the last quarter. This will lead to further engagement with the public during the autumn prior to taking forward the preferred solutions in more detail. Three contracts have recently been awarded to progress flood studies in other areas: for Oban, Envirocentre has been engaged; JBA has been brought on board for the studies at Helensburgh, Kilcreggan and the Surface Water Management Plan for Dunoon; and Aecom has been awarded the study work for Tarbert, Lochgilphead and Clachan. The studies are due to be completed by the end of 2019 for reporting to SEPA. These will then be prioritised nationally for the second cycle of Local Flood Risk Management Plan funding due to run from 2022 until 2028.

Works are due to finish by early June at East Clyde Street bridge in Helensburgh. Design work is underway for Kintyre Street bridge in Tarbert and Cliad bridge on Coll.

Staff in Infrastructure Design are undertaking the design and associate consents and licences for the new coastal defence works to protect the proposed swimming pool and associated car park at the Helensburgh Waterfront Development.

Kirk Road, Dunbeg - Staff in the Infrastructure Design team continue to supervise construction of the improvements to Kirk Road in Dunbeg. The main contract works commenced in May and are due for completion by late 2018.

Staff have been providing an increasing level of assistance to the Piers and Harbours section with regard to marine inspections and project work. This work is being carried out in order to deliver the marine capital plan. Using internal staff builds our skill base and provides a more viable delivery model. Staff have also recently provided reports and recommendations on some slope stability issues for several rock slopes above the road network.

- 6.3 WW100 Commemoration, Islay:** Roads and Amenity Staff were key in organising the event commemorating 100 years since two vessels sunk off the coast of Islay and over 600 US and British servicemen lost their lives. The service delivered significant preparatory works and provided great assistance on the day. Staff went above and beyond carrying out support for the event working closely with a range of agencies to make the day a success. Roads and Amenity staff set up and managed traffic management, safety barriers and also provided additional public conveniences, facilitated repair to the war memorial and kept the event area clean and tidy to ensure this prestigious event went smoothly.
- 6.4 Northern Roads Collaboration Forum:** The partnership authorities in the Northern Roads Collaboration (NRC) have held their first formal meeting in Aberdeen, which I attended on 18<sup>th</sup> May. Depute Policy Lead, Councillor Ellen Morton, has been appointed as Chair of the group.
- 6.5 Depot Rationalisation:** Roads and Amenity Services is co-locating services in a single depot in each key area to replace multiple operational depots. This depot rationalisation programme aims to merge operational teams, reduce running costs and create opportunities to generate income by releasing land for business and industry development. The programme is planned to be progressed between now and 2021 and is on track to deliver the agreed savings of £172,500 by March 2021.

Progress made to date includes:

- Oban – following the fire at Millpark depot in November 2016 there is a plan to locate the single depot at Jackson's Quarry, subject to an assessment of that site's viability in terms of consents and any subsequent costs to meet any regulatory requirements.
- Lochgilphead – given the increasing unsuitability of the fleet workshop on Bishopton Road and the commercial interest in both the Bishopton Road and Monydrain Road sites, the Kilmory Industrial

Estate site has been identified as the preferred location. Feasibility plans have been produced.

- Campbeltown – as the fleet and amenity premises at Roding in Campbeltown are increasingly unsuitable, and as there is capacity at Machrihanish where the Roads team is already based, this has been identified as the preferred site.
- Rothesay – there has been commercial interest in the High Street depot and initial feasibility plans show that all services can be located at the Union Street depot.
- Islay- all three depots at Bowmore can be relocated to a single depot at Gartbreck next to the waste disposal site to release the use of land not owned by the Council, as well as releasing assets for offer to the market. A feasibility plan has been produced.
- Dunoon – there is added complexity due to there being a lease for part of the Roads depot at Victoria Road. To date, only site valuations have been undertaken.

**6.6 Service Redesign:** The service redesign agreed at February's budget meeting is on track in relation to timeline. Members of the EDI Committee and trades unions were given a presentation recently on the concept and functions.

Notably the job evaluation process for posts within the new structure is underway. This is a critical stage in the process and any delay will affect the overall timeline. It is envisaged at this stage that the interview process will be complete by the end of June.

Members agreed this package with the addition of two customer liaison posts, recognising the disparity between contact/demand and resource, with a view to supporting the customer care project. Job descriptions for these posts have been agreed internally and are currently with HR for job matching. It is expected that they will be advertised in early course.

**6.7 Capital Programme:** The Capital Roads Reconstruction Programme is underway. The programme has been published on the council website and good progress is being made.

**6.8 Marine Works and Progress:**

- Port Askaig – Work by Arch Henderson ongoing – 3 options considered – extension to the north / extension to the south / new facility extending into adjacent bay to the north.
- Craignure – Work on the STAG report is underway – Mott MacDonald have been awarded this contract. First public consultation to take place on 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> June.

- Iona / Fionnphort – Contract has just been awarded for ground investigation works – expected to take around 8 weeks to complete. Start date to be confirmed with Contractor – Causeway Geotech.
- Tayinloan / Gigha – This work is not being progressed as upgrading of these facilities is not currently considered to be a Transport Scotland priority – discussions will continue with TS on this, and other, priorities. In the medium term it is envisaged that Tayinloan/Gigha will be developed to accommodate hybrid ferries.
- Rothesay – Contract for wavescreeen awarded to Lochshell Engineering – fabrication will be starting off-site shortly with on-site works due to commence in August. Both Calmac and Council Officers are liaising closely with particular regard to keeping the public informed.

## **7. POLICY LEAD FOR COMMUNITIES, HOUSING, GAELIC AND ISLANDS – Councillor Robin Currie**

### **7.1 Communities:**

Participatory Budgeting Project: April saw the Community Development team supporting individuals and communities across Argyll and Bute to participate in voting for projects to receive the Supporting Communities Fund. 4,730 digital votes were cast across Argyll & Bute when voting closed on 1 May 2018 and over 60 projects were funded. An evaluation of the project is taking place and members will be informed of the outcomes of this following summer recess.

The Community Development service has been supporting groups in Argyll and Bute that were unsuccessful with the SCF funding this year in preparation to apply for the Health and Wellbeing Fund and other potential funders.

Support for Communities: since April 2018, 29 groups have engaged with the service for support. The Information below provides a snapshot of this:

- Community-led Action Planning – process is under way in Inveraray and there have been and will continue to be a rich variety of community engagement events to ensure that a collective view emerges about the key issues the town faces and the opportunities it can take advantage of.
- South Islay Development Trust and the island of Jura are the latest communities in MAKI to have completed their plans – while South Kintyre Development Trust are close to completing their five-yearly review. Dunadd Community Enterprise are embarking on theirs.
- General support to build capacity – the PACT group offers social and advocacy opportunities to adults with learning disabilities and their friends, and the Community Development service support them to

hire a co-ordinator to strengthen the group, ensure this vulnerable community has a voice at local forums and is able to participate in civic life.

- Work has continued with the Loch Long Jetty Association to provide support with funding applications, specifically with their Expression of Interest for National Park funding.

Community Planning: the recent Area Community Planning Group meetings were well attended by community members and partners. Actions from the Area Community Planning Action Plans are progressing.

The next meeting of the Community Planning Management Committee is 27<sup>th</sup> June, where partners will look at the outcome areas of both Young People and Skills, Education and Training. There will be presentations from the new Chief Executive of the Third Sector Interface, Argyll and the Isles Coast and Countryside Trust (ACT) and Argyll and the Isles Tourism Co-operative.

## **7.2 Housing:**

Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) - Argyll and Bute Council received positive feedback from the Scottish Government in a letter dated 25<sup>th</sup> April. The Scottish Government recognized the key role that the local authority plays in enabling the development of affordable housing through the use of the Strategic Housing Fund. The Scottish Government also recognised the excellent partnership working and engagement with stakeholders in the preparation of the SHIP programme. The Scottish Government also commended the fact that there is a high level of corporate commitment within the Council to the delivery of the Ship.

The Scottish Government did raise a concern that none of the projects within the SHIP are identified as meeting Greener Standards. Given the Council's priority on dealing with fuel poverty and providing energy efficient housing we will work with housing providers to develop to Greener Standards where possible.

Homelessness: 517 homeless applications were recorded during the period from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018 which represents an increase of 40 applications (8.4%) on 2016/17. A paper will be going to the Helensburgh and Lomond Area Committee on 21<sup>st</sup> June to discuss the increase in that area as detailed below:-

Area	Trend	Change in: Number	Change in: (%)
<b>Bute and Cowal</b>	<b>Down</b>	-11	-9%
<b>Helensburgh &amp; Lomond</b>	<b>UP</b>	36	25%
<b>Mid Argyll, Kintyre &amp; Islay</b>	<b>UP</b>	14	12%
<b>Oban, Lorn &amp; the Isles</b>	<b>Up</b>	1	1%

Welfare Rights: Income generated during 2017/18 totals £2.94m, which exceeds the full year target of £2.5m. The Welfare Rights team continues to achieve a high level of positive outcomes for clients with 87% records during 2017/18. 2,022 referrals were actioned during the year.

The team will play a key role in delivering the Anti Poverty Strategy which was approved in draft form by the Policy and Resources Committee on 24<sup>th</sup> May. The vision is ‘we want an Argyll and Bute where no one lives in poverty. Everyone should be able to achieve their potential and feel healthy, happy and valued. We want to be a place where everyone understands that tackling poverty is everyone’s responsibility. We believe that if we act locally, and in partnership, we can make a real difference’.

**7.3 Islands:** The Argyll Islands Strategic Group met most recently on Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> May and noted that 5 Island Liaison Directors have been appointed by the Scottish Government to Argyll and Bute as part of the pilot initiative. It is hoped that some of them may attend the group’s next meeting in August. Disappointment was noted at the continuing situation whereby the National Islands Group has not met since July 2017 which is viewed as lost opportunity for strategic discussion on island issues to have taken place.

An update was provided in regards the recent Islay and Jura Summit held on 4<sup>th</sup> April, noting that actions have already been progressed by the holding of an initial meeting to explore the establishment of an economic forum for the islands.

The final stage 3 of the Islands (Scotland ) Bill was passed in the Parliament on Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> May, making provision for a national islands plan, introducing the principle of island proofing and establishing a licensing scheme in respect of marine development adjacent to islands. The detail of this legislation will continue to be the focus for much of the work of the AISG



moving forward to better ensure the deliverability of positive outcomes for island communities.

The group remains hopeful that Humza Yousaf MSP, Minister for Transport and the Islands will attend a future meeting of the group.

**7.4 Culture, Heritage and the Arts (CHArts):** Results from *The CHArts Baseline Review and Summary, February 2018 draft, (the Review)* show that the sector has grown since the previous study undertaken in 2013. Using business base data which is based on a VAT threshold of £83k we can report that the number of businesses has grown by 6% and the numbers employing staff has grown by 23% and the numbers employed has grown by 22%. In addition the majority of creative industries are in a rural area (105 compared to 70) however the majority of those employing more than one member of staff are in towns. These results are subject to the caveats described in the review which highlight the difficulty in quantifying the sector's contribution to the economy and to communities. This relates to the lack of robust and reliable data; nature of the sector being that there are many micro-businesses, sole traders, freelancers and volunteers, and that the sector has myriad interconnections.

As part of the review a survey was issued to examine both opportunities and barriers to growth. The main findings highlighted an overwhelming desire for growth, collaboration, shared space and faster broadband speeds, alongside the knowledge and ability to access markets and funding sources. A programme of capacity building and training has been developed with dates to be finalised prior to advertising. The training programme will include Business Gateway and HIE to deliver generic and specialist support. A copy of the Review is available on request and members are encouraged to visit <https://www.chartsargyllandisles.org/> for up to the minute information.

## **8. POLICY LEAD FOR EDUCATION – Councillor Yvonne McNeilly**

**8.1 INEA Update:** A return visit took place on 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> May. Inspectors focused on evidence in relation to the following main points for action:

- Significantly improve young people's attainment across the authority;
- Continue to improve the quality of educational provision with consistently higher levels of support and challenge from central officers and elected members;
- Improve relationships and communication, promoting a more positive ethos amongst all stakeholders;
- Improve the quality of strategic leadership and direction at all levels within the Education Authority.

Discussions were very constructive and there will be a further update following their return in September.

- 8.2 PGDE (Secondary):** Graduates living in Argyll and Bute are being offered financial support to become fully qualified secondary school teachers without having to move away from the area. The programme arises from a partnership with the Universities of Dundee and the Highlands and Islands and, subject to approval from the General Teaching Council of Scotland, will see student teachers based in local schools over an 18-month period. Training, funded through a Scottish Government bursary scheme, will allow students to both study from home and spend substantial time in class under the guidance of a mentor.

Subjects on offer are chemistry, computing, home economics, maths and physics – where there is a shortage of qualified teachers across Scotland.

On completion students will be awarded a Post Graduate Diploma in Education, will be fully registered secondary teachers and able to apply immediately for teaching posts. The first intake of students is due in December this year.

- 8.3 Digital Learning:** The digital learning team has been working on a new system for managing all of the iPads in schools across Argyll and Bute.

The current system (called Meraki) works, but there are some difficulties that schools experience because it doesn't have all the features we need or want. The new system, called Jamf, will have some real benefits to schools. Within Jamf is an area called "self-service". Self-service is essentially a library of apps that can be installed on the iPad with a single click.

The digital learning team has commenced the transition of devices out of Meraki and into Jamf, and there is a schedule being formulated to ensure iPads are moved as quickly and seamlessly as possible. The team will be in touch with schools to co-ordinate the transition in the coming months.

- 8.4 Literacy:** This year has seen the successful implementation of a pilot project with 11 primary schools, focussing on literacy in primary 1. The principles on which the pilot is based are founded on current research and can be adapted for use in any size of school. Having had a positive impact on motivation and attainment, the approach will be shared with all primary schools across Argyll and Bute for implementation next session.

This session has also seen the first year of our involvement with the Northern Alliance regional collaborative and we are working closely with them on the emerging literacy workstream which has had a positive impact on literacy attainment, particularly in terms of closing the poverty related

attainment gap. Nine schools undertook training in this approach between January and June 2018 and they will join another 14 schools who will go through the training and implementation in 2018-2019. We have continued to support secondary schools with their approaches to learning across the curriculum as well as offering twilights for all cluster areas.

Next year will see the further development of these areas as well as a focus on 2<sup>nd</sup> level writing with training being offered by Storyline Scotland for 40 practitioners across the authority.

**8.5 Numeracy:** Two of our schools were also represented at the Scottish Maths Conference at Stirling University on Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> May. Derek Munro from Hermitage Academy discussed how to use digital technologies to enhance the BGE, whilst Lucy Blake from Clachan Primary shared her school's Number Talks journey and the very positive impact that it has had on the school community. Both sessions received positive feedback and we are delighted that we were able to share the great work going on in Argyll and Bute.

**8.6 School achievements:** Congratulations to Primary 4/5 at Sandbank Primary School who were the winners of the Sumdog UK Competition in May – a fantastic achievement. Their class teacher, Mr Donald, credits their success to Number Talks. Over the course of this session Ardrishaig, Clachan and Rosneath Primaries have also been winners of the Argyll and Bute Competitions. All these schools have won a six-month subscription to Sumdog Spelling for their learners.

Lochdonhead Primary School have been declared the Scottish Regional Winner in the Totally Active category in the Better Energy School Awards 2018 – well done to all involved.

**8.7 Standard for Headship:** The Standard for Headship involves strategically planning leading an area of school improvement across the school community and considerable study into the theory of successful leadership. We are grateful to schools who have supported our colleagues and wish them all the very best for the future. Their success reflects our commitment to one of our key priorities in Our Children, Their Future in regard to strengthening leadership at all levels.

Congratulations to Aileen Thomson, Julien-Pierre MacKenzie, Alison Macdonald, Simone McAdam, Tina Sartin and Lucy Blake who successfully completed the Standard for Headship this year through professional study with University of the Highlands and Islands, and the Scottish College for Educational Leadership – well done.

**8.8 Parental Engagement Strategy:** The Argyll and Bute Council Parental Involvement Strategy, drafted in 2016, has been reviewed this term following consultation with a wide range of stakeholders including parents, teachers, Head Teachers, non-teaching staff, Youth Services, Educational Psychologist and others.

The revised Argyll and Bute Council Parental Engagement Strategy focuses on the following six areas:

- Developing strong partnerships with parents
- Promoting and supporting effective communication between schools and parents
- Providing support and encouragement for learning at home
- Supporting and promoting the role of Parent Councils
- Providing a clear route for parents' concerns and complaints to be resolved
- Seeking views and responding to feedback from parents about the strategy

Schools will be asked throughout the next school session 2018-2019 to draft action plans to detail how they will implement the Strategy aims in their own settings, based on their own school community needs and preferences.

At the time of writing this was due to be further discussed at the Parent Council Seminar being held on 2<sup>nd</sup> June before presentation to the Community Services Committee on 14<sup>th</sup> June 2018.

**8.9 Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) Expansion:** As a result of Scottish Ministers and COSLA Leaders reaching agreement on a multi-year revenue and capital funding package for the expansion of early learning and childcare (ELC) on 27 April 2018, the Early Years Service is now able to take forward its phasing plan for the expansion of ELC in Argyll and Bute. It is hoped that an additional 12 settings will offer 1140 hours of ELC from October 2018, with a further seven settings offering 1140 hours from January 2019.

This will mean that a total of 29 nurseries from across Argyll and Bute will be offering increased hours by the end of January 2019. Feedback from ELC teams, childminders and parents who have participated in the initial phasing of 1140 hours has been very positive – practitioners report that children are enjoying the extra time in ELC and are 'thriving'. One parent even started her own business as a result of being able to access training when her child was at nursery. The phasing plan for 2019-20 and 2020-21 will include details around when the remaining ELC settings will be able to offer the additional hours to their families and will be confirmed by the end of June 2019.

Additional Graduate Allocation: By August 2018, the Scottish Government has made a commitment to ensure nurseries in the most deprived areas will benefit from an additional graduate – either a graduate practitioner with a relevant degree award or a teacher with Early Years expertise. As a result of this initiative, Argyll and Bute has been allocated sufficient funding to place an additional graduate within the towns of Bute, Campbeltown and Dunoon to support nurseries with delivery of high quality ELC to improve outcomes for all children. Over the next two years, each locality within Argyll and Bute will have access to the support of an ELC graduate as part of the ELC phasing plan.

Workforce Development: The Early Years Service is currently working in partnership with Argyll and Bute's Learning and Development Team, Skills Development Scotland (SDS) and secondary schools across the Council to deliver a Foundation Apprenticeship in Social Services Children and Young People (SSCYP), starting in June 2018. Timetabled into students' choices for S5 and S6, year 1 will comprise five units towards the national progression award and year 2 will include nursery placements for one day each week.

The Service will also deliver six Modern Apprenticeships in SVQ3 (SSCYP). Starting in August 2018, this will be offered as a two year apprenticeship where students are paid a salary as they work towards their Practitioner qualification within Local Authority nurseries. In future years, if a student successfully completes the Foundation Apprenticeship in S5 and S6, he or she could subsequently complete the Modern Apprenticeship in one year. The Early Years Service will also be working with Argyll College and the Council's Lead Officer 16+ to raise the profile and attractiveness of the sector and actively increase diversity.

It is anticipated that these developments will contribute to the recruitment of a suitably skilled and well qualified additional workforce which will be required to meet the needs of extended ELC entitlement.

Outdoor Learning: On 22nd February 2018, the Minister for Childcare and Early Years announced funding for Inspiring Scotland to, amongst other things: work with eight local authorities to promote and increase outdoor learning as part of the expansion to 2020; develop cross sector models of partnership working that drive collaboration between local authority, voluntary/ third sector and private sector to deliver increased outdoor learning opportunities; and produce a "How To Guide" as detailed in the Scottish Government Quality Action Plan.

Following a robust application process, Argyll and Bute was successful in its bid to become one of the eight local authorities to be supported by

Inspiring Scotland. The Early Years Service welcomes Inspiring Scotland's support in taking forward ambitious and exciting plans for outdoor provision as part of the expansion of ELC in Argyll and Bute.

## **9. POLICY LEAD FOR PLANNING AND REGULATORY SERVICES – Councillor David Kinniburgh**

**9.1 Planning (Scotland) Bill:** Stage 1 of the Planning (Scotland) Bill concluded on 28<sup>th</sup> May and the Bill is now at Stage 2 of the Parliamentary process.

**9.2 Local Development Plan 2 (LDP2):** Since my last update on Local Development Plan 2 officers have held a workshop in April for elected members on the findings of the strategic Main Issues Report and I would thank those who attended for their input.

Officers have also attended Area Committee Business days through May & June to discuss site specific issues with elected members and the feedback received from this and through the various consultation processes of the Development Plan Scheme with key stakeholders etc. will help officers prepare the proposed Local Development Plan 2, which will become the settled view of the Council, for public consultation in November/December 2018.

Details of the Development Plan Scheme and LDP2 process can be found at: <https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/ldp2>

**9.3 Argyll and Bute Windows- Technical Working Note:** At the April meeting of the Planning, Protective Services and Licensing (PPSL) Committee members approved a draft Technical Working Note for dealing with replacement windows in conservation areas and/or on listed buildings within Argyll and Bute. At the moment the draft Technical Working Note is out to consultation with Officers consulting on the key messages of the document. The consultation period ends on 20th July 2018 with feedback from the consultation due to be reported to the PPSL committee in August/September with adoption of the Technical Working Note being sought at that time.

The Argyll and Bute Windows - Technical Working Note follows on from the existing Rothesay Windows – Technical Working Note approved by the PPSL committee in December 2015 and if adopted will be a material consideration and bring a consistent approach when assessing and determining applications relating to replacement windows in Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings across all of the Argyll and Bute Planning Authority.

Details of the consultation as well as the draft Technical Working Note can be found at:

<https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/consultations/replacing-windows-listed-buildings-and-conservation-areas>

- 9.4 Building Standards:** The current economic uncertainty continues to affect building work throughout Argyll and Bute and this situation is having an adverse effect on the overall numbers of Building Warrant applications received. However Building Standards continue to commercialise by providing a verifier role to a number of other Local Authorities, in particular City of Edinburgh Council who are currently using their services on a weekly basis.

## **10. CONCLUSION**

- 10.1** This report provides members with an update on each of the Policy Lead portfolios. Policy Lead Councillors will be happy to provide more detail or discuss any particular issues with colleagues as required.

## **11. IMPLICATIONS**

- 11.1 Policy - None**
- 11.2 Financial – None**
- 11.3 Legal – None**
- 11.4 HR – None**
- 11.5 Equalities – None**
- 11.6 Risk – None**
- 11.7 Customer Service – None**

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**For further information please contact Aileen McNicol, Leadership Support and Member Services Manager, telephone 01546 604014 or email [aileen.mcnicol@argyll-bute.gov.uk](mailto:aileen.mcnicol@argyll-bute.gov.uk)**