

SERVICE ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW

NAME OF SERVICE: FINANCIAL SERVICES	PERIOD: FINANCIAL YEAR 2020/21
1. DELIVERING OUR OUTCOMES	
<p>Our case studies help illustrate the positive contribution the Service has made to our communities and provides examples of good service delivery.</p>	
<p>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</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) £641,514 in Scottish Welfare Fund grants were paid to support vulnerable people.b) The average processing time for New Housing Benefit claims was 19.2 days and 2.6 days for changes in circumstances. Both are below the targets of 21 days and 6 days respectively.c) £787,614 of Discretionary Housing Payments was distributed to households in need.d) We have paid out £65,000 in grants to cover food and fuel for people in poverty and successfully referred them for support to advice agencies. As at the year end 240 families have been supported to maximise benefit income and reduced fuel costs to the value of £301,000.e) In relation to the Money Skills Argyll (MSA) project we negotiated a revised project closure with Big Lottery Community Fund which involved a desktop review of all cases completed during MSA project. This yielded an additional £233k for our project delivery partnersf) Our Income Maximisation team completed an exercise to digitalise paper based client files and they transitioned from office based working to home based working whilst still delivering the Income Maximisation service.	
<p>Corporate Outcome - Our Economy Is Diverse And Thriving Business Outcome BO110: We Support Businesses, Employment and Development Opportunities</p> <p>Success Measure: FIS110_01-Increase the total value of Non-Domestic Rates (NDR) relief awarded</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) We worked alongside other Council colleagues to support the administration of over 11,600 business support grants and awarded in excess of £86.2 million to support local businesses, protect the local economy and jobs, prevent business closure and promote economic recovery as lockdown restrictions eased and businesses started to re-open.b) We awarded £27.3 million of Non-Domestic Rates reliefs to support local businesses	

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Corporate Outcome - Getting it right

Business Outcome BO115: We Are Efficient And Cost Effective

- a) We have implemented a new Counter Fraud Team on a two year pilot basis to enhance the Council's zero tolerance to fraud and protect the public purse.
- b) We collected 96.12% of Council Tax exceeding the target of 96.00%.
- c) The External Audit of the 2019/20 Annual Accounts was completed by the extended statutory deadline and an unqualified Audit Certificate received.
- d) Positive External Audit Annual Audit Report received and reported to Council in November 2020.
- e) Financial monitoring packs were submitted to each Policy & Resources Committee.
- f) The average investment rate for 2020-21 was 0.578% compared to the average 7 day LIBID (London Inter-Bank) rate of -0.071%. The investments generated £0.710m of interest in 2020-21.
- g) The 2020/21 internal audit plan was fully completed and reported by the target date of the June Audit and Scrutiny Committee.
- h) The service closely monitored the financial impact of Covid on the Council throughout the year, regularly updating assumptions and projections, to ensure that the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (CoSLA) returns were robust and the Council would receive the appropriate levels of Covid specific Scottish Government funding.

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

- a) Due to financial impact of Covid on social care providers the Income Max team were under increased pressure to get contracts and payments to providers for delivering care home services. The Social Work Finance Team also implemented a social care providers' financial sustainability scheme on behalf of the Scottish Government which is an ongoing piece of work. This has increased the workload on the team and they have established new partnership working arrangements with care home providers to resolve any emerging financial issues.
- b) There has been a 20% increase in the number of claims for Scottish Welfare Fund due to the impact of Covid on people in financial hardship. This has created a pressure on the service in terms of the volume of processing but more significantly in terms of striving to ensure that people in hardship are receiving longer term advice and support.

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Corporate Outcome - Our Economy Is Diverse And Thriving

Business Outcome BO110: We support businesses, employment and development opportunities

- a) Significant resource requirement to administer a range of Covid related Business Support Grants which required redeployment of staff in Revenues and Benefits and Internal Audit and created increased pressure on Creditors and Treasury Management officers to manage the volume of payments and movement in funds.

Corporate Outcome - Getting it right

Business Outcome BO115: We Are Efficient And Cost Effective

- a) Similar to departments across the Council 'business as usual' was significantly impacted by the need to support the Council's response to the pandemic and to transition from office based working to home based working. This created a unique set of challenges to maintain good team-working and a quality service delivery whilst taking on additional workloads to manage and report on the financial impact of Covid. Despite these additional pressures the service met their key deadlines for preparing the financial statements, statutory financial returns and maintained a flow of quality financial reporting throughout the year to support services.
- b) An increased volume of crisis grant applications has been received due to increased financial hardship as a consequence of Covid. We have supported people through grant awards and referred them to a new innovative fund to support food and fuel insecurities with longer term financial support and fuel advice.

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) During the first Covid lockdown large numbers of the public were required to self-isolate and getting food supplies to them was particularly challenging. The Council was in constant dialogue with Community Groups through the Care for People work stream and a request that came from them was that having a Council backed shopping fund in place with local supermarkets across Argyll and Bute would be extremely beneficial.

We worked with the Care for People group to devise a solution which involved loading £1,000 onto gift cards in supermarkets that could be accessed by community groups in each local area. We set up a process whereby referrals could be passed electronically between bodies and receipts gathered and returned allowing us to invoice the customer so they could pay us back for the value of goods they received in a Covid secure manner.

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- b) We asked what could be done to reduce the numbers of people relying on foodbanks for support during the pandemic. Foodbank providers advised us through the Argyll and Bute Community Food Forum that more welfare rights and fuel poverty related support and advice for people with food insecurity attending the foodbanks would be beneficial.

We setup the new Argyll and Bute Flexible Food Fund which incentivises people in hardship to get this professional advice by making two monthly payments to families, the first one before the referral is made for professional support and the second one after the support has been delivered. This maximised engagement and helped find significantly more benefits for families in hardship.

There is evidence that the number of families and single parent families that rely on support from foodbanks is reducing.

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FINANCIAL SERVICES – ANNUAL SCORECARD 2020/21

Financial Services Scorecard 2019-22

Scorecard owned by: **Laurence Slavin** FY 20/21

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

[Accounting and Budgeting Team Scorecard](#)

[Revenue and Benefits Team Scorecard](#)

[Internal Audit Team Scorecard](#)

[Click here for Chief Executive's Unit Scorecard](#)

Management Information

RESOURCES					
People	Benchmark	Target	Actual	Status	Trend
Sickness absence FIS		9.4 Days	3.6 Days	G	↑
PRDs FIS		90 %	1 %	R	↓

Financial				
	Adjusted Budget	Actual	Status	Trend
Finance Revenue totals FIS	£4,436,348	£4,501,877	R	↑

IMPROVEMENT

FIS Service Improvements 2017-21					Status
Actions	Total No	Off track	On track	Complete	
Financial Services Audit Recommendations	0	→	5	↑	0
Overdue	0	→	5	↑	0
Rescheduled	0		0		0
Actions in Plan	0		0		0
Complete	0		0		0

Customer Service FIS					
Customer satisfaction					
Customer Charter	G	Stage 2 Complaints	100 %	G	↑
Number of consultations		Stage 2 Complaints	100 %	G	→

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

Success Measures A →

FY 16/17 FY 18/19 FY 20/21

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

Success Measures G →

FY 16/17 FY 18/19 FY 20/21

BO115: We Are Efficient And Cost Effective [FIS]

Success Measures A →

FY 16/17 FY 18/19 FY 20/21

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Financial Services Scorecard 2019-22

Scorecard owned by: **Laurence Slavin** FY 20/21

[Click here for Full Scorecard](#)

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

Success Measure **A** →

FIS110_01-Increase the total value of Non-Domestic Rates (NDR) relief awarded	Actual	£ 27,372,163	C
	Target	£ 15,000,000	↑
	Benchmark	£ 27,372,163	Covid Impact

FIS110_02-Maintain the percentage of suppliers that are paid within 30 days.	Actual	96.0 %	C
	Target	95.5 %	↓
	Benchmark	96.0 %	↓

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

Success Measure **A** →

FIS102_01-Maximise distribution of Scottish Welfare Fund.	Actual	85.9 %	R
	Target	95.3 %	↓
	Benchmark	85.9 %	Covid Impact

FIS102_02a-Scottish Welfare Fund claims processes promptly: Crisis Grant applications	Actual	100 %	C
	Target	100 %	→
	Benchmark	100 %	→

FIS102_02b-Scottish Welfare Fund claims processes promptly: Community Care Grant applications	Actual	100 %	C
	Target	100 %	→
	Benchmark	100 %	→

FIS102_03-Maximise distribution of Discretionary Housing Payment [DHP] fund.	Actual	99.9 %	R
	Target	100.0 %	↓
	Benchmark	99.9 %	Covid Impact

FIS102_04a-All new benefit claims are processed promptly.	Actual	19.41 Days	C
	Target	21.00 Days	↑
	Benchmark	19.41 Days	↑

FIS102_04b-All benefit changes in circumstances are processed promptly.	Actual	2.55 Days	C
	Target	6.00 Days	↑
	Benchmark	6.00 Days	Covid Impact

FIS102_04c-All benefit changes in circumstances are processed accurately.	Actual	96.5 %	C
	Target	96.5 %	↓
	Benchmark	96.5 %	↓

BO115: We Are Efficient And Cost Effective [FIS]

Success Measure **A** →

FIS115_01-Produce the Council's Unaudited Accounts by 30 June	Actual	On track	C
	Target	On track	→
	Benchmark	On track	→

FIS115_08-Review treasury management practice (TMP) statements	Actual	100 %	C
	Target	100 %	→
	Benchmark	100 %	→

FIS115_02-Produce the Council's Audited Accounts by 30 September	Actual	On track	C
	Target	On track	→
	Benchmark	On track	→

FIS115_09-Our Return on Investment [ROI]of surplus funds at least equal to 7 day money market LIBID rate	Actual	0.5765 %	C
	Target	-0.1378 %	↓
	Benchmark	0.5765 %	↓

FIS115_03-Produce the Annual Efficiency Statement	Actual	Complete	C
	Target	On track	↑
	Benchmark	Complete	↑

FIS115_10-Review the Strategic Risk Register	Actual	On track	C
	Target	On track	→
	Benchmark	On track	→

FIS115_04-The Medium to Longer Term Financial Strategy Plan is updated	Actual	On track to revised plan	C
	Target	Complete	↓
	Benchmark	On track to revised plan	↓

FIS115_11-The agreed audit plan is delivered	Actual	100 %	C
	Target	100 %	→
	Benchmark	100 %	→

FIS115_05-The Medium Term Budget Outlook reviewed and updated	Actual	Complete	C
	Target	Complete	↑
	Benchmark	Complete	↑

FIS115_12-Internal Audit level of satisfaction	Actual	95 %	C
	Target	80 %	↑
	Benchmark	95 %	↑

FIS115_06-Distribute routine reports to budget holders	Actual	On track	C
	Target	On track	→
	Benchmark	On track	→

FIS115_13-The Internal Audit service complies with Public Sector Internal Audit Standards	Actual	90 %	C
	Target	90 %	→
	Benchmark	90 %	→

FIS115_07-The Annual Treasury and Investment Strategy is approved	Actual	Complete	C
	Target	Complete	→
	Benchmark	Complete	→

FIS115_14-Maintain collection of Non-Domestic Rates [NDR]	Actual	98.11 %	C
	Target	97.50 %	↑
	Benchmark	97.30 %	↑

FIS115_15-Maintain the high rate of collecting Council Tax	Actual	95.77 %	R
	Target	96.00 %	↓
	Benchmark		Covid Impact