NAME OF SERVICE: DEVELOPMENT AND ECONOMIC GROWTH 1. DELIVERING OUR OUTCOMES

Our case studies help illustrate the positive contribution the Service has made to our communities and provides examples of good service delivery.

PERIOD: FINANCIAL YEAR 2020/21

Corporate Outcome – People Live Active, Healthier And Independent Lives

Business Outcome BO102: We Provide Support, Prevention And Opportunities To Help People Make Better Lifestyle Choices.

a) Covid public health control measures

The Covid pandemic and the public health control measures, including lockdown, significantly impacted on all aspects of everyday life. New statutory powers were placed on local authorities and Police Scotland to regulate the public health restrictions across businesses, domestic dwellings, and public areas. In response, the Council developed a memorandum of Understanding with Police Scotland to coordinate enforcement activity and agree priorities, an enforcement strategy (4 E's- engage, educate, encourage and enforcement) and authorised officers from Regulatory Services, including environmental health, and trading standards officers to carry out this work. Over the period from March 2020, the Council have aimed to support business to ensure that they have appropriate guidance and advise to be "Covid safe" and to ensure that business that were not permitted to open remained closed. This approach has achieved high levels of compliance, protecting public health in controlling any potential spread of Covid infection. This works continues to promote and secure compliance, and re-emphasising the FACTS messages. This work has been demanding and challenging and over this period, and environmental health and trading standards officers have been in direct contact with 2780 businesses to assess their Covid measures, responded to there has been a total of officer contact with 2780 businesses, investigated 896 complaints from the public about businesses, provided advice via website, through businesses groups, Business Gateway and through specific business enquiries. Revisits were carried out to 456 businesses and there were 23 instances where formal enforcement or Prohibition notices were required to cease business activities.

Business Outcome BO103: We Enable A Choice Of Suitable Housing Options

a) Homeless Preventions and Empty Properties

The Energy Efficient Scotland: Area Based Scheme was put on hold from March to July 2020 due to lockdown restrictions. Coming back from lockdown was challenging, with negotiation required with the Scottish Government regarding safe travel and accommodation for the scheme contractor, who are based out with of Argyll and Bute. By working with the Scottish Government, agreement was reached to extend the 2019/20 budget until 30th November 2020 to ensure that the full budget awarded was spent, with a total of 287 households receiving insulation measures through the Council's programme

and another 131 private owners in mixed tenure blocks receiving external wall insulation in conjunction with Argyll Community Housing Association (ACHA).

Close working with the Scottish Government has ensured that additional funding has been made available, with £2.3 million of additional funding being awarded to support insulation works with ACHA in 2020/21. The Area Based Scheme programme has been on hold again from 26th December 2020 to 26th April 2021, as the majority of works were deemed non-essential construction (limited external works were able to progress). At this time, the 2020/21 budget has been extended until 31st August 2021 to allow as much work to progress as possible with a full programme of works planned for the summer.



b) Delivering Affordable Housing

Despite lockdown, the first completions of the next significant 300 unit phase at the strategic Dunbeg Development have been handed over with 38 units. A large amount of preparatory work has also been undertaken during the year such that LINK are on track to complete handover of the entire 300 unit phase by the end of 2021/22 financial year. This is Argyll and Bute's biggest investment in social housing in decades that will directly contributing to health of the whole housing supply in Oban and wider Lorn. This multi-million pound investment is the culmination of significant cross-public sector partnership working and funding including from Argyll and Bute Council, Scottish Government, Scottish Water, LINK and West Highland Housing Associations. The first completed phase is shown in the photo below with more phases set to be released soon.



Corporate Outcome - People Will Live In Safer and Stronger Communities Business Outcome BO104: Our Communities And Supported And Protected.

a) Managing Outbreaks of Communicable Disease and protecting public health.

The well-established incident management procedures which the Council's environmental health service have in place with NHS Highland, through our Joint Health Protection Plan have been implemented in response to Covid outbreaks across Argyll and Bute in the last year. These have successful minimised the spread of the virus by implemented a range of control measures, including direct advice to thousands of local businesses, and have protected public health across Argyll and Bute. Officers have had to show considerable flexibility in approach in dealing with outbreaks (2 or more linked cases) have ranged from small and large community outbreaks to outbreaks involving individual businesses to on board ships.



Business Outcome BO105: Our Natural Environment Is Protected And Respected.

a) Introduction of mobile virtual technology to issue completion certificates

The Council's building standards introduced new technology to allow them to continue to provide a service to customers during lockdown and having to work from home due to Covid restrictions. Using mobile video technology, the team were able to issue completion certificates using remote verification inspections, where the site and works were videoed in real time with the officer. This technology has worked well and will become part of range of options for future work. In some cases, this will reduce the need for onsite inspections, travel and provide a better service to customers in rural areas.



b) Retaining the Customer Standards Excellence award. In 2020/21

The Council Building Standard's service retained the national Customer Service Excellence (CSE) accreditation relating to customer focus with the number of compliance plus increased from 18 to 20 which is considered excellent for a council service. Key points raised during the audit and summarised at the closing meeting by the audit was that there was no impact of the management restructure on CSE award and some improvements have been made, performance has been maintained, the service has used technology well and introduced a range of new measures (including Remote Verification Inspections) to ensure that the customer process during Covid was seamless. There was a strong element of team work, testament to the building standards team that continued their service and improved it during a global pandemic.

Corporate Outcome - Our Economy is diverse and thriving

Business Outcome BO110: We Support Businesses, Employment and Development and Opportunities.

a) Candle-maker unlocks scent-sational growth with Business Gateway support (November 2020)



A bespoke candle maker has been able to accelerate the growth of her business and take on new premises after Business Gateway helped the team secure funding through the Business Gateway Local Growth Accelerator Programme.

CUSTOMER SERVICE EXCELLENCE

Founded in 2019 by Hazel MacCormick, Lismore Luminations is a business based on the Isle of Lismore that designs and manufactures soy candles and ancillary products with unique scents inspired by the magnificent local scenery.

Business Gateway worked with Hazel after she experienced increased demand for her products. As well as providing support from a business adviser, they were able to signpost her to funding opportunities and help her access a growth grant from the Local Growth Accelerator Programme. The Business Gateway Local Growth Accelerator Programme is funded by Argyll and Bute Council and the European Regional Development Fund

2014-20 Structural Funds Programme.

Using this grant, Hazel was able to expand production from her kitchen to larger premises, with the aim to provide further employment opportunities on the island long term.

Hazel said: "Before working with Business Gateway I would never have imagined I could turn my hobby into a growing business. With their support, I have been able to access funding, expand into new premises and create a successful brand that I hope will bring jobs to the local community in the future." Through Business Gateway, Hazel was also able to access a range of services including 1:1 support, advice on her business plan and two days of marketing support to help identify potential markets for her business to target which helped expand her customer base across mainland Scotland and the UK. She also engaged with DigitalBoost, Scotland's national digital training programme, delivered by Business Gateway.

The combination of funding and business support services has resulted in the development and creation of new candle scents and products. "When the pandemic hit I had to adapt my business as I was no longer able to attend markets or sell in shops. With the support of Business gateway I was able to develop my online sales via my website site. The one to one support has been invaluable to help navigate social network marketing. Angela Vernel, business adviser for Business Gateway, said: "The Argyll and Bute Local Growth Accelerator Programme has been highly effective in facilitating the growth of Lismore Luminations, and it's fantastic to see how Hazel has had the confidence to build her brand, develop new products and expand."

"We know that throughout this pandemic, people have been taking time to evaluate what they want to do with their careers. Hazel's story shows that it's possible to take your hobby and make it into a thriving business, especially if you reach out and access the range of support available."

b) Fish and chip shop bring home the catch after DigitalBoost support (October 2020)

An award-winning fish and chip shop takeaway in Argyll and Bute has adapted to Covid restrictions with the creation of a new website and introduction of online ordering, following support from DigitalBoost, Scotland's national digital training programme, delivered by Business Gateway.

The Wee Kelpie is a world-renowned fish and chip shop established in 2011. Led by husband and wife team Nicola and Kerr Raeburn, the business closed at the start of lockdown to ensure the health and safety of their team.

Following this, Nicola and Kerr approached Business Gateway to identify how they could adapt their business model to reopen in the safest way possible and limit their exposure to the public to reduce the spread of the virus.

Through DigitalBoost, The Wee Kelpie accessed 1:1 support, including expert advice as they started building their first website. Nicola was supported as she went through appointing a web developer, with Business Gateway input to the plan and brief helping to ensure the website met their business needs.

Business Gateway was also able to signpost funding opportunities, and the Wee Kelpie secured funding through the Business Gateway Local Growth Accelerator Programme, towards their new website and the necessary equipment needed to adapt their operations. The Business Gateway Local Growth Accelerator Programme is funded by Argyll and Bute Council and the European Regional Development Fund 2014-20 Structural Funds Programme.

Nicola said: "Before the pandemic, we relied on footfall and word of mouth to drive sales. After deciding to close, we knew we had to explore other ways of operating and Business Gateway was there to help take us through this process.

"Through DigitalBoost, we were able to access expert, impartial help which was invaluable as we started the process of building a website. It was particularly helpful as we searched for a web-developer to support us, as I received several quotes and conflicting advice from design agencies. However, our DigitalBoost consultant was friendly, knowledgeable, and explained things clearly to us, outlining what we needed to do to adapt and launch a new platform."

Jen Smith, Business Adviser for Business Gateway Argyll and Bute, said: "It is rewarding to see how this package of support has come together for Nicola and team and assisted their safe reopening.



"Having a strong online presence will continue to be vital for businesses and for many this can be

daunting, especially if this is something they haven't done before. However, the DigitalBoost programme can help, providing free, expert, impartial advice to support businesses as they take their operations online, and our Local Growth Accelerator Programme remains open to those looking to grow."

c) Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics (STEM) /Community Hub in Dunoon

Clyde Mission funding to the value of £490k was secured in December 2020 for to repurpose a council building in Dunoon into a STEM / Community Hub. This has been bolstered by £50k of funding from the council and a further £100k for digital connectivity from Crown Estates Scotland monies. Project development and delivery of this Hub during 2021/22 will act as a pilot for delivery of the other STEM Hubs proposed with the Rural Skills Accelerator Programme proposition within the Rural Growth Deal.

The key focus of the project is to create a flexible structural, digitally connected, space (with plug and play facilities) to meet the lifelong learning needs of the community and partners.

d) Fair Start Scotland (FSS)

A participant signed up for FSS after making contact with the Employability Team's Key Worker to discuss what help was available, participant had heard about the service through a post on the Argyll & Bute Council web page. He signed up straightaway as he was keen to have the support as soon as possible

The participant had been on Universal Credit since losing his job about a year before, he had also suffered family bereavement which was impacting on his health and he was missing a daily routine and contact with others.

Induction, Employment Diagnostic Assessment (EDQ) and Better Off Calculator (BOC) were all completed and discussed with participant, he was job ready and keen to make applications to any suitable local job. The Key Worker agreed to pay for his CSCS (construction) card test to be completed and set up a date for the test with Argyll College as he felt this would open doors to the Wind Farm sites. He had more focus now and was positive about finding a job so he started to approach employers direct, he spoke to the Co-op who offered him a temporary contract to assist with their increasing delivery service.

The participant is delighted with this offer and accepted immediately. The support, guidance and advice he received on his short time on FSS was very beneficial, he continues to receive in-work support through the Employability Team on a weekly basis.

e) Easing of Town Centre and supporting business

To assist the easing of Covid restrictions in town centres, a Group was established comprising a range of Council services, Police Scotland, Transport Scotland and BID4Oban (who represented business groups across Argyll and Bute). The aim was to open up our town centres safely as restrictions ceased, support business and the wide economy. This group considered and introduced a wide range of cations including guidance relating to queuing outside shop premises, standards of external seating areas for businesses, introduced signage in town centres re-emphasising the FACTS messaging and a fast track licensing system. A particular success was the successful initiative to use public open spaces across our main town centres for temporary use by business free of charge. An example was an area provided to the business group, IsleofButebid, who provided seating and tables for visitors and locals to use in Montague Street, Rothesay. This area was well used and tables and chairs will be set out in the morning by a member of the Isle of Bute Bid event team and returned to the storage area at the close of business. The area was used 84 times over the year and by over 4000 people. Isle of Bute BID commented that "Visitors to the island loved Alfresco and, were very complimentary about it but, more importantly the residents made full use of it many times over. You have to remember that the facility ensured that eateries could remain open and provide take away food and drinks which helped secure the jobs involved. "





A new community space in Rothesay has been welcomed by local residents and visitors to Bute.

Business Outcome BO111: We Influence And Engage With Business And Policy Makers

a) Working with businesses to minimise the disruption of EU Exit

The potential impact of EU Exit to our food manufacturing industry, particularly fish and shellfish, was considerable, with the likelihood that consignments to EU countries would require to be inspected and accompanied by Export Health Certificates (EHC) from Argyll and Bute Council, in the same way as exports to non-EU countries. Working through national groups involving business, other regulators and Scottish/UK Government, arrangements were put into place to try and minimise the disruption on businesses, reduce the considerable workload additional EHC requests would have on local authorities and support the wider economy. As a result, the councils environmental health service engaged with local businesses to ensure that systems were in place to meet their perceived demand, carried out food safety assessments of issued attestation to 9 major export businesses in Argyll and Bute to allow them to use the new commercial hubs which were set up in Scotland to deal with specific consignments and issue EHC's, and introduced a new registration scheme for fishing vessels and inspected 204 local fishing vessels allowing their catch to access the EU market.



Business Outcome BO112: Argyll And Bute Is Promoted To Everyone

a) Lochgilphead Public Realm Project

£540,000 project delivered on time and within budget from January to May 2021. This project has delivered:

- Widened and resurfaced footways using natural stone from a local quarry
- Improved pedestrian road crossings
- New cycle parking and street furniture in the town centre
- More space for pedestrians
- Improved surfaces for anyone with mobility challenges, wheelchair users and prams.

An image of the completed works can be found below at Colchester Square:

The project was managed and delivered by Council and their locally sourced sub-contractors supporting local jobs.

Fully funded by The Scottish Government's Cycling, Walking and Safer Routes Fund (CWSR), Highlands and Islands Transport Partnership (HITRANS) and Transport Scotland's Spaces for People fund, managed by SUSTRANS charity.



b) Shopfront Improvement Grants

Shopfront improvement schemes have been developed for town centres in Argyll and Bute, funded by the Scottish Government through the Town Centre Fund administered by Argyll and Bute Council.

The project directly supports local businesses, visually enhances Argyll's main and key town centres and encourages greater level of footfall into the main shopping streets.

Campbeltown

- The Campbeltown Shopfront Scheme has built upon the success of the Campbeltown Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme (CARS) and Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) projects by assisting business owners further improve the appearance of the town centre. The scheme comprised of two rounds; 2019 and 2020.
- 34 shopfront improvement grants were awarded for the total amount of £60,000.
- The improvements have also supported Campbeltown in becoming Scotland's Most Improved Place in the 2020 SURF Awards:
- An example is provided below of Harlequin Tearoom. The grant supported the refurbishment of the shopfront:





Dunoon

- The Dunoon Shopfront Scheme has complemented the current Dunoon CARS project by assisting local business owners to further improve the appearance of the town centre.
- 16 shopfront improvement grants were awarded for the total amount of £20,000.
- An example is provided below of The Beauty Box, Dunoon. The grant supported repairs to exterior decoration and new signage:





Region-wide

- The latest shopfront improvement scheme is now underway and includes: Lochgilphead, Ardrishaig, Tarbert, Bowmore, Tobermory, Helensburgh, Cardross, Garelochhead, Rosneath, Kilcreggan.
- 75 shopfront improvement grants were awarded for the total amount of over £150,000.
- Works will be delivered between now and September, with an example below of The Journey, Helensburgh. The grant supported the manufacture, supply and installation of new signage:

The project is managed and delivered by Council and their sub-contractors.

The project is funded by the Scottish Government through the Town Centre Fund which is designed to support small businesses as part of the Covid recovery process.



c) Shop Local

- Argyll and Bute Council is encouraging people to support towns and high streets by shopping locally and working alongside the nation-wide, Scotland Loves Local campaign by offering support to local business owners to help enhance both the online and physical presence of their businesses.
- In 2020, Argyll and Bute Council undertook a community engagement exercise in eight towns, which resulted in the commissioning of locally bespoke messaging for each town or community.
- Images have been produced for each of the region's main towns or key settlements (with the exception of those with Business Improvement Districts). Mull and Islay took forward a whole Island shop local campaign. Example images can be found below:



- Following on from the creation of bespoke Shop Local messaging, the council is currently delivering a number of initiatives designed to enhance the online presence of town centre businesses which include:
 - Free Google My Business training to increase local businesses online presence
 - Free Google accredited photography for local businesses to help showcase their offering.

The project is managed and delivered by Council and their sub-contractors.

The projects are funded from Scotland's Towns Partnership Scotland Loves Local Grant that the council won through a competitive process.

2. SIGNIFICANT CHALLENGES

The significant challenges faced by the Service during 2020/21. These challenges either created specific pressures on the Success Measures or impacted on delivery. Specific additional activity or mitigating actions were carried out to reduce the negative impact on service delivery.

Corporate Outcome - People Live Active, Healthier and Independent Lives Business Outcome BO103: We Enable A Choice Of Suitable Housing Options.

a) Throughout 2020/21 very significant pressure has been placed on the Council's Homelessness Service as a result of a variety of lockdown measures and implications. Most acutely the Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) were unable to create new tenancies through much of the early lockdown period. This meant people presenting as homeless has no route into RSL stock and required the Council to increase its stock of temporary tenancies. In addition direct effect of Covid relating to places to self-isolate, inability to travel and loss of hospitality related accommodation created an increased demand on the need for temporary accommodation. At the same time lockdown conditions made it demanding on the Council to procure additional temporary accommodation, and the administration of the whole process had to be carried out in a virtual manner. At one stage there were 51 additional rooms in use and this has created an approximate £700k cost to the Council. Despite this extreme circumstances, at no stage has the Council been unable to find accommodation for those in need.

Corporate Outcome - People Will Live In Safer and Stronger Communities

Business Outcome BO104: Our Communities And Supported And Protected.

a) There is considerable work and resources required to restart the official food safety programme in Argyll and Bute. This involves the reassessment of all food businesses, introduction of a new statutory Code of Practice, new requirements relating to food standards and allergens and the introduction of new ICT systems. This will be a challenge to the environmental health team as there will be a requirement for additional resources at a time when there is a national shortage of qualified environmental health and food safety officers.

3. CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT - WE ASKED, YOU SAID, WE DID....

The following are all the consultations and resulting actions that the Service has carried out during this period.

a) In 2020/21, Housing Services carried out a range of consultation exercises/stakeholder engagement in support of the Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA) and Local Housing Strategy (LHS).

These included:

- A number of Focus groups/face to face surveys with key client groups and their representatives, & specialist providers/services, such as Gypsy/Travellers, wheelchair users, and Armed Services/Veterans in early 2020, throughout Argyll & Bute.
- Survey and telephone interviews with PRS sector (landlords, letting agents, estate agents/solicitors & tenants etc.) to inform HNDA & affordability analysis
- An early-engagement LHS online survey for partners, local community groups and residents
- A virtual LHS Stakeholder conference in November 2020, with around 50 participants via Microsoft Teams, to develop vision, outcomes & priorities for next LHS
- Staff Review Day for council Housing services & colleagues, in December 2020, refining outputs from above exercises
- 4 LHS Option Appraisal workshops with key partners/stakeholder, in February 2021, to review & refine LHS action plan & targets
- Ongoing engagement with partners via existing structures including the Strategic Housing Forum (SHF), Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) Officers' Group, Energy Efficiency Forum, Housing Support Group, and Housing/Health & Social Care Partnership locality groups, generally on quarterly basis

The outputs from this consultation & engagement activity helped to inform the overarching HNDA and the development of the next LHS which will be circulated in draft format for wider public consultation over the summer of 2021 with a view to being completed and implemented by end of year.

b) In 20/21, we asked fish and shellfish exporters whether they required support to develop their preparedness plans for EU Exit, their plans for exporting to the EU after the 31st December 2020 and for their comments on the revision of the small quantities charge for export health certificates. As a result, The Council:

- Listened to the views of business and revised its export health certificate charges for small quantities from 5kg to 60kg for food consignments which were intended for export.
- Specific arrangements were made with businesses to ensure that they were able to access services for export health certificates to allow them to continue to access the EU market.
- Environmental health service to audit specific business who wished to use the new commercial hubs for export purposes and issued attestations to allow them to do so based on a full audit of their safety management systems.

DEVELOPMENT & ECONOMIC GROWTH – ANNUAL SCORECARD 2020/21



9-22 ecard owned by: F	ergus Murray	FY 20/2	1	
BO102: We Provide Se And Opportunities To Better Lifestyle Choice	Help People Make		Α	
DEG102_01-Protecting t people through the deliv formally approved Joint	ery of the Targ		te	5
BO103: We Enable A O Housing Options [DEG		Success Measure	G	
DEG103_01-Number of completed per annum.	new affordable home	Actual ²⁵ Target Benchmark	20 20 75	1
DEG103_02-The percent homeless prevention inte 1]		Actual Target Benchmark	56 % 50 % 50 %	1
DEG103_03-The number brought back in to use p		Actual Target Benchmark	29 25 25	1
BO104: Our Communi And Protected [DEG]	ties Are Supported	Success Measure	А	
DEG104_01-Maintain the broadly compliant food I of our enforcemen		Actual t Target Benchmark	86.2 % 85.0 % 87.0 %	1
DEG104_02-The percent service requests that are working days		Actual Target Benchmark	76 % 80 % 86 %	Co Imj
DEG104_03-Undertake a intervention programme in respect of environmer health and welfare and l	to high risk premise ntal health, animal	Actual _S Target Benchmark	100 95 95	

Click here for Full Scorecard

BO105: Our Natural And Built Environment Is Protected And Respected [DEG]	t Success Measure	A	*
DEG105_01-Respond to Building Warrant applications within 20 days B	Actual Target ienchmark	96.8 % 80.0 % 98.1 %	G ŧ
DEG105_02-Respond to Completion Certificate applications within 10 days	Actual Target lenchmark	2.0 Days 10.0 Days 2.3 Days	G 4
DEG105_03-Retain our customer service excellence award status for Building Standards and Planning an B	Actual Target Ienchmark	On track Complete On track	⊡ ≠
DEG105_04-Market the Building Standards service commercially to become self-funding and to assist with budget reconciliation B	Actual Target lenchmark	EK 105 EK 250 EK 250	R Umpact

BO111: We Influence And Engage With Businesses And Policy Makers [DEG]	Success Measure	G	*
	Actual	100	G
DEG111_01-An enforcement intervention is performed in a consistent and fair manner	Target	80	-
with businesses supported throughout	Benchmark	90	

BO112: Argyll And Bute Is Promoted To Everyone [DEG]	Success Measure	G	t
DEG112_01-Deliver the Dunoon CARS (Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme) project	Actual Target Benchmark	Green Green Green	G
DEG112_02-Deliver the Rothesay TH (Townscape Heritage) project	Actual Target Benchmark	Green Green Green	G
DEG112_03-Deliver the Tarbert and Lochgilphead Regeneration Fund project	Actual Target Benchmark	Green Green Green	G
DEG112_04-Deliver the Lochgilphead CARS (Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme) project	Actual Target Benchmark	Green Green Green	G

BO110: We Support Businesses, Employment And Development Opportunities [DEG]	Succes Measur		ŧ
DEG110_01-Increase visitor numbers by working in partnership with the tourism industry Last Data Received Was FQ1 2020/21	Actual Target	24,195 535,976	Covid
DEG110_02-The12 month survival rate of n small and medium sized businesses	Actual New Target Benchmark	77 % 85 %	Covid
DEG110_03-The number of new business start-ups supported	Actual Target Benchmark	92 100 61	Covid mpact
programme and produce an evaluation	Actual On trad Target achmark On track	k to revised plan	G
DEG110_05-The above national average lev of planning application approval rates is maintained	Actual vel Target Benchmark	97.4 % 95.0 % 93.7 %	G t
DEG110_06-The time it takes to determine 'local' planning applications is no longer tha 10% above t	Actual m Target Benchmark	12.7 Wks 10.0 Wks 9.0 Wks	R T Covid mpact
DEG110_07-Increase the proportion of planning applications that are right first tim	Actual e Target	0 % 10 %	R Covid mpact
DEG110_08-Maintain a Local Development Plan that is less than 5 years old	Actual Target Benchmark	On track On track On track	G †
80113: Our Infrastructure Is Safe And For The Future [DEG]	Fit Success Measure		÷
DEG113_01-Maintain the total number of landings at Oban airport per annum	Actual Target	398 939	Covid

AAME OF SERVICE: ROADS AND INFRASTRUCTURE a) DELIVERING OUR OUTCOMES

Our case studies help illustrate the positive contribution the Service has made to our communities and provides examples of good service delivery.

Corporate Outcome – We Have An Infrastructure That Supports Sustainable Growth Business Outcome BO113: Our Infrastructure Is Safe And Fit For The Future

a). Oban depot consolidation project

The scheme to rationalise our depots in Oban and Lorn was substantially completed this year despite the construction delays caused by Covid.

This project sees the following three existing roads' depots combined, expanded and redeveloped as a single site for all Roads and Infrastructure Operations across Oban and Lorn.

The three depots are Oban Mill Park, Jackson's Quarry and the Appin depot.

This project reduces the Council's operating costs by moving from three depots to one, and has created local job/economic opportunities through subcontracts from the main contract delivered by Luddon Construction. Support has also been provided

to the accommodation market in Oban with Luddon squads staying in Oban Mon-Thurs.



PERIOD: FINANCIAL YEAR 2020/21



The site is now almost 1,000 square metres larger and includes a new office facility; new hardstanding; drainage; a state-of-the-art four bay fleet workshop; new material storage and an external fuelling area. This fuelling area is separate but linked to the depot providing options for easier, safer refuelling and provision for new EV chargers to meet the needs of our modernising fleet.

When completed the site will also include modernised staff welfare and a new horticultural workshop.

The 2 vacated depots sites now provide opportunities for local firms/developers looking to access suitable business and industry land with the Council currently considering possible options.

b) Lochgilphead public realm project

The Mid-Argyll Roads Operations team delivered £500,000 of public realm improvements to Colchester Square and Argyll Street in Lochgilphead creating new, wider footways; improved pedestrian crossings; new cycle parking; new street furniture and special tactile surfaces for those with mobility issues.

As well as the aesthetic benefits, the team also co-ordinated with Scottish and Southern Electricity (SSE) to allow them to undertake infrastructure improvements to ensure increased resilience for the properties in the works area by replacing old, out-dated cabling. While this was more disruptive in the short-term it was logical to co-ordinate this work while the excavations were underway anyway.





The team also ensured a simple but effective communications exercise which saw local businesses and other interested parties provided with regular weekly updates via email, as well as populating online resources via the Council's website. This is a tried and tested method first used during the Helensburgh CHORD works and ensures we stay on the front foot, keeping businesses informed about how schemes are progressing and reducing the number of complaints or the amount of correspondence.

c) Rothesay pontoons project

The scheme specification and procurement was completed in this financial year, with delivery of the scheme in the following year. This is a £550,000 project to provide around 20 pontoon berths for Rothesay which will give access to the town and Isle of Bute for leisure yachters. This is a significant and affluent market area which will bring increased visitor numbers to Rothesay town and the Isle of Bute and support the local economy by spending money in local shops, restaurants, cafes etc.

Developing access to the marine tourism market is a continuing theme, and this project comes of the back of the Campbeltown and Oban pontoon projects which have brought significant economic benefit to both of those towns.

d) Major marine transport connectivity schemes

Over the course of 2020/21 we have moved forward with a number of ambitious marine engineering schemes designed to guarantee safe and sustainable future transport connectivity for our island communities. These include:

• Craignure

Developing business cases for both short and long term options for Craignure Pier. Due to its age the infrastructure at the Pier is increasingly unsuitable for modern traffic patterns, volumes and ferry developments.

• Fionnphort/Iona

At this location we are progressing a £20million scheme to replace/renew key pieces of marine infrastructure to allow for full and unfettered access to and from Iona.

• Port Askaig slope stabilisation and road resurfacing

At Port Askaig on Islay we are guaranteeing future access to the Islay/Jura crossing by improving road access through a resurfacing scheme, and have also taken forward significant works to remove a risk to the access route by performing a complex slope stabilisation project to a high standard, on time and to budget.

e) Find and fix roads maintenance pilot

Due to the Covid pandemic much of the 2020/21 roads capital reconstruction programme was carried forward into the following year. However, during this period we trialled a new approach to roads maintenance called 'find and fix'.

Traditionally a Roads Inspector would regularly inspect the network, there are different frequencies of inspections for different categories of roads. The Inspector identifies and classifies any defects in line with our Roads Asset Management Plan (RAMP). Works instructions to pre-set timescales are then issued to local Superintendents to arrange repairs via their roads squads, and to update the asset management system accordingly.

Find and fix sees a mobile roads squad cover inspection routes ahead of the regular inspection. The mobile squad deals with minor works (works which don't require excavations) like potholes, offlets, blocked drains, sign damage etc. The mobile squad then feeds back to the inspector who retrospectively generates a works instruction and closes the work off in the asset management system.

This model allows us to attend to minor problems earlier than they might otherwise have been attended to, and crucially, before they become bigger (and more costly) problems/defects.

Covid provided us with this opportunity to look at the model differently, with the result that we have taken find and fix forward through the budget process, which will allow us to further develop the model and realise both savings and improvements.

Find and fix also improves the lines of communication and simplifies our overall business process for this area of work.

This will inform future plans to use artificial intelligence in developing roads inspection and asset management techniques.

f) Covid safe funeral and cremation arrangements

In response to Covid we had to make changes to how we delivered our burial and cremation services, with a focus on staff and mourner safety. There were a range of specific changes to the actual practice, the process of interring a coffin and to the way the Crematorium operated ensuring social distancing.

This provided an opportunity to develop specific Risk Assessments and Method Statements (RAMS) for an area of service where none were needed previously, which in-turn drove consistency across all 130 burial grounds.

The changes to this service area were underpinned by robust, meaningful and ongoing communication and engagement with funeral undertakers and mourners.

The staff involved in these services acquitted themselves commendably, and were, as ever, sympathetic and supportive of the needs of mourners.

g) £5.6million road improvements in the latter part of the year, leading into £10million programme 2021/22

Due to Covid this year's roads capital programme has been spread over 2 years and delivered our capital programme over a reduced 2020/21 budget of £5.6M on roads reconstruction. This will be supported in 2021/22 with a substantial £10M budget investment in Argyll and Bute's local road network.

Despite diminishing resources and reduced spend per kilometre, the Council's operations team has delivered significant improvements to our network.

A suitable local road network, particularly in a rural setting with a unique set of engineering challenges, is vital for community resilience and economic growth.

The nationally accepted Road Condition Index Survey shows that there are now more roads in the area in a green (good) condition, and crucially in terms of community resilience, fewer roads in a red (poor) condition.

In developing the programme, the condition and strategic importance of roads is considered alongside feedback from partner agencies like the emergency services as well as community/public feedback. This is all recorded on our asset management system, allowing engineers to make appropriate recommendations which balance wants and needs.

h) New traffic management arrangements in Luss.

Traffic issues in Luss have been a cause of concern for residents for a number of years and have generated much discussion and, at times, national media interest. Despite various attempts to find a proportionate, balanced and sustainable solution to the issues raised which meets the needs of residents, businesses, visitors, and is fair to road users who all have a right to use the public road, no solution has yet been agreed. Over the past two years officers have engaged positively with the Community Council and other key stakeholders in an effort to arrive at an agreeable solution. The extent of this work and the intensity of the debate on the matter over the years is a clear indication that the issue is complex and a solution is not simple to arrive at.



In response to Covid and the significant influx of visitors to the village as lockdown and travel restrictions were eased, a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order was progressed. The recent changes – the main thrust of which was the introduction of a temporary permit zone – appear on the face of it to be working reasonably well, although there does appear to be an issue in terms of people's understanding of the restrictions which will require additional clarity by way of further signage etc.

This successful exercise is informing proposals to develop a permanent Traffic Regulation Order and we are moving forward with that process in conjunction with the community council.

Corporate Outcome – We Have An Infrastructure That Supports Sustainable Growth Business Outcome BO114: Our Communities Are Cleaner And Greener

a) Glengorm landfill cell and waste transfer station, Mull, c. £1million investment in sustainable waste disposal

Over the course of this year a scheme was progressed on Mull to ensure suitable landfill capacity for the island's general waste, ensuring that waste services can continue to the current model for the next few years.

Around £800,000 was invested in a specialist, environmentally compliant landfill cell.

At the same time around £160,000 was invested in the waste transfer station at the same site. This allowed different waste streams to be sorted and transported off the island while the cell was under construction. Transferring waste off the island brings with it significant haulage costs, and is therefore not our preferred method. However, with the impending national landfill ban, this may be something that the Council needs to do in the future, taking all waste in Argyll and Bute to the central belt for processing.

The transfer station works were therefore required in the short term until the cell was completed, but also with a view to the potential future changes to waste disposal nationally.



We hadn't originally planned to construct another cell as the Biodegradable Municipal Waste (BMW) ban was originally due to come into force in January 2021, but the Scottish Government has since delayed this to December 2025.

b). Joint procurement brings savings of c. £90,000 a year

Working with West Dunbartonshire Council, the Council secured a new waste disposal contract for our waste in the Helensburgh and Lomond area.

By joining up with a neighbouring authority we were able to realise economies of scale and have entered a new contract with Barr Environmental which will run up until December 2025 when the above mentioned BMW ban comes into effect.

As well as the savings in the cost of disposing of waste, this new joint procurement has secured a number of community benefits, including employment and apprenticeship opportunities for local people, skills for work support and support to third sector organisations.





c) Temporary changes to waste collection during COVID

One of our responses to the Covid pandemic and ensuing service challenges (staff shielding etc.) was to put in place a temporary revised waste collection model whereby all waste from households was collected fortnightly (two bins per household).

Notwithstanding the Council's firm commitment to reducing the amount of waste to landfill, the only sustainable and effective way to deliver this service during the unprecedented level of service challenge brought about by the first lockdown was to change our approach, with a focus first and foremost on our customers – providing an easy to follow, simple and efficient service.

This revised model came into effect at the beginning of April, with normal service returning from the end of June.

Overall feedback on the model was positive, and our waste teams were roundly praised and appreciated by communities across Argyll and Bute as they continued to deliver this vital service during such a challenging period.

Corporate Outcome – Getting It Right

Business Outcome BO115: We Are Efficient And Cost Effective

a) Decarbonisation projects

Over the course of 2020/21 we have progressed a number of schemes which will contribute to the Council's corporate goals to reduce our carbon footprint and provide for cleaner, greener transport options:

• Fleet replacement

We have introduced over 50 electric hybrid vehicles across the Council fleet, working towards the ban on petrol/diesel light vehicles.

The photo provides an example of some of the electric/hybrid vehicles which have recently been introduced to the fleet.

• Electric Vehicle Charging (ELV)strategy

We have developed a strategy for future development of our electric charging infrastructure, with an initial focus on cost recovery to ensure the current network of 28 can be sustainable into the future. The cost recovery model will also allow the future EVCs to be provided sustainably. Over the course of the following financial year we will develop a future programme to increase the network.

• LED replacement

Around 13,300 of the Council's 14,442 streetlights have now been replaced with energy efficient LED luminaires, with the remainder to be replaced early in the following financial year. Our streetlights previously produced 3140 tonnes of CO2 in 2015/16 – this figure reduce to 89 tonnes last year.



2. SIGNIFICANT CHALLENGES

The significant challenges faced by the Service during 2020/21. These challenges either created specific pressures on the Success Measures or impacted on delivery. Specific additional activity or mitigating actions were carried out to reduce the negative impact on service delivery.

Corporate Outcome – People Live Active, Healthier And Independent Lives Business Outcome BO101: We Ensure Information And Support Are Available For Everyone

a) Customer contact versus reducing capacity

Although significant progress has been made in this area of our work over the past few years with increasing automation; availability of proactive information to reduce avoidable contact; improved business processes and service redesign, there continues to be a huge pressure in terms of correspondence.

Although further resources have been committed to this area of work, it may be the case that should a further significant improvement in customer service and engagement be desired, that further investment is required. At the very least, post-Covid we will need to undertake another round of Business Process Redesigns to see what improvements can be realised within the current establishment/processes. The pressure on back office teams to juggle a range of work streams continues to be a challenge.

Ultimately our goal is to continue with the process of channels shift, encouraging all customers to self-serve. This requires to be supported with the appropriate resources, information and expertise to provide an enhanced data set to allow for self-service.

Corporate Outcome – We Have An Infrastructure That Supports Sustainable Growth Business Outcome BO113: Our Infrastructure Is Safe And Fit For The Future

a) Continuing the trend of improvement/arresting the decline in our road network

Our Annual Status and Options Report sets out the benefits of continued investment in our road network and highlights the critical risk of underinvestment. Although our network has seen a welcome improvement in recent years, we would need to spend in the region of £10million annually to maintain a 'standstill' position, and significantly more to see continued improvements.

Year on year budget consultations and public feedback has shown the importance of roads to our communities – maintaining the required level of investment is likely to be challenging in future years given the predicted decline in available capital funding. This brings with it significant engineering, economic, financial and reputational risks for the Council.

We continue to deliver a range of different technical solutions that are designed to be proportionate for the use of the road and take into consideration the island and rural geography of Argyll and Bute. As an example, we have made extensive use of in situ recycling which has both environmental benefits and also helps us overcome some of the logistical challenges in some geographical locations.

b) Increasing the pace of change to deliver on decarbonisation objectives

Of particular concern in this area of work is the impending legislative changes and the move away from petrol and diesel vehicles. It is expected that the new Transport Scotland Electric Vehicle Strategy will set ambitious national goals, with the expectation that local authorities will deliver the bulk of the infrastructure to allow for the necessary modal shift.

While we are advanced in our planning for a future Electric Vehicle Charging (EVC) network it is expected that the pace of delivery of schemes will need to increase to match demand. It appears likely that a rolling programme of multiple annual installations will be required. This will need to be appropriately resourced. Even if the Council appoints a term contractor for EVC installations, this will require to be contract managed and reported on.

At present it is expected that there should not be any particular financial issue for the Council, as EVC development and associated project management costs are likely to be covered by Transport Scotland/Scottish Government funding. There is however a significant challenge in delivering the infrastructure to support a transport revolution, and ensuing reputational risk.

There will be similar pressures to replace the Council's fleet. In this aspect of decarbonisation work it is critical that we recognise that we must not instigate change simply for its own sake – continuity of service delivery needs to be first and foremost throughout this process. At the moment, although there have been trials of electric and electric/hybrid heavy vehicles, it remains to be seen if the current market offering is robust and resilient enough to deliver our services to the current quality specifications and frequencies.

c) The sustainability of our current cemetery provision

There are significant ongoing pressures on the Council's cemeteries with some critical sites in Kintyre and on Mull approaching their capacity. The Council will require to take a view on potential future reductions in cemetery availability and options for our customers or make a significant (likely to be in the tens of millions) financial allocation to allow for significant expansion, environmental compliance, future proofing etc. of the current provision.

This is the subject of an ongoing consultation and review exercise, which will be reported to the Environment, Development and Infrastructure services committee over the course of this financial year.

d) Delivering the Craignure and Iona/Fionnphort marine infrastructure schemes

Financing and delivering these once-in-a-generation marine engineering schemes will pose significant resource challenges over the course of the next financial year.

Business Outcome BO114: Our Communities Are Cleaner And Greener

a) Working towards the 2025 Biodegradable Municipal Waste (BMW) ban and the end of the Waste Public Private Partnership contract in 2026

While these significant changes are some years away in the future the planning is already underway. The BMW ban will pose a significant and ongoing financial risk to the Council. Officers are currently engaged on a number of fronts working with Scottish Government and neighbouring local authorities to plan for/reduce the impact and to provide Members with advice and support for any lobbying activities that they may wish to undertake.

Corporate Outcome – Getting It Right

Business Outcome BO117: We Encourage Creativity And Innovation To Ensure Our Workforce Is Fit For The Future

a) Workforce planning

Putting mechanisms in place to succession plan and to reduce the overall age profile of our workforce, providing attractive career/growth opportunities and the ability to 'grow our own'. In particular we have had historically poor retention of graduate engineers, although with recent changes to the structure and progression pathways within our Design Team we are hopeful of having better retention in this area of the business going forward.

Of particular concern though is the age profile of our operational squads and within our middle management positions.

3. CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT - WE ASKED, YOU SAID, WE DID....

The following are all the consultations and resulting actions that the Service has carried out during this period.

- a) Cemetery consultation we consulted on possible options for the future provision of burial grounds in Argyll and Bute. As a result of the public feedback we are developing further information to allow for an additional level of public consultation and engagement
- b) Craignure Pier we consulted on both the short and long term options earlier this year. As a result of feedback we are developing further 3D projections of the possible options to allow communities to better understand the proposals
- c) Jura-Islay ferry as a result of public feedback and engagement we recently made changes to the service to allow for a booked-in-advance later sailing at 20.30 to provide better transport connections for those coming back to Jura from Glasgow

d) Traffic Regulation Orders often result in significant representation received by the Council. This brings with it a level of demand that needs to be prioritised which can often result in other less urgent tasks having to be postponed.

ROADS & INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES – ANNUAL SCORECARD 2020/21



101: We Ensure Information And oport Is Available For Everyone [RIS]	Success Measure	G	ŧ
15101_01-Information regarding dates, elays and changes to road and bridge works posted on our website	Actual Target Benchmark	100 % 100 %	G
113: Our Infrastructure Is Safe And Fit The Future [RIS]	Success Measure	A	ŧ
IS113_01-The are no 'avoidable' weight strictions in place on our roads and bridges	Actual Target Benchmark	100 % 100 %	G
IS113_02-The percentage of roads in need maintenance as defined by the annual invey	Actual Target Benchmark	52.5 % 54.4 % 64.7 %	Covid Impact
IS113_03-The percentage of the top priority utes that receive winter weather treatment at are completed on time	Actual Target Benchmark	100.00 % 98.87 % 99.00 %	G
IS113_04-The percentage of reported otholes are repaired according to their everity	Actual Target Benchmark	93 % 75 %	G
15113_05-The percentage of street lighting ult repairs are completed within 10 working ays	Actual Target Benchmark	40 % 75 %	R ↓
IS113_06-Complete the Local Flood Risk anagement Plan	Actual Target Benchmark	On track On track On track	G
15113_07- Monitor, update and deliver the D Year Marine Asset Management Plan	Actual Target Benchmark	On track On track On track	G

Road & Infrastructure Services Scorecard 2019-22				
corecard owned by: Jim Smith	FY 20/21		Scorecar	
0114: Our Communities Are Cleaner nd Greener [RIS]	Success Measure	G	•	
	Actual	43.9 %	R	
RIS114_01-The percentage of waste that is ecvcled, composted or recovered	Target	45.0 %	-	
ecycles, composed of recovered	Benchmark	48.9 %	Covid Impact	
	Actual	18,701	G	
RI5114_02-The number of tonnes of waste sent to landfill	Target	21,500		
	Benchmark	19,000	•	
RIS114_03-Percentage of street cleanliness	Actual	80.0 %	-	
	Target	73.0 %	G	
	Benchmark	67.0 %	T	
	Actual	On track	-	
RIS114_04-Implement the required changes to comply with the new Biodegradable	Target	On track	G	
Municipal Waste (BMW) landfill ban in 2025.	Benchmark	On track		
	Actual	On track	-	
RIS114_05-Implementing the required thanges to comply with the Deposit Return	Target	On track	G	
Scheme (DRS)	Benchmark	On track		
0115: We Are Efficient And Cost fective [RIS]	Success Measure	G	•	
	Actual	99.0 %	G	
IS115_01-Percentage of bins collected on me	Target	96.0 %	-	
	Benchmark	99.0 %	-	