

## CASE STUDIES ILLUSTRATING THE POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION TO OUR COMMUNITIES

### DEVELOPMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

#### Business Outcome 1 - The health of our people is protected through effective partnership working

##### Multi-Agency Working (PHRS)

A multi-agency Detect and Disrupt Group tackling serious and organised crime, across Argyll and Bute Council and West Dunbartonshire Council, has been successful in targeting incidents relating to illegal workers, food and environmental crime and to protecting consumers from being subjected to frauds and scams. As a result, this approach has developed systems for the sharing of intelligence, joint working operations, sharing of best practice, targeting resources driven by intelligence and rising awareness across Council and other employees.

**SERIOUS**  
**CRIME**  
**AFFECTS ALL COMMUNITIES**  
**NOT JUST CITIES**

**You know what's normal - report the abnormal:**

**Out and about:**

- Permanently covered windows or unusual security
- No refuse for occupied premises
- Empty chemical containers or tubs as part of refuse
- People loitering or visiting properties at strange times

**In businesses:**

- High turnover of staff that speak limited or no English
- Staff seem nervous or described as just visiting
- Mattresses on non-designated sleeping areas
- Small businesses with more than one till

**CALL CRIMESTOPPERS ON**  
**0800 555 111**

Argyll and Bute Council | POLICE SCOTLAND | SEPA | Home Office

**Business Outcome 12- High standards of Public health and health protection are promoted**

**Emergency Drinking Water Supplies (PHRS)**

Emergency arrangements were implemented across Argyll and Bute to provide alternative drinking water (principally bottled water) to properties on private water supplies which were drying up or had insufficient quantities during the summer months. Users of private water supplies account for 12% of the total population of Argyll and Bute and this increases during the tourist season., It was imperative that these properties had access to a safe drinking water and these arrangements were funded by the Scottish Government

**Age-related sales operations and sale of tobacco (PHRS)**

Advice visits continually found non-compliances and action was taken to ensure that appropriate procedures were implemented. During the limited directed surveillance underage sales operations, using an under-age volunteer to try and make a purchase, 100% of those businesses visited in 2018/19, which were selling tobacco and Novel Vaping Products (NVP) products, did not sell. This was an indication the businesses had satisfactory age-related sales procedures in place. This is an increase from 89% in 2017/18 and shows an improvement against the previous trend where premises found to be selling such products illegally to customers under 18 years of age, was increasing. In public health terms this is welcomed but further work will be undertaken in 19/20 to assess whether this improvement is representative and sustainable.

## Business Outcome 15 – Argyll and Bute is open for business

### The Refurbishment of the Queen's Hall in Dunoon (EDST)



A total investment of just over £12<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> million has seen the hall, completed in 1958, undergo a transformational change, with new elements added, and existing elements completely refurbished.

The project has:

- Created 15FTE posts
- revitalised the Queen's Hall, giving people exciting gathering places both inside and outside the building
- provided a purpose built fitness & training suite
- provided new home for the Public Library
- co-located the offices of Skills Development Scotland
- provided a completely refurbished main auditorium
- provided a Children's Soft play area for children from early years up to age ten
- provided a new Cafeteria and catering facilities.
- provided a new road layout, public realm with paving, and soft landscaping to revitalise and enhance pedestrian, vehicular and marine access to Dunoon town centre, Cowal and the National Park beyond
- delivered a major building refurbishment as opposed to new build project; and enhanced the public realm around the area of Dunoon's War Memorial, in the centenary of the end of the First World War

**Clachan flood study (R&A)**

Working with the local community and other stakeholders such as the Scottish Environment Protection Agency, Scottish Forestry, and Scottish Water, Clachan was recognised as a Potentially Vulnerable Area (PVA) to flooding in 2018, which provides an avenue for any identified flood scheme to be 80% grant funded by the Scottish Government from 2022.

**Compliant food businesses (PHRS)**

Through proportionate regulation, environmental health have supported compliant food businesses to continue to operate locally, nationally and in accessing worldwide markets, In 2017/18, 2034 export certificates were issued ( an increase in 30% from 16/17) which have allowed local businesses to export food (principally fish, shellfish and whisky) to countries out with the EU. This is a key economic driver as well as protecting food safety and the reputation of food products from Argyll and Bute.

**Business Outcome 23 - Economic growth is supported**

**Business Gateway (EDST)**

## KEY ACHIEVEMENTS 2018/19



BUSINESS START UPS SUPPORTED BY BUSINESS GATEWAY ARGYLL & BUTE



116

NEW BUSINESS  
START UPS SUPPORTED

137

NEW JOBS  
CREATED

£4.2m

PROJECTED  
TURNOVER

SUPPORTING EXISTING  
& GROWING  
BUSINESSES



209

EXISTING BUSINESSES SUPPORTED  
VIA 1-2-1 ADVISOR MEETINGS

CUSTOMER  
SATISFACTION

91%

In an independent satisfaction tracking survey of Business Gateway nationally, the 12 month average for the overall satisfaction of services provided by Business Gateway in Argyll and Bute is 91% compared to a national average of 84%

DIGITALBOOST  
*power up your business*

22

WORKSHOPS  
DELIVERED

116

ATTENDEES

20

BUSINESSES  
RECEIVED  
1-2-1 SUPPORT

28

BUSINESSES RECEIVED SPECIALIST  
CONSULTANCY ADVICE

GATEWAY EVENTS

68

WORKSHOPS  
DELIVERED

572

ATTENDEES



89%

OF WORKSHOP ATTENDEES  
RATED THE EVENT AS "VERY  
GOOD"

44

EXISTING BUSINESSES RECEIVED  
FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR GROWTH  
PROJECTS

“ I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for all your support this year, you have been fantastic for my first year at The Journey. ”  
Steve Losh, SOS Fitness & The Journey



email: [business.gateway@argyll-bute.gov.uk](mailto:business.gateway@argyll-bute.gov.uk)  
tel: 01546604555

## Basking Shark Scotland (EDST)



An Oban boat tour company that specialises in interacting with basking sharks has invested in a new vessel that will allow them to explore the west coast of Scotland even further.

Marine biologist Shane Wasik set up Basking Shark Scotland in 2012 after living in New Zealand for a few years. With diving and underwater photography experience, Shane decided to turn a transformational childhood experience of swimming with basking sharks into a business.

Since then the company has grown steadily and with recent support from Business Gateway Argyll and Bute, Shane is confident that this season will be the most successful yet.

With the commissioning of a brand new 12m bespoke boat designed and built specially for what Shane and his team does, Basking Shark Scotland are now able to offer customers more offshore destinations and expeditions.

“Business Gateway has assisted us with social media and business training which was great. Our adviser also suggested potential funding opportunities which led to us getting some small grants for equipment and attending trade shows to help us market the business. This was a big help as it allowed us to get out and about more to show people what we offer.”

### **Wild Thyme Spirits (EDST)**

Fin and Eileen Geekie set up Wild Thyme Spirits Ltd in 2016 and since then have sold over 5000 bottles including sending their first export shipment to Canada.

Support from Business Gateway Argyll and Bute has helped them grow the business. Recently the couple have benefitted from specialist marketing advice via *the Business Gateway Local Growth Accelerator Programme, which is part funded by the European Regional Development Fund 2014-20 Structural Funds Programme.*

Fin said: “We’re proud of our Colonsay Gin and the response we’ve had from the public. When we sold our 5000<sup>th</sup> bottle it was a special moment and since then we’ve expanded more. We exported our first shipment to Canada including an exclusive special commemorative bottling for Canada’s finest military regiment, the Lord Strathcona’s Horse. We’re also currently in negotiations with importers in Italy and Spain so it’s an exciting time for us. We have secured a national supermarket order although we can’t say which one until nearer the time.”

“Since setting up we’ve had support from Business Gateway who have been with us every step of the way. The specialist advice we received in marketing and PR has really given us a boost and put us in a great position to go forward.”

The success of Colonsay Gin has led Fin and Eileen to offer a Gin Lover’s Retreat experience, making use of the on-site accommodation built during the renovations. The weekend retreat offers visitors and gin enthusiasts a chance to choose from over 200 gins and eat fantastic food whilst taking in the remote and beautiful scenery of the island. For 2018, bookings for the retreat are already at 70% as gin lovers seek a unique experience.



### **Rural Resettlement Fund (EDST)**



Argyll and Bute continues to focus on growing its population and has seen a high uptake of its Rural Resettlement Fund since its launch in November 2016 to its closure in May 2018.

At the conclusion of this initiative 79 applicants had received RRF grants, including 74 moving to Argyll and Bute take up work and five who are self-employed.

The fund has encouraged a total of 196 new residents into the area, and this includes 55 children.

Recipients of the fund have been grateful for the support and very impressed with the service they received. Typical responses include: 'I am eternally grateful for the opportunity to be given the fund', 'I absolutely see good futures for the children here and I know we will be well supported' and 'the fund has helped us with what were vast moving expenses, easing stress and anxiety'.

### **Kirk Road Widening (R&A)**

The road widening scheme at Kirk Road was substantially completed at the end of March 2019 to support the ongoing development of 800 new houses at Dunbeg.

**Ardnahoe Distillery on Islay - flexible policy approach (PHRS)**

The Planning Service is corporately aligned with the aspirations set out by the Council in the Argyll and Bute Outcome Improvement Plan (ABOIP) for a “thriving broad based economy” with growth in sectors including “renewables, tourism, food and drink, marine science and digital knowledge”. The Council’s Local Development Plan provides a flexible framework to support development within economically fragile areas and is underpinned by the engagement of the Development Management Service to deliver permissions on the ground. The case study below from the July 2018 PPF submission provides an overview of the flexible policy approach, the role of the Planning Service from pre-application engagement and its ability to identify solutions to issues during the application process, and customer feedback on how our engagement and positive approach has facilitated the development of Ardnahoe Distillery on Islay which commenced production in April 2019 following construction works of approximately £2.5m, much of which has been undertaken by an Islay based contractor, and the direct creation of up to 19 new jobs.

## Case Study 5 Ardnahoe Distillery, Islay

### Flexible Settlement Strategy - Open for Business

Within Argyll and Bute delivery of Development Management is corporately aligned with Outcome 1 of the [Argyll and Bute Outcome Improvement Plan](#) which sets out the aspiration for a "thriving broad based economy" with growth in sectors including "renewables, tourism, food and drink, marine science and digital knowledge". The strategy for delivery of economic growth is set out in the Council's [Economic Development Action Plan](#) (EDAP).



Whilst there is a primary focus within the [Local Development Plan](#) at directing larger scale business and industry development to the most sustainable locations in and around our Main Settlements the Settlement Strategy also recognises that much of Argyll and Bute is "Economically Fragile" and is characterised by factors including declining population, scarcity of economic opportunities, ageing populations, geographical challenges, and below average income levels. The LDP Settlement Strategy accordingly includes sufficient flexibility to provide support for larger scale business and industry proposals within rural areas identified as being "Economically Fragile" where these are aligned with the Economic Development Action Plan.

The development of a new 2,800 sqm distillery with an installed production capacity of 500,000 litres per annum and visitor centre within a 1.8ha site at Ardnahoe on the Isle of Islay is considered to be a prime example of this flexible policy approach in operation.

The development is located in a remote rural location where ordinary operation of the LDP Settlement Strategy would only be supportive of development of up to 200sqm within a site area of less than 0.5ha. The distillery proposal

was however aligned with aspirations in the EDAP for growth in food and drink, and tourism related development on Islay and the developer successfully demonstrated a locational requirement to utilise this particular site based upon a number of factors including a sequential assessment of in relation to the availability of preferable alternative locations. The application was accordingly able to be supported by the provisions in the LDP and associated Supplementary Guidance relating to development within an "Economically Fragile Area".



Planning Performance Framework Report 2017/18

### Positive Engagement with Developers - Resolution of Issues and Building Confidence in Outcomes

The following information has been provided by the Agent for the Ardnahoe Distillery development and is intended to provide a customer perspective on engagement by the Council's Development Management Service both at pre-application stage and in resolution of additional issues which arose during the application process. The Development Management team were engaged for an initial pre-application site meeting in Sept. 2015. Planning permission for a subsequent application was granted in Sept. 2016 and the development has subsequently commenced and is nearing completion.

#### Customer Feedback:

*"The siting, design and construction of Ardnahoe Distillery presented a challenge for both the designer and planning authority. The site was identified initially for access to the requisite resources required to operate a distillery. Pre-application meetings with the team from Argyll & Bute were necessary to identify the road map for presenting an application that was sensitive and appropriate.*

*Initial meetings prepared the groundwork for making the design as aesthetically intrinsic within the countryside location as possible. As the project developed different challenges presented themselves which were assimilated and identified by the Planning team. These were then presented in a way that consultants could be engaged to negate any possible adverse impact on the environment. Planning gain was extracted in a sensible way and proportionate to the development.*

*During the formal application, consultees and limited local opposition identified a number of areas of clarification required to properly assess the application. The Planning Authority proposed that the initial application should be withdrawn and a new proposal presented which would address the concerns of the consultees. This obviously raised concerns with the applicant who had spent significant sums on the initial application and had alternative contingency plans in other areas. The planning authority arranged direct meetings with the applicants and their agent to outline the regulatory concerns. During this engagement the Planning Authority assured the applicant that sufficient information was garnished during the initial application to make a positive outcome likely, should the areas of*



*concern be addressable. This reassurance provided the applicant with the confidence to proceed and invest the necessary sums in the requisite consultants.*

*During construction variations were identified due to the fuller dissemination of the mechanical design within the distillery. Argyll and Bute Planning worked with the designer to vary the Planning Permission sensitively and practically. As the project comes to a completion Argyll and Bute Planning are continuing to engage with the clients to maximize the employment potential of the distillery within the framework of the area.*

*Planned opening date will be August 2018. The client intends to apply for planning Permission to operate a restaurant and bar prior to this date, and has indicated an intention to increase the production capacity of the site. New employment number are 5 direct production staff and 14 for the Restaurant, Bar and Visitors Centre. Where possible local contractors have been used. The main contract was awarded to McEachern Bros from Keils, Islay with an approximate value to date of around £2.5 million. The travelling work force have kept the local accommodation full throughout last winter.*

*Iain Hepburn - Project Consultant*

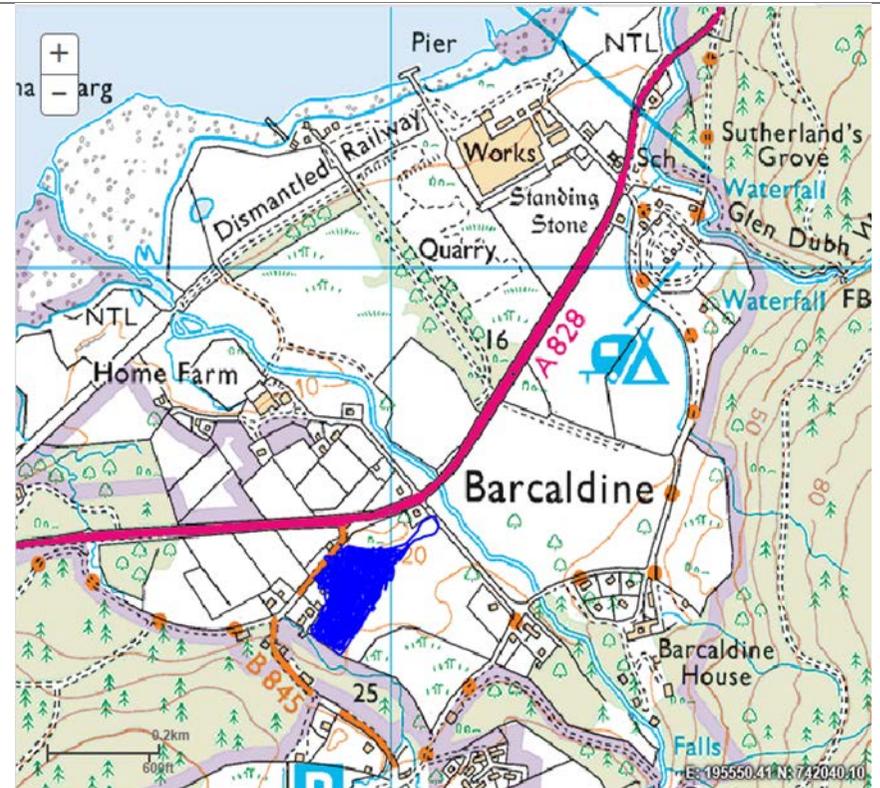
### Affordable Housing (PHRS)

As a result of the investment in Barcaldine being made by Scottish Sea Farms it is anticipated that there will be an associated increase in local housing demand.

Accordingly, Argyll and Bute Council have worked in partnership with West Highland Housing Association and the Scottish Government to identify and fund the delivery of a ten unit affordable housing scheme which will include units for sale with shared equity and for rent.

The proposal has been granted planning consent in 2017 and the Scottish Government awarded Housing Grant in April 2018 so that work could start in August 2018.

It is hoped that this development will help to retain locally some of the economic benefits of the Scottish Sea Farms investment by providing the opportunity to live and work within the village.



## **Business Outcome 24 – Waste is disposed of sustainably**

### **Waste Strategy (R&A)**

There has been significant progress on the production of the Waste Strategy. The primary purpose of the Waste Strategy is to identify, cost and introduce compliant waste disposal solutions for the impending 2021 ban on the disposal of Biodegradable Municipal Waste (BMW ban). However, the national policy position on the BMW ban remains changeable; there have been recent indications that the Scottish Government position on the BMW ban may change. Any changes to the terms of the BMW ban has the potential to alter the solutions put forward in the final strategy. Pressure to change the terms BMW ban is being driven by continued lobbying from COSLA, CIWM and industry. In addition, the publication of the Scottish Governments Waste Market review revealing the likely national cost impacts of the change will raise further pressure to rethink this policy. Direct negotiations between the Council and the Scottish Government on seeking additional financial support and limited derogations to enable compliance continue.

The draft Waste Strategy was approved at Environment Development and Infrastructure Committee in March 2019, elements of the strategy are due to go out for public consultation in summer 2019. The draft strategy identified BMW ban compliant solutions and impacts for the Islands and Helensburgh and Lomond residual waste disposal.

The draft strategy also highlighted the two BMW most feasible BMW ban solutions available for the Waste PPP contract area. The solutions have been developed by the joint working group on technical solutions led by the Waste Disposal team and including officers from Renewi the Councils PPP waste disposal provider. The proposed solutions for the PPP area are:

- The conversion of the existing Mechanical Biological Treatment (MBT) to a system of In-Vessel Composting (IVC) support by Waste Transfer infrastructure to allow for Recovery of Waste via Energy from Waste (EfW) in the central belt or further afield, or;

- Converting all existing Landfill sites in the PPP are to Waste Transfer Sites to allow the transfer of all the Residual waste to central belt or further afield for Recovery of Waste via EfW.

In addition to identifying the technical solution to the BMW for the Waste PPP area in order to make this change the Council will have to alter the existing Waste PPP contract (runs till 2026). To achieve this within the required timeframe will require the buy in of not just Renewi but also the contract funders and the Scottish Government.

The final Waste Strategy including the fully costed proposed solutions for the Waste PPP area will be put forward for review and approval to P&R and EDI ahead of the Summer recess as part of an internal options appraisal.



## **Business Outcome 26 - People have a choice of suitable housing options**

### **Stimulating Housing and Development (PHRS)**

Reflecting the concern that a lack of housing contributes to population decline, over recent years the Council has worked hard to review its housing land supply in order to verify that it is fit for purpose and not acting as an impediment to the delivery of new housing building. Building on this work the Council is now exploring innovative ways in which it can contribute to or facilitate the further delivery of a variety of housing types.

The Council, along with a wide range of stakeholders including landowners, stakeholders, housebuilders and communities has inputted to a recent Highlands and Islands Enterprise Report: Stimulating Housing and Development which was produced during 2017.

Some of the main issues which have emerged from the study are: a need for access to land for the right type in the right places; Infrastructure, site servicing and connecting to utilities is an impediment; Planning and Building Regulations are still perceived as an impediment; limited building sector capacity and labour supply; there is need for Innovations in funding; there is a need to Enable community led approaches

Many of these issues mirror those we have been tackling within our Area and to consider and take forward the recommendations in more detail a Housing Innovation Working Group has been set up to include Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE), Planning and Housing Services of the Council, and stakeholders from the Local Housing Forum including Registered Social Landlords (RSL) and private builders.

Amongst some of the actions being explored and or taken forwards are:

- Developing a Simplified Planning Zone for Lochgilphead and Salen which will deliver self-build plots to the local market.
- Disposal of public sector assets for housing development which is seeing significant numbers of affordable and private housing.
- Supporting community lead housing schemes such as on Iona.
- Utilisation of HIF funding to deliver strategic infrastructure unlocking housing and business sites.
- Exploring the options of pre-fabricated building thus reducing the cost of construction times in remote rural areas.
- Exploring the use of container units for accommodating construction staff in remote areas.
- Understanding and tackling additional island building costs.
- Exploring the potential to grant or loan funds for small site infrastructure.
- Providing self-build mortgages

Appendix 2

- Producing Local Area Housing Needs Studies
- Employing an empty homes officer who has brought into use over 300 empty properties.
- Collaborating with Highlands Housing trust



**Business Outcome 27 – Infrastructure and assets are fit for purpose**

**Rural Growth Deal (EDST)**

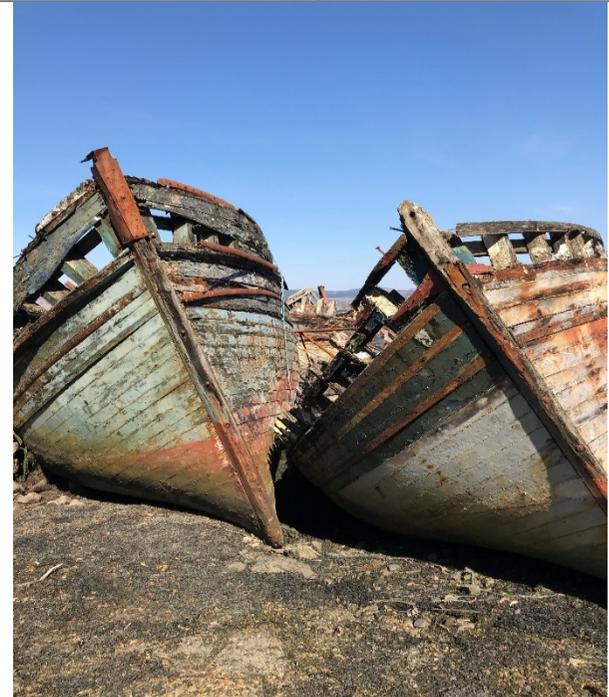
The Strategic Transportation Team supported by other council services and external stakeholders drafted a Rural Growth Deal proposition document consisting of 16 projects totalling £178.5m. The Rural Growth Deal proposition was approved by the Full Council in October 2018 and formally submitted to the Scottish and UK Governments in November 2018. The Rural Growth Deal will fund transformational projects that will drive clean and inclusive economic growth in the region. Negotiations with both governments are on-going and it is hoped to achieve a heads of terms agreement in late 2019.

## Business Outcome 28 – Our processes and business procedures are efficient, cost effective and compliant

### Port Marine Safety Code (R&A)

The last Designated Person report (January 2019) stated that '*the basic requirements for compliance with the Port Marine Safety Code are now in place*'. The report goes on to highlight the following ten topics for continuous improvement:-

- Harbour Regulations / Limits of Jurisdiction
- Accountability of the Duty Holder
- Marine Safety Plan
- Navigational Risk Assessments.
- Proactive Management of Navigation
- Emergency Preparedness
- Pilotage at Campbelltown
- Licensing of small commercial vessels
- Qualifications / Training for Harbourmasters



## Business Outcome 30 - We engage with our customers, staff and partners

### Service Redesign (R&A)

A significant service redesign has successfully concluded within Roads and Amenity Services. A central control Hub is now in place and developing asset management, programming and planning; budget control and serving the role of an information centre. The hub manages customer service functions which includes closing the loop on communications, proactive information, channel shift, using innovation/technology and maximising automation.

Our customer service improvement project has, through better service delivery, new processes and proactive information, seen a reduction in contacts from a peak of 24,426 phone calls in 2016/17 to 21,693 in 2017/18 and in the last financial year 16,640, a reduction of 32% from peak.

**Business outcome 33 – Information and support are available for our communities through the redesign of advice services.**

**Core statutory advice services (PHRS)**

The Council agreed on the 16<sup>th</sup> August 2018 to implement a new model for the delivery of core statutory advice services within Argyll and Bute. The new model aimed to find capacity with a reducing budget, reduce duplication, utilise new technology and ensuring that clients, particularly the vulnerable in our communities, have access to appropriate advice. Implementation of the review is nearing completion and has involved the:

- Development of an assessment tool for vulnerability and a triage system where clients are supported by a range of different routes including Council, directly funded advice agency, other local and national providers.
- Council services focusing on the provision of welfare rights, homelessness and debt advice to particular vulnerable clients with others directed to a single advice agency supported by the Council, providing specific advice services to others.
- Improved governance arrangements including the development of a multiagency Financial Inclusion and Advice Group
- A redesigned debt counselling and welfare rights team within the Council
- Improved use of the Council website to provide specific information on advice services, including affordable credit , to support clients