

## SERVICE ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW

<b>NAME OF SERVICE: DEVELOPMENT AND ECONOMIC GROWTH</b>	<b>PERIOD: FINANCIAL YEAR 2021/22</b>
<b>1. DELIVERING OUR OUTCOMES</b>	
<p><b>Our case studies help illustrate the positive contribution the Service has made to our communities and provides examples of good service delivery.</b></p>	
<b>Corporate Outcome 1: People Live Active, Healthier And Independent Lives</b>	
<b>Business Outcome BO103: We Enable A Choice of Suitable Housing Options</b>	
<b>a) Empty Homes</b>	
<p>The official 'Empty Homes Team' at Argyll and Bute Council, has just one Empty Homes Officer (EHO). However, as anyone who works in the field of empty homes will understand no EHO undertakes their role in isolation and collaborative and partnership working is crucial in our everyday roles, which is something we do really well across our teams.</p>	
<p>The EHO is a key member of the wider housing team; all housing roles are closely aligned to ensure that staff are working towards the key aims and objectives of the Local Housing Strategy which includes maximising the use of existing resources and bringing empty homes back into use. A few examples of pro-active collaborative working just within the area housing teams include: close working between EHO and local Housing Improvement Officers, co-ordinating advice and actions to encourage investment in common repairs in tenements when looking at options to bring individual empty units back into use. Ensuring there is regular communication and signposting to the EHO from across the team when empty homes are involved in other renovation and regeneration projects, or when advice enquiries are received.</p>	
<p>More widely, the EHO has the opportunity to regularly feed into the development of the Strategic Housing Investment Plan and local Housing Need and Demand issues, to ensure that we maximise use of existing stock if it offers suitable solutions. Empty homes have been renovated with assistance of grant funding and brought back into use as temporary homeless accommodation. We are also currently working with an owner renovating properties for possible use by NHS staff. Another diverse approach is Homeless staff contacting the EHO to bring to attention any Section 11 Notices that have been received from Lenders - this is a new protocol following on from good practice identified in the overlap of a mutual case.</p>	
<p>With systems already in place for agile working, the EHO has been able to provide advice and assistance throughout the whole pandemic. Whilst site visits were restricted, we could engage by alternative means to ensure delivering an efficient service as possible, even participating in Zoom calls with owners on our personal devices to accommodate I.T. compatibility.</p>	

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Within the Council the EHO has strived to establish strong and meaningful working practices across a number of internal services all of which contribute to supporting the EHO to achieve outcomes. Partnership working takes the shape of assisting in tracing owners, instigating action, or helping find funding or practical solutions. We continue to develop our partnerships to find suitable and innovative ways to assist owners and communities bring empty homes back into use. A few examples include:

- EHO is the Chair of our Area Property Action Groups which brings together Officers from range of Departments who deal with the most problematic buildings, and agree ways to engage with owners and find solutions;
- The EHO attends the Strategic Housing Forum to provide an update in the service, this highlights the high level priority and commitment that bringing empty homes back into use is for our Housing Partnership;
- Fraud Team – recent quote from Team Leader following joint working noted that “the EHO is an adopted member of our team!” recognition of how team working approach as strengthened relationships between Departments;
- Joint piece of work with EHO in Stirling Council to raise the profile of Empty Homes within the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park. A joint blog has been produced which was a great opportunity to highlight issues of empty homes and help available!

Whilst the empty homes service in Argyll and Bute Council has been established for a number of years, it continues to grow from strength to strength despite capacity remaining the same. The EHO has an overall remit to assist and encourage owners to bring empty homes back into use with an annual target set. This is monitored through the Local Housing Strategy. However, this in essence doesn't capture the wider outcomes that the EHO has achieved working in partnership, some include:

- Over 500 empty homes brought back into use
- The EHO and Council Tax Department work extremely closely together, effective communication is key to the success of this partnership. A recent example is where the EHO was alerted to a request to change the status of an account after a letter was issued confirming property had been empty over 2 years to claim reduced VAT rate –this enabled the EHO to discuss the implications of project with the empty home owner who would have no longer been entitled to reduced VAT rate.
- Implementation of a bespoke Empty/Abandoned Homes Enabling Budget to facilitate and/or instigate action to bring empty homes back into use
- First Empty Homes CPO concluded - renovation works undertaken with no financial support and flat leased as private let
- Worked in conjunction with Mull and Iona Community Trust to undertake joint communication exercise with all registered empty home owners on the Island.

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- Hebridean Trust in Tiree supported by the EHO to drive forward plans for the long term use of all their buildings whilst assisting them to bring six listed empty flats back into use. Due to the scale of scheme, the EHO established a working group of relevant partners to maximise support to take this project forward.
- The EHO is working with Islay Development Initiative to bring two empty flats back into use as affordable housing. This also provides unique opportunity to consider a plug and play model on the grounds of property for additional housing provision.
- Regular Shelter Best Practice Group contribution and also provided support and shared good practice with a number of Local Authorities over the course of 2021 including: development of empty homes grant schemes; new Empty Homes Officer peer support; sharing details on funding mechanisms; and bespoke case management demonstration.
- Winner of outstanding team and Scottish Empty Homes Conference 2022.



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### Corporate Outcome 2: People Will Live In Safer and Stronger Communities

#### Business Outcome BO1014: Our communities and supported and protected

##### a) Covid public health control measures

National Covid restrictions to businesses and communities were still in place in April 2021, and these changed over the reporting year. This placed additional responsibilities on the Councils Environmental Health service to support and enforce standards within businesses to ensure compliance with relevant public health control measures.

The changing landscape of controls made this work challenging and an example of this was the introduction of the vaccine certification scheme affecting some 220 licensed premises in Argyll and Bute. Through a proactive approach, businesses adapted their activities to develop compliance plans or bring their operation out with these requirements in a two-week period.

In the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022, the environmental team carried out 862 Covid interventions and investigated 773 business enquiries and complaints. Compliance levels were high with 7 formal notices issued.

This is excellent performance by the environmental health team in challenging times, when they also were involved in the management of Covid outbreaks with NHS Highland and referrals through the Test and Protect regime.

##### b) Retaining Customer Standards Excellence accreditation

Planning and Regulatory Services retained their Customer Standards Excellence accreditation in 21/22 with the number of compliance-plus criteria increasing from 4 to 7, and 2 other partial criteria classified as fully compliant. This is a very positive outcome, particularly as services had to introduce new ways of working during the Covid pandemic.

##### c) Customer Service Requests resolved within targets

Demand on Regulatory Services to respond to customer service requests increased during the pandemic, from 1,549 in 2019/20 to 2444 in 21/22 (excluding export health certificates), an increase of 56%. This was particularly challenging and resource intensive, but the team responded well achieving 70% (increasing to 85% with export health certificates) resolved within service targets. Given the increasing workload, a demand reduction project to review our triaging system for service requests will be carried out in 22/23, which may result in some complaints types not being investigated or being dealt with differently.

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### d) Local Air Quality

Local Air Quality Progress report 2021 for Argyll and Bute prepared by the environmental health, concluded that local air quality in Argyll and Bute continues to show a long-term steady or falling trend, with a marked reduction at most monitoring locations during 2020.

### e) Air services out to the islands

Argyll and Bute Council operate three licensed aerodromes at Oban, Coll and Colonsay. These aerodromes are licensed by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) as required by law to allow scheduled passenger flight services (for use by paying members of the public) to land and take off. The licensed aerodromes above support the Public Service Obligation (PSO) air services out to the islands of Coll, Colonsay and Tiree (Tiree airport is owned by Scottish Govt and operated by Highlands and Islands Airports). Support to the firefighting staff and inspection of the aerodromes on Coll and Colonsay is provided by the Station Manager and two Crew Commanders from Oban airport. There are also scholar flights to the islands at the weekend. The air services transport pupils from the islands of Coll and Colonsay to Oban High School allowing them valuable time with their families during the weekend and offering further resilience in the event of ferry service cancellations during the winter months. (Tiree has its own high school). The PSO air services have proved essential for service provision to the islands with the NHS, Argyll and Bute Council, Argyll Community Housing Association being key business users.

During the Covid pandemic the Council continued to support and operate the air services out to the islands with all seats reserved for travel for essential users only e.g. key workers, NHS staff or island residents on the Wed and Thurs flights. The Council worked with the operator Hebridean Air Services to convert the weekend flights to cargo flights. The eight seats were removed from the aircraft to make way for freight.



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### **f) Digital connectivity**

The Council continues to have a significant interest and provide support to the national effort as it continues to improve communication infrastructure across our rural areas. The Council's Strategic Transportation and Infrastructure Team continues to provide support acting as a single point of contact for Government Officials, Industry bodies and numerous external consultants by providing assistance when it is required. Feedback from consultants has been complimentary of the processes which the council has implemented to assist in the progress of digital connectivity. With the numerous Government and Commercial programmes currently active, even through the difficult national lockdown the free flow of information, continuous communication and support has provided dividends with these national programmes. Our cross departmental working continues to play a major role in the successful development of digital connectivity across the area.

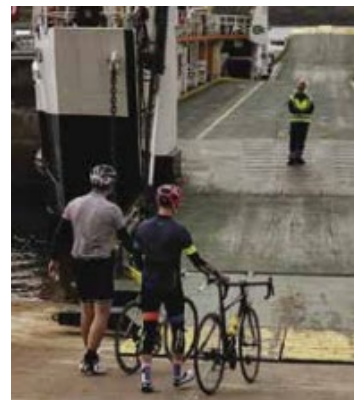
### **g) Active Travel**

Active Travel is an overarching term covering journeys made by a physically active means, for example walking, wheelchair, cycling or scooting. Active Travel projects are usually split into two types, infrastructure and behaviour change, although some projects can include elements of both within a single project. Infrastructure development and delivery aims to provide high-quality, accessible routes for people to walk/wheelchair and, in the case of cycleways/cyclepaths to cycle or scoot, thereby enabling and encouraging them to travel actively. Research has identified that a lack of suitable and safe routes are one of the most frequently cited reasons for not travelling more actively. These physical barriers can be relatively minor items, for example lack of dropped kerbs, or larger, for example the lack of an off-carriageway route. This is particularly notable within Argyll and Bute where the majority of walking and/or cycling provision is limited or non-existent out with the built up areas, forcing users to walk/cycle on national speed limit carriageways.

Behaviour Change projects are designed to overcome challenges to give people the confidence or incentive to travel more actively, for example by providing walking or cycle training, by providing individualized travel plans to demonstrate the viability of travelling more actively within their life or providing activities which encourage active travel. Behaviour change elements are becoming increasingly common within infrastructure projects in order to encourage use of the infrastructure to maximise the benefits to the community. Research has demonstrated that increased activity, including travelling actively, has significant physical and mental health benefits, reduces inequality, creates a healthier and more productive workforce and reduces congestion and transport related pollution (e.g. air, noise and visual). As such promotion of active travel delivers benefits and savings across both the public and private sectors while supporting economic development and healthier, happier lives.

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Argyll and Bute Council's Strategic Transportation Team during 21/22 has delivered active travel projects totalling £80k from Smarter Choices Smarter Places funding, £195k from Strathclyde Partnership for Transport, £376k from Cycling Walking Safer Routes and £628k from Sustrans funding.



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

#### **a) Building Standards meets all key performance measures**

Building Standards met all key performance measures in 2021/22. Building Warrant numbers have not recovered to pre-pandemic levels although the service were successful in obtaining commercial work in vetting applications from Scottish Borders and East Lothian Council.

#### **b) Dangerous Buildings**

The lack of maintenance in private properties has been challenging leading to an increase in reports of dangerous buildings. Building Standards surveyors are required to inspect these properties and where there are risks to the public, take action to remove these dangers. Any enforcement action can be challenging, particularly where the owners refuse to take immediate repairs, and initiation works in default has been resource intensive. An example is a fire affecting 4 commercial and a residential properties on the main shopping area in Dunoon, where the Council had to initiate actions to partially demolish the properties to remove immediate dangers and secure the site. There was continued pressure to clear the site and this took some months, following negotiations with the different owners and insurance companies.

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### c) **Building Standards one of a few local authorities to introduce the new Building Standards Scotland Competency Framework**

Building Standards was one of a few local authorities to introduce the new Building Standards Scotland Competency Framework. This was successfully introduced through an officer-working group, which identified that we have an experienced, professional and competent team, with some personal and professional training needs incorporated within a formal plan.

## **Corporate Outcome 5: Our Economy is diverse and thriving**

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

#### a) **Business Gateway support is the perfect piece for local jewellery maker**

A jewellery designer based in Cardross, Argyll and Bute, has enhanced its e-commerce offering in response to the Covid pandemic, with support from Business Gateway via DigitalBoost, Scotland's national digital upskilling programme, and grant support from Argyll and Bute Council.

Led by husband-and-wife team Linda and Matt Scott, Linda Macdonald Jewellery specialises in hand-crafted silver and gold jewellery. The business benefited from Business Gateway support during the Covid pandemic as it navigated retail store closures along with wholesale and supplier issues.



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With over 100 stockists in the UK and overseas, the team has been working with the service to grow the business for almost ten years. Most recently, Linda approached Business Gateway for support as the online retail side of the business grew during the pandemic. Through DigitalBoost, Linda and Matt accessed one to one support from a digital expert as well as digital webinars and online resources.

Linda Macdonald Jewellery also secured Recovery grant funding from the Business Gateway Local Growth Accelerator Programme to help with the cost of enhancing the existing e-commerce platform and the development of a hard copy trade brochure and digital display, as COVID restrictions ease and in-person events are back on the cards.

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.

Linda said: “It’s been great to have the support of Business Gateway during what has been a very challenging period to run a business. Through DigitalBoost, we were able to access expert help which was invaluable as we started the process of improving our e-commerce offering. Additionally, the Recovery grant funding secured through the Local Growth Accelerator Programme was particularly helpful, allowing us to invest in upgrading our website and marketing materials as our focus shifts to recovering post-pandemic and getting back to business as usual.”

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Jen Smith, Business Adviser for Business Gateway Argyll and Bute, said: “It is rewarding to see how this package of support has shaped Linda and Matt’s digital journey, and we’re pleased they have increased confidence to move to a greater focus on digital capabilities. Having a strong online presence will continue to be vital for businesses as we emerge from the pandemic. Through the DigitalBoost programme, digital specialists are available to help businesses across a range of issues with free, expert, impartial advice. Our Local Growth Accelerator Programme can now help businesses to recover from the pandemic, as well as those looking to grow.”

Find out more about Linda Macdonald Jewellery at [lindamacdonaldjewellery.com](http://lindamacdonaldjewellery.com)

### **b) Business Gateway catapults consultancy to success with expanded team and ISO accreditation**

A business consultancy that specialises in helping organisations deliver efficiencies and become more sustainable, has been able to expand its team with the appointment of a new graduate, following a package of support from Business Gateway.

DWS Associates, who help organisations solve problems and win opportunities, were able to take on a graduate placement through HR advice and signposting to funding through the Business Gateway 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.

Alice Masson was taken on at the start of the year and increased capacity in the team. She also helped the business secure vital ISO accreditations, as well as the Scottish Business Pledge and Cyber Essentials Plus.



Through Business Gateway, owner David Smart was also able to access support through DigitalBoost, Scotland’s national digital upskilling programme, delivered by Business Gateway. This included a Digital Health Check and webinars on video production for social media and LinkedIn for business.

David, owner of DWS Associates, said: “Our network of experienced directors’ were at capacity, and we knew we needed support if we were to achieve our wider business goals and growth ambitions. Through Business Gateway, we were able to access the help and funding we needed to expand our team and take on Alice who has helped upskill the whole team with her creativity, research and communications skills. She also increased our capacity and resources, letting us achieve vital ISO accreditations that will help us facilitate further business growth.”

Alice said, “It’s been an incredibly rewarding experience working at DWS, and knowing that I’ve brought value to the organisation through my work in securing accreditations and developing our communications strategy. I look forward to building on this further in the coming months.”

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Donald Melville, Business Gateway adviser, said: "By acknowledging their need for a new member of staff to help lighten the load, DWS has been able to achieve key certifications, ensuring their directors can focus on doing what they do best. Taking on a new employee can be a complex process. We can help businesses with each step, as they start their recruitment process through to hiring their new team member."

### NOTES TO EDITORS:

1. *The Scottish Government is the Managing Authority for the European Structural Funds 2014-20 Programme. For further information visit our webpages or follow @scotgovESIF.*
2. The Local Growth Accelerator Programme Argyll and Bute is open to businesses aiming to increase their turnover by £50,000 or more within the next three years; or aiming to increase annual turnover to pre-COVID levels or achieve modest growth (below £50,000 increase) within the next three years. Businesses must be based in Argyll and Bute; micro, small or medium sized (fewer than 250 employees and less than €50m turnover or balance sheet total of less than €43m); not account managed by Highlands and Islands Enterprise or Scottish Enterprise and not operating solely as retailers.

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

#### a) An enforcement intervention is performed in a consistent and fair manner with businesses supported throughout

A survey of businesses which were subject to Covid enforcement interventions concluded that 95% of businesses were satisfied or very satisfied with the response of officers within Regulatory Services and believed they were treated fairly. This is an indicator of good enforcement practices by Regulatory Services.

#### b) Food exports

The UK withdrawal from the European Union on the 31<sup>st</sup> January 2020, introduced new arrangements for the export of food to EU countries. This was particularly challenging for food exporters in Argyll and Bute (primarily fish and shellfish) and to the Council Environmental Health service, who must certify that the product is compliant with food safety legislation and fit for human consumption. The creation of commercial hubs in central Scotland mitigated demand at a local authority level for export health certificates for EU consignment with the main exporters in Argyll and Bute using these hubs. To support business and meet our statutory requirements as a food authority, audits of the main exporters have been undertaken and attestations issued every 3 months to these key exporters to allow them to continue exporting to the EU using commercial hubs. In addition, the Council issued 1284 export health certificates in 21/22 to businesses to export to non-EU countries (e.g. China, Middle East etc.) and 195 certificates to exporters services to export to EU countries.

## SERVICE ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW

### Business Outcome BO112: Argyll And Bute Is Promoted To Everyone

#### a) Restoration of 39-43 Victoria Street, Rothesay, Isle of Bute

A Rothesay Townscape Heritage (TH) grant of £311,601 supported the comprehensive repair of a prominent listed building in multiple ownership, serving to safeguard the property for future generations whilst helping to lift the appearance of Rothesay's town centre.



Traditional materials and methods of repair were used to ensure best practice, and align with Historic Environment Scotland's Advisory Standards of Repair. Works encompassed roof works, including leadwork, chimney and skew repairs, as well as substantial masonry works to front, rear and gable elevations, which included stone indents and stone replacements, as well as full re-pointing and structural repairs. Rainwater goods and dormer windows were also restored and the roof inspected for rot and treated accordingly. Timber sash and case windows were restored, and uPVC windows replaced in timber. New close doors were added to front and rear.

Rothesay TH is a heritage-led partnership project that is funded by National Lottery Heritage Fund, Historic Environment Scotland, Argyll and Bute Council, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Smarter Choices Smarter Places and LEADER. The partnership funding totals, £2,746,049. It is anticipated with private owner contributions included, the total value of the project will be in excess of £3.2m. The programme is being delivered over a 5 year period, and will conclude on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023.

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### 2. SIGNIFICANT CHALLENGES

The significant challenges faced by the Service during 2021/22. 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 1: People Live Active, Healthier And Independent Lives

##### Business Outcome BO103: We Enable A Choice of Suitable Housing Options

- a) A significant challenge is emerging in relation to the statutory provision of suitable temporary accommodation for households presenting as homeless to Argyll and Bute Council. We rely on the private rented sector for the provision of temporary accommodation and over recent months the housing market has picked up significantly and a number of landlords have asked for their properties back thus reducing the number of temporary accommodation units available to the Council. There has not been a budget increase in relation to the temporary accommodation budget for a significant time period so the ability to pay a competitive rent to secure replacement units is very limited. The increasing pressures on accommodation managed by Housing Services in the form of changes to the way that Asylum Seekers will be accommodated, the Ukrainian Resettlement Programme and changes in the Criminal Justice system to relieve pressures on prisons will and are making the situation even more challenging. At present close scrutiny of this issue is being carried out in order to quantify and identify any emerging trend and potential solutions.

#### Corporate Outcome 2: People Will Live In Safer and Stronger Communities

##### Business Outcome BO104: Our Communities And Supported And Protected

- a) There is considerable work and resources ongoing to restart the official food safety programme in Argyll and Bute. This has involved the risk assessment of over 2400 businesses to develop a new interventions plan, the training of authorised officers in new process and systems and a review on how statutory food controls delivered. This will be a challenge to the environmental health team, given the resourcing difficulties and other conflicting work demands. Additional resources are required at a time when there is a national shortage of qualified environmental health and food safety officers.
- b) Recruitment and workforce planning. There are serious resourcing issues affecting the service due to the national shortage in qualified professional officers and the inability to attract to Argyll and Bute. On one occasion, after three adverts, no qualified officers applied for a post, despite the offer of flexible locations and home working. This reduces the team's capacity, and leaves the options of recruiting trainees or operating with long term vacancies.

## SERVICE ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW

### Corporate Outcome 5: Our Economy is diverse and thriving

#### Business Outcome BO112: Argyll And Bute Is Promoted To Everyone

- a) Significant shortages of skilled staff and rises in costs of materials and fuel and difficulties accessing supplies as well as delays experienced in the commencement of construction caused by Covid.

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

Please list all consultations and resulting actions that the Service has carried out during this period.

#### a) Argyll & Bute Local Housing Strategy 2022-2027: Public Consultation Final Phase: September – October 2021

Following extensive consultation and stakeholder engagement in 2019/20 and 2020/21, the final consultative draft LHS was issued for comment and feedback prior to approval by the Strategic Housing Forum and full Council in November 2021. The responses were positive and reinforced key aspects of the strategy including the need to improve stock condition and energy efficiency; the need for more affordable housing to attract and retain permanent residents; the negative impacts of too much second/holiday homes; and the need to ensure sufficient infrastructure to support new build programme. The overall view was summed up in the comment: "I think the Housing Strategy does pin point the key issues and actions needed well." At the same time the draft LHS was submitted to the Scottish Government and the formal Peer Review process, and again very positive feedback was received, with particular commendation on our approach to community engagement, consultation and partnership working. This included the support and joint working with local community groups and led to the establishment of a dedicated Community Housing Network for community-led housing projects. The consultation plan is available on the LHS page of the council website, and is summarised in the new LHS itself, which was formally launched at the Strategic Housing Forum in March 2022.

#### b) Argyll & Bute Housing Contribution Statement 2022/23 – 2024/25

Housing Services engaged with HSCP colleagues on the review and update of the new three-year HCS which forms part of the Joint Strategic Plan for the HSCP. This involved consultation and approval by partners on the SHIP Officers Group and the Strategic Housing Forum.

## SERVICE ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW

### c) Regulatory Services and Building Standards Stakeholder Surveys

In 2020/21, Regulatory Services and Building Standards carried out a number of stakeholder surveys to attain their views on specific issues aimed at making service improvements. These included:

- i) A survey of businesses who received a Covid intervention to assess the quality of the service provided the appropriateness of information on public health controls and any enforcement was fair. This identified that businesses welcomed the advice and guidance from the Councils environmental health teams in assisting them to new and developing public health measures.
- ii) Following the national Pye Tate report for building standards, agents were surveyed to obtain their views on the reported slight reduction in user satisfaction and on the future of User Forums that had been poorly attended previously. As a result, the User Forums have been replaced with regular newsletters and a single MS Teams Agents Group, rather than 4 individual annual face-to-face meetings. In addition to support customers, a guide to “Do You Need a Building Warrant” was developed and published on the [Councils website](#)

### d) Aviation Strategy

[Discussion document to inform the development of an Aviation Strategy \(transport.gov.scot\)](#) Ensuring that the Scottish Government uses this welcome review of the governance and support of air services to consider alternative structures and funding mechanisms that can best deliver improved affordable connectivity.

### e) Strategic Transport Projects Review 2 (STPR2)

This review of the strategic transport network’s performance will inform transport investment in Scotland for the next 20 years (2022-2042) by providing evidence-based recommendations on which Scottish Ministers can base future transport investment decisions. STPR2 offered the opportunity for Economic Development Department to lobby for improvements to the Argyll and Bute transport network, to be delivered at a national level through, the Strategic Transport Project Review 2.

# DEVELOPMENT AND ECONOMIC GROWTH SERVICE – ANNUAL SCORECARD 2021/22\_FINAL

## Development & Economic Growth Scorecard 2019-22

Scorecard owned by: **Fergus Murray** **FY 21/22**

Economic  
Growth  
Team  
Scorecard

Development  
Policy &  
Housing  
Team  
Scorecard

Transformational  
Projects &  
Regeneration  
Team  
Scorecard

Strategic  
Transportation  
&  
Infrastructure  
Team  
Scorecard

Development  
Management  
Team  
Scorecard

Building  
Standards  
Team  
Scorecard

Regulatory  
Services  
Team  
Scorecard

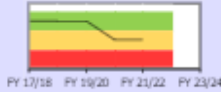
[Click here  
for all Business  
Outcomes and Success  
Measures](#)

[Click here for Ex. Director  
Kirsty Flanagan Scorecard](#)

### BO102: We Provide Support, Prevention And Opportunities To Help People Make Better Lifestyle Choices [DEG]

Success Measures

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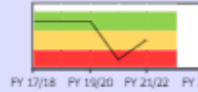


FY 17/18 FY 19/20 FY 21/22 FY 23/24

### BO110: We Support Businesses, Employment And Development Opportunities [DEG]

Success Measures

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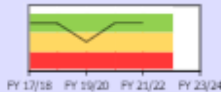


FY 17/18 FY 19/20 FY 21/22 FY 23/24

### BO103: We Enable A Choice Of Suitable Housing Options [DEG]

Success Measures

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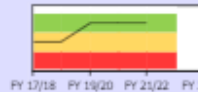


FY 17/18 FY 19/20 FY 21/22 FY 23/24

### BO111: We Influence And Engage With Businesses And Policy Makers [DEG]

Success Measures

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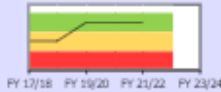


FY 17/18 FY 19/20 FY 21/22 FY 23/24

### BO104: Our Communities Are Supported And Protected [DEG]

Success Measures

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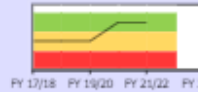


FY 17/18 FY 19/20 FY 21/22 FY 23/24

### BO112: Argyll And Bute Is Promoted To Everyone [DEG]

Success Measures

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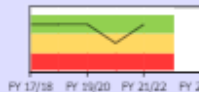


FY 17/18 FY 19/20 FY 21/22 FY 23/24

### BO105: Our Natural And Built Environment Is Protected And Respected [DEG]

Success Measures

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FY 17/18 FY 19/20 FY 21/22 FY 23/24

## Management Information

### RESOURCES

People	Actual	Trend		
Sickness absence DEG	6.0 Days	↓		
	Target	Actual	Status	Trend
PDRs DEG	90 %	12 %	R	↓
Financial	Budget	Forecast	Status	Trend
Finance Revenue totals DEG	£K 13,787	£K 13,696	R	↓

### IMPROVEMENT

	Total No	Off track	On track	Complete
DEG Service Improvements 2017-22	9	5	3	1
Development & Economic Growth Audit Recommendations	0	3	0	0
	Overdue	Rescheduled	Actions in Plan	Complete
Health & Safety	Overdue	Rescheduled	Actions in Plan	Complete
Service H&S Plan Actions	R 2	2	9	7
H&S Investigation Actions	0	0	0	0
Customer Service DEG				
Stage 1 Complaints	88 %	G	↑	
Stage 2 Complaints	80 %	R	↓	



## Development & Economic Growth Scorecard 2019-22

Scorecard owned by: **Fergus Murray** FY 21/22

[Click here for Full Scorecard](#)

### BO102: We Provide Support, Prevention And Opportunities To Help People Make Better Lifestyle Choices [DEG]

Success Measure **A** →

DEG102_01-Protecting the health of our people through the delivery of the formally approved Joint Health Protection Plan (2020-2022 Plan)	Actual	On track to revised plan	<b>G</b>
	Target	Complete	
	Benchmark	On track to revised plan	

### BO103: We Enable A Choice Of Suitable Housing Options [DEG]

Success Measure **G** →

DEG103_01-Number of affordable social sector new builds completed per annum.	Actual	145	<b>G</b>
	Target	145	
	Benchmark	110	

DEG103_02-The percentage of positive homeless prevention interventions [prevent 1]	Actual	71 %	<b>G</b>
	Target	50 %	
	Benchmark	50 %	

DEG103_03-The number of empty properties brought back in to use per annum	Actual	38	<b>G</b>
	Target	25	
	Benchmark	25	

### BO104: Our Communities Are Supported And Protected [DEG]

Success Measure **G** →

DEG104_01-Undertake an enforcement intervention programme to high risk premises in respect of environmental health, animal health and welfare and licensing standards	Actual	96 %	<b>G</b>
	Target	95 %	
	Benchmark	95	

### BO105: Our Natural And Built Environment Is Protected And Respected [DEG]

Success Measure **G** ↑

DEG105_01-Respond to Building Warrant applications within 20 days	Actual	95.9 %	<b>G</b>
	Target	80.0 %	
	Benchmark	96.8 %	

DEG105_02-The Percentage Of Building Warrants And Amendments Issued Within 6 Days From Receipt Of All Satisfactory Information	Actual	93.9 %	<b>G</b>
	Target	90.0 %	
	Benchmark		

DEG105_03-Increase the use of the Building Standards service towards it being self-funding.	Actual	£K 227	<b>R</b>
	Target	£K 250	
	Benchmark		

### BO111: We Influence And Engage With Businesses And Policy Makers [DEG]

Success Measure **G** →

DEG111_01-An enforcement intervention is performed in a consistent and fair manner with businesses supported throughout	Actual	95 %	<b>G</b>
	Target	80 %	
	Benchmark	95 %	

### BO110: We Support Businesses, Employment And Development Opportunities [DEG]

Success Measure **A** ↑

DEG110\_01-MARKER-REMOVED FROM SERVICE PLAN **Covid Impact**

DEG110_02-The number of new business start-ups supported	Actual	135	<b>G</b>
	Target	100	
	Benchmark	120	

DEG110_03-The time it takes to determine 'local' planning applications is no longer than 10% above the National Average.	Actual	14.6 Wks	<b>R</b>
	Target	11.0 Wks	
	Benchmark	10.4 Wks	

### BO112: Argyll And Bute Is Promoted To Everyone [DEG]

Success Measure **G** →

DEG112_01-Deliver the Dunoon CARS (Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme) project	Actual	Green	<b>G</b>
	Target	Green	
	Benchmark	Green	

DEG112_02-Deliver the Rothesay TH (Townscape Heritage) project	Actual	Green	<b>G</b>
	Target	Green	
	Benchmark	Green	

DEG112_03-Deliver the Tarbert and Lochgilphead Regeneration Fund project	Actual	Green	<b>G</b>
	Target	Green	
	Benchmark	Green	

DEG112_04-Deliver the Lochgilphead CARS (Conservation Area Regeneration Scheme) project	Actual	Green	<b>G</b>
	Target	Green	
	Benchmark	Green	

## SERVICE ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW

**NAME OF SERVICE: ROAD AND INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES**

**PERIOD: FINANCIAL YEAR 2021/22**

### 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.**

**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 was fully completed this year. This project sees the Council's existing roads depot and Jackson's Quarry, Oban, expanded and redeveloped as a single site for all Roads and Infrastructure Operations across Oban and Lorn to be delivered from.

This project reduces the Council's operating costs by moving from three depots to one, and has created local job/economic opportunities through subcontracts to the main contract delivered by Luddon Construction, as well as providing for support to the accommodation market in Oban with Luddon squads staying in Oban Mon-Thurs.

The depot consolidation project continues with focus now being given to both Lochgilphead and Islay.



## SERVICE ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW

### b) **Rothesay pontoons project**

Scheme specification and procurement was carried out last financial year, with delivery of the scheme commencing in this financial year and in to the following year. This is a c. £900,000 project to provide around 20 pontoon berths for Rothesay, providing access to the town/Isle of Bute for leisure yachters. This is a significant and affluent market area, which will bring increased visitor numbers to Rothesay to spend money in local shops, restaurants, cafes etc. Developing access to the marine tourism market is a continuing theme, and this project comes off the back of the Campbeltown and Oban pontoon projects which have brought significant economic benefit to both of those towns.

### c) **Major marine transport connectivity schemes**

Over the course of 2021/2022 we have progressed 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 the concept of this scheme towards a detailed design including significant public engagement where a community group is working with council on elements of the design process.



#### **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.

### d) **Road reconstruction**

During this financial year we carried out an ambitious programme of road improvements with an investment of over £10m of council funding together with additional monies from the Timber Transport Fund in the region of £1.4m. This allowed us to complete over 100 individual roads reconstruction schemes which will improve the overall road network, contributing to keeping Argyll and Bute open for business. As a result of this ongoing prudent investment and proportionate and appropriate engineering choices, the overall road condition continues to improve.

## SERVICE ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW



### e) Bridge improvements

During the tail end of this financial year we were successful in securing a £5.5m grant for bridges and structures improvements/replacement. This will enable a number of bridges to be strengthened and/or replaced over the coming years, providing more resilience to transport infrastructure whilst also reducing some of the routine revenue maintenance work.

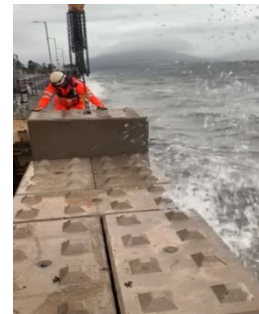


## SERVICE ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW

### f) Bute seawall

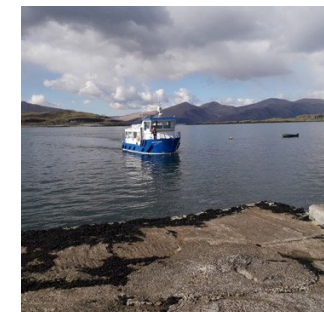
In December 2021 a combination of high tide and unusual easterly wind direction resulted in significant damage occurring to the seawall on the A886 at Ardbeg on Bute.

The damage was so severe that utility pipes cables and conduits were left exposed. With the wall having washed away significant further damage to the carriageway and highly probably private land beyond would have been caused. This is a key route into Rothesay and as such the council mobilised working with its own internal team and contractors to put in place a temporary sea defence utilising interlocking concrete blocks. In this financial year we are taking forward the design works for a permanent, lasting solution.



### g) Lady Lismore, ferry services and Ports and Harbours

The council operates four lifeline ferry services as well as 39 ports and harbours across the council area. This financial year a new vessel was commissioned and built. Connecting Port Appin with Isle of Lismore. This new vessel came in to service in May 2022. The old vessel was replaced due to changes in safety requirements. The new vessel meeting current day Maritime Coastguard Agency and maritime requirements.



### h) Oban Bay



The council's harbour board in December 2021 took a decision to progress the municipal port for Oban. This means the council will become responsible for the wider waters of Oban Bay and through a statutory process which includes a Harbour Revision Order which will provide powers to the council which will ensure that vessel movement within the bay can be safely managed.

## SERVICE ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW

### i) Winter maintenance

The council is responsible for carrying out winter maintenance, removal of ice and snow, to its 2,300km of road. There is a network of roadside weather stations which together with specialist forecasting surveys provide bespoke treatments across the council area utilising 32 separate routes.

Key facts from this winter season:

- 65 full fleet runs
- 2,049 individual vehicle runs
- Highest turned out route A819 Inveraray to Dalmally
- Total distance travelled 105,024 miles
- Salt used 11,030 tonnes
- Total spend £2,258,228.59



### Corporate Outcome – We Have An Infrastructure That Supports Sustainable Growth

#### Business Outcome BO114 Our Communities Are Cleaner And Greener

##### a) Island landfill cells

Circa £1million investment in sustainable waste disposal and Gartbreck on Islay which is currently underway.

Over the course of the previous year the Mull scheme was progressed to ensure suitable landfill capacity for the island's general waste, ensuring that waste services can continue up until December 2025.

Similar works commenced in this current year for Gartbreck and Islay which will provide landfill capacity for Islay and Jura's general waste up until December 2025.

Some landfill capacity will be required beyond the end of 2025 for items such as arisings from abattoirs and some building materials such as plaster board etc.



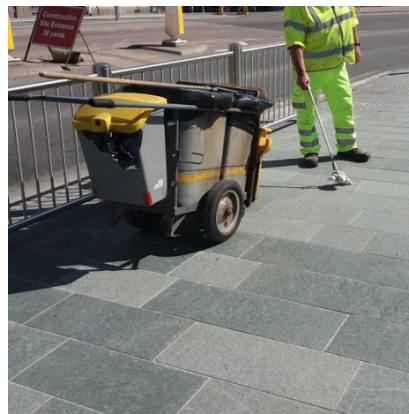
## SERVICE ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW

### b) Preparing for 2025 Biodegradable Municipal Waste Landfill Ban

Collaborative work has continued with West Dunbartonshire Council regarding joint procurement for waste solutions post December 2025. This is likely to mean a joint contract for some of Argyll and Bute's waste material which would bring efficiencies due to economies of scale. It is likely however that Argyll and Bute will need additional transfer stations particularly in the Helensburgh and Lomond area to help create logistical efficiency.



### c) Street cleansing



We continue to deliver our commitments under the Environmental Protection Act and have also been consistently achieving high marks in the street cleanliness index which is administered by Keep Scotland Beautiful. Street cleanliness contributes towards public health as well as providing a clean and attractive environment in which our communities, businesses and visitors can thrive.

## SERVICE ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW

### d) Refuse collection and recycling

We collect refuse and recycling from over 48,000 households together and 3,400 commercial premises, as well as providing 11 civic amenity sites and 98 bring sites across the council area.



### e) Decarbonisation projects

Over the course of 2021/2022 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 this includes:

Additional electric and hybrid vehicles, additional EV charging points, LED lighting replacements as well as carrying out proportionate low carbon roads repair techniques, such as surface dressing which has a significant reduction in carbon emission compared to traditional surfacing methods. In many applications surface dressing can be a more environmentally friendly surface treatment generating far less carbon per M<sup>2</sup> than laying a typical 40mm layer of asphalt material on a road. However, whole life costs need to be considered both in terms of carbon and finance. This means that often it is more cost effective and indeed necessary from a structural point of view to lay asphalt/bituminous macadam rather than surface dress.

Treatment type	Typical Carbon cost
Inlay	8.43Kg per metre squared of CO2
Surface dressing	1Kg per metre squared of CO2





## SERVICE ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW

### 2. SIGNIFICANT CHALLENGES

The significant challenges faced by the Service during 2021/22. 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. 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 is where the existing road surface is excavated then re-laid at a new level – this has both environmental benefits and also helps us overcome some of the logistical challenges in getting new materials to some of our harder to reach areas.

## SERVICE ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW

### **b) 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 EDI over the course of this financial year.

### **c) 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 BMW ban and the end of the Waste PPP contract in 2026**

While these significant changes are some years 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.

#### **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 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,

## SERVICE ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW

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.

### Corporate Outcome Getting it Right

#### Business Outcome BO115 We Are Efficient And Cost Effective

##### a) Inflationary price increases

During this current financial year it has been noted that tenders are being returned with higher than estimated prices together with increases in material costs and some items of specialist equipment/parts becoming increasingly difficult to source. The specific impact of price increases on individual projects is being regularly reported through the Council's committee process e.g. recent report to EDI on the roads reconstruction programme.

#### 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. In addition there are increasing challenges relating to recruitment and retention of staff due in part to more attractive remuneration packages being offered by competitors.

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

**Please list all consultations and resulting actions that the Service has carried out during this period.**

a) During this period the council through its EDI committee agreed to carry out a consultation exercise relating to EV chargers, this consultation is due to commence during 2022.

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.

## SERVICE ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW

c) We Asked... 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.

# ROAD AND INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES – ANNUAL SCORECARD 2021/22\_FINAL

**Road & Infrastructure Services Scorecard 2019-22**  
 Scorecard owned by: **Jim Smith**      **FY 21/22**

- Infrastructure Design Team Scorecard
- Network & Standards Team Scorecard
- Operations Team Scorecard
- Fleet, Waste & Transport Team Scorecard
- Marine Operations Team Scorecard

Click here for all Business Outcomes and Success Measures

Click here for Ex. Director Kirsty Flanagan Scorecard

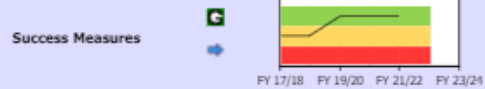
## BO113: Our Infrastructure Is Safe And Fit For The Future [RIS]



## BO114: Our Communities Are Cleaner And Greener [RIS]



## BO115: We Are Efficient And Cost Effective [RIS]



## Management Information

RESOURCES			
People	Actual	Trend	
Sickness absence RIS	12.1 Days	↓	
Target    Actual    Status    Trend			
PDRs RIS	90 %    56 %	R	↑
Financial			
Budget	Forecast	Status	Trend
Finance Revenue totals RIS	£K 32,606    £K 32,716	R	↓

IMPROVEMENT				Status	Trend	Status	Trend
RIS Service	Total No	Off track	On track	Complete			
Improvements 2017-22	Actions	9	9				
Road & Infrastructure Service							
Audit Recommendations	R	Overdue	Due in future	Future - off target			
		1	12	2	↑	↑	↓
Health & Safety							
Service H&S Plan Actions		Overdue	Rescheduled	Actions in Plan	Complete		
		0	0	0	0		
H&S Investigation Actions		0	0	0	0		
Customer Service RIS							
Stage 1 Complaints	81 %	G	↓				
Stage 2 Complaints	87 %	R	↓				

### BO113: Our Infrastructure Is Safe And Fit For The Future [RIS]

Success Measure **A** →

	Actual	
RIS113_01-The are no 'avoidable' weight restrictions in place on our roads and bridges	Target	100 %
	Benchmark	100 %

	Actual	
RIS113_02-The percentage of roads in need of maintenance as defined by the annual survey	Target	54.4 %
	Benchmark	64.7 %

**Covid Impact**

	Actual	100.00 %	<b>G</b>
RIS113_03-The percentage of the top priority routes that receive winter weather treatment that are completed on time	Target	98.87 %	→
	Benchmark	99.00 %	

	Actual	100 %	<b>G</b>
RIS113_04-The percentage of Class 1 potholes are repaired within 36 hours.	Target	100 %	↑
	Benchmark		

	Actual	28 %	<b>R</b>
RIS113_05-The percentage of street lighting fault repairs are completed within 10 working days	Target	75 %	↓
	Benchmark	39 %	

## Road & Infrastructure Services Scorecard 2019-22

Scorecard owned by: **Jim Smith**

**FY 21/22**

[Click here for Full Scorecard](#)

### BO114: Our Communities Are Cleaner And Greener [RIS]

Success Measure **G** →

	Actual	49.0 %	<b>G</b>
RIS114_01-The percentage of waste that is recycled, composted or recovered	Target	45.0 %	↑
	Benchmark	46.7 %	<b>Covid Impact</b>

	Actual	18,773	<b>G</b>
RIS114_02-The number of tonnes of waste sent to landfill	Target	21,500	↓
	Benchmark	18,701	

	Actual	79.8 %	<b>G</b>
RIS114_03-Percentage of street cleanliness	Target	73.0 %	↓
	Benchmark	67.0 %	

### BO115: We Are Efficient And Cost Effective [RIS]

Success Measure **G** →

	Actual	99.0 %	<b>G</b>
RIS115_01-Percentage of bins collected on time	Target	96.0 %	→
	Benchmark	99.0 %	