

**COUNCIL 6-MONTH PERFORMANCE REPORT – APRIL TO SEPTEMBER 2022**

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**1. SUMMARY**

- 1.1 The Performance and Improvement Framework (PIF) sets out the process for presenting the Council's performance reports.

This paper presents the Council's 6-month Performance Report for April to September 2022.

It is recommended that the Audit and Scrutiny Committee:

- 1.2 Note that this report presents Council performance on strategic activities across all services;
- 1.3 Review and scrutinise the Council's 6-month Performance Report;
- 1.4 Note that the Strategic and Area Committees have responsibility to scrutinise operational performance;
- 1.5 Note the planned activity for Performance Management and Reporting during 2022/23 onwards.

**Pippa Milne**  
**Chief Executive**

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**2. SUMMARY**

- 2.1 The Performance and Improvement Framework (PIF) sets out the process for presenting the Council's performance reports.
- 2.2 The paper identifies the strategic activities across council services that have occurred during the reporting period, reports on key performance and outlines the planned activity for Performance Management and Reporting commencing 2022/23

**3. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the Audit and Scrutiny Committee:

- 3.1 Note that this report presents Council performance on strategic activities across all services;
- 3.2 Review and scrutinise the Council's 6-month Performance Report;
- 3.3 Note that the Strategic and Area Committees have responsibility to scrutinise operational performance;
- 3.4 Note the planned activity for Performance Management and Reporting during 2022/23 onwards.

**4. DETAIL**

- 4.1 The Performance and Improvement Framework (PIF) was approved by the Council in September 2017. The PIF sets out the agreed framework for planning, monitoring and reporting the Council's performance.
- 4.2 To support scrutiny of performance by Elected Members and Senior Officers in September 2020 the Performance Management Project commenced. An output of the project to date has been to identify a suite of 47 high-level indicators aligned to the Corporate Outcomes. These 47 indicators are known as the Corporate Outcome Indicators – COIs. The majority of the COIs are reported annually after FQ4 with the exception of 13 COIs which are reported quarterly to

the Area Committees. The full list of the 47 Corporate Outcome Indicators is attached, however work is in progress to finalise the wording for some indicators (Appendix 1).

4.3 The following sections detail the Council’s Management Information which are high-level cross cutting themes such as absence, risks and complaints along with Council activities to note.

4.4 **Absence**

Absence data for FQ1 22/23 saw increases for both Teachers and LGE on the same quarter last year. In FQ2 22/23 teacher absence has reduced by half a day on the same quarter last year, whereas LGE absence has increased by half a day.

It should be noted that sickness levels are always lowest in FQ2 for both LGE and Teachers due to the summer holiday period.

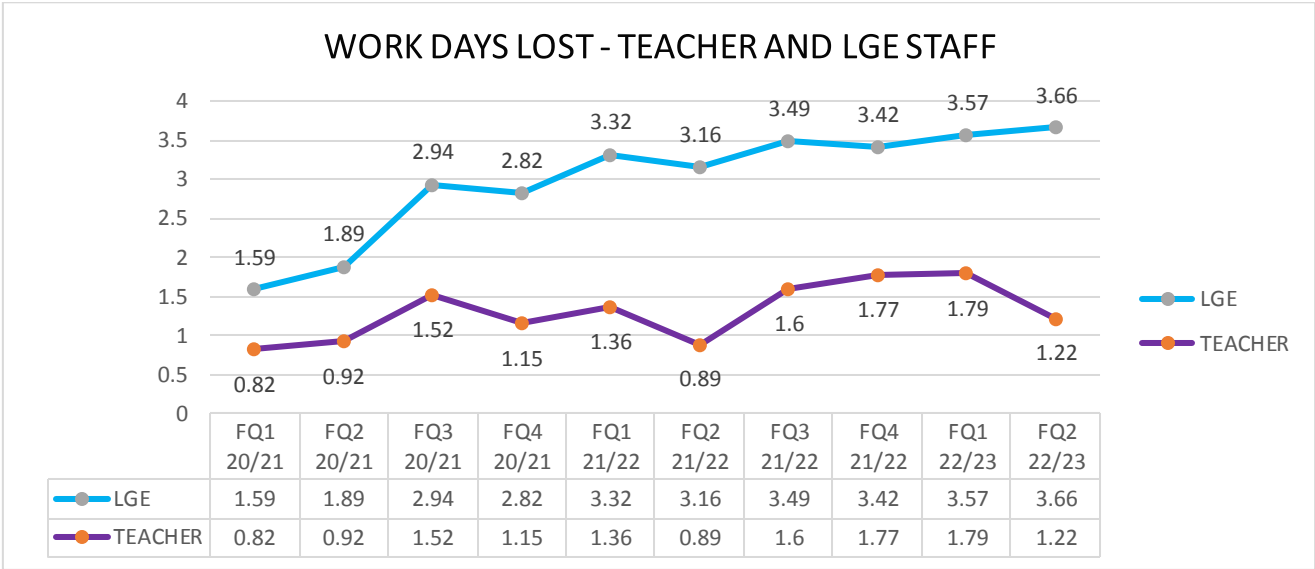


Figure 1: Teacher and LGE Absence trends across each quarter since 20/21

The top three reasons for absence in both FQ1 and FQ2 22/23 have been –

- Stress/Depression/Mental Health
- Infections
- Other Musculoskeletal Reasons (Fracture and broken bone. This does not include back and neck pain which has its own category)

This is quite different from the same two quarters last year the top three reasons being –

- Stress/Depression/Mental Health
- Stomach/Liver/Kidney/Digestive

➤ Medical Treatment

With no Covid restrictions and Covid related absence now counting in normal sickness absence reporting figures the increase in days lost due to infections was anticipated. However, as the NHS moves back towards business as usual a rise in absences due to Medical Treatment has not been seen.

The following is the analysis of the reasons for absence across the service conditions of APTC, Manual and Teachers for all work days lost -

- For APTC staff it was Stress/Depression/Mental Health accounting for 20%
- For Manual Workers it was Stress/Depression/Mental Health accounting for 34%
- For Teachers the top reason for absence was Infections accounting for 28%

Following consultation with staff and managers the Supporting Attendance and Stress in the Workplace procedures were simplified and improved last year. Both procedures are intended to have a positive impact on reducing absence. A survey will be conducted in December 2022 to establish the impact and customer satisfaction of the above procedures.

The focus of the Wellbeing Team has been on supporting managers dealing with long term absence, particularly within the HSCP. However, despite this we have seen a continued increase in absence in this area and this must be investigated further. Another new wellbeing initiative has just been launched in October 2022. The Recalibrate Programme focuses on a range of lifestyle subjects and is designed to help build healthy habits that support positive health and wellbeing. This programme is being delivered via Teams over a 12-week period.

#### 4.5 **Quality Conversations**

The Quality conversations approach has replaced the Council's previous PRD process. The focus is on ensuring managers and employees have conversations about performance, learning and career aspirations throughout the year. The desired outcomes are that employees are clear about what is expected of them and have the skills and knowledge to deliver on their agreed objectives. The approach also aims to ensure that managers feel confident and have the skills to agree objectives with employees and deliver quality feedback and recognition for their work, or discuss barriers to performance as well as employee career aspirations. The previous approach did not measure these outcomes and so initial baseline surveys for both employees and managers took place during summer 2022.

The employee survey consisted of 11 questions, and the manager survey consisted of 8 questions. Initial indications from the employee survey are that employees know what is expected of them in their role, including the behaviours expected, and have the knowledge and skills required to deliver their objectives.

These surveys are currently being analysed by the HR and OD team, who continue to support departments with the roll out of the quality conversation approach. Feedback from the baseline surveys will be used to provide more targeted support across the organisation.

Going forward we will be surveying employees annually. Additionally, we will be surveying managers on their handling of Quality Conversations, this is a perspective we have not had from PRDs.

#### 4.6 Complaints

The first 2 quarters of 2022/23 saw the number of complaints rising compared with the last 2 quarters of 2021/22. During FQ1 and FQ2 there were 274 Stage 1 Complaints and 120 Stage 2 Complaints received. Roads and Infrastructure Services continues to receive the majority of complaints. Performance within timescale has decreased over the recent 2 quarters and the Compliance and Regulatory team will continue to support services to try to improve this.

The table below provides a breakdown by Service. A detailed Annual Complaints Report will be submitted to this Committee meeting.

	Stage 1			Stage 2		
	Total number	Number in time	% within time	Total number	Number in time	% within time
<b>Chief Executives</b>						
Directorate	0	0	-	1	1	100%
Financial Services	16	13	81%	4	3	75%
Community Planning & Development	0	0	-	0	0	-
<b>Executive Director Douglas Hendry</b>						
Directorate	3	3	100%	0	0	-
Education	13	13	100%	18	15	83%
Legal and Regulatory Support	4	4	100%	7	6	86%
Commercial Services	4	4	100%	0	0	-
<b>Executive Director Kirsty Flanagan</b>						
Directorate	0	0	-	0	0	-

Customer Support Services	5	5	100%	0	0	-
Roads and Infrastructure	180	146	81%	55	33	60%
Development and Economic Growth	32	23	72%	12	6	50%
<b>Health &amp; Social Care Partnership</b>						
Adult Care - Health & Community Care	3	3	100%	7	3	43%
Adult Care - Acute & Complex Care	1	1	100%	5	1	20%
Children and Families & Criminal Justice	12	8	67%	11	6	55%
<b>Live Argyll</b>						
Live Argyll	1	1	100%	0	0	-
<b>Overall Totals</b>	<b>274</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>82%</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>62%</b>

#### 4.7 Audit Recommendations

Internal and External Audit Reports are presented at this committee meeting. Audit recommendations are reported quarterly to the Strategic Management Team and actions to complete them are recorded and allocated to the responsible officers.

#### 4.8 Finance

The performance against budget for the first six months of financial year 2022-23 is a forecast overspend of £0.395m or 0.1%. For reference the 2021-22 forecast overspend as at September 2021 was £0.399m or 0.2%.

Social Work, managed by the Health and Social Care Partnership, is reporting a forecast overspend of £0.263m due to a high demand for Services. Within Executive Director Kirsty Flanagan, there is a forecast overspend of £0.106m mainly from an under-recovery of income within Parks and Pest Control. Central Budgets are projecting an £0.026m overspend resulting from the Elected Members pay award, which is set nationally via Statutory Instrument, being greater than the available budget.

It should be noted that the above forecast overspend does not include the potential impact of the 2022-23 pay settlement, where negotiations were not finalised as at the end of September 2022.

#### 4.9 **Strategic Risk Register (SRR)**

The Strategic Risk Register (SRR) details significant challenges and the agreed approaches to manage them. These specific interventions are subject to scrutiny at Strategic Committee Level and kept under review by the Council's Strategic Management Team.

The reported SRR has twelve risks in total. Three are red, six are amber and the remaining three are green. The three red risks relate to population and economic decline, Waste Management, and Cyber Security.

#### 4.10 **Operational Risks**

Executive Director Kirsty Flanagan has six red risks. These relate to the cost of delivering environmental health services in relation to public health; the impact of extreme weather on both the road network and the cost of winter maintenance; waste disposal; the affordability of maintaining ageing bridges and retaining walls on the road network and cyber security breach and associated attack.

Executive Director Douglas Hendry has five red risks. These relate to delivery failure of school kitchen supplies; capital investment to keep buildings safe and operational; the availability of resources and funding to delivery capital projects; compliance with the conditions of externally funded projects and increasing utility costs associated with gas, electricity, oil etc.

Key actions have been agreed to address these red risks and all other risks in the operational risk registers.

### **Other Strategic Activities**

#### 4.11 **Education**

##### **Achievements**

Dunoon Grammar School received an accolade as the World's Best School for Community Collaboration at the World's Best School Prizes. The winners of the 5 categories share a cash prize of US \$250,000. This is truly outstanding achievement and as CEO I wish to highlight the key role of the Head Teacher David Mitchell and his staff for their leadership to their pupils who are the stars of this award.

##### **Attainment**

The Annual Participation Measure on the economic and employment activity of 16 – 19 year olds showed a 0.4% rise for Argyll and Bute compared to 2021 with

93.6% of young people in education employment or training. Argyll and Bute placed 5<sup>th</sup> out of the 32 local authorities.

### **A Nurturing Council**

A further ten schools in Argyll and Bute achieved accreditation for developing nurturing cultures in their school communities bringing the total number of schools to 18. Part of the Council's 'Our Children, Their Nurturing Education' strategy which aims to ensure that our young people have the emotional support they require to survive. Led by the Council's Educational Psychology service, the programme helps staff to better understand learner's behaviours and put into practice nurturing approaches to support them including children showing signs of distressed behaviour.

### **A Leading Council**

In a UK first, the Council has teamed up with leading drone specialists to trial the use of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (drones) in delivering school meals. Flying from Oban Airport, the trial involved delivering meals freshly prepared in Oban to Lochnell Primary 1.5km away. Whilst the majority of our schools have kitchens on site preparing meals, the provision of school meals to some rural and remote schools rely on traditional methods of transport including vans, taxis and ferries which can be affected by weather conditions. All pupils in early years and P1 - P5 are entitled to free school meals and the use of drones may offer an alternative carbon free mode of transport that could reduce costs and delivery times. The trials are part of ambitious plans to create an Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Innovations Logistics Hub at Oban Airport.

### **LEIP – Learning Estates Investment Programme**

Further to engagement with residents, the Council agreed to submit a business case and funding application to the Scottish Government for a new school campus on Mull. This is the beginning of a competitive bidding process which if successful will require a major financial commitment to the project from the Council.

## **4.12 Place**

### **Current Large Scale Capital Investment**

The Council is currently delivering across 18 large scale projects worth £35m to the area of which the Council's contribution is over £5m. Projects includes the following;

- £10m Conservation Area Regeneration Schemes and Townscape Heritage across Helensburgh, Dunoon, Lochgilphead and Rothesay.
- £10m Regeneration Capital Grant Funding (Scottish Government's RCGF) supporting 15 projects including Tieve Community Business Hub, Kerrera Old School Community Hub and Ulva Ferry Shore Facilities Building.



- Scottish Government Place Based Investment (£821,000). Projects include a regional shopfront improvement scheme, public realm improvement works in Oban and Bowmore, priority building repairs in Rothesay and Dunoon and pier resurfacing works in Helensburgh.
- Scottish Government Islands Programme (£740,000); investment for ten projects on Jura, Gigha, Tiree, Kerrera, Mull, Iona, Islay, Colonsay and Rothesay.
- Scotland Loves Local (£46,000); supporting local economics and encouraging shopping locally.
- £1.5m public realm project to transform Lochgilphead Front Green to create a new public square, play park, additional seating, new waling and cycling facilities was completed. Thanks to the funding partners:- the Cooperative's Local Community Fund, the Lochgilphead Phoenix Project and two Scottish Government funds, Cycling, Walking and Safer Routes (CWSR) and Town Centre Funds.

Work to improve the waterfront in Ardrishaig has commenced. The £700,000 scheme will create a new public square, improved car parking, additional seating within a new loch-side viewing area, art work and improved accessibility for the Argyll Sea Kayak Trail to make it easier for kayakers to go between Loch Fyne and the Crinan Canal.

The new £23m leisure centre and swimming pool was completed on time and budget. Part of a wider waterfront regeneration strategy, the facilities includes a luxury health suite with steam room and sauna, a café, shop, fitness studios and a gym with panoramic views of the river Clyde. The project includes new flood defences on the waterfront. Thanks to the UK Government from £5m from the Libor Fund and £100,000 from Sports Scotland.

Helensburgh Pier received £345,000 to improve the appearance and add to the overall improvement works at the waterfront. Funded by Crown Estates Scotland and the Scottish Government's Placed Based Investment Programme, work started July for an eight week period.

### **Planned Capital Programmes**

In September the Council's Environment, Development and Infrastructure Committee agreed a £500,000 capital programme to improve the quantity and quality of footpaths across Argyll and Bute. Responsible for approximately one million square metres of footpaths, the programme will focus on improving access for all abilities by dropping kerbs at crossing points.

At the September Council meeting the Council agreed the Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) which sets out plans for 750 housing units in the coming years including 247 homes this year.

In August the Council's Policy and Resources Committee approved the programme submission to the UK Government with regards to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. This fund is the successor to the EU Structural Fund.

Argyll and Bute's allocation is £4.5m. All local authorities are required to submit a plan indicating how the funds will be invested and sets out for each priority interventions, outputs and outcomes.

Argyll and Bute's plan is aligned to the three priorities –

- a) Communities and place
- b) Supporting local business
- c) People and skills

#### 4.13 **Environment**

Argyll and Bute Council has reduced its carbon emissions for the fourth year in a row and by a third since 2015/16. This is as a result of a range of measures including making buildings more energy and heat efficient, the street lighting LED scheme, electric and hybrid vehicles and recycling municipal waste.

As part of Argyll and Bute's Community Planning Partnership the Council has allocated £50,000 to part-fund a new post. The new Climate Action Project Manager will have responsibility for formulating a new Climate Action Plan with a strong focus on community involvement.

The Council received over £2m from the Scottish Government's Energy Efficient Programme. This funding is for means tested grants of between £8,000 and £21,100 per household.

In July the Council appointed a principal contractor to deliver the Campbeltown Flood Protection Scheme. This is part of a £15m scheme to reduce the risk of flooding in the town including new pipelines to separate surface and sewer drainage, a new 'storage dam' facility, a large culvert and underground storage areas. Some homes and businesses will benefit from mitigations including the removal of flood protection barriers on doors, automatically closing airbricks and small pump systems.

#### 4.14 **Housing**

The Council agreed to an additional £90,000 of funding (on top of £72,000 previously awarded) for six affordable houses on the Isle of Ulva. These will be delivered by the North West Mull Community Woodland Company who purchased the island via the Community Right-to-Buy initiative in 2018.

In response to the growing challenge with regards to the provision of housing, a housing group led by Executive Director, Kirsty Flanagan has been established. Together with Heads of Service and Senior Officers the group will identify solutions and actions to address housing market issues across all sectors, not just the Council.

It will also consider how to remove any barriers to developing additional housing across the area.

#### 4.15 Cost Of Living

In September the Council agreed to lobby Government and create a Short Life Working Group to alleviate the particular impacts of the cost of living/fuel cost crisis faced by our communities.

Argyll and Bute has -

- The highest number of inhabited islands of all Scottish Local Authorities
- Highest percentage of people living in Remote Rural Areas of all mainland Councils.
- Third lowest median pay rate (gross) of all Scottish Local Authorities.
- Ranked most vulnerable to post Covid economic shock.
- Additional costs of living in our communities range from 13% to 185% above costs in urban UK areas.
- Nearly 70% of all households are at risk of fuel poverty or of extreme fuel poverty.

The Council calls on Governments to -

- Urgently provide information on funding for people who do not get their energy through typical means, 50% of our households are non-gas compared to 14% of all Scottish properties.
- Apply price caps to oil, LPG and solid fuel to ensure all households are given the support they need to heat their homes.
- Remove the variable standing charge rate that compounds the already higher costs for households in remote and rural areas. This must be changed to a uniform charge.
- Deliver equity in support for the cost of living and fuel cost crisis by making sure that the support measures are pivoted to take account of the additional costs incurred with remote, rural and island living.

The following is a link to the report that went to Council on 29 September 2022 [Link to Council document - Cost of living\\_argyll-bute.gov.uk](#) with further details on this item.

#### 4.16 Care

The Council agreed to take the extraordinary step to take the legal responsibility for the Kintyre Care Centre, a 40 bedroom private sector care home in Campbeltown. The Kintyre Care Centre provides the only nursing care provision in Campbeltown and the west of Argyll. The care centre was due to be closed by the owner HC-One

for commercial reasons. The Integrated Joint Board of the HSCP considered that it was critically important to try to prevent the closure of the remaining care centre in the area and agreement was reached. The HSCP cannot legally own buildings as it is a partnership between the Council and NHS Highland.

## **Other Activities**

### **4.17 Performance Management Project**

#### **Data Challenge**

Following on from previous updates the Council is continuing on the highly ambitious initiative to establish a 'data platform'. The 'data platform' will collect data from various systems and over time will enable the data to be accessed and explored in a dashboard format.

A Data Advisory Group consisting of senior officers from across the organisation (both Council and HSCP) has been set up and is accountable to the Executive Leadership Team (ELT).

We aim to harness our data to ensure an evidence led approach to performance management, service design, policy development, strategies and other decisions that impacts on outcomes for our communities and stakeholders.

Option Appraisals have been developed and presented to ELT with the decision to use current 'on site' technology as the best option. This will allow the opportunity to scale-up accordingly as the 'data platform' matures. Alongside this a number of Data Challenges have been identified. One such challenge is to explore how we can identify, and therefore support, children that are entitled to financial support.

This internal initiative has and will maintain close links with the Scottish Local Government Digital Office data initiative and links to an action within the Council's Best Value Improvement Action Plan.

#### **Change Programme - Service Design**

After completing Phase 1 of the Performance Excellence Project to review performance at Corporate Level, ELT agreed that Services will undertake a review of Performance as part of the Service Design activity. The project team will provide guidance and support to Services and are currently considering approaches to this significant activity. A proposal will be presented to the ELT in due course.

### **4.18 PIF Activity**

As of this financial year the delivery of our Corporate Outcomes will be

monitored through a suite of 47 Indicators that have been identified. These are known as Corporate Outcome Indicators (COIs).

A Council-wide Business Plan will be developed during 2022/23 which will align to our Corporate Plan, and the renewed Argyll and Bute Outcome Improvement Plan (ABOIP). This will replace the previous Service Plans which were not renewed for 2022/23.

The 6-monthly ASC report will continue to present performance on cross-cutting strategic themes such as Absence, Complaints and Risks. Additional information relating to strategic activity will also be reported.

This agreed process feeds into the Performance Management Project which commenced in September 2020.

## **5.0 CONCLUSION**

This report updates the Audit and Scrutiny Committee on how we are delivering our outcomes; the key challenges and how we plan to manage them; other Strategic activity along with implemented and planned changes to the PIF.

## **6.0 IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 Policy: None

6.2 Financial: None

6.3 Legal: None

6.4 HR: None

6.5 Fairer Scotland Duty: None

6.5.1 Equalities - protected characteristics: None

6.5.2 Socio-economic Duty: None

6.5.3 Islands: None

6.6 Climate Change: None

6.7 Risk: This report sets out key challenges to the organisation and actions in response to these.

6.8 Customer Service: None

### **For further information contact:**

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## **APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 - Suite of 47 Corporate Outcome Indicators

**Pippa Milne, Chief Executive – Argyll and Bute Council**

03 November 2022