

Policy and Co-ordination Committee

Due to Scottish Government guidance relating to Covid-19, this meeting will be held remotely



Thursday, 24th June, 2021 - 10.00 a.m.

AGENDA

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1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** – In terms of Section 5 of the Code of Conduct, members of the Committee are asked to declare any interest in particular items on the agenda and the nature of the interest(s) at this stage.
3. **MINUTES**
 - (i) Policy and Co-ordination Committee of 13th May, 2021. 3 – 7
 - (ii) Common Good and Trusts Investment Sub-Committee of 29th April, 2021. 8 – 9
 - (iii) The following Sub-Committee minutes are submitted for noting only:-
 - Education and Children's Services of 11th May, 2021 10 – 14
 - Community and Housing Services of 26th May, 2021 15 – 21
 - Environment and Protectives Services of 27th May, 2021 22 – 23
 - Economy, Tourism, Strategic Planning and Transportation of 10th June, 2021 24 - 26
4. **REVENUE BUDGET PROVISIONAL OUTTURN 2020-21** – Report by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Services). 27 – 49
5. **CAPITAL INVESTMENT PLAN - PROVISIONAL OUTTURN 2020-21** – Report by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Services). 50 – 58
6. **FIFE COUNCIL REFORM AND RECOVER PROGRAMME: ATTAINMENT AND CLOSING THE GAP REFORM** – Report by the Head of Education and Children's Services (Primary and Improvement Support). 59 – 74
7. **DRAFT PLAN FOR FIFE – A PLAN FOR RENEWAL** – Report by the Executive Director (Communities). 75 – 106
8. **NEW BUILD AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRANSITIONAL PROGRAMME (2022-24)** – Joint report by the Head of Housing Services, Head of Finance and Head of Assets, Transportation and Environment. 107 - 121
9. **SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT PLACE BASED INVESTMENT PROGRAMME – FIFE'S ALLOCATION OF £3.163M** – Report by the Head of Business and Employability Services. 122 - 126
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10.	INVESTING IN ECONOMIC RECOVERY: BUSINESS AND EMPLOYABILITY SERVICE CAPITAL AND REVENUE INVESTMENT 2021-2024 – Report by the Head of Business and Employability Services.	127 – 131
11.	EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY SCHEME 2021-2025 – Report by the Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods Service.	132 -165
12.	ENSLAVEMENT EDUCATION GROUP - PROPOSED ACTION PLAN – Report by the Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods Service.	166 - 175
13.	UK GOVERNMENT FUNDING - COMMUNITY RENEWAL FUND – Report by the Executive Director (Communities).	176 – 180
14.	SUSTAINING SERVICES THROUGH NEW WAYS OF WORKING – Joint report by Head of Human Resources and Head of ICT, Business Technology Solutions.	181 - 185

Members are reminded that should they have queries on the detail of a report they should, where possible, contact the report authors in advance of the meeting to seek clarification.

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17th June, 2021.

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THE FIFE COUNCIL - POLICY AND CO-ORDINATION COMMITTEE – REMOTE MEETING

13th May, 2021.

10.00 a.m. – 12.20 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillors David Ross (Convener), David Alexander, David Barratt, John Beare, Tim Brett, Altany Craik, Dave Dempsey, Linda Erskine, David Graham, Judy Hamilton, Andy Heer, Linda Holt, Helen Law, Carol Lindsay, Donald Lothian, Mino Manekshaw, Tony Miklinski, Fay Sinclair, Ross Vettraino and Craig Walker.

ATTENDING: Steve Grimmond, Chief Executive; Eileen Rowand, Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Services), Morag Ferguson, Head of Legal and Democratic Services, Helena Couperwhite, Manager (Committee Services) and Michelle McDermott, Committee Officer, Legal and Democratic Services, Finance and Corporate Services; Keith Winter, Executive Director (Enterprise and Environment); Ken Gourlay, Head of Assets, Transportation and Environment, Derek Crowe, Senior Manager (Roads and Transportation Services), John Mitchell, Service Manager (Sustainable Transport and Parking), Michael Drever, Programme Manager (Levenmouth Reconnected Blueprint), Craig Walker, Lead Officer, Assets Transportation and Environment; Gordon Mole, Head of Business and Employability Services; Pam Ewen, Head of Planning; Maria Lloyd, Head of Service (Education and Children's Services) and Stuart Booker, Improvement Officer (Strategy and Knowledge Management), Education and Children's Services.

290. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No Declarations of Interest were submitted in terms of Standing Order No. 7.1.

291. MINUTES

(i) **Policy and Co-ordination Committee of 1st April, 2021.**

Decision

The Committee approved the minute.

(ii) The following minutes were submitted for noting:-

- Environment and Protective Services Sub-Committee of 25th March, 2021
- Economy, Tourism, Strategic Planning and Transportation of 8th April, 2021
- Assets and Corporate Services of 22nd April, 2021

Decision

The minutes were noted.

292./

292. FIFE COUNCIL REFORM AND RECOVERY PROGRAMME: WORKSTREAM UPDATE - EMPLOYABILITY AND POSITIVE DESTINATIONS FOR ALL OUR SCHOOL LEAVERS

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Service, Education and Children's Services providing members with an update on progress on the Employability and Positive Destinations for all Our School Leavers Workstream which was part of the Education recovery and fed directly into one of the five cross-cutting themes within the Council's wider Reform and Recovery Programme, specifically the Leading Economic Recovery established in response to the ongoing impact of the global Covid-19 pandemic. The report outlined the key challenges facing young people in terms of employment and positive destinations in Fife and how this reform area, through a comprehensive Employability Recovery for Young People Plan, had been set out to try to address these in the challenging context of Covid-19.

Decision

The Committee:-

- (1) reviewed and commented on progress and the next steps of the Workstream; and
- (2) considered the progress of the Workstream alongside reports previously submitted to Committee on progress and outputs from the other cross-cutting Workstreams within the Reform and Recovery Programme.

293. PASSENGER TRANSPORT REFORM AND RECOVERY PLANNING: FIFE BUS RECOVERY SERVICE IMPLEMENTATION PLANNING

The Committee considered a joint report by the Executive Director (Enterprise and Environment) and Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Services) outlining the timeline and Implementation Plan to deliver the expanded Fife Bus Recovery Service as agreed at the Policy and Co-ordination Committee on 1st April, 2021 and set out the related funding proposals.

Decision

The Committee:-

- (1) agreed the Implementation Plan and timescales for the expanded Fife Bus Recovery Service as detailed in section 2.0 of the report; and
- (2) agreed that the revenue and capital costs associated with this proposal be met corporately from funding as identified in para. 2.8 of the report.

294. EDINBURGH AND SOUTH EAST OF SCOTLAND CITY REGION DEAL AND REGIONAL GROWTH FRAMEWORK

The Committee considered a report by the Executive Director (Enterprise and Environment) advising members on changes to the Governance for the Edinburgh and South East of Scotland City Region Deal, updating members on its progress and on the Regional Growth Framework.

Decision/

Decision

The Committee:-

- (1) approved the updated Terms of Reference for the Members' Oversight Committee outlined in paragraphs 2.1 to 2.4 of the report;
- (2) approved the vision and themes of the Regional Growth Framework (RGF), noted the progress made on the development of the RGF and the milestones for reporting and consultation to complete it;
- (3) noted the update on the Edinburgh and South East of Scotland City Region Deal; and
- (4) noted the intention for a further report back to Committee on the Regional Growth Framework in Autumn, 2021.

**295. EDINBURGH AND SOUTH EAST SCOTLAND CITY REGION DEAL:
DUNFERMLINE STRATEGIC TRANSPORTATION INTERVENTION
MEASURES (STIM) BUSINESS CASE**

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Planning Services seeking approval for the Business Case for the Dunfermline Strategic Transportation Intervention Measures (STIMs) Programme, as part of the Edinburgh and South East Scotland (ESES) Region City Deal, for submission to the Scottish Government. The Business Case would support Scottish Government grant applications to part fund the delivery of the STIMs. Delivery of the infrastructure was essential to facilitate the unlocking and delivery of the Council's approved Local Development Plan sites as part of the strategic growth of Dunfermline and to assist in achieving Plan4Fife outcomes.

Decision

The Committee:-

- (1) approved the Strategic Business Case and authorised submission of the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal Joint Committee and Government partners for final approval;
- (2) authorised officers to submit a Housing Infrastructure Fund grant application to Government partners for phase 1 of the STIM programme;
- (3) delegated any non-substantial changes to the Business Case to the Executive Director (Enterprise and Environment); and
- (4) noted that further reports would be submitted to this Committee as phases and related strategic interventions were advanced for approval and implementation.

The meeting adjourned at 11.50 a.m. and reconvened at 12.00 p.m.

296./

296. LEVENMOUTH RECONNECTED PROGRAMME

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Assets, Transportation and Environment advising members of the governance process proposed to manage the £10m Levenmouth Reconnected Programme Fund (formerly known as Levenmouth Blueprint).

Decision

The Committee:-

- (1) agreed the process proposed to approve grant awards from the £10m Levenmouth Reconnected Programme Fund (Blueprint) as follows:-
 - (a) grant awards of up to £5,000 to be approved through the Levenmouth Local Community and Neighbourhoods Panel;
 - (b) grant awards over £5,000 and up to a maximum of £5m to be approved through the Levenmouth Area Committee;
 - (c) for project measures occurring throughout the programme (up to £25,000) that required to be advanced quickly and outwith Committee timescales, an Accelerated Project Approval process would be adopted with delegated authority to the Executive Director (Enterprise and Environment) in consultation with the Convener of the Levenmouth Area Committee up to a cumulative maximum of £100,000 in any financial year;
- (2) noted that a report summarising all grant awards issued under all the processes applied would be presented to the Committee annually; and
- (3) noted that a report updating on progress of the programme and linkages with other initiatives would be presented to the Economy, Tourism, Strategic Planning and Transportation Sub-Committee annually.

297. SCOTLAND EXCEL JOINT COMMITTEE - SUBSTITUTE MEMBER

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services seeking the appointment of a substitute member to the Scotland Excel Executive Sub-Committee.

Decision

Motion

Councillor John Beare, seconded by Councillor David Alexander, moved that Councillor Vettraino be appointed as the substitute member to sit on the Scotland Excel Executive Sub-Committee.

Amendment

Councillor Altany Craik, seconded by Councillor Linda Erskine, moved that Councillor Ian Cameron be appointed as the substitute member.

Roll/

Roll Call

For the Motion - 8 votes

Councillors David Alexander, David Barratt, John Beare, Tim Brett, Carol Lindsay, Fay Sinclair, Ross Vettraino and Craig Walker.

For the Amendment - 10 votes

Councillors Altany Craik, Dave Dempsey, Linda Erskine, David Graham, Judy Hamilton, Andy Heer, Helen Law, Mino Manekshaw, Tony Miklinski and David Ross.

Abstention

Councillor Donald Lothian.

Decision

The Amendment was accordingly carried and the Committee agreed that Councillor Ian Cameron be appointed as the substitute member to sit on the Scotland Excel Executive Sub-Committee.

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THE FIFE COUNCIL - COMMON GOOD AND TRUSTS INVESTMENT SUB-COMMITTEE – REMOTE MEETING

29th April, 2021

2.00 p.m. – 3.15 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillors Dave Dempsey (Convener), Mino Manekshaw and Alistair Suttie.

ATTENDING: Elaine Muir, Head of Finance, Laura Robertson, Finance Operations Manager and Lesley Kenworthy, Business Partner, Finance; Helena Couperwhite, Manager - Committee Services and Wendy MacGregor, Committee Officer, Legal and Democratic Services.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Jordan Irvine, Hymans Robertson LLP.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillor(s) Altany Craik, Colin Davidson and Fiona Grant.

9. LACK OF QUORUM

In accordance with Standing Order No. 4, members present determined whether to continue to meet as the meeting was inquorate.

Decision

S The Committee:-

- (1) unanimously agreed to continue with the meeting; and
- (2) agreed that a note of the discussion and any recommendations or decisions would be submitted to the next meeting of the Policy and Co-ordination Committee for agreement.

10. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were submitted in terms of Standing Order No. 7.1.

11. MINUTE

The Sub-Committee considered the minute of the Common Good and Trusts Investment Sub-Committee meeting of 26th November, 2020.

Decision/

Decision

S The Sub-Committee agreed to approve the minute.

12. COMMON GOOD AND TRUST FUNDS

The Sub-Committee considered a report by the Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Services, updating members on the market value of investments of the Common Good and Trust Funds and of the investment performance as at December 2020.

Decision

The Sub-Committee noted the contents of the report.

13. REVIEW OF INVESTMENT ARRANGEMENTS - COMMON GOOD AND TRUST FUNDS - GLOBAL EQUITY CONSIDERATIONS

The Sub-Committee considered a report by the Head of Finance providing details of the outcome of a review undertaken by Hymans Robertson, of the current investment strategy for Common Good and Trust Funds. Members were provided with further information in respect of investing in Global Equities as opposed to UK equities only.

Decision

S The Sub-Committee:

- (1) approved the recommendation made by Hymans Robertson to implement a single investment mandate which was consistent with the current approach adopted;
 - (2) approved the recommended approach for the funds to achieve global equity exposure through a passive market-cap index, preferably with climate or ESG tilt if practicable; and
 - (3) acknowledged that recommendation number three on the report, could not be agreed, until a report providing further recommendations relating to governance, investment strategy, investment principles and the fund manager selection, be submitted to a future meeting of the Sub-Committee for consideration, following a number of questions raised during discussion by the members.
-

**THE FIFE COUNCIL - EDUCATION & CHILDREN'S SERVICES SUB-COMMITTEE –
REMOTE MEETING**

11th May, 2021

10.05 a.m. – 12.35 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillors Craig Walker (Convener), Bobby Clelland, Dave Dempsey, Linda Erskine, Ian Ferguson, Rod Cavanagh (Substituting for Councillor Julie Ford), Gary Guichan, Helen Law, Kathleen Leslie, Rosemary Liewald, Dominic Nolan, Ross Paterson, Fay Sinclair, Alistair Suttie, Mr. George Haggarty and Mr. William Imlay.

ATTENDING: Carrie Lindsay, Executive Director, Education & Children's Services; Kathy Henwood, Head of Education & Children's Services (Children & Families & Criminal Justice Services); Shelagh McLean, Head of Education & Children's Services (Early Years and Directorate Support); Angela Logue, Head of Education & Children's Services (Primary Schools & Improvement Support); Lynn Gillies, Service Manager (Operations Glenrothes/Family Support); Jackie Funnell, Education Manager; Rona Weir, Education Manager; Stuart Booker, Improvement Officer (Strategy & Knowledge Management); Clark Graham, Early Learning Officer; Gillian Johnston, Project Manager (Early Learning and Childcare), Education & Children's Services; Diane Barnet, Committee Officer, Legal & Democratic Services.

ALSO ATTENDING: Lee Cowie, Fife CAMHS, NHS Fife (for Para. No. 212).

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillor James Calder and Mr. Alastair Crockett.

Prior to the start of business, the Convener, on behalf of the Sub-Committee, extended congratulations to Councillor Calder and his wife on the birth of their baby.

209. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Dominic Nolan declared an interest in Para. 216 – 'Support for Voluntary Organisations' – as he was a Council appointed member of Families First, St Andrews.

210. MINUTE

The Sub-Committee considered the minute of the Education and Children's Services Sub-Committee of 16th March, 2021.

Decision

The Sub-Committee agreed to approve the minute.

211./

211. MINUTE OF EDUCATION APPOINTMENT COMMITTEE

The Sub-Committee considered the minutes of meetings of the Education Appointment Committee of 10th March and 30th April, 2021.

Decision

The Sub-Committee noted the minutes.

212. OUR MINDS MATTER: SUPPORTING YOUNG PEOPLE'S EMOTIONAL WELLBEING SERVICE UPDATE

The Sub-Committee considered a report by the Executive Director, Education and Children's Services providing an update since the previous report considered by this Sub-Committee in November, 2020 on work to support young people's mental health.

Decision

The Sub-Committee:-

- (1) noted the progress since November, 2020 in continued development of work to support children and young people's emotional wellbeing in Fife;
- (2) endorsed the proposed next steps to continue to evolve services and development work as an ongoing response to the impacts of the COVID-19 context, the strategic priorities of Belonging to Fife and the requirements of The Promise;
- (3) commended all stakeholders for their continued efforts in development of work to support children and young people's emotional wellbeing in Fife; and
- (4) accepted an invitation to join workshops across the course of the coming year, aimed at:-
 - (a) sharing additional information on strategic development work included within the report; and
 - (b) providing opportunities for discussion and feedback, recognising the key importance of mental health support for young people and families during recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

213. CLIMATE CHANGE AND LEARNING FOR SUSTAINABILITY

Arising from a motion at the Fife Council meeting of 12th November, 2020 (Para. Ref. No. 204 of 2020.FC.233 refers) - 'Fife Council also calls for a paper on Climate Change education to be brought to the Education and Children's Services Sub-Committee at some point in the near future, detailing what action is currently being taken' - the Sub-Committee considered a report by the Executive Director, Education and Children's Services providing an overview of:

- National expectations on Climate Change and Learning for Sustainability; and
- Local/

- Local delivery of these aspects of the Curriculum within Fife educational settings.

Decision

The Sub-Committee considered and acknowledged the information detailed in the report.

214. DIRECTORATE IMPROVEMENT PLAN - PRIORITIES 2021/2023

The Committee considered a report by the Executive Director, Education and Children's Services outlining the draft improvement priorities for the Education and Children's Services Directorate Plan 2021-23, explaining the rationale for and inviting comments on the draft priorities detailed in the report.

Decision

The Sub-Committee acknowledged the Education and Children's Services Directorate draft improvement priorities for 2021-23.

215. EARLY LEARNING AND CHILDCARE – ADMISSIONS UPDATE

The Sub-Committee considered a report by the Executive Director, Education and Children's Services, providing the outcomes of the review, agreed at the Policy and Co-ordination Committee of 16th July, 2020, of the Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) admissions process, following the establishment of the member working group whose remit was to recommend improvement and address problems that had arisen during the 2020/21 admissions process; and to respond to the decision of Fife Council of 25th February, 2021 (Para. Ref. 214 of 2021.FC.249 - 'Childcare Services and Play Practice Development'), requesting a report to this Sub-Committee to advise on the possibility that all children under the age of five years old at the start of the school term automatically receive funding for an additional year of nursery – to begin this academic year.

The Sub-Committee then adjourned temporarily to consider the terms of a motion intimated by Councillor Law and seconded, in principle at this stage, by Councillor Guichan.

The meeting adjourned at 11.30 a.m.

The meeting re-convened at 12 noon

Decision

The Sub-Committee, subject to the amendment of recommendations (4) and (5) of the report and including an additional recommendation:-

- (1) acknowledged the outcomes of the work undertaken to investigate areas of concern and the impact of any proposed amendments to the Early Learning and Childcare Admissions Policy, as identified by the working group;
- (2)/

2021 ECS 90

- (2) in the context of the statutory requirement for a biennial review, agreed that the Education Service also undertook an annual review to consider the applications received during the previous admissions process and to determine whether any changes in capacity and/or operating model should be explored to better reflect demand;
- (3) agreed, in the future, should there be a need for a fundamental revision of the models of delivery of ELC across Fife, as happened for session 2020/21, at that point note would be taken of the issues highlighted regarding eligible children returning for their second year of funded ELC and options would be investigated to mitigate any impact on children already allocated placements having to reapply;
- (4) delegated to officers to progress with formal consultation regarding amending the priority criteria within the ELC Admissions Policy to consider whether there should be priority for siblings of children within a primary school where there was a nursery class (or classes);
- (5) agreed, from August 2022, that funding should be allocated to allow the Education Service to agree a discretionary deferral where it was agreed this was in the best interests of the child and was funded with a partner provider, where requested; and
- (6) requested a report to this Sub-Committee, within 6 months, detailing the deferral process - from the initial application through to decision.

Prior to consideration of the following item Councillor Nolan, having declared an interest, left the meeting at this point.

216. SUPPORT FOR VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS

The Sub-Committee considered a report by the Executive Director, Education and Children's Services providing a progress update on the re-modelling of Children and Families Commissioned Services and outlining proposals for the next stage of this programme of work for 2021-22.

Decision

The Sub-Committee:-

- (1) noted the progress that had been achieved and plans for the next phase of activity;
- (2) approved the preferred option - Option 2 as outlined in section 3.4 of the report (a differential approach based on categories of organisation) and based on the progress made to date;
- (3) commended all stakeholders for their contribution to date toward the re-modelling of Children and Families Commissioned Services; and
- (4) agreed to consider a further report in September, 2021.

217./

**217. EDUCATION & CHILDREN'S SERVICES SUB-COMMITTEE FORWARD
WORK PROGRAMME 2021**

The Sub-Committee considered the Education and Children's Services Sub-Committee Forward Work Programme 2021/22.

Decision

The Sub-Committee noted the Education and Children's Services Sub-Committee Forward Work Programme 2021/22, subject to amendment as necessary.

2021 CHSC 105

THE FIFE COUNCIL - COMMUNITY AND HOUSING SERVICES SUB-COMMITTEE – REMOTE MEETING

26th May, 2021

10.00 a.m. – 13.25 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillors Judy Hamilton (Convener), Lesley Backhouse, John Beare, Ken Caldwell, Alistair Cameron, Rod Cavanagh (substituting for Councillor Julie Ford), Neil Crooks, Linda Erskine, Fiona Grant, Helen Law, Alice McGarry, Graham Ritchie, David J Ross and Darren Watt.

ATTENDING: Michael Enston, Executive Director - Communities; Paul Vaughan, Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods; Ross Martin, Team Manager (Service Development and Strategy), Lauren Bennett, Policy Officer, Communities and Neighbourhoods; John Mills, Head of Housing Services; Paul Short, Service Manager - Housing, Health and Social Care and Older Persons; Mark McCall, Service Manager (Safer Communities), Housing Services; Paul D'Arcy, Project Manager and Carlene Simpson, Assistant Project Manager (Private Sector), Assets, Transportation and Environment - Property Services; Steve Hopton, Service Manager - Criminal Justice Service, Children and Families and Criminal Justice Services and Wendy MacGregor, Committee Officer, Legal & Democratic Services.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Fiona MacKay, Age Concern Scotland.

APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE: Councillor Donald Lothian

213. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations were made in terms of Standing Order 7.1.

214. MINUTE

The Sub-Committee considered the minute of the meeting of the Community and Housing Services Sub-Committee of 18th March, 2021

Decision

The Sub-Committee agreed to approve the minute.

215. JUSTICE SOCIAL WORK - ADDITIONAL FUNDING

The Sub-Committee considered a report by the Executive Director, Education and Children's Services informing the Sub-Committee of additional funding from the Scottish Government to address the projected backlog expected when the Courts fully reopen in late summer.

The/

2021 CHSC 106

The Justice Social Work Service Priority and Development Plan included with the report provided background and context to the work undertaken within the Service.

Decision

The Sub-Committee:-

- (1) noted the additional funding from the Scottish Government and proposed plan for additional resources to address the expected backlog;
- (2) noted the content of the Justice Social Work Priority and Development Plan; and
- (3) agreed an additional recommendation welcoming additional funding from the Scottish Government, recognising this was for a one year period only and asked that urgent confirmation was sought from the Scottish Government, along with COSLA, to secure ongoing additional funding for Justice Social Work Services for a three year period if possible, to address the anticipated backlog challenges when Courts re-opened later this year.

216. FOOD WELFARE AND SUPPORT

The Sub-Committee considered a report by the Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods providing an update on food and welfare support and outlining proposals for a long-term approach to food insecurity to tackle poverty and encourage crisis prevention.

Decision

The Sub-Committee:-

- (1) noted the progress to date by Fife Council and partners in response to food insecurity during the pandemic;
- (2) noted the immediate recovery actions as detailed in the report;
- (3) agreed to implement the proposed framework for a Fife Food Strategy, which would be co-ordinated by a partnership working group; and
- (4) agreed an additional recommendation - that the Sub-Committee recognises and supports the Council's approach to holiday food provision in Fife; that Fife is leading the way across Scotland in providing universally accessible support to families over and above targeted support for those most in need; and is committed to continued investment and continuation of this provision.

217. PROGRESS UPDATE ON FIFE GYPSY TRAVELLER SITES

The Sub-Committee considered a report by the Head of Housing, providing an update on site improvement at the three permanent Gypsy Travellers sites at Kelty, Thornton and Cupar, and in relation to assistance provided to nomadic Gypsy Travellers as outlined in the Fife Co-operation Policy.

Following/

2021 CHSC 107

Following consideration of the report, the Convener, on behalf of the Sub-Committee, acknowledged the recent retirement of Lesley Corio, Gypsy Traveller Officer, Fife Council and expressed appreciation for the support Lesley had provided to all traveller families in Fife during her career.

Decision

The Sub-Committee:-

- (1) acknowledged and supported progress made in relation to improving the Gypsy Traveller Site at Tarvit Mill, Cupar;
- (2) agreed to the proposed next phase of improvements at Heathery Wood, Thornton; and
- (3) agreed to support the development of the Fife Gypsy Traveller Co-operation Policy following the evaluation of the Negotiated Stopping Places pilot across Scotland.

The Sub-committee adjourned at 11.40 a.m.

The Sub-committee reconvened at 11.50 a.m.

218. GARDEN FENCING POLICY

The Sub-Committee considered a report by the Head of Housing providing an update on the work being carried out to develop a Housing Services Garden Fencing Policy as part of the wider Estates Management Approach and outlining proposals to develop a consistent approach to requests for maintenance and replacement of garden fencing in Council properties.

Decision

The Sub- Committee:-

- (1) noted the proposals outlined in the report and authorised officers to progress the proposed Test of Change as detailed in section 3.2 of the report;
- (2) agreed to continue to fund fencing repairs, maintenance and replacement from existing HRA Revenue and Capital budgets for the financial year 2021/2022;
- (3) agreed to consult with the Fife Tenants Forum on the development of the policy; and
- (4) agreed to consider a final report proposing a Garden Fencing Policy at its meeting on 3rd February, 2022 and requested Officers consider the issues some tenants may face with future maintenance of hedging and green options as boundaries.

219./

219. DECISION TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY - TRANSFER OF FORMER BLACKLAW PRIMARY SCHOOL SITE, BLACKLAW ROAD, DUNFERMLINE

The Sub-Committee considered a joint report by the Head of Housing and the Head of Assets, Environment and Transportation Services advising of the decision taken by the Executive Director, Enterprise and Environment and the Executive Director, Communities, acting under delegated authority, to transfer the site of the former Blacklaw Primary School, Blacklaw Road, Dunfermline to the Housing Revenue Account for the development of 80 affordable homes.

Decision

The Committee noted the decision taken under delegated authority to transfer the site of Blacklaw Primary School to the Housing Revenue Account to allow for further affordable housing development to take place.

220. COMMUNITY AND HOUSING SERVICES SUB-COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Sub-Committee noted the Community and Housing Services Sub-Committee Forward Work Programme, which would be updated accordingly.

221. AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROGRAMME – 115 NEW UNITS, OVER 4 DEVELOPMENTS (PUBLIC REPORT)

The Sub-Committee considered a joint report by the Head of Housing Services, the Head of Assets, Transportation and Environment, the Head of Legal and Democratic Services and the Procurement Service Manager seeking authority as part of the ongoing implementation of Phase 3 (2017-22) of the Fife Affordable Housing Programme, to continue negotiations and conclude legally binding agreements with the Developer for the following:-

- (a) 8 New Houses – High Street, Methil
- (b) 34 New Houses – West Wood Park, Glenrothes
- (c) 34 New Houses – Boreland Road, Dysart
- (d) 39 New Houses – High Street, Kirkcaldy

Decision

The Sub-Committee noted the contents of the individual reports for the sites listed above, and that there followed, later on the agenda, confidential reports providing detailed information on the (commercial) terms as contained in the individual reports at Para. 222 below.

222. AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROGRAMME – 115 NEW UNITS, OVER 4 DEVELOPMENTS (PRIVATE REPORT)

The Committee, under Section 50(A)(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, agreed to exclude the public and press from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 8 and 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A to the Act.

The/

2021 CHSC 109

The Sub-Committee considered a joint report by the Head of Housing Services, the Head of Assets, Transportation and Environment, the Head of Legal and Democratic Services and the Procurement Service Manager seeking authority as part of the ongoing implementation of Phase 3 (2017-22) of the Fife Affordable Housing Programme, to continue negotiations and conclude legally binding agreements with the Developer as outlined in the relevant appendix to the report:

- (a) High Street, Methil (8 New Houses) - to purchase newly constructed units to Housing for Varying Needs Standards;
- (b) Westwood Park, Glenrothes (34 New Houses) - to purchase newly constructed units to Housing for Varying Needs Standards;
- (c) Boreland Road, Dysart (34 New Houses) - to acquire the site for the development of new affordable council houses for rent; and for the construction of new affordable council houses for rent (recognising the stated figures may be adjusted as the detail in the proposals was worked through); and
- (d) High Street, Kirkcaldy (39 New Houses) - to acquire the sites for the development of new affordable council houses for rent; and for the construction of new affordable council houses for rent (recognising the stated figures may be adjusted as the detail in the proposals was worked through)

Councillor Caldwell left the meeting during consideration of the above item.

Decision

(a) Affordable Housing Programme (Private Report) – 8 New Houses, High Street, Methil

The Sub-Committee agreed to authorise the Head of Housing Services, the Head of Assets, Transportation and Environment and the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to conclude negotiations and enter into legally binding agreements on terms to their satisfaction for:

- (1) the acquisition from Allanwater Homes Limited of the site of the proposed housing development of 8 new affordable council houses for rent at the site known as 251 High Street, Methil for the total cost detailed in the report (recognising that figure may be adjusted as detail of the proposal was worked through) all as described in Appendix A. The acquisition will be for completed units.

(b) Affordable Housing Programme (Private Report) – 34 New Houses, Westwood Park, Glenrothes

The Sub-Committee agreed to authorise the Head of Housing Services, the Head of Assets, Transportation and Environment and the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to conclude negotiations and enter into legally binding agreements on terms to their satisfaction for:

- (1)/

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- (1) the acquisition from Keepmoat Homes Limited of the site of the proposed housing development of 34 new affordable council houses for rent at the site known as Westwood Park, Glenrothes for the total cost detailed in the report (recognising that figure may be adjusted as detail of the proposal was worked through) all as described in Appendix A. The acquisition will be for completed units.

(c) Affordable Housing Programme (Private Report) – 34 New Houses, Boreland Road, Dysart

The Sub-Committee agreed to authorise the Head of Housing Services, the Head of Assets, Transportation and Environment and the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to conclude negotiations and enter into legally binding agreements on terms to their satisfaction for:

- (1) the acquisition from Allanwater Homes Limited of the site of the proposed housing development of 34 new affordable council houses for rent at the site known as Boreland Road, Dysart, as described in Appendix A;
- (2) the direct award of a construction contract to Allanwater Homes Limited for the construction of the development of 34 new council houses for social rent at the site known as Boreland Road, Dysart for the total cost detailed in the report (recognising that figure may be adjusted as detail of the proposal was worked through); and
- (3) to suspend the CONTRACT STANDING ORDERS – Scheme of Tender Procedures 2018 in terms of Contract Standing Order 6.1 in respect of the proposed direct award of the construction contract to Allanwater Homes Limited on the grounds of the special circumstances described in the report.

(d) Affordable Housing Programme (Private Report) – 39 New Houses, Kirkcaldy High Street

The Sub-Committee agreed to authorise the Head of Housing Services, the Head of Assets, Transportation and Environment and the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to conclude negotiations and enter into a legally binding agreement on terms to their satisfaction for:

- (1) the acquisition from GMC Ventures Limited of the site of the proposed housing development of 39 new affordable council houses for rent at the site known as 257 - 261 High Street, Kirkcaldy as described in Appendix A;
- (2) the direct award of a construction contract to GMC Ventures Limited for the construction of the development of 39 new council houses for social rent at the site known as 257 - 261 High Street, Kirkcaldy for the total cost detailed in the report (recognising that figure may be adjusted as detail of the proposal was worked through);
- (3) to authorise the acquisition of land prior to full planning approval in order to support the overall Town Centre Capital Delivery programme timescales; and
- (4)/

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- (4) to suspend the CONTRACT STANDING ORDERS – Scheme of Tender Procedures in terms of Contract Standing Order 6.1 in respect of the proposed direct award of the construction contract to GMC Ventures Limited on the grounds of the special circumstances described in the report.
-

THE FIFE COUNCIL - ENVIRONMENT & PROTECTIVE SERVICES SUB-COMMITTEE – REMOTE MEETING

27 May, 2021

10.00 a.m. – 10.45 a.m.

PRESENT: Councillors Ross Vettrains (Convener), David Barratt, Rod Cavanagh, Gavin Ellis, David Graham, Sharon Green-Wilson, Jean Hall-Muir, Judy Hamilton, Andy Heer, Gordon Langlands, Jane Ann Liston (substituting for Jonny Tepp), Derek Noble, Dominic Nolan and Jan Wincott.

ATTENDING: Keith Winter, Executive Director, Enterprise and Environment, Ken Gourlay, Head of Assets, Transportation and Environment, Ross Speirs, Service Manager (Structural Services), Rick Haynes, Lead Consultant, Flooding, Shoreline and Harbours, Enterprise and Environment; and Elizabeth Mair, Committee Officer, Legal and Democratic Services.

189. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were submitted in terms of Standing Order 7.1.

190. MINUTE

The Sub-Committee considered the minute of meeting of the Environment & Protective Services Committee of 25 March 2021.

Decision

The Sub-Committee agreed to approve the minute.

191. SEVERE FLOODING – AUGUST 2020 UPDATE

The Sub-Committee considered a report by the Head of Assets, Transportation and Environment providing an update on progress of investigation and mitigation works regarding the August 2020 flood events across Fife and seeking agreement to the proposed list of projects identified for progression in the capital works programme in 2021-23.

Decision

The Sub-Committee:-

- (1) noted that work continued with the investigation and development of mitigations where appropriate on the collated Priority Flooding List;
- (2) agreed that the projects identified in paras 3.2 and 3.4 of the report be progressed within the flooding capital programme in 2021-23; and
- (3) agreed that a further update report be provided to this Sub-Committee at its meeting on 2 September 2021.

(Councillor Gavin Ellis joined the meeting during consideration of the above item)

192./

192. ENVIRONMENT & PROTECTIVE SERVICES SUB-COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Sub-Committee noted the current Environment & Protective Services Sub- Committee Forward Work Programme, which would be updated as appropriate.

**THE FIFE COUNCIL - ECONOMY TOURISM STRATEGIC PLANNING AND
TRANSPORTATION SUB-COMMITTEE – REMOTE MEETING**

10th June, 2021

10.00 am – 11.30 am

PRESENT: Councillors Altany Craik (Convener), John Beare, Ian Cameron, Dave Coleman, Bill Connor, Colin Davidson, Jean Hall-Muir, Jane Ann Liston, Mino Manekshaw, Lea McLelland (substituting for Councillor Ann Verner), Ross Paterson, David J Ross, Alistair Suttie and Jan Wincott.

ATTENDING: Keith Winter, Executive Director - Enterprise and Environment; Gordon Mole, Head of Business and Employability, Pam Ewen, Head of Planning, Bill Lindsay Service Manager, Pamela Stevenson, Service Manager - Economic Development, Peter Corbett, Lead Officer Economy, Economy, Planning & Employability Services; John Mills, Head of Housing Services; Samantha Pairman, Policy Officer, Communities and Neighbourhoods and Lesley Robb, Lead Officer - Committee Services, Legal & Democratic Services.

**APOLOGY FOR
ABSENCE:** Councillor Sharon Green-Wilson.

168. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations were submitted in terms of Standing Order 7.1.

169. MINUTE

The Sub-Committee considered the minute of the meeting of the Economy, Tourism, Strategic Planning and Transportation Sub-Committee of 8th April, 2021.

Decision

The Sub-Committee agreed to approve the minute.

170. MID-FIFE ECONOMIC INVESTMENT PROSPECTUS

The Sub-Committee considered a report by the Head of Business and Employability updating Members on the development of a Mid-Fife Economic Investment Prospectus, in response to the recommendations of the Mid-Fife Economic Action Plan report, originally produced by Context Economics and subsequently reviewed within the context of the ongoing economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Decision/

Decision

The Sub-Committee:-

- (1) noted the Mid-Fife Economic Action Plan report, developed by Context Economics in consultation with the four Mid-Fife Area Committees, which sets out the basis of proposed activity for the Mid-Fife Economic Investment Prospectus;
- (2) reviewed the proposed Mid-Fife Economic Investment Prospectus framework developed in response to the Mid-Fife Action Plan Report produced by Context Economics, taking into account the agreed economic recovery plan and responding to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic; and
- (3) approved, in principle, to progress the proposed framework of economic investment in Mid-Fife as set out in the prospectus, subject to the ongoing review and refinement of projects in a changing operating environment, the availability of appropriate resources and Committee approval of specific projects as appropriate.

171. LOCAL PLACE PLANS - FIFE COUNCIL RESPONSE TO SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION ON PROPOSALS FOR REGULATIONS

The Sub-Committee considered a report by the Head of Planning providing Members with an overview of emerging legal provisions for the local place plans and recommended a response to the current Scottish Government consultation related to secondary legislation for the community-led plans, which would focus on land use.

Decision

The Sub-Committee:

- (1) agreed the proposed response to the Scottish Government consultation, as detailed in appendix 1 to the report, on proposals for regulations which covered the content, preparation, submission and registration of local place plans;
- (2) request the Scottish Government provide an explanation of how it would fund resources for local authorities to assist with the new duty and provide funding opportunities that community bodies can access, and consider how those resources would be prioritised to support communities in most need of capacity building to prepare local place plans; and
- (3) delegated to the Head of Planning powers to finalise the consultation response, and to submit it to the Scottish Government, on behalf of the Economy, Tourism and Strategic planning and Transportation Sub-Committee.

172./

172. NATIONAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK 4 MINIMUM ALL TENURE HOUSING LAND REQUIREMENT - FIFE COUNCIL RESPONSE

The Sub-Committee considered a joint report from the Head of Planning Services and Head of Housing Services, enabling Members to consider Fife Council's response to the Scottish Government's initial default housing estimates, which would inform their identification of a minimum all-tenure housing land requirement for individual local authority areas. The response would form the basis for further discussions with the Scottish Government and contribute to the final housing land requirement figures to be included within National Planning Framework 4.

Decision

The Sub-Committee:

- (1) noted that a draft holding response had been submitted to the Scottish Government by the original deadline of 4th June 2021 to allow initial considerations to begin, as any significant delay to local authority returns would have repercussions for the overall timescale for producing the draft National Planning Framework 4 in the autumn and that the Council's formal response would follow after consideration of the matter by the Sub-Committee;
- (2) approved Fife Council's response to the Scottish Government on the Housing Land Requirement figures, as detailed in appendix 1 of the report; and
- (3) delegated to the Head of Planning Services and Head of Housing Services powers to finalise the consultation response and submit it to the Scottish Government by 30th June 2021 on behalf of the Economy, Tourism, Strategic Planning and Transportation Sub-Committee.

173. ECONOMY, TOURISM, STRATEGIC PLANNING AND TRANSPORTATION SUB COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

Decision

The Sub-Committee noted:

- (1) the contents of the Economy, Tourism, Strategic Planning and Transportation Sub-Committee forward work programme; and
- (2) That Members contact the Convener with suggested reports to be include on the Economy, Tourism, Strategic Planning and Transportation Sub-Committee Forward Work Programme.

Revenue Budget Provisional Outturn 2020-21

Report by: Eileen Rowand, Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Services)

Wards Affected: All

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide members with a strategic overview of Fife Council's finances and also the provisional outturn position for 2020-21. Significant costs have been incurred as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic as detailed in reports considered throughout the year. This report provides a provisional outturn position for these costs, the impact and the financial strategy applied.

Recommendations

It is recommended that members:-

- (i) Note the scale and complexity of the financial impacts during the course of the pandemic and the extent of additional funding provided over the course of the year
- (ii) Note the high-level financial position as detailed in this report
- (iii) Note that detailed provisional outturn reports will be submitted to the relevant Sub-Committees when it is practical to do so
- (iv) Approve the earmarking of balances for COVID-19 funding for use in future years
- (v) Approve the suspension of the Budget Carry Forward Scheme for 2020-21 with the exception of items referenced in Appendix 4.

Resource Implications

Dealing with the emergency and critical responses resulting from COVID-19 had a significant impact on the Council's finances and resources. Reports considered throughout the financial year identified continually changing financial consequences as the Council continued to respond to changing Government guidance associated with COVID-19. The response to the pandemic impacted on costs and loss of income and some of the the financial consequences will continue in the medium-term. The financial consequences in 2020-21 were continually evaluated and are now established to be in the region of £51m for the financial year.

Throughout the year many funding announcements were made by the Scottish Government which meant that the funding options available continually changed and increased. An update on the funding announced over the course of the year is set out in a table in Section 3 of this report and is presented in detail at Appendix 5. The provisional outturn demonstrates the extent to which funding announcements impacted on the Council's finances for the current year, with the total for Fife reaching £87.3m by the end of the year as detailed in Appendix 6. Almost 50% of this funding was announced in the last month of the financial year.

The final outturn has been impacted by reduced level of costs associated with the pandemic, increased levels of specific funding provided, and increased levels of general funding provided by the Scottish Government. This has led to a General Fund Service overspend of £6.035m. Further one off underspends relating to a change in accounting treatment, unused contingencies set aside in the early part of the year and significant grant funding have led to an overall contribution to balances of £71.878m, with a large element of this being funding that will be required to cover future costs relating to COVID-19, with an estimated uncommitted balance of £47.942m.

The Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Services) has a statutory duty as Section 95 Officer to ensure that the Council operates within available resources and remains financially sound over the short, medium and long term. The current crisis challenged the ability of the Council to operate within available resources and action must continue to be taken at both a local and a national level to ensure that this duty can be fulfilled into future years. The report provides an update on the outturn position for 2020-21 and outlines that work continues to be advanced to ensure the financial stability of the Council going forward.

The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in significant additional costs and loss of income to the Council and the short-term financial strategy was developed to mitigate against these. The provisional outturn position now includes the costs, loss of income, additional funding received, and the mitigations adopted. Work is currently being carried out to assess the extent to which some of these increased costs and loss of income will continue to impact on the Council in the coming months and years.

Legal & Risk Implications

There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

Impact Assessment

An EqIA is not required because the report does not propose a change or revision to existing policies and practices.

Consultation

None.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Over the course of the financial year 2020-21 the pandemic has brought significant financial challenges which have been both large and complex throughout the year and of a scale not previously experienced. Assessments of costs and loss of income have been constantly evolving throughout the year given the introduction of lockdowns and various changes to restrictions at various points through the year with subsequent changes to services and operations constantly evolving over that time period. In addition, the accumulation of different funding announcements has meant that the financial situation throughout the year was complex and volatile with expenditure and income spread unevenly throughout the year.
- 1.2 In August 2020 Policy & Co-ordination agreed a short-term financial strategy Committee agreed a short term financial strategy to deal with the potential costs arising as a result of the pandemic. At this time the cost pressures were estimated to be in the region of £78m and the strategy identified funding sources and included the potential use of Council balances up to a level of £10m. When the strategy was agreed, only a small number of funding allocations from the Scottish Government had been announced. It was also at the time that lockdown restrictions were easing and before any assumptions were made about a more transmissible variant and a second wave later in the year.
- 1.3 Several reports have been presented since the short term strategy was agreed and by January 2021 it was becoming apparent that it would be unlikely that the use of Council balances would be required. The reason for this was two-fold. The estimated financial impact of the pandemic had reduced, to an estimated £66m, cost reductions across the Council had increased, and additional significant funding was announced by the Scottish Government at the turn of the year.
- 1.4 Since the last report, the increased costs associated with COVID-19 have reduced once again to an estimated £51m and other costs across Council services have also reduced. In addition, a further substantial amount of funding has been announced, as set out in a timeline per Appendix 5. In total, £87.3m of funding was allocated to Fife with 50% of this only being announced in the final month of the financial year. The result being that some of the originally agreed Council funding solutions are no longer required. Section 2 of this report details the main changes to financial assumptions since the last report.
- 1.5 Section 3 provides more detail as to the final position and how the overall financial pressures have been funded and demonstrates why the agreed short term financial strategy that was superseded. The aim of the financial strategy was to ensure continued financial sustainability for the Council.
- 1.6 As a result of the changes noted above, the overall General Fund Service provisional outturn is an overspend of £6.035m for the financial year. When all additional funding if taken into consideration, there will be a one off contribution to balances of £71.878m. However, the extent to which funding will need to be used in the next financial year could also be of a significant magnitude, with COVID-19 funding being earmarked to offset the continuing financial impacts of the pandemic. Section 4 summarises the provisional outturn position for Services for 2020-21 and some high-level analysis of the variances. The position is still subject to audit and therefore provisional at this stage.

- 1.7 As a result of the size and timing of many of the funding announcements and the final outturn position, Council reserves will temporarily increase by a significant amount. This is a situation that will be replicated nationally across many Local Authorities. However, some of the funding has been provided for specific purposes, and in addition, the financial implications associated with COVID-19 will continue in the short and even medium term in some cases. In recognition that some of the financial challenges are likely to reach beyond the end of the financial year proposals to earmark these for use in future years is detailed alongside the movement and commitments against balances detailed at section 6 of this report.
- 1.8 There is a high degree of uncertainty going forward regarding core funding and the budget report in September will provide an update on likely one off and recurring pressures going forward. Balances can only be spent once and it is important that we continue to focus on a sustainable level of core funding and take decisions wisely on how we use balances without adding to our ongoing commitments in future years.
- 1.9 More detailed financial reports will be presented to the relevant Sub-Committees as part of the Council's wider scrutiny and performance management reporting arrangements. These arrangements departed from normal practice this year given the challenging circumstances the Council was faced with, but these detailed reports are now being produced and discussed with Sub-committees in the normal way.

2.0 Financial Pressures Update

- 2.1 Since the last report to this Committee the financial pressures facing the Council in 2020-21, including the impact of COVID-19, have reduced from the previous estimate of £66m with the latest estimate being £51m. This represents an overall reduction of approximately £15m.
- 2.2 The overall reduction is as a result of a number of changes including the level of work carried out by Building Services increased following changes in restrictions and lockdown arrangements meaning levels of service delivery was higher from that anticipated, with increased work requests meaning that the level of lost income was not as severe as originally anticipated.
- 2.3 There were other areas where costs did not end up being as high as originally anticipated. For example, costs associated with PPE, building reconfiguration and heating in schools were all much lower than originally forecast due to the second lockdown. The level of costs avoided has also increased. Full details of the movement in terms of forecasts are explained in more detail in the narrative outlined in section 4.
- 2.4 Services have also absorbed costs of £4.055m associated with workforce change during the year.

3.0 2020-21 Short Term Financial Strategy

- 3.1 The short term financial strategy that was agreed by Committee on 27th August 2020 was based on the estimated financial impacts at that point in time and at a point before many of the Scottish Government funding announcements had been made. The strategy assumed that the Council would need to take significant corrective

action to contain or mitigate increased costs to protect the financial sustainability of the organisation. However, the situation continued to evolve and change throughout the financial year, with the Scottish Government announcing a number of funding streams for a range of measures, including General COVID funding, Loss of Income Scheme and Education Recovery funding. The funding awarded was through different mechanisms including General Revenue Grant (GRG) and specific grant.

3.2 Funding announcements continued throughout the year totalling £87.3m, with almost 50% only being announced within the last few weeks of the financial year including general COVID funding of £16.987m. Education recovery funding was also revised with funding originally planned for 2021-22 being awarded in 2020-21. In addition, some of this funding was previously awarded on a grant and claims basis but switched to being funded by GRG. A timeline showing the milestones and timing of funding announcements is shown per Appendix 5, and Appendix 6 sets out the breakdown of all funding announcement over the course of the year.

3.3 The Council's additional costs associated with COVID-19 and the funding applied are summarised in the following table. It identifies that additional costs were in the region of £51m which were offset by a number of funding streams as well as service underspends leading to an overall Service overspend of £6.035m. There is a further surplus arising from one off items such as a previously highlighted change in accounting treatment, unused contingencies previously set aside as part of the short term financial strategy, and additional funding relating to COVID-19. The underspend will result in a temporary increase in council balances which will provide funding to cover the continuing financial impacts of COVID-19 in the coming months and years.

	Total Costs of COVID-19
Net Costs of COVID-19	50.758
Less Cost related to Council Tax	0.974
Service Cost of COVID-19	49.784
Funded by:	
	18.133
General Revenue Grant for Specific Items	
Specific grants claimed and applied	7.454
Cost Sharing	7.251
Job retention scheme	0.881
Capital funding	3.093
General COVID Funding	0.248

ELC Flexibilities	2.170
Service Underspends	4.519
Net Overspend on Services	6.035
Loan Charges (NHT)	(8.439)
Contingencies	(11.890)
COVID funding	(58.558)
Council Tax under-recovery	0.974
REVISED SURPLUS (ALSO SEE APPENDIX 1)	(71.878)

- 3.4 In line with the agreed strategy, Service cost reduction in some areas have mitigated against the increased costs and pressures. Further, specific grant and grant claims have been maximised and applied to all relevant eligible expenditure. Doing so has allowed the appropriate COVID-19 grants to be carried forward in 2021-22 to be used in line with the General Fund Revenue Budget 2021-24 approved in March 2021.
- 3.5 In addition to expenditure associated with COVID-19, Services have continued with their Workforce Change plans to deliver future efficiencies/savings. Included within the provisional outturn figure is £4.055m of costs relating to Workforce Change. This represents the overall cost in 2020-21.

4.0 Revenue forecast – Main Variances

4.1 General Fund Services

The provisional outturn position across all General Fund Services is an overspend of £6.035m, which equates to (0.8%) of budgeted expenditure. Appendix 1 details the provisional outturn and variances against the budget, broken down across all General Fund Services. The narrative below provides a brief explanation of the main areas where there are variances of +/-£0.250m or 0.25%, whichever is the greater, between the budget and forecast expenditure and income.

Over the course of the year, additional government funding of £87.3m was announced. Of the funding received £58.558m was not used in 2020-21 and will be utilised to cover inevitable cost pressures in the year ahead. The level of contingencies required to be used is less than anticipated by £11.890m. Loan charges budget has a one-off underspend of £8.439m and there is a shortfall of £0.974m in Council Tax funding. The overall result is a contribution to balances of £71.878m, however, much of this will be required to be earmarked to cover the continuing financial implications of COVID-19 in 2021-22. Work is underway to assess the continuing financial impacts.

Appendix 1 details the provisional outturn and variances against the budget broken down across all General Fund Services. The following paragraphs provide a brief explanation of the main areas where there are variances of +/-£0.250m or 0.25%, whichever is the greater, between the budget and forecast expenditure and income.

All the above pressures and funding sources are incorporated into the outturn for all services. This section provides detailed narrative explaining the variances and identifies where these relate to COVID-19. As Services responded to the pandemic and took corrective action to mitigate costs and recover services, it has become more difficult over time to distinguish between “normal” variances and those directly associated with COVID-19.

4.1.1 **Education and Children’s Services**

Directorate position:- Variance £4.344m underspend, movement (£6.097m)

Devolved School Management:- Variance £1.902m underspend, movement (£2.070m)

The outturn reflects an underspend on employee costs of £3.628m, mainly due to vacant teaching posts. This reflects continuing difficulties in teacher recruitment in some specific subject shortage areas, as well as an overall reduced availability of supply staff as result of a significant increase in the number of teachers recruited to temporary contracts to support Covid recovery. The Scottish Government response to Covid-19 in terms of additional funding for teachers and support staff enabled schools to increase the teaching resource available to support children, however this was funded separately as part of Covid-19 and therefore does not impact on the DSM core budget.. The underspend is partly offset by an overspend on Supplies and Services of £1.719m, due to increased spend on stationery, communications and computing equipment, as schools have utilised some of their underspends on staff costs to supplement these areas in order to support pupils with remote learning.

The movement since the last report is mainly due to an increased underspend on teachers pay costs of £1.813m, and a reduction in the projected overspend on supplies and services of £0.193m. The reduction since the previous report is an average of £7,000 per school across Primary/Nursery and £100,000 across Secondary schools, and reflects the impact of the post-Christmas lockdown/school closures and the availability of COVID-19 funding from the Scottish Government to support additional staffing and logistical costs.

Non-DSM/Childcare:- Variance £1.529m underspend, movement (£3.307m)

The outturn position is reflective of a number of factors across the service. The overspend on long term absence and maternity across schools of £3.256m has been offset by underspends within employee costs across Nursery of £0.732m due to the timing of recruiting Early Years Officers and the delay to the implementation of 1140 hours provision due to COVID-19. Within Special Education an underspend of £0.900m is mainly due to staff vacancies of £0.421m across all staff groups and an underspend of £0.362m within Third Party Payments, mainly due to a reduction in the number of purchased placements where the education cost is borne by the service. Within premises costs an underspend of £0.698m has arisen due to reduced energy, non domestic rates and insurance costs. Further underspends across school transport of £0.201m, and £1.686m within services supporting schools which were unable to fully operate due to school closures such as MLPS (Modern Languages in

Primary Schools), counselling services, developing the young workforce and hungry for success. Further smaller reductions in spend of £0.568m across budget heads account for the remaining underspend.

The movement since the last report is due to a net reduction pay costs across Primary and Special Education of £0.295m, a reduction in the anticipated cost for the education element of child placements of £0.262m, and a reduction in the projected cost of support services to schools of £0.697m due to the further school closure period. Savings of £1.700m which have been delayed due to the impact of COVID-19 have been offset by funding flexibilities and this reduction also contributes to the movement. Finally additional income has been received in relation to probationers of £0.280m since the last report.

Children and Families / Criminal Justice Service: Variance £0.913m underspend, movement (£0.720m)

The position for the service reflects an underspend mainly due to reduced employee costs of £0.967m due to staff turnover, £0.480m in relation to reduced transport spend, £0.681m due to reduced spend on supplies and services, £0.592m in care costs in relation to a reducing number of purchased placements and additional income compared with the budget in relation to unaccompanied asylum seeker children and secure placements contribution from Education of £0.867m. These underspends are partly offset by overspends on Continuing Care of £1.194m, Family Placements such as kinship care and foster care of £1.355m and grants to voluntary organisations of £0.261m due to unachieved savings.

The movement since the last report is mainly due to additional income received within Criminal Justice Service of £0.409m and a reduction in anticipated Family Placement costs of £0.340m.

4.1.2 **Health and Social Care**

Social Care:- Variance £0.035m underspend, movement (£1.397m)

The Health & Social Care Partnership (H&SCP) is managed by the Integration Joint Board (IJB). The 2020-21 IJB budget was approved based on a balanced budget across the Partnership after savings and investment had been approved. The agreed integration scheme provides for circumstances where an underspend within the partnership arises, the scheme sets out that a planned underspend will be retained by the partnership.

There was a significant underspend on Social Care expenditure of £18.711m mainly due to funding received in Quarter 4 of £14.150m which will be allocated to meet the continued costs of COVID-19. The other variances include underspends on employee costs of £2.266m and on third party payments of £1.783m. The underspend on employee costs is partly due to delays in filling vacancies and partly due to absences which were COVID-19 related being funded through the Local Mobilisation Plan. The underspend on third party payments is mainly due to a reduction in the requirement for external nursing and residential placements for Older People. This is partly due to reduced overall demand and partly because many of the beds currently in use relate to COVID-19 illness and were therefore funded by H&SC Partnership Mobilisation Plan. In line with the integration scheme this underspend will be retained by the partnership in reserves for use by the partnership in the future.

Overall, the H&SCP incurred additional costs of £26.0m in 2020-21 to deal with the effects of COVID-19, of which £16.0m relate to costs incurred by Fife Council. This expenditure has been funded in full by the Scottish Government through the Local Mobilisation Plan.

This leaves a modest underspend in Social Care of £0.035m on the element of the budget that is out with the remit of the H&SCP.

The movement of £1.397m relates to increased funding as a result of COVID-19 eliminating the previously forecast overspend.

4.1.3 **Enterprise and Environment**

Directorate position:- Variance £2.722m overspend, movement (£18.831m)

Assets, Transportation and Environment:- Variance £5.957m overspend, movement (£15.483m)

The overspend of £5.957m is due to the following:

As a result of COVID-19, Fife Resource Solutions saw a substantial reduction in levels of external income, this resulted in an agreed additional management fee of £1.210m.

Within Winter Maintenance an overspend of £1.764m resulted from significantly increased winter gritting activity during the freezing January period and the unplanned road and footway snow clearing during and after Storm Darcy in February 2021.

There is a net under-recovery of income of £2.178m within Car Parking due to COVID-19 pandemic, the impact of the national lockdown and the resultant suspension of car parking charges. Income during September to November recovered more than expected, however a further income shortfall was incurred due to the second national lockdown and further suspension of car parking charges from January 2021.

Building Services overspend was £1.328m, this was due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the trading account income as the service were unable to progress certain work during the various lockdown periods, as well as productivity impacts caused by additional health and safety measures post lockdown. This position includes £6.380m income received from the HRA for cost sharing of direct costs such as staff downtime as identified in previous reports.

The movement of £15.483m is primarily due to Building Services. The under recovery of income within Building Services has reduced by £17.372m. This is primarily due to increased work requests generating a further £11.915m. In addition, £6.380m income from the HRA for direct costs incurred during the first lockdown has mitigated the overspend in Building Services.

The overall movement is partly offset by increased costs of £1.515m in Winter maintenance due to Storm Darcy.

Due to a significant reduction of planned roads patching activity following lockdown and other restrictions throughout the year and also as a result of diverting key resources to deal with the August flooding events, an underspend of £1.297m emerged within Structural Maintenance. It is proposed that priority is given to dealing

with the backlog created and a specific ringfenced budget carry forward is proposed to allow additional work to be carried out next financial year.

Economy, Planning and Employability:- Variance £1.431m underspend, movement (£1.544m)

The main variance is an underspend in employee costs of £0.870m due to vacant posts across the 3 services. This is due to difficulties recruiting to posts within Protective services and Planning services which is consistent across other local authorities. In addition, COVID-19 has meant that there has been delays in filling posts across all 3 services. There are also underspends due to reduced activity in tourism, strategic events, and economic development projects of £0.535m as a result of lockdown and prioritisation of COVID-19 response activity to support the resilience of the Fife economy.

The main reasons for movement of £1.545m were as a result of £0.453m increase in statutory income from Building Standards and Planning fees. In addition, there was reduction in £0.535m project expenditure due to COVID-19 response and other variances due to the impact of COVID-19 lockdown.

Property Repairs and Maintenance - Variance £1.804m underspend, movement (£1.804m)

The underspend and movement are due to the COVID-19 restrictions in place during the financial year. During the initial lockdown, all construction works were suspended, with critical construction works not resuming until June. Ongoing restrictions have limited the ability to progress work due to limited access to building and ongoing social distancing.

4.1.4 **Communities**

Directorate position:- Variance £7.418m overspend, movement £0.883m

Communities & Neighbourhood:- Variance £5.202m overspend, movement (£0.198m)

The majority of the £5.202m overspend relates to the impact of COVID-19. The Council's Trusts have suffered loss of income, each to varying degrees and this is estimated to be in the region of £3.177m resulting in supplementary management fees being paid to the Trusts to ensure they remained financially viable during the time they were unable to operate and generate income. Community Use suffered a reduction in income of £1.604m and Halls and Centres have a reduction of £0.730m in income due to closures because of COVID-19. However, this was offset by a non-domestic rates rebate in the region of £0.800m for 2020-21 and utilities savings as a result of closed facilities saving £0.500m. Workforce change costs of £1.028m across the service has led to staffing overspends which have been offset by £0.300m relating to staffing vacancies and further underspends across the service. Café Inc has an underspend of £0.350m due to COVID-19 and a change in the way food initiatives were provided in the school holidays, including free school meal payments. This was funded by Scottish Government grant funding.

There is an overspend of £0.666m relating to unachieved savings, of this £0.306m is due to a delay in implementation of savings as a result of COVID-19 and £0.360m is due to unachieved savings in previous years.

The movement of £0.198m is mainly due to a reduction in support required for the Trusts due to the job retention scheme funding offsetting further loss of income.

Customer & Online Services:- Variance £2.307m overspend, movement £1.227m

There was a restructure which took place in year to improve the structure of the service and to allow for savings to be made. There are workforce change costs of £1.470m relating to this restructure in year which accounts for the majority of the overspend and the movement of £1.228m.

There are unachieved savings of £0.473m included within the projected overspend. This is due to a delay in Customer Service Delivery savings of £0.273m in the current year and £0.200m from previous years. Work is continuing with the Customer Programme to deliver these savings. The restructure which has taken place within the year will improve this position in the new year.

As a result of COVID-19 the income generated by Registrations was reduced, mainly due to a significant reduction in the number of weddings being booked in year. This resulted reduced income of £0.208m in the year. There have been some small reductions in expenditure relating to travel and printing costs in the year which have partially offset the impact of lost income.

There is also an underachievement of income within Revenue Services of £0.292m. The introduction of Universal Credit has reduced the level of work being carried out for the DWP and has in turn reduced the level of funding received. This could have a significant impact on future years outturn and will require a review to determine the impact on future years.

4.1.5 **Finance & Corporate Services**

Directorate position:- Variance (£0.135m) underspend, movement (£1.751m)

Within Finance & Corporate Services, there was additional expenditure of £1.190m that relates to the impact of COVID-19. This includes BTS costs of £0.390m for remote working and IT equipment to enable home working, as well as PPE and flu vaccination costs of £0.100m. Lost income from liquor licencing is approximately £0.105m for bars, restaurants and events and an impact on savings from projects that were delayed has resulted in a projected overspend of £0.544m.

COVID-19 pressures are partially mitigated by £0.432m from a reduction in printing and stationery costs alongside reduced staff travel due to home working.

There is an underspend of (£1.100m) which relates to the Housing Benefit Overpayment bad debt provision. This provision has reduced following a review of the accounting treatment following audit points being raised during the 2019/20 annual process.

The accounting treatment for Statutory Penalties has also been reviewed resulting in an underspend (£0.800m).

Miscellaneous Services has a projected overspend of £0.542m. This mainly relates to an increase in Bad Debt Provision £0.096m and the write-off of historical debtors' balances of £0.388m. This overspend has been offset by the underspends relating to Council Tax. Other overspends of £0.400m are due to underlying pressures linked to the delivery of savings.

In the main, the movement relates to Council Tax and Miscellaneous Services as described above.

4.1.6 **Chief Executive**

Directorate position:- Variance £0.409m overspend, movement £0.244m

The projected overspend sits within Corporate and Democratic Core and relates to an increase in the Apprenticeship Levy for Fife Council.

4.1.7 **Additional Items**

Loan Charges:- Variance £8.439m underspend, movement (£7.439m)

The 2016 loans fund regulations allowed for the reprofiling of debt repayments to be commensurate with the life of the asset life as well as allowing for use of the income method where appropriate.

The revised loans fund repayment policy was implemented in 2019-20 and subsequent budget savings were delivered in 2020-21. However, as mentioned in the previous report, further work to reprofile older debt and apply the income method where appropriate has been carried out.

The movement is a result of applying the Income Method for re-profiling loans fund advances associated with one specific investment relating to On-Lending to National Housing Trust (NHT). Application of this method results in a one off catch-up benefit. The application of the income method means that the loans fund advances are repaid in line with the income from the repayment of on-lending to NHT as it is received.

Contingencies:- Variance £11.890m underspend, movement (£9.890m)

The contingencies budget represents funding set aside during the budget process to fund specific items such as additional Scottish Government Grant, Workforce Change, BTS Investment and Inflation. During normal financial year these funds are then distributed to Services as costs are incurred.

The underspend represents the funding that was set aside as part of the agreed strategy which were then not fully utilised as a result of other cost reductions and significant additional funding. It is now contributing to the overall underspend across the Council.

The movement in the variance is a direct result of funding not being required at the anticipated levels for COVID-19, Workforce Change and Teachers pay costs. In addition, following a successful VAT claim in respect of Leisure Services the associated refund was reflected in Contingencies as a funding source for COVID-19 but this is no longer required.

COVID Funding – Variance £58.558m underspend, movement (£29.768m)

The funding sources in response to COVID-19 financial consequences previously included Scottish Government Funding such as Hardship Fund, Barnett Consequentials, Lost income scheme, additional settlement funding and funding from Contingencies that could be used for COVID-19. This has now been increased to reflect the additional general funding received from the Government (£58.558m) not utilised.

Whilst the additional funding was welcome there was a lack of clarity and certainty about the likely level of funding that would be received. The timing of some of the announcements contributed to the level of movement (£29.768m).

As previously reported COVID-19 non-specific funding was due to be allocated to Services at the end of the financial year once costs and funding are more certain. However, as a result of service underspends this action has not been taken meaning that the underspend contributes to balances and can be utilised in future years.

4.1.8 Financing

Council Tax Income:- Variance £0.974m under-recovery, movement (£1.526m)

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic recovery arrangements were initially suspended. In response to this, the level of under recovery represents an adjustment to the bad debt provision required to reflect reduced collection levels and people's ability to pay which was partially offset by additional funding for Council Tax Reduction received.

The movement represents the application of increased Council Tax Reduction funding.

4.2 Housing Revenue Account

4.2.1 *Housing Revenue Account:- £5.000m contribution to balances, movement (£5.000m)*

The outturn for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) is shown on Appendix 2 and indicates a contribution to balances of £5.000m. This will bring the HRA balances position to slightly in excess of £8m and will mean that the HRA is holding balances of slightly in excess of 6% and is well placed to cover future one-off costs arising as a result of the pandemic. Work is currently under way to assess the extent of the financial implications for the new financial year.

Repairs & Maintenance is underspent by (£3.764m) which is due to a reduced number of repairs being carried out during the lockdown periods throughout the financial year. The movement of £5.120m is based on some increase in spending on Change of Tenancy and Responsive Repairs works at the end of the year as COVID-19 restrictions were loosened and also due to the inclusion of £2.954m charges from Building Services associated with direct costs incurred during the first national lockdown. The CFCR is underspent in year by (£3.622m) as a result of reduced capital costs. It is important to note that underspends in year on areas such as repairs & maintenance and on adaptations are a result of spending being delayed as a result of COVID-19 and it is considered that a £5m contribution into balances will help mitigate against any one off pressures which may arise in future years within either HRA Revenue or HRA Capital.

Other Expenditure has underspent in year by £0.622m in year, movement (£0.449m). This is largely due to underspends on Disability Adaptations which has been delayed due to COVID-19. As a result there are many customers waiting on adaptation work to take place and this may see spend increase in 2021-22 as restrictions loosen.

COVID-19 Expenditure is overspent by £3.930m, movement £3.912m which relates to costs within Building Services and Property services relating to direct costs incurred during the initial national lockdown.

Other Expenditure has provisionally underspent in year by £0.622m in year, movement (£0.449m). This is largely due to underspends on Disability Adaptations which has been delayed due to COVID-19. As a result there are many customers waiting on adaptation work to take place and this may see spend increase in 2021-22 as restrictions loosen.

There is an overspend on Voids of £0.612m, movement (£0.038m) which is a result of properties remaining empty for longer periods of time due to social distancing measures put in place as a result of COVID-19. Supervision & Management is overspent by £0.100m with a movement of £0.474m which is mainly due to a movement in the Central Support Charges made in year. The cost of borrowing is also underspent by £0.311m, movement £0.372, the budget for this is set based on borrowing estimates at the time of setting the budget and can vary in year.

The HRA has overachieved on the income target for the year by £0.878m, movement £0.044m which is mainly due to a number of additional new Affordable Housing properties and properties purchased through the acquisition policy becoming available to rent at the end of 2019-20. Bad Debts has underspent in year by (£0.372m) in year, movement (£0.372m) due to the level of bad debt write-off required being lower than anticipated in year.

5.0 2020-21 Revenue Budget Savings Progress

- 5.1 Appendix 3 provides details of the achievements against the approved revenue budget savings for 2020-21 by Directorate.
- 5.2 The table demonstrates that overall the Council will achieve 65% of 2020-21 budget savings. This is lower than in previous years as the ability of services to deliver savings has been significantly impacted in several areas as a direct result of the pandemic. However, services continue to deliver savings where possible in year but there is potential risk that delays could impact into the next financial year.
- 5.3 More detailed reports on the progress of savings will be presented to the relevant Sub-Committees as part of the Council's wider scrutiny and performance management reporting arrangements.

6.0 Balances

6.1 *General Fund Services*

- 6.1.1 Appendix 4 shows a forecast of the balances' position for General Fund Services over a three-year period with the level of approved commitments also being set out. The level of balances is unprecedented but comes as a result of an exceptional year where mass disruption of services and significant financial uncertainty has had a major and complex impact on Council finances. This is coupled with some significant funding announcements coming extremely late in the year. However, the future financial implications may also be significant and the temporary increase in balances will assist in managing the ongoing financial sustainability in the coming months and year.
- 6.1.2 The opening General Fund balance brought forward at 1 April 2020, including earmarked balances, was £32.689m.
- 6.1.3 It was previously reported that Audit Scotland had identified an unadjusted error during the audit of the 2019/20 Annual Accounts in respect of the bad debt provision for Housing Benefits Overpayments. This has been fully reviewed and corrected. As this related to previous years, the correction has been actioned as a restatement of previous' years accounts and will be reflected as such in the Annual Accounts. In addition, work has also advanced this year to review the accounting treatment for Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rates statutory penalties. Again, this has been corrected as a restatement of previous years' accounts and again provides a positive contribution to balances. The combined value of these items is £12.755m.
- 6.1.4 Funding has been transferred from the General Fund Balance to fund commitments made such as the transformation projects, insurance claims, Change Fund, earmarked grants and items carried forward at the end of 2019-20. Contributions have also been made to balances for budgets that are being carried forward into 2021-22 including Roads Maintenance, Local Community Planning, Anti-Poverty Budgets and other earmarked grants. In addition, settlement of the continued legal process associated with Dunfermline Flood prevention scheme has also been recognised in balances. The net contribution from balances for these items being £0.243m.
- 6.1.5 There has been a transfer into the general fund balances from other statutory reserves that the Council holds, namely Capital Receipts unapplied and the Insurance Fund. These transfers have then been utilised to fund expenditure from balances for transformation projects and expenditure related to insurance claims which are financed by the insurance fund. The costs are all in service expenditure but met by reserves.
- 6.1.6 The level of underspend of £71.878m provides a contribution to balances taking the estimated balances level to £121.696m. Given the substantial levels of additional grant funding contributing to this balance, it is proposed that these are earmarked to fund the continuing costs of dealing with the pandemic. This is in line with the General Fund Revenue Budget report approved in March 2021.
- 6.1.7 Commitments are also recognised for DSM, Energy Management Fund, carry forwards of underspends and other commitments from previous decisions.
- 6.1.8 In recognition of the Council's priorities associated with Roads Maintenance, the 2020-21 underspend has been carried forward and will be used to prioritise expenditure on repairs and maintenance in 2021-22.

- 6.1.9 Taking all commitments and contributions into account the uncommitted balances as at 31st March 2021 are £47.942m, which is 5.3% and above the policy minimum. The increase on uncommitted balances are mainly due to the one-off adjustments in non Covid related items i.e. loans charges and adjustments to accounting treatment etc., as outlined in section 4.
- 6.1.10 As a result of underspends on HRA, there is a positive contribution to HRA balances of £5.000m taking the balances to £8.005m.

7.0 Governance and Scrutiny

- 7.1 As outlined in the previous report, the necessary focus over the last year was to identify and assess the financial consequences of COVID-19 across the organisation. It was also necessary was to identify an organisation wide financial strategy to make sure that all the additional pressures could be funded within the year.
- 7.2 The sub-committee reports are now in production and previous reporting processes have been reinstated.

8.0 Conclusions

- 8.1 Dealing with the emergency and critical responses resulting from COVID-19 had a significant impact on the Council's finances and resources. The financial challenges have been both large and complex throughout the year and of a scale not previously experienced. Reports considered throughout the financial year identified continually changing financial consequences as the Council continued to respond to changing Government guidance associated with COVID-19. The response to the pandemic impacted on costs and loss of income and some of the financial consequences will continue in the medium-term. The financial consequences of the pandemic in 2020-21 were continually evaluated and are now established to be in the region of £52m for the financial year.
- 8.2 Additional funding totalling £87.3m was announced in stages throughout the year, with around 50% being announced in the final month of the financial year. Given additional funding increased and the second national lockdown reduced anticipated costs, the General Fund Services overspent by £6.035m year, and overall there will be a surplus and contribution to balances of £71.878m.
- 8.3 Taking into account the one-off positive contribution to balances and along with the restatement of previous years' accounts and all earmarked balances and commitments will take the uncommitted level of balances to £47.942m.
- 8.4 In line with the agreed approach set out in the General Fund Revenue Budget 2021-24, the unused COVID-19 government funding has been earmarked to assist with the ongoing costs of the pandemic and recovery. There is a high degree of uncertainty going forward regarding core funding and the budget report in September will provide an update on likely one off and recurring pressures going forward. Balances can only be spent once and it is important that we continue to focus on a sustainable level of core funding and take decisions wisely on how we use balances without adding to our ongoing commitments in future years.

8.5 The provisional outturn for the Council's Housing Revenue Account in 2020-21 is a surplus of £5.000m which has been added to the HRA balances. The level of HRA balances now being £8.005m.

List of Appendices

1. General Fund Revenue Summary 2020-21
2. Housing Revenue Account Summary 2020-21
3. Approved Savings 2020-21
4. Summary of Balances
5. Funding and COVID-19 timeline
6. COVID-19 funding 2020-21

Background Papers

None.

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FIFE COUNCIL
GENERAL FUND REVENUE SUMMARY 2020-2021

	Annual Budget £m	Provisional Outturn £m	Annual Variance £m	Previous Committee Annual Variance £m	Movement £m
EDUCATION & CHILDREN'S SERVICES					
Education (Devolved)	207.172	205.270	(1.902)	0.168	(2.070)
Education (Non Devolved)	112.731	111.202	(1.529)	1.778	(3.307)
Children and Families/CJS	63.170	62.257	(0.913)	(0.193)	(0.720)
	383.073	378.729	(4.344)	1.753	(6.097)
HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE					
Health & Social Care	162.358	162.323	(0.035)	1.362	(1.397)
	162.358	162.323	(0.035)	1.362	(1.397)
ENTERPRISE & ENVIRONMENT					
Assets, Transportation and Environment	74.086	80.043	5.957	21.440	(15.483)
Economy, Planning and Employability	15.313	13.882	(1.431)	0.113	(1.544)
Property Repairs and Maintenance	15.007	13.203	(1.804)	0.000	(1.804)
	104.406	107.128	2.722	21.553	(18.831)
COMMUNITIES					
Housing & Neighbourhood Services	11.709	11.618	(0.091)	0.055	(0.146)
Communities & Neighbourhood	40.853	46.055	5.202	5.400	(0.198)
Customer & Online Services	12.190	14.497	2.307	1.080	1.227
	64.752	72.170	7.418	6.535	0.883
FINANCE & CORPORATE SERVICES					
Assessors	1.516	1.514	(0.002)	0.080	(0.082)
Finance	6.915	7.803	0.888	0.605	0.283
Revenue & Commercial Services	14.282	13.886	(0.396)	(0.160)	(0.236)
Human Resources	5.270	5.117	(0.153)	0.135	(0.288)
Business Technology Solutions	15.386	15.786	0.400	1.055	(0.655)
Legal & Democratic Services	3.729	4.029	0.300	0.001	0.299
	47.098	48.135	1.037	1.716	(0.679)
Miscellaneous	2.294	2.837	0.543	0.000	0.543
Housing Benefits	2.052	0.337	(1.715)	(0.100)	(1.615)
	51.444	51.309	(0.135)	1.616	(1.751)
CHIEF EXECUTIVE					
Chief Executive	0.291	0.257	(0.034)	(0.041)	0.007
Corporate and Democratic Core	2.204	2.647	0.443	0.206	0.237
	2.495	2.904	0.409	0.165	0.244
SERVICE TOTALS	768.528	774.563	6.035	32.984	(26.950)
ADDITIONAL ITEMS					
Loan Charges (including interest on revenue balances)	63.741	55.302	(8.439)	(1.000)	(7.439)
Capital Expenditure Financed from Current Revenue	5.362	5.362	0.000	0.000	0.000
Contingencies	11.890	0.000	(11.890)	(2.000)	(9.890)
COVID Funding	58.558	0.000	(58.558)	(28.790)	(29.768)
	139.551	60.664	(78.887)	(31.790)	(47.097)
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	908.079	835.227	(72.852)	1.194	(74.047)
FINANCED BY:					
General Revenue Grant	(624.364)	(624.364)	0.000	0.000	0.000
Non Domestic Rates	(111.709)	(111.709)	0.000	0.000	0.000
Council Tax Income	(171.763)	(170.789)	0.974	2.500	(1.526)
Budgets transferred to/(from) Balances (previous years carry forwards etc)	(0.243)	(0.243)	0.000	0.000	0.000
TOTAL INCOME	(908.079)	(907.105)	0.974	2.500	(1.526)
CONTRIBUTION (TO)/FROM BALANCES	0.000	(71.878)	(71.878)	3.694	(75.573)

FIFE COUNCIL
HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT SUMMARY 2020-2021

	Annual Budget £m	Provisional Outturn £m	Annual Variance £m	Previous Committee Annual Variance £m	Movement £m
BUDGETED EXPENDITURE					
Repairs and Maintenance	34.866	31.102	(3.764)	(8.883)	5.120
Supervision and Management	15.952	16.052	0.100	(0.374)	0.474
Funding Investment					
Cost of Borrowing	27.067	26.755	(0.311)	(0.683)	0.372
Revenue Contribution (incl CFCR)	32.419	28.798	(3.622)	10.416	(14.037)
	<u>110.304</u>	<u>102.707</u>	<u>(7.597)</u>	<u>0.476</u>	<u>(8.072)</u>
Voids	2.102	2.714	0.612	0.650	(0.038)
Housing Support costs	(0.362)	(0.418)	(0.056)	(0.049)	(0.007)
Bad or Doubtful Debts	2.984	2.612	(0.372)	0.000	(0.372)
Garden Care Scheme	0.376	0.359	(0.017)	0.000	(0.017)
Other Expenditure	9.686	9.064	(0.622)	(0.173)	(0.449)
Covid Expenditure	0.000	3.930	3.930	0.019	3.912
	<u>125.090</u>	<u>120.969</u>	<u>(4.122)</u>	<u>0.923</u>	<u>(5.044)</u>
FINANCED BY					
Dwelling Rents (Gross)	(117.973)	(118.913)	(0.940)	(0.930)	(0.011)
Non Dwelling Rents (Gross)	(3.458)	(3.492)	(0.034)	(0.031)	(0.003)
Hostels - Accommodation charges	(2.266)	(2.278)	(0.012)	(0.003)	(0.009)
Other Income	(1.393)	(1.285)	0.108	0.041	0.066
	<u>(125.090)</u>	<u>(125.969)</u>	<u>(0.878)</u>	<u>(0.923)</u>	<u>0.044</u>
CONTRIBUTION (TO)/FROM BALANCES	0.000	(5.000)	(5.000)	0.000	(5.000)

**FIFE COUNCIL
APPROVED SAVINGS FOR 2020-21**

Directorate	Savings Target £m	Provisional Outturn £m	(Under) / Over £m	Achieved %
Education & Childrens Services	4.208	1.908	(2.300)	45%
Enterprise & Enviroment	3.388	2.604	(0.784)	77%
Communities	1.998	1.293	(0.705)	65%
Finance & Corporate Services	1.608	0.901	(0.707)	56%
Health & Social Care	1.736	1.736	0.00	100%
	12.938	8.442	(4.496)	65%

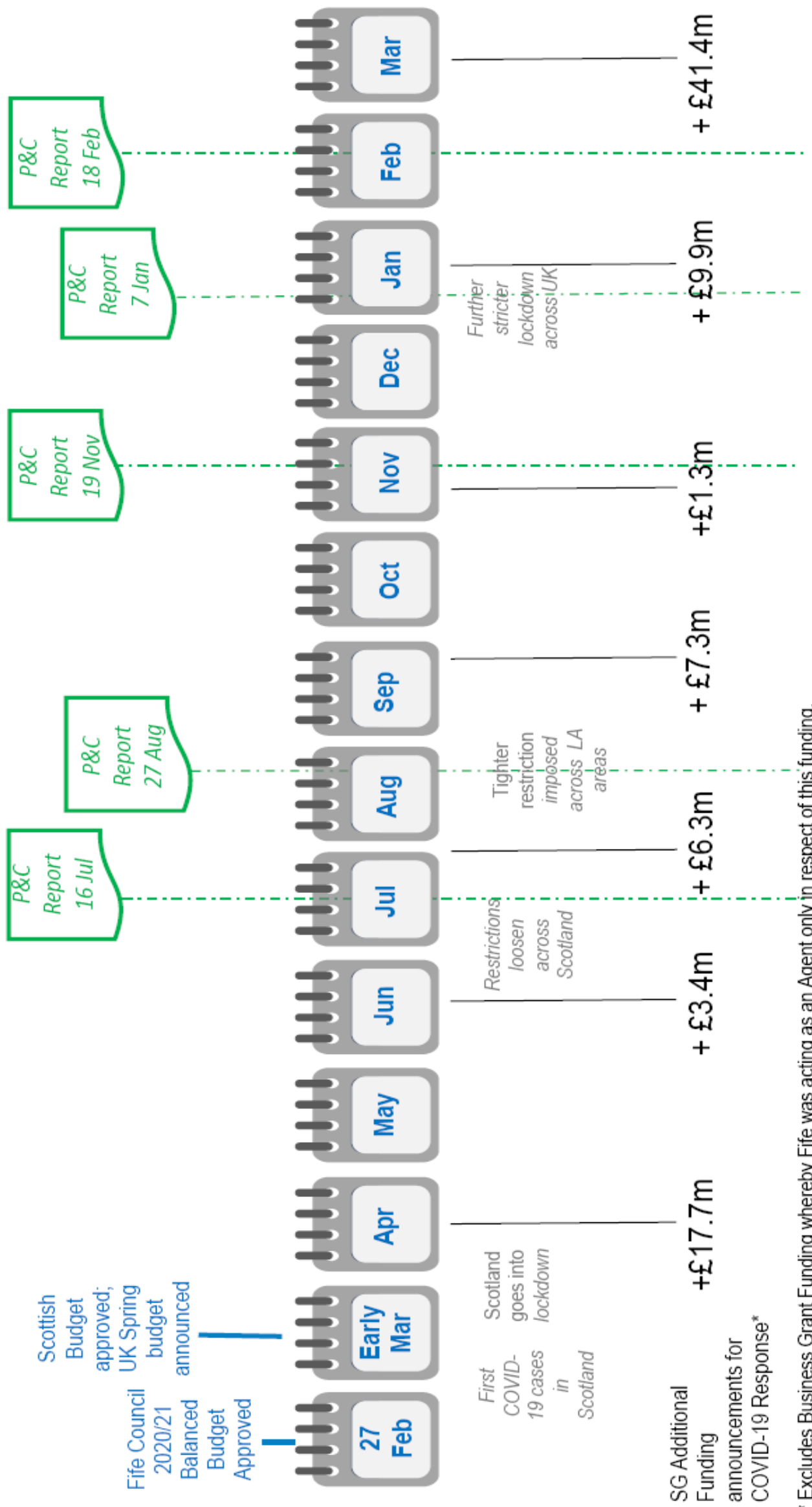
FIFE COUNCIL
BALANCE - GENERAL FUND SERVICES

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	Future Years
	£m	£m	£m	£m
Balance at 1 April 2020	(32.689)	(47.942)	(47.029)	(47.029)
Restatement of Statutory Penalties/HBen	(12.755)			
	(45.444)			
Budgets transferred (to)/from balances	0.243			
Transfers from Other Statutory Reserves	(4.617)			
Add Overall budget variance 2020-21 (Appendix 1)	(71.878)			
Estimated General Fund Balance at 31 March	(121.696)	(47.942)	(47.029)	(47.029)
Earmarked Balance				
Devolved School Management	1.902			
COVID Specific GRG	13.716			
COVID Non-Specific GRG	44.759			
Energy Management Fund	0.871			
Council Tax - Second Homes	6.918			
	68.166	0.000	0.000	0.000
	(53.530)	(47.942)	(47.029)	(47.029)
Commitments against balance				
Budget Carry Forward Scheme	0.000			
Carry Forward - Temp Investment	0.659			
Carry forward - Capital Delivery Fund	0.103			
Carry forward - Earmarked Grants	1.614			
Carry forward - Roads Maintenance	1.297			
Carry forward - LCP	0.738			
Change Fund	0.000	0.290		
Fife Job Contract	0.252	0.563		
Mid-Fife Economic Development	0.033			
Change to Deliver - BTS Investment	0.539			
Dunfermline Flood Prevention Scheme	0.291			
Other Commitments	0.062	0.060		
	5.588	0.913	0.000	0.000
Estimated uncommitted balance at 31 March	(47.942)	(47.029)	(47.029)	(47.029)

BALANCE - HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	Future Years
	£M	£M	£M	£M
Balance at 1 April 2020	(3.005)	(8.005)	(8.005)	(8.005)
Add Overall budget variance 2020-21 (Appendix 2)	(5.000)			
Estimated uncommitted balance at 31 March	(8.005)	(8.005)	(8.005)	(8.005)

Funding and COVID-19 Timeline: 2020/21



SG Additional Funding announcements for COVID-19 Response*

* Excludes Business Grant Funding whereby Fife was acting as an Agent only in respect of this funding.

FIFE COUNCIL
COVID-19 Funding: 2020-21

Funding	Allocation £m	Cumulative £m
Hardship Funds	3.400	
UK Consequentials relating to Local Government	10.564	
Food Fund (April)	2.254	
Scottish Welfare Fund – Top Up	1.513	
April	17.731	17.731
Further UK Consequentials relating to Local Government	3.339	
June	3.339	21.070
Scottish Welfare Fund – Top Up (DHP)	0.210	
Distribution of a further £5 million to deliver Discretionary Housing	0.311	
Additional Food Fund (June)	2.107	
Additional Teaching and Support Staff	3.636	
July	6.264	27.334
Digital Inclusion (£30m announced but £5m is for FE)	1.847	
Education Recovery Funding (logistics) - Upfront Funding	1.356	
Funding for Additional Teachers and support staff 2nd tranche	2.181	
School Transport- capital	0.094	
Town Centres Capital Fund	1.560	
Test and Protect Funding (Support for People)	0.035	
Test and Protect Funding (Support for People) - Extension to 11th Jan	0.005	
Additional Funding for Death Registration Service	0.041	
Administration for Self Isolation Grants	0.050	
Outbound Calling - (up to 11th Jan 2021)	0.154	
September	7.323	34.657
Council Tax Reduction	1.190	
Funding for Additional Environmental Officers	0.127	
November	1.317	35.974
Admin of £100m COVID Hardship Payment	0.032	
Scottish Welfare Fund – Top Up £20m Unallocated	1.355	
Test and Protect Funding (Support for People) - Additional Quantum	0.004	
Outbound Calling - (up to 11th Jan 2021) - Additional Quantum	0.012	
Homelessness Funding - SG Winter Support Fund	0.335	
Supporting services for vulnerable children and young people	1.245	
Loss of Income	4.565	
Funding for Additional Environmental Officers - Additional Quantum	0.025	
Young Person's Guarantee	2.070	
Partnership Action for Continuous Employment (PACE)	0.193	
January	9.836	45.810
FSM for Oct, Xmas & Feb Holidays	1.597	
General Administration Funding	0.671	
Hardship Payment Grants	1.044	
Discretionary Business Support	5.010	
Addressing Financial Hardship	0.316	
£100 Spring Hardship Payment - Grant	1.287	
FSM	1.428	
Education Recovery	4.745	
Additional Teaching and Support Staff	1.821	
Loss of Income - Additional Quantum	5.557	
Loss of Income - Tranche 2	16.961	
Children & Young People Mental Health and Wellbeing	1.047	
March	41.484	87.294

Capital Investment Plan Update – Provisional Outturn 2020-21

Report by: Eileen Rowand, Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Services)

Wards Affected: All

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide a strategic financial overview of the Capital Investment Plan, and to advise on the provisional outturn for the 2020-21 financial year.

Recommendations

The Policy and Co-ordination Committee is asked to note: -

- i) the provisional outturn position, the risks and mitigating actions for the major projects within the Capital Investment Plan;
- ii) the provisional outturn position for the 2020-21 Capital Investment Plan;
- iii) that more detailed capital outturn reports for 2020-21 will be submitted to relevant Committees of the Council, in accordance with agreed financial reporting arrangements; and
- iv) that budget variances will be managed by the appropriate Directorate in conjunction with the Investment Strategy Group.

Resource Implications

None.

Legal & Risk Implications

Potential risks continue to include the impact of COVID-19 on the costs of construction projects, availability of funding streams for larger capital projects and the capacity to complete some projects on time, again as a result of COVID-19, as well as risks associated with changes to capital accounting arrangements. Further explanation of the current risks is contained in section 2.2.

Impact Assessment

An EqIA is not required because the report does not propose a change or revision to existing policies and practices.

Consultation

Provisional outturns are agreed in consultation with each Directorate and are based around the expected progress of individual projects.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise members of the provisional outturn position for the Council's Capital Investment Plan (the Plan) for the financial year 2020-21. The report also highlights the provisional outturn position for major projects over £5.000m along with any potential risks associated with these projects. Explanation is provided at Section 2.1 where there is deemed to be a greater level of financial risk linked to major projects. The Plan covers capital expenditure on all Council Services including Housing, which is managed as a separate programme.

2.0 Issues

2.1 Major Projects

- 2.1.1 Appendix 1 provides a summary of the projected outturn for major projects within the Plan. There are 22 projects in this category with an overall budget of £891.281m at this stage, it is anticipated that there will be an overspend of £0.374m which is due to Depot Rationalisation.

2.2 Potential Risks and Issues

- 2.2.1 There continues to be a risk across the Capital Investment Plan that the cost of projects may be adversely affected going forward as a result of continued restrictions associated with COVID-19 and as a result of BREXIT. Impacts are beginning to emerge in relation to the supply of some construction materials, road materials, salt and waste materials. However, the overall impact of this is difficult to predict with any level of certainty at this stage and the focus of forecasts in this report are in relation to the current financial year and on projects that are currently in progress. Monitoring of the impact of these additional costs and timescales is ongoing and are being closely scrutinised by Property Services.
- 2.2.2 Since the last report the Council have approved a revised Capital Plan, which includes £202m investment in respect of Secondary Schools in West Fife including the Dunfermline Learning Campus and Inverkeithing High School. This revised figure reflects the funding requirements of the Scottish Government's Learning Estate Investment Plan which requires the Council to fund the up-front cost of construction, with Government support coming in the form of a revenue contribution based on the achievement of outcomes. This investment is intended to address both school condition, and the need for additional school places arising from housing development. Discussions around the funding of the Council element are progressing with the Scottish Government, the Scottish Futures Trust and Fife College, and work is continuing with the college to develop the business case for the Dunfermline Learning Campus. Initial design development is underway and progressing well. The statutory education consultation commenced 13 April 2021.
- 2.2.3 Within Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) the delivery date of August 2020 was removed by the Scottish Government in light of COVID-19. The new implementation date has been confirmed as August 2021. There is a risk that contingency arrangements may be required in the short term to provide places should the outstanding projects be delayed, which include retaining 600hrs provision in some settings and phasing over time to 1140hrs provision as building works are completed. There are 4 projects which are due to complete during the summer holiday period. Contingency arrangements have been developed to provide short term alternative places should these projects be delayed. The plans have been developed with the ELC staff and approved by Care Inspectorate and will be in place for the start of the August 2021 term should they be required. There are another 3

projects which are programmed to complete beyond August 2021. These are Inzievar, Methilhaven and Templehall, and again temporary alternative arrangements have been identified until these facilities are operational

2.2.4 A new risk has emerged which has the potential to adversely affect the overall affordability of the Capital Investment Plan. A Capital Accounting review being carried out nationally is looking at specific accounting practices relating to Scottish Local Authorities Capital Accounting. It is too early to determine the outcome of this review and further information will be provided as the review progresses.

2.3 Financial Performance – 2020-21 Total Expenditure - Projected Outturn

2.3.1 Appendix 2 provides a summary by capital theme of provisional expenditure and income for 2020-21 showing the total expenditure budget of £162.423m and provisional spend of £138.473m in the 2020-21 financial year, £23.950m slippage across the plan. Comparable expenditure for the previous 3 years was £175.104m (2019-20), £144.083m (2018-19) and £140.253m (2017-18).

3.0 Budgets and Funding

3.1 Budget

The Capital Investment Plan 2019-29 was approved by Fife Council in February 2019. At the end of each financial year, any remaining budget is rolled forward into the next financial year as slippage. Services are asked to re-profile their project budgets in light of this slippage and the result of this can be seen in the movement from the approved budget to the current budget as detailed in Appendix 2.

Since the last report to this Committee, the capital investment plan budget has increased as outlined in the following table:

	Total Expenditure £m
Capital Investment Plan as at November 2020	150.174
Increased Grant and Contributions and Ring-fenced Capital Receipts	8.208
Capital Financed from Current Revenue (CFCR)	4.041
Current Capital Investment Plan	162.423

The increased grant and contributions above are in relation to an insurance receipt in respect of Woodmill High School (£5.133m), and additional grant funding for Roads and Transportation (£2,035m) and to purchase additional ICT equipment for schools (£1.576m)

The increase in CFCR is in relation to £3.000m for Early Learning and Childcare to support the 1140 hour expansion and £0.900m from Second Home Council Tax Funding to support the Affordable Housing Programme.

3.2 Expenditure

The provisional outturn suggests expenditure variances across all Directorates, the most significant being: -

3.2.1 Opportunities for All

Education & Children's Services (£6.351m)

The new Madras College within Building Fife's Future theme is showing a slippage of £3.029m within financial year 2020/21. The project is progressing well and is due for completion in July 2021. The variance is the result of lower than anticipated costs being agreed with the contractor in order to address the adjustments required for COVID-19.

The Early Learning and Childcare programme is showing a slippage of £4.166m which is due to delays on site due to COVID-19 restrictions. The slippage will be carried forward to ensure delivery of the remaining projects within the required timescale. Contingency plans are in place to ensure eligible children can access their entitlement in the event of any delays.

Secondary Schools West Fife is showing an advancement of £1.182m to ensure the delivery date of August 2024.

Primary School Development theme has a slippage of £0.398m. Most of this is from a delay in the installation of a temporary modular classroom unit at McLean Primary School from December 2020 to the summer of 2021. The remaining slippage relates to the Guardbridge Primary School extension project. Slippage on both projects is as a result of delays caused by the current COVID-19 restrictions. The projects are both on schedule for completion in July 2021.

3.2.2 Thriving Places

Asset & Transportation & Environment (£0.535m)

The slippage is mainly within Roads and Transportation Thriving Places Capital Programme of (£0.442m) across 2 projects. First in Strategic Transport there were programme delays due to the severe winter weather which affected the time taken to complete the Pitreavie Roundabout Signalisation. The second relates to Sustainable Transport where there were delays to delivering the Path & Cycleway Programme which arose due to COVID-19 and lockdown as well as the need to re-prioritise resources to deliver externally funded works.

Area Community & Corporate Development (£2.390m)

Slippage is in the main attributable to current restrictions surrounding COVID-19. Several projects have been delayed due to factors such as restricted access, contractor working arrangements on site and issues around delivery of materials. For example, £0.140m staging work at Rothes Halls scheduled to take place in 2020-21 now being deferred until 2021-22. Phasing of the wider Lyneburn corridor project has led to £0.266m expenditure now being reprofiled into 2021-22. Delays and further changes to the Adam Smith Hub design has resulted in a slippage of £0.455m. Multiple smaller projects within the Improving Health through Leisure & Sport programme are reliant on external funders and third party community groups collaborating with the service. The inability to do so in the current circumstances led to work valued at £0.416m being delayed until 2021-22.

Rockgelly and Lochgelly town hall have combined a slippage of £0.417m. Across the service there are several large-scale projects that have progressed slower than anticipated; delays in re-lining the pool at Carnegie Leisure Centre, £0.200m, Glenwood regeneration project is slowly progressing, plans are in place to demolish the library, but there is still a slippage of £0.091m. Multiple smaller projects have slipped across the service totalling £0.404m.

3.2.3 Inclusive Growth and Jobs

Economy, Planning & Employability £0.443m

This variance is mainly due to the early advancement of £0.734m on a range of projects funded by the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal. Progress has been made on the construction of business units at Flemington Road, Glenrothes and Dunnikier Industrial Site, Kirkcaldy, despite COVID-19 restrictions. The acquisition of a site at Fife Interchange Dunfermline was also completed.

Infrastructure work at Levenmouth Business Park has slippage of £0.261m as a result of COVID-19 lockdown which delayed the necessary legal agreement to secure access to third party land.

3.2.4 Maintaining Our Assets – Rolling Programme

Education (£0.996m)

The Education Rolling Programme covers smaller improvement projects across the school estate. There is slippage in this programme of £0.617m which is again due to COVID-19 restrictions preventing access to schools throughout the financial year. These delayed projects have been reprogrammed and will be addressed in future years.

Asset & Transportation & Environment (£3.328m)

Fleet - Purchase of Vehicles and Equipment slippage of (£0.758m) due to impacts of COVID-19 and BREXIT. The increase in slippage of (£0.358m) from the last report is caused by worsening effects on the supply chain. It is now anticipated that the new vehicles will be supplied in early 2021/22.

The slippage within Roads and Transportation - Maintaining Our Assets rolling Capital Programme of (£2.506m) is across various projects. This is mainly due to the COVID-19 Pandemic shortened year resulting in the need to re-prioritise resources away from the rolling programme, at short notice towards COVID-19 related specific projects such as the externally funded Spaces for People programme and to complete projects to maximise spend on the £1.600m Grant for Cycling Walking and Safer Streets

3.2.5 Maintaining Our Assets – Specific Programmes

Asset & Transportation & Environment £2.348m

As reported previously, there has been a requirement to advance work across both landfill sites, to the value of £2.278m, to ensure the highest possible environmental standards are maintained. As part of this work, capping has taken place at Lower Melville Wood while gas capture infrastructure has been advanced at Lochhead.

Finance & Corporate Services (£3.192m)

The underspend of (£3.192m) within the Finance & Corporate Services Directorate relates to projects in the IT Capital Programme. The main areas of slippage (delay) are Servers/Storage £0.457m, Telephony £0.250m, Security £0.423m and Local Area Network (LAN) £1.6m. In respect of Servers/Storage there is a change in the technology available and BTS are reviewing the options. Due to COVID-19 the current Telephony contract has been extended. In light of this and the current circumstances the timescales for a replacement system have changed. The new LAN and Security contracts are currently being procured, but the contracts will not be in place until 2021-22.

3.2.6 Housing Revenue Account (£9.124m)

The provisional slippage of (£9.124m) relates to projects across several areas of the HRA capital programme. Due to the periods of lockdown as a result of COVID-19 and on-going social distancing measures a number of projects planned to begin in this financial year have been delayed. These include regeneration projects in a number of estates, work on Travellers sites and in Hostels. The Housing service have carried out a review of all delayed projects in conjunction with Property and Building Services to reschedule these projects across 2021-22 and 2022-23, as well as working in partnership throughout the year to ensure that essential works have been delivered.

Despite delays due to COVID-19, the Affordable Housing programme is projecting an in-year advancement of £0.521m. Although some sites have slipped into future years an opportunity became available in year to purchase an additional 28 properties in Ladybank. This has allowed the HRA to continue to deliver plans to meet their Phase 3 Housing Target and deliver homes in an area of high demand.

3.3 **Total Income**

Capital expenditure is funded from several income sources, some of which contribute specifically to individual projects in the plan. These income sources are Capital Financed from Current Revenue (CFCR), Scottish Government Specific Capital Grant and other grants and contributions (e.g. lottery funding). Appendix 2 shows that there is a total income budget of £73.851m against a forecast of £74.830m giving a provisional variance of £0.980m.

The main variances include income from CFCR being £2.822m below budget due to a combination of less work needing funded following the impact of COVID on the HRA Revenue Account and the decision to contribute £5m to HRA Balances. This has not had an adverse effect on HRA Borrowing or the overall HRA Capital Plan due to the level of slippage as detailed in para 3.2.6. The decision to contribute £5m to balances will help give the HRA resilience against any long term financial impacts of COVID-19 or other financial risks which may need mitigated in future.

Subsidy income for the Affordable Housing Programme was £2.572m higher than anticipated and the Specific Grant for the Property Acquisition variance of £1.495m is due to good progress being made on both of these projects in year despite the restrictions caused by COVID-19.

3.4 **Total Funding**

Within the total funding section of Appendix 2, the other income such as General Capital Grant and Capital Receipts are not specifically related to any capital project but is funding for the plan overall. The balance of required funding in the year is met from borrowing through the Council's Loans Fund.

The adverse variance on Capital Receipts is due in the main to property sales expected in 2020-21 not taking place. These sales are now anticipated in 2021-22.

The favourable variance on NHT Loan Repayments is respect of the final instalment for Caraille Green, Crail being repaid earlier than expected.

4.0 Conclusions

- 4.1 Against the current total expenditure budget of £162.423m, the Council is showing provisional spend of £138.473m (85.25% of total budget) in the financial year and slippage of £23.950m.
- 4.2 This level of expenditure demonstrates continued progress on the delivery of a wide range of capital projects, despite the COVID-19 restrictions continuing the major capital investment made by Fife Council in recent years, however there is still a level of uncertainty associated with speed of delivery and future costs.
- 4.3 There are 22 projects within the Plan which have a value of £5.000m or greater. The overall budget for these projects is £891.281m, the Council is showing projected spend of £891.655m and an overspend variance of £0.374m.
- 4.4 If significant variances arise, these will be reviewed by the Investment Strategy Group in conjunction with the appropriate Directorate and reflected in any future capital plan reports.

List of Appendices

1. Major Capital Projects Total Cost Monitor
2. Monitoring Report by Capital Theme

Background Papers

None

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FIFE COUNCIL
CAPITAL INVESTMENT PLAN 2020-29
TOTAL COST MONITOR - MAJOR CAPITAL PROJECTS

Appendix 1

	Service	Original Approved Budget £m	Current Project Budget £m	Total Projected Outturn £m	Variance £m	Variance %	Current Project Status	Expected Project Completion Date
Opportunities for All								
Madras College - Langlands	E&CS	50.170	62.514	62.514	0.000	0.00%	Current Project	2021-22
Early Learning and Childcare	E&CS	28.376	34.965	34.965	0.000	0.00%	Current Project	2020-21
Primary School Development	E&CS	90.953	100.442	100.442	0.000	0.00%	Current Project	2028-29
Secondary Schools West Fife	E&CS	117.572	200.291	200.291	0.000	0.00%	Future Project	2028-29
Extension Secondary School - Auchmuty	E&CS	9.620	3.469	3.469	0.000	0.00%	Future Project	2022-23
Extension Secondary School - Viewforth	E&CS	5.989	6.335	6.335	0.000	0.00%	Future Project	2025-26
New Secondary School - Glenrothes /Glenwood	E&CS	27.532	27.532	27.532	0.000	0.00%	Future Project	2028-29
Methil Care Home	H&SC	6.620	7.155	7.155	0.000	0.00%	Current Project	2021-22
Cupar Care Home	H&SC	5.580	5.580	5.580	0.000	0.00%	Current Project	2022-23
Anstruther Care Home	H&SC	6.145	7.615	7.615	0.000	0.00%	Feasability	2023-24
		348.557	455.899	455.899	0.000	0.00%		
Thriving Places								
Dunfermline Strategic Transportation Intervention Measures	ATE	39.323	34.837	34.837	0.000	0.00%	Current Project	2028-29
Glenrothes District Heat	ATE	10.320	9.449	9.449	0.000	0.00%	Current Project	2020-21
Improving Health Through Sport and Leisure	Communities	10.000	5.588	5.588	0.000	0.00%	Current Project	2021-22
Area Community Facilities	Communities	6.000	16.550	16.550	0.000	0.00%	Current Project	2021-22
		65.643	66.423	66.423	0.000	0.00%		
Inclusive Growth and Jobs								
Edinburgh City Deal	EPES	47.861	49.157	49.157	0.000	0.00%	Current Project	2028-29
		47.861	49.157	49.157	0.000	0.00%		
Housing Revenue Account								
Affordable Housing	Housing	281.869	280.344	280.344	0.000	0.00%	Current Project	2022-23
		281.869	280.344	280.344	0.000	0.00%		
Maintaing Our Assets - Specific Projects								
West Fife Depot	ATE	4.525	8.047	8.421	0.374	4.65%	Current Project	2019-20
Mobile and Flexible Working	BTS	6.700	6.211	6.211	0.000	0.00%	Current Project	2027-28
Local Area Network	BTS	7.800	7.200	7.200	0.000	0.00%	Future Project	2027-28
Burial Provision	ATE	6.700	6.700	6.700	0.000	0.00%	Future Project	2027-28
Reception Hall for Anaerobic Digestion Plant	ATE	5.000	3.000	3.000	0.000	0.00%	Future Project	2026-27
Balwearie High School	E&CS	8.300	8.300	8.300	0.000	0.00%	Future Project	2024-25
		39.025	39.458	39.832	0.374	0.95%		
Grand Total		782.955	891.281	891.655	0.374	0.04%		

**FIFE COUNCIL
CAPITAL INVESTMENT PLAN 2020-21
MONITORING REPORT**

Appendix 2

Capital Theme	Approved Budget £m	Current Budget £m	Actual to Date £m	Provisional Outturn £m	Provisional Variance £m	Projected Outturn as % of Plan
Opportunities for All	49.618	43.704	37.185	37.185	(6.519)	85%
Thriving Places	14.352	8.423	5.600	5.600	(2.823)	66%
Inclusive Growth and Jobs	7.189	4.098	4.541	4.541	0.443	111%
Maintaining Our Assets - Rolling Programmes	26.623	31.710	26.634	26.634	(5.075)	84%
Maintaining Our Assets - Specific Programmes	9.198	8.163	7.311	7.311	(0.852)	90%
Housing Revenue Account	69.523	66.326	57.201	57.201	(9.124)	86%
Corporate Items	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0%
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	176.503	162.423	138.473	138.473	(23.950)	85%
Scottish Government Specific Capital Grants	(7.403)	(11.235)	(12.713)	(12.713)	(1.479)	113%
Other Grants and Contributions	(6.029)	(26.322)	(28.645)	(28.645)	(2.323)	109%
Capital Financed from Current Revenue (CFCR)	(33.923)	(36.294)	(33.472)	(33.472)	2.822	92%
TOTAL INCOME	(47.355)	(73.851)	(74.830)	(74.830)	(0.980)	101%
TOTAL NET EXPENDITURE	129.148	88.572	63.643	63.643	(24.930)	72%
Scottish Government General Capital Grant	(25.033)	(25.033)	(24.784)	(24.784)	0.249	99%
Capital Receipts	(5.240)	(2.195)	(1.488)	(1.488)	0.707	68%
NHT Loan Repayments	0.000	(0.093)	(3.549)	(3.549)	(3.456)	3803%
Borrowing from Loans Fund - General Fund	(61.939)	(37.021)	(19.754)	(19.754)	17.267	53%
Borrowing from Loans Fund - HRA	(36.936)	(24.230)	(14.067)	(14.067)	10.163	58%
TOTAL FUNDING	(129.148)	(88.572)	(63.643)	(63.643)	24.930	72%

Fife Council Reform and Recovery Programme: Attainment & Closing the Gap Reform

Report by: Angela Logue, Head of Service, Education and Children's Services

Wards Affected: All Wards

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide members with an update on progress in the Attainment & Closing the Gap Reform workstream and to provide further details on key activities underway to ensure sustained education recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic, through increased universal or targeted support for our children and young people.

Recommendation(s)

It is recommended that the Committee:

1. Reviews and comments on progress and next steps of this workstream and key activities planned or underway to support education recovery.
2. Consider this work alongside reports previously submitted to the committee on progress and outputs from the cross-cutting workstreams within the Reform & Recovery Programme.

Resource Implications

There are no immediate resource implications associated with this report. Scottish Government Education Recovery Grants have been allocated to support aspects of the work outlined in this report during 20/21 and into 21/22.

Legal & Risk Implications

There are no specific legal and risk implications associated with this report.

Impact Assessment

An Equalities Impact Assessment has not been completed and is not necessary at this stage, as the proposals within the report do not currently represent a change to policy.

Consultation

Staff, pupils, parents and partners have been consulted through various surveys and through improvement projects, to inform our Attainment & Closing the Gap Reform workstream and our wider approach to supporting education recovery, at a strategic level and through the work taking place locally in schools and communities.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 There is a long-standing and well evidenced challenge facing Scotland, regarding equity of educational outcomes. This “attainment gap” exists for different reasons for a wide range of learners, and can be measured by data for: Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD), the proportion of pupils on the school roll who are registered for free school meals (FSM), additional support needs (ASN), looked after and care experienced children, parental occupation and educational qualifications.
- 1.2 The poverty-related attainment gap remains in Scotland with inequalities exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic. This reflects barriers to learning arising from: reduced engagement with learning during periods of home learning, the challenges of ensuring effective support for home learning and increasing levels of child poverty arising from the economic impact of Covid-19. [Audit Scotland \(March 2021\)](#) highlights the need for improvement to happen quickly and that addressing inequalities must be at the heart of our response to Covid-19 and the longer-term recovery and improvement.
- 1.3 The Scottish Government, [Equity Audit \(2021\)](#) identified key themes emerging from the evidence, that need to be part of an ongoing, long-term, system-wide focus on closing the poverty-related attainment gap. This includes addressing the impact the pandemic may have had on some of the most socio-economically disadvantaged children and families:
 - Health and wellbeing support
 - Digital infrastructure and connectivity
 - Support to parents and families
 - Teaching provision and the quality of learning
 - Support for teachers and the wider workforce
- 1.4 [The National Improvement Framework and Improvement Plan \(2021\)](#) outlines, in the vision for education in Scotland, the need to deliver both excellence in terms of ensuring children and young people acquire a broad range of skills and capacities at the highest levels, whilst also delivering equity so that every child and young person thrives and have the best opportunity to succeed, regardless of their social circumstances or additional needs. Raising attainment and closing the equity gap remain key national policy priorities.
- 1.5 Improving educational attainment for all groups remains a key ambition of the [Plan for Fife](#). The aim of the attainment and closing the gap reform is to address the impact on children and young people’s progress in learning, caused by the school closures during the pandemic, and develop sustainable approaches to improving attainment and closing the gap across our schools and early learning centres over the next three years. This work will build on lessons learned and opportunities that have arisen during the lockdown periods and the recovery phase.
- 1.6 At the outset of the programme an analysis was undertaken of the data held on our system for tracking and monitoring primary pupils progress in learning. This allowed an estimate to be made of the impact of the initial period of school closures on achievement of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) levels by the end of the 2019/20 school session.

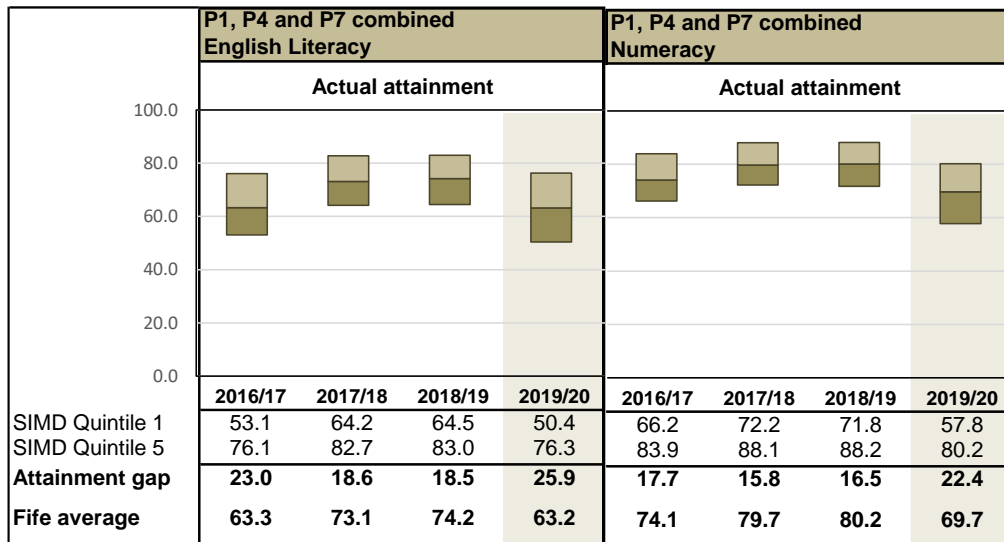


Figure 1. Trends in achievement of CfE levels in literacy and numeracy by primary pupils (P1, P4 and P7 combined) up to the end of last session (June 19/20).

1.7 The figure above shows the trends in achievement of CfE levels for primary pupils leading up to 2019/20 and the estimated levels of achievement at the end of that school year. As can be seen:

- In the years leading up to 2019/20 there had been an improving trend in achievement of CfE levels for both literacy and numeracy.
- In the period 2016/17 to 2018/19, there had been a closing of the attainment gap for literacy. Over the same period, the attainment gap for numeracy had remained broadly constant, although narrower than that for literacy.
- In 2019/20, for both literacy and numeracy, the evidence suggests that the overall level of achievement fell, and the attainment gap widened.

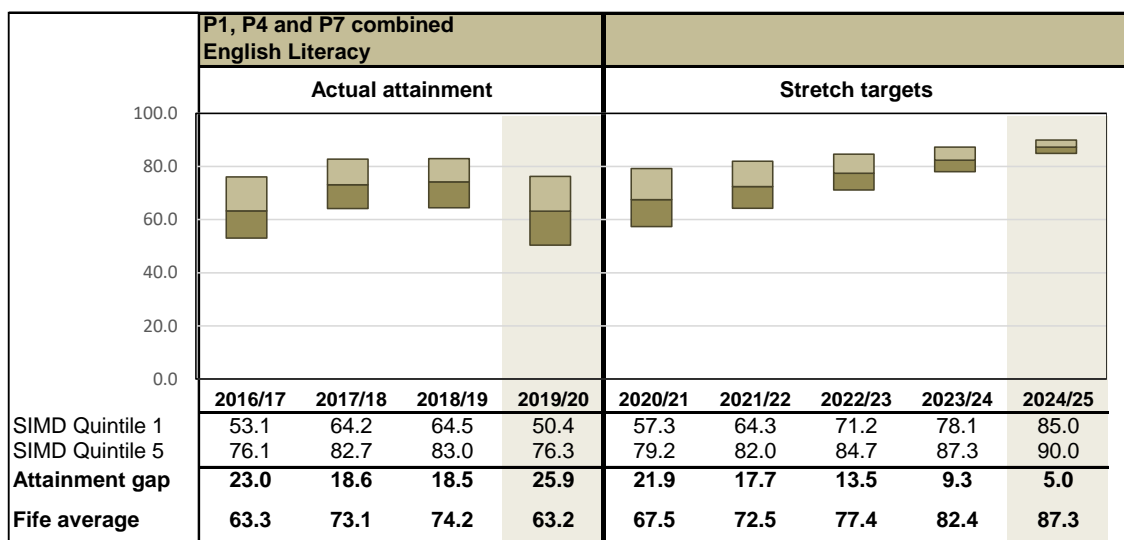


Figure 2. Stretch targets for literacy to 2024/25.

1.8 In order to provide a focus to support schools with their recovery planning, a set of stretch targets have been calculated for both literacy and numeracy for the primary sector. These have been calculated based on an aspiration to ensure that:

- The national stretch targets for Achievement of CfE levels are achieved by 2024/25;

- There is steady improvement in overall levels of achievement over the intervening period;
 - The attainment gap narrows steadily over the intervening period.
- 1.9 Figure 2 provides an illustration of these stretch targets for literacy. Similar stretch targets have been calculated for numeracy. Schools have been issued with a version of the stretch targets that reflects the social content of their school.
- 1.10 Currently, secondary schools maintain their own tracking and monitoring data and report achievement of CfE levels data at the end of the school year. In recognition of the work that secondary schools are undertaking to support the Alternative Certification Model for SQA results, and in line with national guidance, no data on Achievement of CfE levels for S3 is being nationally or centrally gathered this year.
- 1.11 Work is planned with the secondary sector next year, to improve the support available for tracking and monitoring of pupils in the Broad General Education.

2.0 Attainment Reform Group Approach

- 2.1 A representative reform group was established from across the Directorate in September 2020. Working arrangements were also established between Fife Education & Children's Services, local partners and the [Children and the National Young People Improvement Collaborative](#), who are providing tailored quality improvement support to the reform group.
- 2.2 The vision for the programme of reform work is that:
- Every Child Matters: by ensuring equity and raising attainment, all children and young people of Fife will thrive and succeed to realise their hopes and dreams.*
- 2.3 A high level change theory was developed, based on what was known about how the system is currently working. Key themes emerged as areas that will need to be working optimally at system level in order to reach our stretch aims. The primary drivers for improvement in attainment and closing the poverty-related attainment gap have been identified by the reform group as; health & wellbeing, equity, engagement & participation: high quality learning, teaching and assessment, with leadership and quality improvement underpinning all areas. These are detailed in the driver diagram in Appendix 1.
- 2.4 Strategic Improvement Leads from the reform group have worked with our own Improvement Co-ordinator and colleagues from the [Children & Young People's Improvement Collaborative \(CYPIC\)](#) to adopt the use of quality improvement methodology to develop sustainable approaches to improving attainment and close the gap across schools and early learning settings. It is being used to target and align all levels of the system to a common purpose. Quality Improvement Methodology is a rigorous and systematic approach to accelerate improvements, whilst developing our understanding of what changes have led to improvement.
- 2.5 Following on from Early Years Collaborative (2012-2017) and Raising Attainment for All (2014-2017) local training has been gradually building our Quality Improvement (QI) capacity and capability across our Directorate. Building capacity and capability for improvement is grounded in experiential learning and the active application of QI approaches, tools, and techniques. Between 2017-2020 there have been 9 local training programmes involving over 87 Teams / 300 practitioners.

- 2.6 Building on from successful efforts to grow our QI capacity and capability across our Education and Children's Services workforce we have set out an ambitious plan to invest and further grow our expertise to ensure that work aligned to Fife's Recovery and Reform (Attainment & Closing the Gap) makes effective use of Quality Improvement Methodology. This approach advocates that we tackle improvement systematically, testing change ideas and concepts on a small scale so we learn 'what works' quickly enabling us to invest and scale up successful changes quickly based on demonstratable improvements.
- 2.7 During 20/21, our QI Training Programme has accelerated our capacity and capability. This programme of work set out to build our QI capacity and capability whilst simultaneously initiating and taking forward improvement work focused on equity and improving children's outcomes. During this session we have had 44 schools taking forward over 60 improvement projects focussed on equity and closing the poverty related attainment gap.
- 2.8 26 QI leaders within establishments have been trained to ensure sustainability of improvement activity within their own settings and 23 QI coaches have been trained to support improvement activity across more settings going forward. 9 staff carrying out varying roles across the Directorate have also commenced the National ScIL (Scottish Improvement Leader) Programme which will further increase capacity to make effective use of QI methodology.

3.0 Progress and Next Steps

- 3.1 In this section, we have summarised the progress made this session within the primary drivers for improvement, outlined in Appendix 1, highlighting examples of some of the key improvement projects that lie within these areas.
- 3.2 Health & Wellbeing
 - 3.2.1 Health and wellbeing support for children and young people has been an area of significant focus as we progress through the recovery phase of the pandemic. This has been informed by young people's views and their feedback confirms that the picture of young people's mental health needs is diverse. Some young people's mental health has been more adversely affected by the Covid constraints than others. In addition, the type of supports young people want and need differs according to their circumstances and their personal characteristics. For these reasons, our optimum strategic approach is to develop a broad 'menu' of supports for young people, which can be developed as early interventions wherever possible and as targeted provisions wherever needed.
 - 3.2.2 Key preventative strategies focus on the [5 Ways to Wellbeing](#) - connecting with people, being active, taking notice, learning and giving. The return to school has been part of the recovery process but has also been difficult for some young people. A key part of our strategy is to ensure that those adults who are around young people feel confident to support and signpost to ensure that support is provided at the earliest opportunity.
 - 3.2.3 There are a range of wellbeing supports which are accessible to school staff to help identify young people who would benefit from additional support. Through the Child Wellbeing Pathway, more intensive supports are available for those who need them most. In response to identified need, targeted supports for young people have been broadened. This includes the extension of the Schools' Counselling Service and additional community-based support, specifically focused on those young people whose emotional wellbeing has a severe impact on their ability to attend school. The focus on

data gathering to both inform need and to identify how well communities are supporting young people's emotional wellbeing, through partnership data sharing and the implementation of the SHINE approach, will be a key element going forward.

3.2.4 The SHINE approach recognises that central to success in this area is the development of a culture where mental health is discussed as readily as physical health and where it is expected that it is everyone's responsibility to help people reflect upon what we can all do to be mentally healthy and support each other when necessary.

3.2.5 Further detail can be found in the [Education and Children's Services Committee Paper 'Our Minds Matter: Supporting Young People's Emotional Wellbeing - Service Update 11 May 2021', p10-63.](#)

3.2.6 A number of the improvement projects referred to in 2.7 are focussed on aspects of children and young people's wellbeing. Projects aim to identify and implement interventions to improve resilience, self-regulation and engagement in learning. In the early years we also have a project focussed on parenting support. During COVID restriction times, it has been difficult to fully involve families in parenting support groups. The [Solihull approach](#) has a well-developed online course for parents underpinned by theoretical evidence. This online programme has been made free to all parents in Scotland by the Scottish Government, but however uptake of the resource has been extremely poor. This improvement project is exploring the barriers to families participating in this resource and to find ways on how best parents can be supported to complete the online modules. In doing so, parents will have a better understanding of their child's development and how to better manage their child's behaviours in a positive and nurturing way. Learning gained from these projects will inform the reform work next session, as we move to spread and scale effective approaches.

3.3 Equity

3.3.1 In our analysis of the attainment at the end of the school session 19/20, looked-after children and young people continue to be at a significantly higher risk of not attaining expected attainment levels. The refresh of our Learning with Care (LWC) Action Plan based on evaluations of progress made in 19/20, including the challenges faced during lockdown, has been key to ensuring that Care Experienced Children & Young People funding, part of [Scottish Government's Attainment Scotland Funding](#), enables the provision of high quality support for our looked after children that allows them to engage successfully in their learning in our schools. The Learning with Care Plan looks to address concerns around attendance, achievement and sustained positive destinations. Although we aim to get it right for all Care Experienced young people our target groups for this plan are those young people in residential care who are returning to Fife and those in kinship care. Enhanced support has been provided this session to targeted young people which has improved school attendance and progress in learning. 24 primary-aged care experienced or on the cusp of care have been targeted for an enhanced transition project and 13 secondary-aged young people have completed a week long course to re-engage them with learning after the lockdown and prepare for a school college partnership course in construction in S4.

3.3.2 In the 21/22 LWC plan a team of experienced teachers is being established to support effective transitions for Care Experienced children, including those returning to Fife or those who are cared for in our own residential homes. The team will provide additional and/or intensive support for the young people which will align with the plans of the child's mainstream school. A mentoring programme, in partnership with [MCR Pathways](#), is also being established, targeting care-experienced young people in 5 of our secondary

schools. This programme sets out to improve the sustained positive destinations for care experienced young people.

3.3.3 From the data that we hold, the attendance rate of our Looked After and Accommodated pupils in Fife shows poorer attendance at school than their peers, with the average attendance rate being 5% below that of those who are not or have not experienced being in care. Over the course of the next 12 months, we aim to increase the percentage of attendance in each of the local committee areas to bring the attendance of our looked after pupils in line with their peers. Cluster and Best Practice teams have been established to gather insights into what is working to improve outcomes for our young people and families, working with the seven area teams who are working directly with service users. Within the first half of this work the focus will be on gathering data and learning from three of the localities around attendance. This will transfer to the other areas towards the end of this year.

3.3.4 During this session, six schools were identified to work in partnership with our Education Scotland Attainment Advisor, to share their experiences in reducing cases of exclusion. An improvement project is now concentrating on three primary schools where there are pupils at risk of exclusion, all of whom live with disadvantage. Using the learning gained from across schools, change ideas are being tested to improve support for identified children. Alongside this we have engaged with our partners SACRO and the Scottish Centre for Conflict Resolution (SCCR) to widen support available to staff to develop skills and understanding in reducing cases of exclusion.

3.3.5 In response to an increasing number of referrals to the Autism Spectrum Information and Support Team (ASIST), data was interrogated from 4 months of Requests for Assistance (RFA) forms, 2 months in lockdown and 2 months when schools were open to all pupils. The group identified that the majority of referrals requested support to mitigate distressed behaviours including harm to self and others and fleeing the classroom or building. The project aims to support school-based staff in increasing their skills and confidence in reducing the distressed behaviours of pupils with additional support needs.

3.4 High Quality Learning, Teaching & Assessment

3.4.1 Professional learning (PL) has continued to be a vital support for practitioners this session. All PL offered has been re-formatted to be delivered online in highly effective ways making the most of digital approaches not simply mirroring in-person modes. The Pedagogy Team have continued to support schools through professional learning, advice and guidance covering all areas of learning, teaching and assessment and for nurture and wellbeing.

3.4.2 We have continued to support schools with our evidence-based approaches to teaching literacy and numeracy (Workshop for Literacy/Conceptual Understanding in Numeracy) through our impactful professional learning programmes and with ongoing advice and guidance to schools. These are developing confidence and understanding in the approaches and building capacity in schools to support their own contexts and clusters to improve.

3.4.3 Plans for digital learning support is scaffolded by the [Digital Learning Culture Strategy 21 contained with the E&CS Sub-Committee papers 16th March 2021](#). Through this we have over 40 schools on our Leading Digital Culture programme, auditing their settings and creating action plans to guide their digital improvements with staff, learners and parents next session. We have worked directly with a range of schools who have contacted us for our Short Burst programme where groups of staff have been supported to improve a key aspect of digital learning in a very tight timeframe. We have updated all of our

professional learning to reflect the digital reality of teaching and learning now and how this will support high quality learning in the future. BTS have delivered regular impactful skills sessions on all aspects of using Glow and O365 in schools, including delivering a programme of skills training to all probationer and early phase teachers.

- 3.4.4 We continue to work across Fife to share good practice happening in our schools through our Learning in Fife 2021 project. We also work to connect practitioners through webinars, Informative Sways, Sprint Approaches and by regularly and widely promoting and linking to national offers through [DigiLearn](#) and the [National eLearning Offer](#) with WestOS and eSgoil.
- 3.4.5 There are a number of improvement projects in place to support the development of approaches to assessment and moderation. These improvement projects sit within our Fife-wide networks in conjunction with our South East Improvement Collaborative (SEIC) partners and Education Scotland.
- 3.4.6 Over the past 3 years we have also been scaling up successful improvement focused on children's writing attainment. We have generated an evidence base of 'what works' and a process (Quality Improvement approaches, tools and techniques) to facilitate change. In January 2021, using our 19/20 literacy data, 14 Fife schools involving 45 staff, were identified and supported through training and coaching to engage in quality improvement projects focussed on writing attainment. Two schools from Dundee are also participating in this project which is enhancing the opportunities for sharing good practice across schools/authority areas. Whilst we are confident that improvement will be evident from all schools, the pace of change was impacted by the national lockdown (January-March 2021) therefore this project is ongoing.
- 3.4.7 Within the Levenmouth Cluster, an improvement project is underway focussed on improving early reading skills through high quality teaching, learning and assessment which is underpinned by research-informed knowledge. 9 of the 11 cluster primary schools in the Levenmouth area are participating, with 19 staff involved, promoting collaboration across the cluster. The project is supported by the principal teacher of Literacy from the Pedagogy Team. The rationale of this project is to narrow the attainment gap in reading for our youngest learners. All research indicates that without focused intervention, this gap persists and widens across the years of formal schooling and is linked to future success and positive destinations.
- 3.4.8 Numeracy & Mathematics attainment has been a key focus of improvement activity within the Viewforth Cluster. Headteachers, Primary 7 teachers and the PTC Mathematics at Viewforth High School worked collaboratively to make effective use of diagnostic assessment tools and pedagogical approaches to improve the attainment of Primary 7 children between March and June 2021. The collaboration between primary and secondary colleagues in this project also focussed on ensuring a smooth transition and sustained progress in learning for all children as they move onto Viewforth High School. Learning gained from this project will be used to support assessment and moderation approaches further within Viewforth Cluster and will be shared more widely across Cluster areas.
- 3.4.9 Within early years settings, an improvement project has commenced focussed on improving tracking and monitoring of children's progress through Learning Conversations. Learning Conversations were identified as an approach to tracking and monitoring with the potential to improve confidence and effectiveness in ensuring children's progress in nursery, due to the positive impacts of the approach already well established in Family Nurture Centres across Fife. The challenge in this project was not to prove that Learning Conversations are effective, but to find out if this is a viable

approach in nurseries within schools, and across the different nursery models and related staff working patterns. Piloting of Learning Conversations is taking place this term and learning submitted by the pilot settings by the end of the session. If the pilot shows that Learning Conversations are viable across settings, the approach will be spread through the creation and dissemination of guidance for SLTs/ Managers of ELC settings.

3.5 Participation & Engagement

- 3.5.1 As noted in 3.3.3 attendance at school can directly impact on educational attainment. To improve attainment and close the poverty related attainment gap it is essential that our young people attend school. Attendance within the Levenmouth cluster, one of our most deprived areas, is lower than the Fife average. In order to improve this, we need to focus our work on what we can do to improve attendance and in turn increase the attainment and life chances of the young people within this locality. Within the Levenmouth cluster we have identified four primary schools, alongside Levenmouth Academy to analyse more closely the attendance of their pupil cohorts. Using Quality Improvement Methodology we are working together to understand the system, identify targeted pupil groups and explore strategies to test with a view to identifying best practice that can be developed across the wider system to improve attendance, not only within the five schools, but the wider Fife school cohort.
- 3.5.2 In addition, two Fife secondary schools have participated in the South East Improvement Collaborative Intensive Quality Improvement Programme (IQIP). The aim of the Intensive Quality Improvement Programme (IQIP) was to equip school teams with confidence to undertake quality improvement projects within their school community focussed on improving attendance and engagement, with an overarching principle of addressing issues of equity. We have also taken up the opportunity to work alongside ADES members, QI advisors and teams from other local authorities to improve the engagement and / or attendance of vulnerable learners whose learning was being disrupted. Participating schools have engaged in quality improvement projects and have improved engagement for identified vulnerable learners.
- 3.5.3 An improvement project has also been established to quality assure approved flexible packages (AFPs) for children and young people to ensure plans in place are improving outcomes/attainment. The longer-term aim is to reduce the numbers of young people on AFP's for longer than 6 months. Within an identified group of Secondary and Primary schools, a number of change ideas have been identified and are being used as appropriate with targeted young people. These projects will continue into next session and learning gained will continue to inform our policies and advice to schools across Fife.

4.0 **Education Recovery**

4.1 Education Psychology Service

- 4.1.1 The Educational Psychology Service has evolved and developed its service delivery model during lockdown to provide a responsive and supportive service to schools specifically to support with recovery planning. A focus of this remodelling was to maximise staff and public access, whilst taking into account our finite resources. This has been built around the changing needs of schools, families and young people, including the development of effective teaching and learning and emotional supports for those most affected by the impact of the pandemic.
- 4.1.2 To support recovery the service has prioritised direct work with active cases, staff development and training to increase their confidence and skills in managing young people's wellbeing and integrating this into effective teaching and learning experiences.

The service has sharpened its focus on staff wellbeing, recognising that impact of lockdown, supporting learners at home, from home, and now supporting learners to return to school and developing a sustainable approach to education within the ongoing pandemic, is stressful for staff and demands an increase in resilience, flexibility and coping skills.

4.1.3 In addition, materials developed by the service during and prior to lockdown with the purpose of supporting emotional wellbeing, are being promoted, disseminated and delivered to build capacity in schools. These include the 'Trauma-Informed approaches to transition back to school' Pack, the 'Anxiety is Normal' Toolkit, the 'Resilience Assessment and Intervention' Tool and the 'Coaching Conversations' pack, available on the [EP Service GIRFEC website](#).

4.1.4 The EP Service is also providing direct support for the implementation and development of the 'Counselling in Schools' provision, to support schools to integrate this into a comprehensive whole-school approach to supporting young people's wellbeing.

4.1.5 They have also sustained their specialist role in responding to traumatic incidents within educational provisions and directly support staff, children, and their families when they are impacted by unexpectedly tragic or traumatic circumstances. The service will continue to use data, intelligence and feedback to adjust its service delivery to ensure that as needs change during the recovery and reform process, the service to stakeholders continues to provide what they need, when they need it, to a high quality, and supports the delivery of the Directorate Improvement Plan 21-23.

4.2 Additional Staffing 20/21 and 21/22

4.2.1 In line with the criteria in the Scottish Government Education Recovery Grant 20-21, £3.878 million was allocated to schools to fund additional teachers and support staff during Session 20/21. These staff were used to provide additional support to targeted groups and individuals where their wellbeing and/or progress in learning during the school closures periods has been most impacted. These staff also provided additional resilience in schools when children and/or staff were required to isolate in line with Public Health advice.

4.2.2 Following additional education recovery funding announced by Scottish Government in February 2021, a further £3.363m has been allocated to Fife for teaching and support staff to help meet the needs of pupils whose learning has been most impacted by the school closure periods in 20/21, to extend the provision of devices to children who do not have access to them, and to provide home support for children and families. Also announced in February was a further £1.821m to fund the recruitment of additional staff. Consultation has taken place with all Fife Headteachers and the agreed model is based on all primary and secondary schools receiving a share of the funding. Schools will have the flexibility to deploy teaching or pupil support assistant time. The share of the funding is based on pupil roll at key stages and schools are able to work together, where appropriate, to utilise their funding on a joint basis.

4.2.3 11 schools will receive funding that equates to 0.8FTE teacher or 1.6 FTE Pupil Support Assistant, 44 schools 0.5FTE teacher or 1 FTE PSA and 103 schools 0.3FTE teacher or 0.6 FTE PSA. Family Nurture Centres have also been allocated some additionality to provide outreach support for individuals struggling with transition to P1. Additional staffing has also been allocated to Special Schools to support an outreach model of support to children and young people with additional support needs within mainstream schools (6 teachers or 12 PSAs).

4.2.4 Fife data is highlighting the current P2 and P7 pupils as most impacted and schools are asked to use the funding flexibly to support pupils in P1-3 and S1-3. All schools will be required to report to the local authority on the impact of this additional support. Central support will be offered to staff undertaking the additional hours in the form of networking/professional learning sessions. To support staff in measuring the impact of the additionality, consideration may be given by schools to using improvement methodology to develop their project aims and measures. A centrally organised practicum will be developed to support this.

4.3 Digital Learning & Equity of Access

4.3.1 Since March 2020 important steps have been taken across the Directorate to reduce and/or remove barriers to engagement in remote learning including improving children and young people's access to devices and/or the internet. On the 14 January 2021 elected members were updated through a working group, on the approach taken to the distribution of digital devices to children and young people who had no or very limited access to a device or to the internet.

4.3.2 Continuing to engage with our schools directly we have been able to ensure that there are no young people in Fife who have no access to a digital device for continuing learning at home. However, for many of these young people, this access is not what we would consider to be *good* access. For example, they may be sharing one device between several family members, or they may only have access to a mobile phone.

4.3.3 At the E&CS Sub-Committee on [16 March 2021](#) elected members were briefed on the Directorate's progress and agreed the recommendations for pursuing an equity-based approach to continuing a digital roll-out for young people. Access to appropriate devices, connectivity and platforms for engagement are important factors in reducing inequality for children and young people.

4.3.4 From the Scottish Government Educational Recovery grant 20-21 referred to in para 4.2.2, an additional 5000 new Chromebook devices are now being distributed to young people with limited access to a device for learning between home and school (£1.4m). In line with the agreed approach to broaden access for learners', schools have been asked to identify how many learners have only access to a smartphone or where a single device is shared between more than two people in the home.

4.3.5 By summer 2021, there will be over 12,000 devices allocated to children and young people in Fife to support their learning at home.

4.3.6 The professional learning of our school leaders, teachers and support staff has continued to be a key priority for the service. Significant time and resource have been prioritised to provide staff with the necessary technical and pedagogical support to enable them to continue to develop effective approaches to digital learning. Professional learning opportunities and technical support is being provided through a range of on-line guidance and advice materials, including opportunities to attend webinars and tutorials. Staff are also signposted to nationally available support and resources online. Schools and early learning centres are also provided with opportunities to access and share ideas and examples of practice through GLOW, the national digital platform for schools.

4.3.7 As we continue to progress with our digital learning culture we are embarking upon a wider consultation with key groups across the directorate. This consultation will seek to hear from staff and young people on their digital vision for working and learning. This will be used to create sector specific plans and design pilot programmes which will help us to listen, learn and meet the digital needs of all.

4.4 Easter Holiday Support for Children, Young People and Families

Additional support was offered during the Easter holiday period to children and young people, particularly targeting vulnerable and disadvantaged. Aspects of this offer were enabled by additional Scottish Government Education Recovery funding for logistics for 2021-22.

- Secondary subject leads were consulted to identify the most effective online resources available for senior phase pupils. These were packaged together in a way to signpost young people to online study support materials. These resources included offers from [Esgoil](#), [Scholar](#) and St Andrew's university. The way was viewed by young people 640 times over the Easter holiday period.
- St Andrew's University extended their study support for first chances pupils to all senior phase pupils in Fife. This allowed pupils studying National 5 or Higher English or Mathematics attend tutorials over the Easter Holidays. In total, 124 students registered and 94 attended from 17 Fife schools. With some students attending multiple events, we had a total of 193 engagements across all events.
- Study support sessions in-school and virtually were supported by additional funding in eight secondary schools across Fife. 1060 S4-S6 students attended these sessions across the eight schools.
- A programme of online tutoring was setup to target 50 young people from 5 Secondary Schools from Easter through to end of session. Schools with high levels of FME were targeted. Each school selected 10 young people who were affected by poverty, were young carers or care experienced. Tutors were secondary teachers with a GTC registration across subject specialisms.
- Fife out of school care clubs provided free places to families adversely affected by poverty and in crisis. Three clubs were targeted to include pupils referred for a protected place, these were located at Kelty, Caskieberran and Leuchars primary schools.
- A pilot programme involving four primary schools from the NE of Fife, was set up targeting 63 families. The programme offered 2-hour group tuition sessions each day focused on literacy and numeracy skills.

4.5 Alternative Certification Model (ACM) – Senior Phase

- 4.5.1 There has been regular communication to parents/carers and learners by the Head of Service (Secondary) to keep them updated on both SQA information and how this relates to Fife schools.
- 4.5.2 Schools across Fife are reviewing and gathering evidence to support the ACM. This includes carrying out assessments in line with guidance from the SQA and Fife guidance developed with staff over many months. SQA have provided subject specific guidance in relation to what evidence needs to be gathered and schools are using this guidance to determine what evidence will need to be generated in May and June for each subject. This differs across subjects based on SQA requirements. It also differs across schools based on what evidence the school may already hold from assessments completed earlier in the session from learners.
- 4.5.4 Fife has extended the timetable until the end of term in all Secondary schools, to allow as much time as possible for learners to complete assessments, re-do these, gather as much evidence as possible and give of their best to demonstrate the best grade they can achieve.

4.5.5 In Fife we have worked with practitioners at all levels to develop guidance for schools which includes 3 quality assurance returns to senior local authority officers to ensure the process is robust and fair. Our guidance was recently evaluated by Education Scotland as very comprehensive with a bottom up approach, done by empowering teacher approaches to decisions around assessments and understanding standards with a strong collegiate approach which was very well received, including with Professional Associations. Collegiate work across schools and with Local Authority colleagues was appreciated.

4.5.6 To strengthen the system for recovery, we are looking at what we have learned during this time to support our planning from August 2021. We want to ensure that learners and staff have clear expectations around assessment and moderation and monitoring of progress, should there be any amendments to exams for 2022 diet.

4.6 Summer Holiday Support for Children, Young People and Families

4.6.1 The Scottish Government have allocated £1.160m to Fife for the provision of activities to improve the wellbeing of children and young people during the 2021 summer holidays. The key criteria is to improve the wellbeing of children and young people, providing opportunities for them to socialise and reconnect with peers during the summer through delivery of a range of activities, with food and family support integrated where needed within local communities. The aim of this investment is to enhance and expand any such existing work, building on and learning from existing good practice while providing scope to innovate locally in response to what children and young people tell you would help.

4.6.2 Key groups will be targeted throughout the summer who may have particular wellbeing needs which include children from low-income households, children with a disability or additional support need, young carers, care experienced children and young people, children supported by a child's plan and children who have undergone significant transitions during lockdown or will experience them this year, including starting in ELC, starting primary school, moving to secondary school and leaving school.

4.6.3 Services and teams across the E&CS and Communities Directorate have worked together to co-ordinate an enhanced suite of universal and targeted activities throughout the summer. Programmes and activities are in place supported by Education, Children & Families Social Work, Community Learning & Development teams, Early Years & Childcare Services, Outdoor Education Fife, Fife Music Service and Active Schools teams. These include:

- Enhanced opportunities for care experienced children and young people living in residential houses, foster care or kinship placements, e.g. day trips, short breaks, access to local recreational resources, play and recreational equipment.
- Our Community Learning and Development Teams across all localities have developed enhanced programmes to build resilience, confidence and self-esteem for local children and young people, concentrating those affected by long term persistent poverty. This will be through group-based youth work sessions and family fun community sessions, delivered by experienced CLD staff. New learning opportunities and experiences will be offered that increase children and young people's knowledge and ability to engage within their local community. This work includes physical activities/sport; arts & crafts; outdoor activities; cooking; music, film & I.T activities; teamwork/games; community events, etc. Access to certificated awards programmes can be offered within this work, alongside volunteering opportunities for older young people.

- Our Active Schools Teams will be delivering a comprehensive summer activity programme, this has been enhanced to provide programmes and activities for those young people transitioning from P7 to S1, children with additional support needs and other targeted groups. They will also be providing Young Leader training to increase employability skills. Training will provide the qualifications necessary to meet the minimum requirements to work in school and community settings. Funding will support pupils to gain certificated and vocational qualifications to support their personal development and enhance their employment opportunities.
- Free Range Outdoor Play Project run by the Practice Development Team, Early Years, in partnership with Falkland Estate has increased the number of places available throughout the summer. Targeted, referrals based on an identified health & wellbeing need via Social Work, Education, NHS, Voluntary sector organisations for children aged 4-10 years (pre-school nursery year to P5).
- Special Schools across Fife are opening the facilities for families to use over the summer holidays, e.g., Calaiswood SS is opening 3 days a week for 4 weeks for families to access the swimming pool, art room, rebound therapy or playground facilities.
- Schools are developing family learning opportunities that compliment those offered by active schools, providing families with an alternative choice to sport. This will target families with young people requiring an enhanced transition or support to reengage with school after shielding.
- Building on the success of our Easter tutoring programme and partnership with St Andrew's University we are developing a programme to support our National 5 learners progress to Higher. The use of online tutors is being explored to support young people unable to attend school.

5.0 Conclusion

- 5.1 The emerging data is already showing the significant impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and the closures of schools on children and young people's wellbeing and progress in learning. Over the next two-three years our aspiration is to recover attainment to the levels achieved prior to the Covid-19 pandemic in 18/19 or to exceed these levels.
- 5.2 The most recent data collection, from mid-May, suggested that Achievement of CfE levels this year are likely to be broadly in line with those achieved last year. The stretch targets illustrated in figure 2, set out a path for recovery which will help Fife's schools to achieve our aspiration of meeting the national stretch aims for attainment by 2024/25. However, progress towards this ultimate goal is likely to be uneven, particularly during the ongoing impact of the pandemic. The stretch targets will, therefore, be recalculated at the end of each school year, to reflect the levels of attainment achieved. This will provide schools with a realistic basis for mapping out a path for recovery at the start of each school year, whilst also maintaining a focus on reaching the national stretch targets by 2024/25.
- 5.3 To achieve these targets we aim to capitalise on our learning of 'what works' prior to and during the pandemic. Through the attainment reform work, we will continue to improve universal approaches to raising attainment, with a relentless focus on targeted, disproportionate support to those most disadvantaged and vulnerable.
- 5.4 To improve outcomes for our children and young people we will continue to build capacity and capability in the use of quality improvement methodology. This will ensure a rigorous and systematic approach, enabling us to invest and scale up successful changes quickly based on demonstratable improvements.

- 5.5 Partnership working across the Directorate, wider council services and 3rd Sector providers will be a fundamental aspect of improvement activity, particularly at a local level. Collaborative approaches will strengthen universal, additional and intensive support for children, young people and families across all drivers for improvement within the Attainment & Closing the Gap reform and recovery.
- 5.6 All schools and early learning centres have been provided with guidance to inform improvement planning in all settings for Session 20/21, in collaboration with pupils, parents/carers and partners. School leaders and staff teams are supported to engage with their setting's data effectively to inform the identification of priority areas for improvement. All school leaders will be part of learning partnerships with colleagues across 3-4 settings. This will enable peer support and challenge across the system, focussed on impact on the outcomes for learners, universally and targeted.
- 5.7 Improvement support from Directorate teams will be focussed on developing leadership at all levels in improving aspects of curriculum, learning, teaching and assessment across all sectors. In the main, improvement support will continue to be delivered through virtual training, coaching, collaboration and networking opportunities. We will, however, continue to review delivery models of professional learning and collaboration in line with public health guidance, and through engagement with staff, to determine the approach that suits the purpose of the activities most effectively.

List of Appendices

Appendix 1: Attainment & Closing the Gap Reform Driver Diagram

Background Papers

[Equity Audit, Scottish Government, 2021](#)

[Audit Scotland, Improving Outcomes for Young People through School Education, March 2021](#)

[Closing the poverty-related attainment gap: Progress Report 2016-2021](#)

Report Contact

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Appendix 1
Attainment Reform Group –
Driver Diagram

By August 2023 at least...

- **78.6% of P1, P4, P7 children in SIMD Q1**
- **88.2% of P1, P4, P7 children in SIMD Q5**
- **S3 – TBC ACEL data not available 2020 & 2021.**

...will have successfully achieved the CfE level relevant to their stage in literacy and numeracy

Primary Drivers

Health & Wellbeing

Equity

High Quality Learning, Teaching & Assessment

Engagement & Participation

L
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A
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P

Effectively analysing and using data to inform targeted approaches to measure impact. Ensure this improvement contributes to demonstration and application within a level.

Understanding what high quality learning, teaching and ASSESSMENT leading to improved attainment through application and demonstration of skills, knowledge and understanding.

Curriculum design and rationale development with a focus on IDL, creativity and skills for life in the new normal.

Leading, developing, modelling and promoting a learning culture including the use of digital technology.

Empowering all stakeholders through enhanced focus on participation and engagement.

Secondary Drivers

- Developing CYP self efficacy
- Physical health
- Healthy relationships
- Systemic approaches for families
- Nurturing Approaches
- Positive transitions
- Targeted Support
- The Promise
- Overcome poverty-related barriers to learning
- Learning, Teaching and Assessment cycle
- Positive transitions
- Pedagogical Approaches
- Digital Literacy
- Pupil Voice
- Attendance
- Fully participate in the core and wider aspects of the curriculum
- Partnership Working
- Parental Engagement
- Wider Community

Building Quality Improvement Capacity, Culture and Capability in all staff
 Using data to inform improvement planning and implementation

24th June, 2021.

Agenda Item No. 7

Draft Plan for Fife – A Plan for Renewal

Report by: Michael Enston, Executive Director (Communities)

Purpose

To review progress with the development of the three yearly update to the Plan for Fife 2017-2027 as the basis for Fife's recovery and renewal from the impact of the Covid 19 pandemic.

Recommendations

Committee is asked to consider and comment on:

- a) the draft three-year plan;
- b) proposed delivery and monitoring arrangements for the plan; and
- c) progress in delivering the short-term actions for reform and recovery agreed by Committee in March 2021.

Resource Implications

The updated Plan for Fife will largely be delivered from existing resources across the Fife Partnership. Community wealth building approaches will be used to maximise the benefits from public expenditure in Fife and make best use of Fife's public and community assets for community wellbeing.

Impact Assessment

A full Equality Impact Assessment will be carried out prior to approval of the updated Plan for Fife.

Consultation

Fife Council elected members, Fife Council services, community planning partners and strategic partnership groups were consulted in the preparation of this report. Fife Partnership agreed the proposals in the report at its meeting in May 2021 as a basis for further discussion.

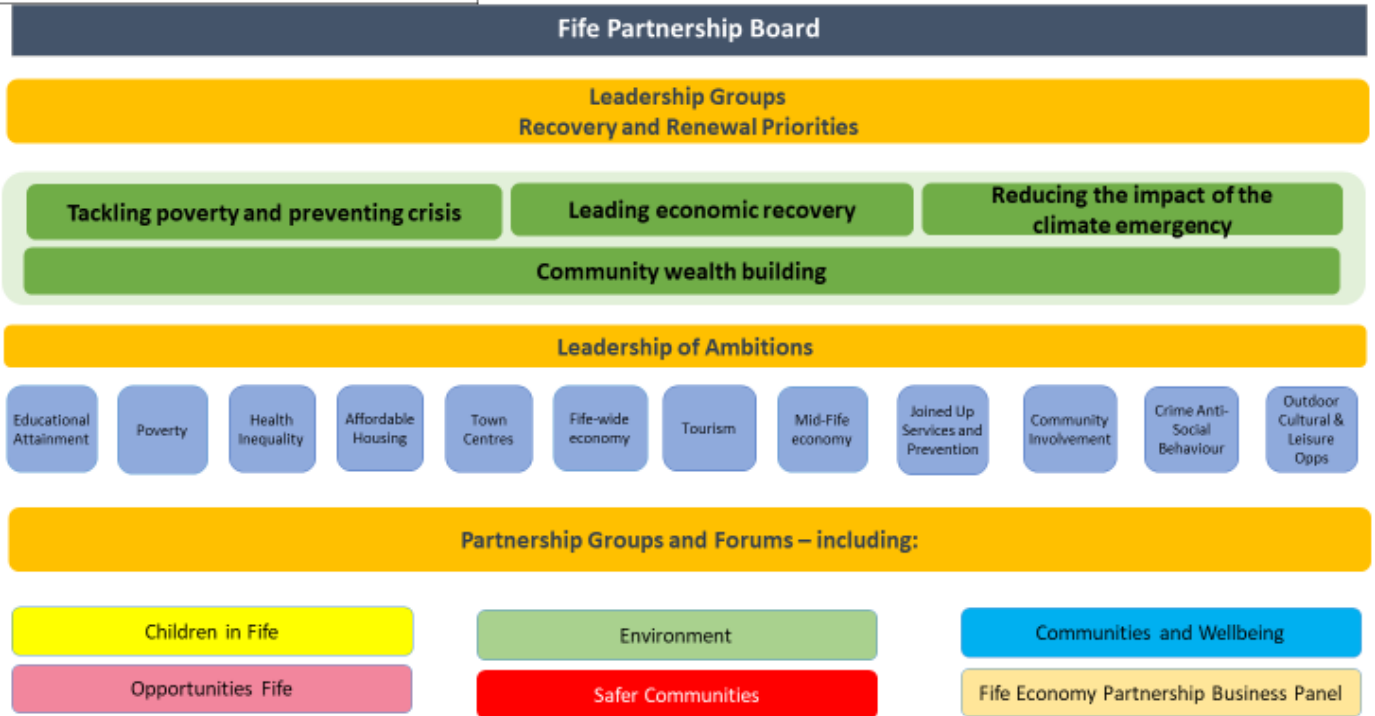
1.0 Background

- 1.1 A report to this Committee on 4th March 2021 presented the conclusions from work carried out during the previous six months to shape Fife's recovery from the impact of the pandemic.
- 1.2 Committee agreed that the revised Plan for Fife should be developed as a renewal plan for Fife, focusing on the recovery and renewal priorities in order to drive forward change in these areas over the next three years.
- 1.3 At the same meeting, Committee considered initial proposals for revised delivery and governance arrangements for the Fife Partnership. This report builds on these and presents updated proposals.

2.0 Draft Renewal Plan

- 2.1 The three-year review point for the Plan for Fife coincided with the Covid emergency. The draft plan was considered by the Fife Partnership Board at its meeting on 18th May, and the proposed focus on the four renewal priorities was strongly endorsed. The draft plan is included as Appendix One to this report.
- 2.2 The Plan for Fife vision remains the delivery of *A Fairer Fife* and the ten-year ambitions are largely unchanged. The Fife Partnership has proposed the addition of an ambition on addressing the climate emergency. The draft plan therefore has two elements: a) a focus on action to deliver the renewal priorities, and b) continued delivery of the long-term ambitions.
- 2.3 The 2020 Strategic Assessment identified that the Plan for Fife's ten-year ambitions are unlikely to be achieved at the current rate of progress. A system review of the partnership also showed that the current partnership arrangements are not clearly aligned to delivering the required outcomes. The Plan for Fife sets out, therefore, revised leadership arrangements, focussed on delivering the renewal priorities. The revised governance model, considered by the Fife Partnership, is set out below and is based on :
 - Senior leadership groups for the renewal priorities including the cross-cutting theme of community wealth building;
 - Identified lead officers for each of the Plan for Fife ambitions;
 - Partnership groups with a partner scrutiny, engagement and advisory role for relevant renewal priorities and ambitions.

Figure 1. Proposed Plan for Fife Governance and Delivery Arrangements



2.4 Building on the positive learning and experience from local responses to the Covid-19 pandemic, local ‘People’ and ‘Place’ leadership groups have been established across Fife’s seven local community planning areas. These groups will have a key role to play in ensuring that the delivery of Plan for Fife ambitions and outcomes is supported by effective local leadership and collaboration. Over next four months, these groups will lead on work to review current local community plans in line with the revised Plan for Fife.

Challenge and Scrutiny

2.5 Delivery of the plan will be monitored via:

- A three-yearly strategic assessment;
- Annual reviews of progress against the 10-year ambitions;
- Quarterly reports on delivery of the renewal priorities;

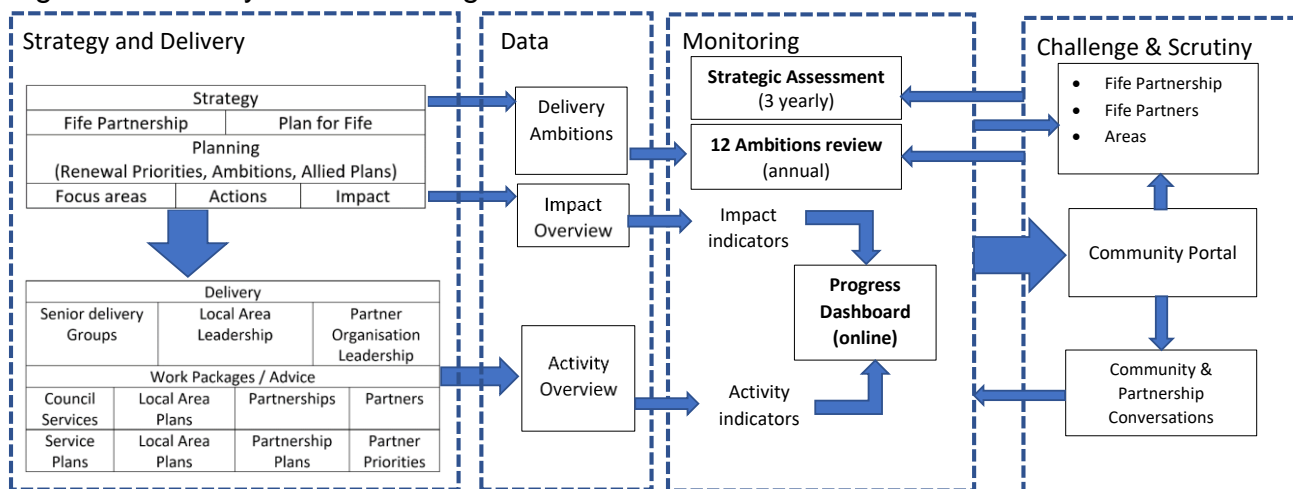
2.6 Within Fife Council, Plan for Fife delivery is currently reported via regular outcome theme reports to the Policy and Coordination Committee. Under the new reporting arrangements, services will report on their contribution to the delivery of Plan for Fife renewal priorities and ambitions as part of their annual performance reports, which will include reporting on both the delivery of outcomes and existing change activity.

2.7 Reporting of progress against indicators and measurements will be combined with qualitative information to provide a meaningful narrative around progress. This will also involve ongoing public reporting through the Community Portal. This information will be used in a ‘living’ way to lead community conversations, conversations with elected members and partner organisations, and to refine our approach.

2.8 The proposed delivery and monitoring framework for the plan is summarised in Figure 2.

Delivery and Monitoring Framework

Figure 2. Delivery and Monitoring Framework



3.0 Finalising the Plan

3.1 The proposed process and timeline for finalising the updated Plan for Fife is as follows:

Activity	Timeline
Consideration of draft plan by Fife Partnership Board	18 th May, 2021
Consideration of draft plan by Partners	June/July
Dialogue with key stakeholders and community groups on the draft plan	June – August 2021
Agreement of final plan by Fife Partnership Board	17 th August, 2021
Agreement of final plan by Fife Council	23 rd September, 2021

3.2 During June and July, there will be dialogue with community planning partners, strategic partnerships and services to further develop the content of the plan in order to ensure that it supports recovery from the pandemic while ensuring continued progress against the long-term ambitions. This will include identifying any gaps in the plan, clarifying the key changes that are needed to ensure recovery, ensuring that planned actions and goals are SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timely) and are likely to have the required impact in terms of achieving the Plan’s ambitions and renewal priorities.

3.3 Partners and Council services will also be asked to ensure that there is clear alignment between the draft plan and their own reform and recovery plans, as well as emerging service plans and strategic plans. This should ensure that there is a clear focus on delivering the renewal priorities across the Fife Partnership.

- 3.4 Community views and experiences of the pandemic are being gathered through the *Your Story, Your Community* survey, and the survey findings will be used to inform the final content of the plan.

4.0 Reform and Recovery – Short Term Actions

- 4.1 At the meeting of this committee on 4th March, it was agreed that the recommendations from each reform area would lead to a number of specific short-term actions by the end of June 2021. Progress on these is summarised in Table 1.

Table 1. Reform and Recovery – Update on Short-term Actions

Reform theme	Activity
<p>Community Wealth Building (CWB)</p>	<p>Prepare delivery plan following consideration of CLES report recommendations Priority actions identified, and development work started on procurement activity, internal processes and the development of a community benefits policy. CWB Project Manager to be recruited.</p> <p>Engage with anchor and financial institutions and key companies on CWB approach Engagement with community planning partners / anchor institutions has revealed strong support for the CWB approach. NHS Fife Board has committed to embedding CWB across the organisation. Positive discussions with Scottish Government on Fair Work Charter, CWB and place agenda.</p>
<p>Tackling Poverty and Crisis Prevention</p>	<p>Agree leadership plan to support new place approach People and Place Leadership arrangements established in each of the seven areas. Further engagement with Fife Council Directorates and partners over the summer to align local delivery arrangements with the Plan for Fife.</p> <p>Initiate a Fife Food and Welfare Support Plan Draft Fife Food Strategy submitted to Communities and Housing Services sub-committee and actions agreed.</p> <p>Initiate test of change in one area around service redesign and commissioning Test of Change proposal submitted to Kirkcaldy Area Committee. Project will run from June 2021 for 12 months.</p> <p>Conclude work on referral and contact support processes Initial referral and contact work concluded. Work will now be implemented alongside the Test of Change project.</p> <p>Develop concessions and cost reduction scheme Project established to produce concessions scheme for implementation early 2022.</p>

Reform theme	Activity
<p>Sustaining Services through New Ways of Working</p>	<p>Develop business proposition for mobile & flexible workstyles</p> <p>Additional funding agreed to support the project for an initial six-month period. Timeline agreed for a return to repurposed workplaces by September 2021, in a blended workstyle, for staff who were previously office based.</p> <p>Further work under way to explore flexibility across the whole workforce.</p> <p>Agree digital and data priorities</p> <p>Digital Strategy agreed in November. Data Office to be established to facilitate the development of data-driven approaches, aligning with Edinburgh and South East Scotland Region City Deal.</p> <p>“6 Lenses” approach developed to help services identify and scope opportunities for digital transformation</p> <p>Further work in June to agree approach, timelines, resources and next steps.</p>
<p>Tackling the Climate Emergency</p>	<p>Develop Climate Emergency priority action areas</p> <p>Project initiated on the regional climate economic impact assessment in partnership with Adaptation Scotland.</p> <p>Integrating climate into local community planning, including piloting Place Standard 2.0 with a climate lens.</p> <p>Initial assessment of vacant and derelict land sites for climate action. Detailed feasibility including climate mitigation and adaptation measures e.g. flood prevention, community energy generation or growing spaces in summer 2021.</p> <p>Development of Fife Council’s sustainable procurement approach, identifying changes to support community wealth building.</p> <p>Assess Green aspect of new ways of working, use of buildings and food sustainability</p> <p>Initial assessment of climate impact from new ways of working completed.</p> <p>Dunfermline Learning Campus moving from stage 1 to stage 2, including net zero verification tracker and report to external design guardian on 11th June.</p>

Reform theme	Activity
	<p>Sustainable Food Places project has engaged with partners and agreeing joint vision with them by end of June. Food Summit planned for 22nd June as part of Greener Kirkcaldy's Climate Action Fife project.</p> <p>Food waste project being developed with Zero Waste Scotland for delivery during 2021/22.</p>
<p>Leading Economic Recovery</p>	<p>Implement the Leading Economic Recovery (LER) six-point action plan, working towards Fife's Economic Strategy.</p> <p>Delivery of short-term LER Action Plan integrated within 'new normal' business as usual activity. A more detailed review of progress on the LER Action Plan being undertaken in June.</p> <p>Mid-Fife Economic Investment Prospectus considered by Economy, Tourism, Strategic Planning & Transportation Committee on 10th June 2021.</p> <p>Continuing to monitor and evaluate the impact of Covid-19 and developments in relation to emerging UK and Scottish government economic policy and strategy.</p> <p>Refresh of the Fife Economic Strategy scheduled for 2022.</p>

5.0 Conclusions

- 5.1 The draft update of the Plan for Fife sets out a three-year renewal plan following the Covid-19 pandemic. It also provides a clear basis for continued partnership activity aimed at delivering A Fairer Fife and long-term ambitions. The plan aims to support a conversation between public service providers and Fife's communities to ensure that communities are at the heart of Fife's recovery and renewal journey over the next three years and beyond.

List of Appendices

Appendix 1. – Draft Plan for Fife Update: A Plan for Renewal

Report Contact

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DRAFT 6TH MAY 2021

RECOVERY & RENEWAL PLAN FOR FIFE 2021-2024

Contents

Our Plan

Our Vision

Our Principles

Our Ambitions

Our Recovery and Renewal Priorities

1. Leading economic recovery
2. Tackling poverty and preventing crisis
3. Reducing the impact of the climate emergency
4. Building community wealth and wellbeing

Delivering together

Tracking progress

Appendices

3-year update on ambitions

Associated Plans

Our Plan

This draft plan sets out our road map through the ongoing challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic and the key steps we plan to take to help Fife come through that stronger and fairer.

The pandemic demands focus. Some of the most significant examples of Fife's incredible response over the past year were characterised by a new kind of community partnership: people and services gathering locally, tackling problems, reducing red tape and creating a common purpose that resonated with all. There were countless examples of on the spot innovation, compassion and a deep commitment to support each other.

Fife's recovery through Covid-19, and the long-term strength in our public services will depend on our ability to stay focused and build on that. This 3-year recovery and renewal plan sets out how all Fife's public services and partners plan to work together to do that. It is grounded in a commitment to community action and draws on the significant resources we have across our partnership, in services, through communities and with the people of Fife to achieve that. We see 4 priorities:

1. **Leading Economy Recovery** – supporting businesses out of the pandemic, securing growth and increasing jobs whilst targeting support to tourism, hospitality and Fife town centres.
2. **Tackling poverty and preventing crisis** – building on important lessons from the pandemic: making sure no-one is left behind and there is 'no wrong door' into partnership services Fife-wide.
3. **Reducing the impact of the climate emergency** – taking urgent action to reduce Fife's impact on climate change, minimise the risks to Fife's communities and make the most of the opportunities the green economy brings.
4. **Building community wealth and wellbeing** – extending the economy recovery to make the most of our assets from natural and manufactured to people and their skills. We will take a holistic approach that will help our communities become not just wealthier but healthier and greener too.

This focused effort will contribute a critical boost to our longer term 10-year Plan for A Fairer Fife and the 12 ambitions that describe our goals. It sets out 3-year actions that will help Fife recover from the pandemic and build back stronger. We hope it will also help stimulate new conversations locally about what needs to change next and how we can all play our part: informing local community plans and the shape of future service plans.

It is a bold plan for renewal, set out to drive Fife's economic and social recovery and see us transform our collective work into a new generation of community-led public services designed to encourage a Fairer Fife for all.

Our Ambitions

Our 10-year plan for Fife is designed to deliver a Fairer Fife described through 12 ambitions. These are still our guiding lights.



Opportunities for All

1. Fife has lower levels of poverty in line with national targets.
2. Educational attainment continues to improve for all groups.
3. Fife has reduced levels of preventable ill health and premature mortality across all communities.



Thriving Places

4. Everyone has access to affordable housing options.
5. Fife's main town centres stand out as attractive places to live, work and visit.
6. All our communities benefit from low levels of crime and anti-social behaviour.
7. Every community has access to high quality outdoor, cultural and leisure opportunities.



Inclusive Growth and Jobs

8. Economic activity and employment in Fife is improving faster than in the rest of Scotland.
9. Economic activity and employment in Mid-Fife is catching up with the rest of Fife and Scotland.
10. Fife has year on year increases in visitor numbers and tourism spend.



Community Led Services

11. Our public services are more joined up and acting 'one step sooner'.
12. Fife's communities and individuals are more involved in local decision making and in helping to plan and deliver local services.

Recovery & Renewal Priority 1 | Leading Economic Recovery

The challenge

- Covid-19 has had an unprecedented economic impact.
- Unemployment will increase significantly once government support schemes end
- Fife's employment rate continues to track Scotland and is lower in Mid-Fife than in Fife



Overall ambition

Economic activity and employment in Fife improving faster than rest of Scotland;



Our 3 Year Renewal Goals

- Recovery in business numbers and employment levels.
- Investment-led sustainable economic growth, particularly in Mid-Fife
- Recovery and growth of tourism sector.
- Revived and repurposed town centres



Outcomes

- Minimise impact of pandemic on businesses and employment
- Strong recovery in town centres, tourism and hospitality sectors
- Areas of greatest need supported
- Increased investment in Mid-Fife
- High quality business premises and innovation centres



Our Approach

- Advice and support for businesses
- Stimulate economic demand
- Protect local employment
- Promote investment in Fife, particularly Mid-Fife
- Support and deliver investment-led economic growth



Leading Economic Recovery– Strategy to Action Map

Advice and support for businesses	Stimulate economic demand	Protect local employment	Promote investment in Fife	Support and deliver investment-led economic growth
Promote access to Covid-19 support	Support investment and repurposing of key town centres	Provide redundancy support through PACE activity	Promote increased investment in Mid-Fife	Support investment in Levenmouth and mid-Fife
Support business sustainability and resilience	Promote 'town centre first' and 'buy local'	Support and deliver re-skilling and up-skilling opportunities	Maximise uptake of new UK and SG funding streams post EU	Edinburgh & SES City Deal /Fife i3 Programme delivery.
Provide advice on business start ups and growth	Support sustainable tourism and hospitality recovery	Provide employability support for 16-24 year olds	Make the case for investment in Fife e.g. via City Region Deals	Support investment in NE Fife through Tay City Region Deal
Promote awareness of supply chain opportunities	Support delivery of 150 th Open Championship	Implement Fife No-one Left Behind commissioning	Support investment through land and property assets	Support Talgo UK investment at Longannet

Recovery & Renewal Priority 2 : Tackling Poverty & Preventing Crisis

The challenge

- Increase in poverty levels across Fife
- Significant increase in demand for crisis support.
- Weak evidence base to direct investment.



Our Overall Ambition

Fife has lower levels of poverty in line with the national target that by 2030 less than 10% of children are living in relative poverty.



Our 3 Year Renewal Goal

To improve by focussing on local networks of support, strengthening our understanding of impact and investing in what works.



Outcome

- Shift to prevention.
- No wrong door.
- Reduction in acute crisis need.



Areas of focus

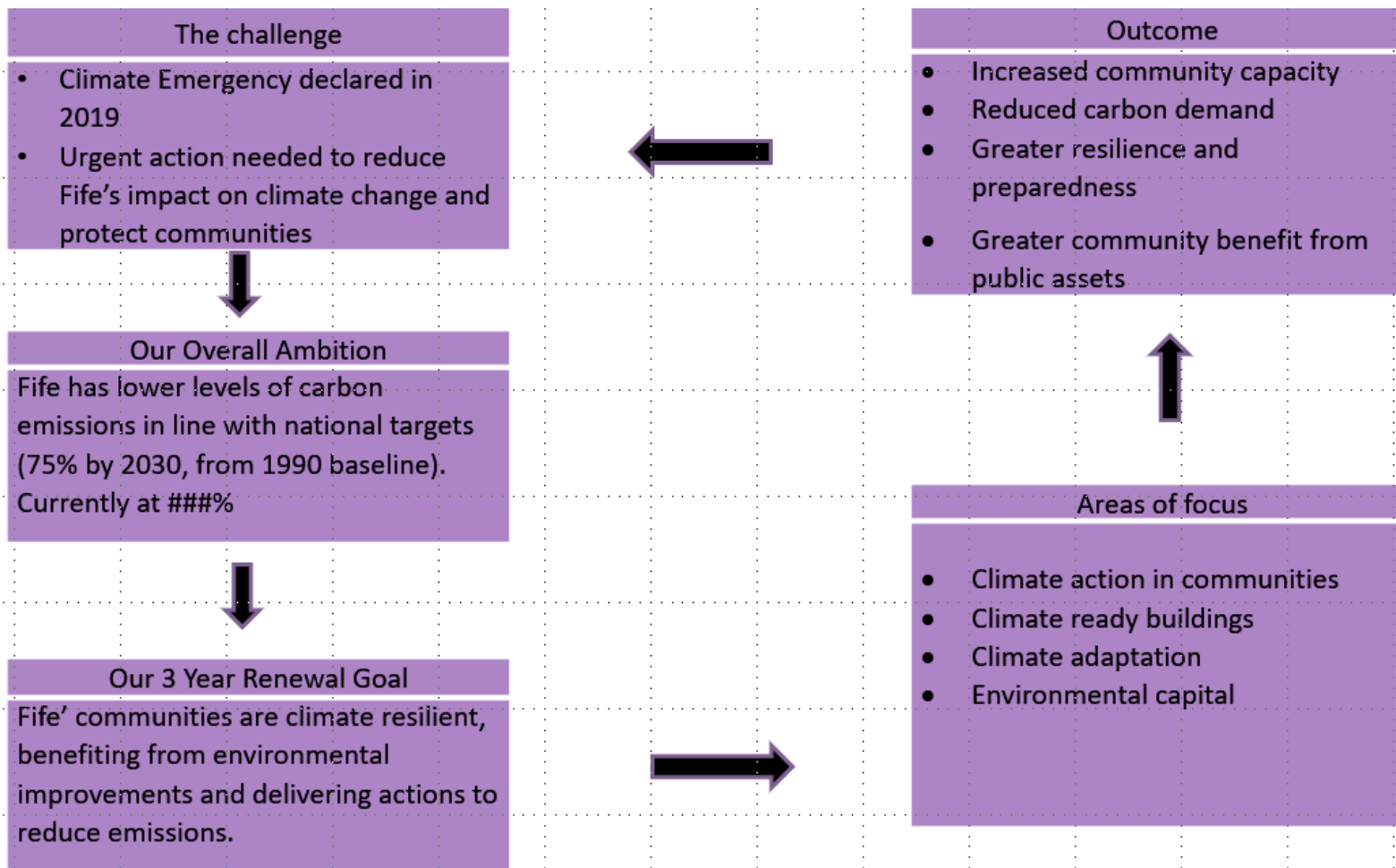
- Develop a no wrong door approach
- Maximise incomes and reduce cost barriers to participation
- Build the network of food and welfare support
- Improve our evidence base and ensure there's a community voice



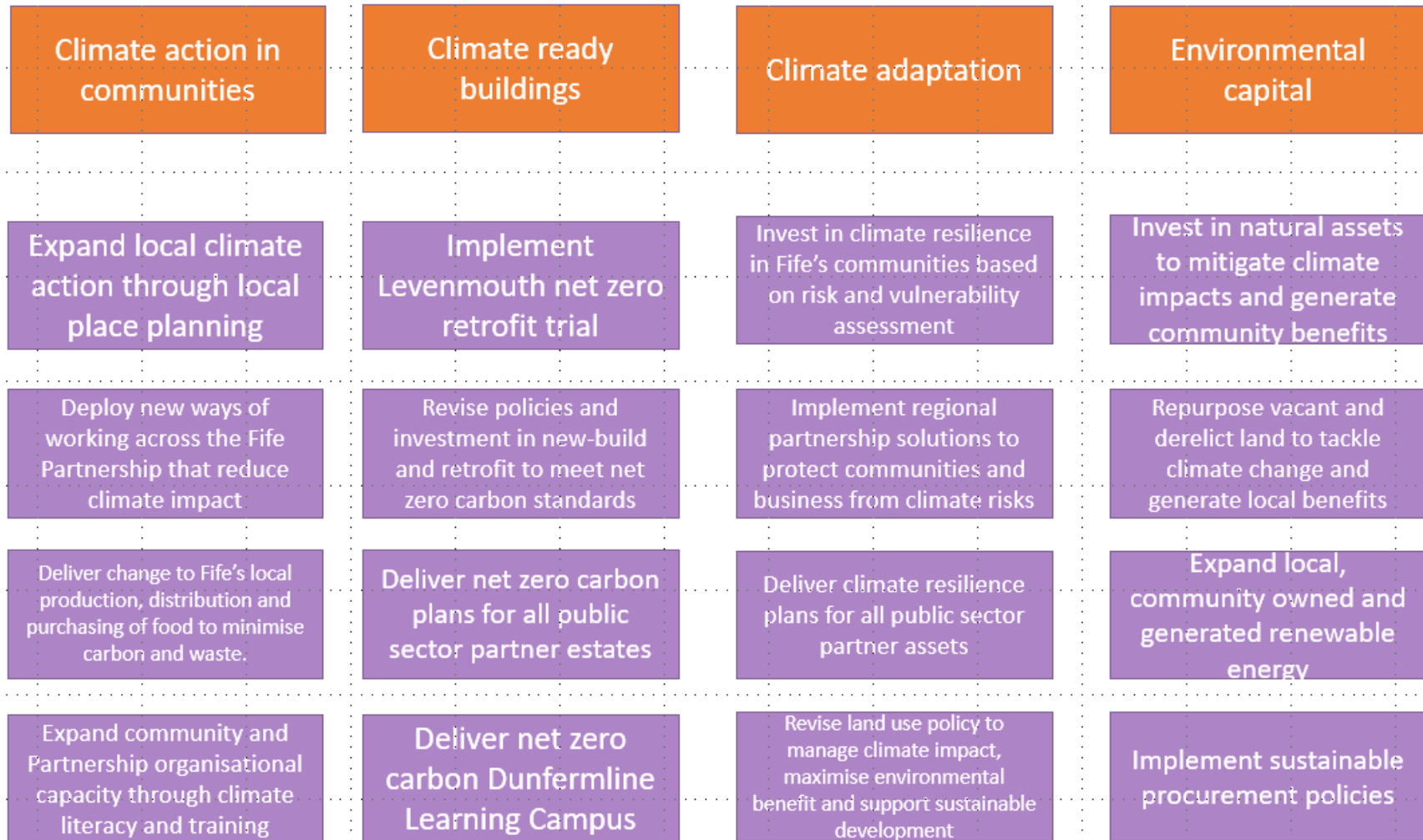
Tackling Poverty – Strategy to Action Map

Develop no wrong door approach	Maximise incomes and reduce cost barriers to participation	Build the network of community food and welfare support	Improve our evidence base and ensure community voice
Embed People and Place Leadership involving all services	Provide integrated benefits maximisation at key service points	Implement a Fife Food Plan	Develop model for assessing impact of anti poverty work
Simplify contact & referral processes	Address cost barriers to participation e.g. school and leisure	Develop wrap around support in specific service areas	Develop area commissioning of services and investment
Develop community support team approach	Introduce active concessions across Fife services	Review and simplify access to operation of welfare funding	Maintain active involvement of voluntary groups in reviewing progress
Support and empower front line staff	Reduce no of households facing fuel poverty	Develop local networks and awareness of services	Ensure that lived experience helps drive change

Recovery & Renewal Priority 3 : Addressing Climate Change



Addressing Climate Change – Strategy to Action Map



Recovery & Renewal Priority 4 : Community Wealth Building

The challenge

- Covid-19 has had an unprecedented on Fife's communities and local economies.
- Growth in the local economy should benefit everyone and should not pass people and places by.



Our Overall Ambition

Deliver transformative local economic development with a focus on community wellbeing and green recovery.



Our 3 Year Renewal Goals

- Implementation of a Community Wealth Building approach in Fife which is embedded within Council and anchor institution approaches to the five pillars of CWB.



Outcome

- Increase in value of community benefits
- More Fife businesses securing contracts
- Anchor institutions set ambitions for local spend
- Reduction in low pay and in-work poverty
- More representative workforces



Areas of Focus

- Progressive procurement and partnership
- Community benefits
- Real living wage and positive recruitment
- CWB and Business Support Hub
- Making financial power work in public places



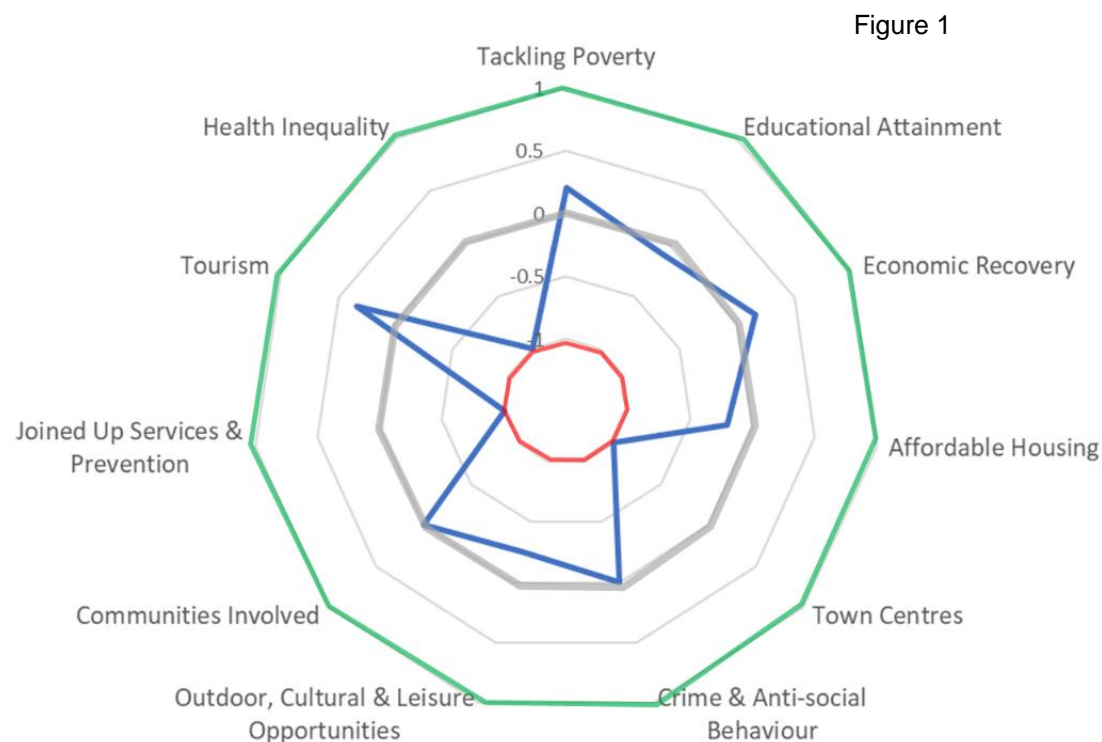
Community Wealth Building– Strategy to Action Map

Progressive procurement and partnership	Community benefits	Real living wage and positive recruitment	CWB and Business Support Hub	Making financial power work in public places
Enhanced levels of supplier development engagement and training	Develop an ambitious and impactful community benefits policy	Support anchor institutions to adopt the Real Living Wage	Expand support for co-ops, social enterprise, community-owned businesses integrated with business support	Support greater access to credit unions/community bank
Maximise contract weighting for community benefits	Demonstrator project – Dunfermline Learning Campus	Support the roll out of Real Living Wage through a targeted towns/region model	Develop training for services	Explore further development of credit unions
Baseline assessment of procurement spend	Prioritised approach for community benefit projects across 7 areas	Target interventions to address under-representation in the workforce		Explore potential for pension funds to incorporate greater social investment purpose
Joint procurement and green building opportunities	CWB Action Plan for a test locality	Collaborative approach to addressing barriers to employment		Use of data-led/open banking tools

Progress to date: 3-year update on ambitions

It is clear from our recent strategic assessment that we are making progress against each of these ambitions, however, not enough to reach our goals. There remain gaps, and the pandemic has made a number of these wider, notably in relation to poverty and the economy. New ways of thinking and working and more stretching objectives are needed if we are to make the headway Fife needs.

Figure 1 shows that there are three ambitions where the indicators suggest the position is worsening i.e. health inequality, town centres and joined up services and prevention. The indicators have stayed the same in relation to community involvement and crime and anti-social behaviour. In contrast, there has been improvement in the majority of indicators for tourism, tackling poverty and the economy (pre-pandemic).



Improving indicators are scored +1, those staying the same 0 and those which are getting worse -1.

They are added together and divided by the total number of indicators. (data source is Fife Strategic Assessment 2021)

Progress against each ambition as an index based on all of the indicators used for monitoring.

Grey - no change

Green - all indicators improving

Red - all indicators getting worse or no indicators.

Ambition 1. Fife has lower levels of poverty in line with national targets

Position Statement

- Children in relative poverty in Fife increased from 16% to 21% between 2014/15 and 2019/20. Poverty levels are likely to increase due to the financial impact of the pandemic.
- The pandemic has had a massive effect on food security, with many people requiring access to food banks, pantries and related support.
- The recent review of approach suggests that support needs to be better coordinated at community level, that evaluation of impact needs to improve and that greater emphasis is needed on prevention as well as sustainable crisis support.

Recovery Challenges

- How to best support people who are newly financially vulnerable and prepare for the end of the furlough scheme.
- How to sustain levels of crisis support and move to sustainable provision
- How to build on the commitment and willingness of staff and volunteers who made such a difference during the pandemic response.
- How to improve our evidence base and build on what works.

Ambition 2. Educational attainment continues to improve for all groups

Position Statement

- The pandemic has had a significant impact on learners' experiences, with evidence suggesting that some learners in broad general education have made slower progress than would otherwise been the case.
- Before the pandemic progress had been made in reducing the attainment gap between more and less deprived areas, with significant improvements for the key skills of literacy and numeracy.
- Evidence suggests that the pandemic has resulted in the attainment gap in broad general education widening again.

Recovery Challenges

- Improvement work needs to step up to address the impact of the pandemic on attainment and the poverty-related attainment gap. This will involve working on ways to:
 - improve equity of opportunity;
 - increase participation and engagement, particularly the attendance of targeted groups and individuals;
 - ensure consistently high-quality learning, teaching and assessment, including through digital learning;
 - support health and wellbeing.
- A key challenge is to improve the progress and pace of learning throughout broad general education. This will require: improved tracking and monitoring, strengthened support at points of transition, and a renewed focus on early literacy and numeracy skills, family support and nurturing approaches.

Ambition 3. Fife has reduced levels of preventable ill health and premature mortality across all communities

Position Statement

- The pandemic has had a major impact on the health and wellbeing of the population and the ability of services to make progress in reducing levels of preventable ill health and premature mortality.
- Covid-19 has affected some population groups more severely than others. Older people and those with certain medical conditions have been at increased risk of severe illness from the virus.
- The pandemic's impact on the economy and education has affected people's mental health, particularly those living in our most disadvantaged communities.

Recovery Challenges

- As services remobilise there is a need to focus on the groups most effected by Covid-19.
- A rights-based approach has the potential to maximise engagement, consultation and co-production of services.
- Economic recovery, employability and education needs to be linked more strongly to health inequalities and to public health priorities.
- Going forward there is a need in all of this to Increase our understanding of the impact of health inequalities, particularly among more disadvantaged communities within Fife.

Ambition 4. Everyone has access to affordable housing options

Position statement

- Fife Council and the Fife Housing Association Alliance are on track to deliver 3,500 affordable homes between 2017 and 2020.
- To meet our housing needs to 2030, Fife will need around 600 new affordable homes per year.
- The number of homeless households living in temporary accommodation has increased due to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- There are 13,000 households with expressed housing needs on the Fife Housing Register.
- Housing opportunities have been reduced due to a lack of turnover and the halt on new build construction.

Recovery Challenges

- The Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTP) has the potential to transform homelessness services and establish rapid rehousing as the default position.
- While recognising the need to increase allocations to homeless households, including addressing issues of children in homelessness, there is also a need for wider access to allocations.
- Affordable housing targets for 2022-24 need to be set taking account of the need for consistency of grant funding between sectors, cost increases, site availability and climate targets.
- The role of private housing in meeting housing needs and maintaining housing standards in local communities needs to be given greater attention.

Ambition 5. Fife's main town centres stand out as attractive places to live, work and visit

Position Statement

- Fife's town centres have suffered years of economic decline – this has been exacerbated during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- High street footfall has declined due to changing shopping patterns and competition from out-of-town and online retail.
- National multiple retailers have, in many cases, re-trenched to major centres of population or forced into closure.

Recovery Challenges

- The key challenge will be how we implement the Scottish Government's Town Centre Action Plan and investment programme - promoting town centre living, reusing and repurposing buildings, developing enterprise opportunities, such as enterprise hubs and urban agriculture.
- Supporting 'Spaces for People' initiatives in town centres which encourage mobility and business use of outdoor space
- Promoting 'buy-local' campaigns.

Ambition 6. All our communities benefit from low levels of crime and anti-social behaviour

Position statement

- Since 2017 overall levels of crime and anti-social behaviour in Fife have declined.
- The number of recorded crimes in Fife has reduced by 33% over the last decade.
- The nature of crime is changing, with a significant rise in cybercrime during this period, presenting significant challenges for prevention activities.
- A number of domestic abuse services experienced an increase in referral rates during the Covid-19 lockdown, while some support services have been operating on a restricted basis.
- Established statutory public protection arrangements are effective in addressing adult and child protection matters.
- Community Safety Partnership (CSP) re-established, incorporating community justice activity

Recovery Challenges

- Improving our service responsiveness to cases of anti-social behaviour including environmental vandalism.
- Look at the effectiveness of our action to address alcohol and drug misuse and improve mental health and well being
- Improve the effectiveness of our partnership working across Fife and locally.

Ambition 7. Every community has access to high quality outdoor, cultural and leisure opportunities

Position Statement

- Pre-pandemic, attendance levels and participation in activities were mixed, with some high performing facilities and others not operating at capacity across both Council and Trust provision.
- Fife's public leisure offer is split between different Trusts and in house teams meaning that it has been challenging to provide customers with consistent information on provision, opportunities, and pricing and ensure equitable access for all groups and communities.

Recovery Challenges

- A joint strategy is needed to increase participation in physical activity, sport and leisure.
- This needs to be aligned to operational delivery, the use of available public assets and area programmes.
- Harmonise pricing, concessions and membership schemes will help to drive participation and access for all.

Ambition 8. Economic activity and employment in Fife is improving faster than in the rest of Scotland

Position Statement

- The Covid-19 pandemic has had an unprecedented economic impact nationally and internationally, the scale of which has still to fully emerge.
- Government support has so far helped to mitigate the immediate impact on businesses, but the concern remains that unemployment will increase significantly once this support is withdrawn.
- The economic impact of the pandemic has seen uneven recovery over the past year. Some sectors, such as manufacturing and construction, have bounced back quickly while others, particularly tourism, hospitality, leisure and culture, continue to struggle.
- Concerns regarding inequalities have also been exacerbated as a result of the pandemic. Some of those in lower paid occupations, and already suffering in-work poverty, have been at greatest risk of redundancy and unemployment.

Recovery Challenges

Fife's Economic Strategy needs to be refreshed to address these challenges. This strategy will build on the 6 short term actions needed to help economic recovery:

- Provide signposting, advice, guidance & support to local businesses
- Stimulate economic demand / support access and mobility
- Protect local employment
- Continue to make the case and actively lobby for additional funding and investment
- Support and deliver investment-led economic growth
- Optimise the role of the Council, and its partners, within the local economy in relation to Community Wealth Building (CWB)

Ambition 9. Economic activity and employment in Mid-Fife is catching up with the rest of Fife and Scotland

Position Statement

- The Covid 19 pandemic has had the most significant impact on areas that were already struggling, notably Mid-Fife
- Mid-Fife committee areas have the highest claimant rates in Fife - Kirkcaldy (8.9%), Levenmouth (8.8%), Cowdenbeath (8.4%) and Glenrothes (6.0%). (March 2021)
- In 2019/20 a draft Mid-Fife economic action plan was developed on behalf of Fife Council and Scottish Enterprise

Recovery Challenges

A draft Mid-Fife Economic Investment Prospectus is due to be considered by Fife Council in June 2021 and will address challenges in relation to:

- Providing modern, high-quality business premises
- Supporting innovation and supplier development
- Skills development and progression (re-skilling & up-skilling our workforce)
- Promoting a culture of enterprise
- Local jobs and access to jobs (supporting people into employment)
- Promoting place-based investment

Ambition 10. Fife has year on year increases in visitor numbers and tourism spend

Position Statement

- Prior the Covid-19 pandemic, Fife had seen a sustained annual growth in visitor numbers and spend.
- Covid-19 has had an unprecedented impact on the tourism industry.
- Government support has helped to mitigate the immediate impact on tourism businesses and their employees.
- Many businesses will need support to rebuild their operations and to adapt their product to meet new hygiene and social distancing requirements and changes in customer demands.
- Some businesses may not reopen once government support is withdrawn, reducing the quantity and quality of the area's tourism offer.

Recovery Challenges

- Support businesses to restart and create more responsible tourism products;
- Review Fife's digital tourism information provision;
- Deliver online digital skills training to tourism and hospitality businesses;
- Provide accessible tourism training to support the Access Fife Group;
- Launch the 'Fife 191' as a tourist route to be enjoyed at any time of the year;
- Create a new video-led consumer marketing campaign and grow social media interaction to increase the number of local and domestic visitors.
- Embed responsible tourism in future activity planning;
- Implement tourist association improvement plans to strengthen industry and community collaboration and promote sustainable tourism.

Ambition 11. Our public services are more joined up and acting 'one step sooner'

Position Statement

Public service reform has continued to reshape our services in Fife with good examples of building in prevention, empowerment and collaboration in our approach. The pandemic has highlighted both the need for collaboration across partners and with communities and the capacity and capability we have in our organisations to make the difference and achieve better outcomes.

Recovery Challenges

- How to build on the excellent collaborative working during the pandemic so it becomes how we work.
- This would include building our understanding of impact and invest and scale up 'what works' in terms of prevention and early intervention support.
- How to achieve a 'no wrong door' approach for crisis support in what are often separate service processes and approaches.
- How to boost the time and Investment to sustain collaborative leadership development across partners and front line staff.

Ambition 12 Fife's communities and individuals are more involved in local decision making and in helping to plan and deliver local services

Progress

Community groups were at the heart of the response to the Covid 19 pandemic, providing a range of vital services to vulnerable people and families, including the delivery of emergency food and medicines, shopping and befriending.

Community planning partners have supported community groups across Fife to take on the management or ownership of community assets either through community asset transfer and subsidised leases.

Community planning partners are supporting local communities to become involved in planning their local areas in a range of ways e.g. neighbourhood plans, local place plans and Health and Social Care locality plans.

Recovery Challenges

- How to ensure community voice through and delivery through the local People and place leadership approach
- How to build on the innovative work around participatory budgeting to a wider area of service and spend.

New Build Affordable Housing Transitional Programme (2022-24)

Report by: John Mills, Head of Housing Services, Elaine Muir, Head of Finance and Ken Gourlay, Head of Assets, Transportation and Environment

Wards Affected: All Wards

Purpose

This report provides members with an in-principle proposal for the development and delivery of a Transitional 2-year development programme to immediately follow-on from the current Phase 3 Affordable Housing Programme (AHP) from May 2022.

Detailed, costed proposals to deliver the Transitional Programme will be reported to Community & Housing Services Sub-Committee in October 2021.

Recommendation(s)

Committee is asked to:

- Consider and discuss the in-principle proposal for delivering a Transitional Affordable Housing Programme 2022-24. (TAHP)
- Agree in principle the proposal to build 1200 new affordable houses during 2022-2024 as outlined in Section 3.14.
- Agree that a financial report be brought back to this Committee by November 2021 to test the affordability of the current proposition, following the completion of the 2021 HRA Business Plan Review, and the outcome of the current review of housing subsidy by the Scottish Government and CoSLA.
- Agree that the current partnership with the Fife Housing Association Alliance is appropriately amended, as outlined in Section 4.5, and implemented by 1st July 2021, running through to June 2024.
- Agree that the commitment to developing a multi-tenure approach on the large affordable housing sites and Section 75 contribution sites will be fully evaluated by June 2024.
- Agree to support the development of a Town Centre Housing Approach within the 2022-27 Local Housing Strategy building on the current and anticipated pilot Projects in Phase 3 and the proposed Transitional Programme.

Resource Implications

Initial high level resource assumptions are discussed within the report.

The in principle proposed TAHP could cost the HRA up to £87.5m. This is based on 500 houses at a unit cost of £0.175m per unit with £0.059m subsidy being available for each, resulting in an additional borrowing requirement of £58m. The 2021 HRA Business Plan Review will test the affordability of this proposal. A further report will be made to this Committee by November 2021 testing the affordability of the TAHP.

Finance and Housing Services are currently reviewing and updating the council's Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Medium Term Financial Strategy (2022-25). The updated strategy will be reported to this Committee by October 2021.

The Fife Housing Association Alliance have reviewed their business plans to confirm capital borrowing capacity to build housing association properties. Kingdom HA as lead developer for the FHAA has updated their rolling 5-year Development Strategy & BP from 2021; the table below summarises FHAA capacity to develop new affordable housing during the period of the Plan.

5 Year Plan (2021-2026)	Social Rent	MMR	Total
Kingdom Housing Association	1,515	198	1,713
Kingdom Housing Association Partners	290	0	290
Total	1,805	198	2,003

FHAA partners' capacity may fluctuate over time. As part of a stress-testing assessment, Kingdom HA has established additional headroom to develop 100 additional units per annum, providing further assurance that there is appropriate headroom between FHAA capacity and projected unit delivery.

The overall resource requirement will also be dependent on the level of support by the Scottish Government in providing housing subsidy after May 2021. The Scottish Government and CoSLA will co-chair the Housing Subsidy Working Group to discuss and review the current subsidy rates paid out to local authorities and RSL's in Scotland. The intention is that the Scottish Federations of Housing Associations are also part of this review and RSL representatives may be involved to be part of the Review Group.

The agreed level of subsidy will have an impact on the financial capacity of the council and the FHAA to invest in the Transitional AHP.

Whilst this paper focuses on the HRA budget, new homes and associated infrastructure (roads, schools, waste collection, open space etc.) increase the assets the Council has to maintain in future with additional pressure on revenue budgets across Services. The delivery of these affordable homes assists in implementing the Councils approved Local Development Plan, meeting overall housing need, and achieving Plan4Fife outcomes including Inclusive Growth and assisting in Fife's economic recovery.

Legal & Risk Implications

Our experience from the Phase 2 and Phase 3 Programmes has confirmed that the council has taken a positive attitude to managing legal and risk issues arising from working with private housing developers to deliver affordable housing.

Procurement compliance is a requirement that needs recognised as part of delivery, If the subsidy levels are not increased this is a risk in relation to the capacity and ability to deliver the programme.

The Council and its framework and other suppliers are continually evaluating construction cost increases due to both Covid-19 pandemic and Brexit pressures. The increase in costs is significant and will put additional pressure and risk on the Council's HRA and the FHAA Revenue and capital budgets.

The costs of retrofitting the council's housing stock to EESSH 2 standard by 2035 will place additional cost risk on the HRA. Housing Services are currently developing a scoping paper with Finance, Property and Building Services to bring forward a 10-year Delivery Plan to Community & Housing Services Sub-Committee in October 2021.

Impact Assessment

There will be an equalities impact arising from the Transitional AHP. A Summary of the EQIA is appended to this report. (appendix 1)

A FEAT assessment will be completed as part of the report to Communities & Housing Services Sub-Committee in October 2021.

Consultation

Tenants and Partners' views were sought through the Strategic Housing Investment Plan (2021-26) discussion and consultation through the Fife Housing Partnership.

Kingdom HA, as lead agency for the Fife Housing Association Alliance (FHAA) has been directly involved in the development of the SHIP. Community & Housing Services Sub-Committee approved the SHIP in November 2020.

The Council Co-Leaders and the Community & Housing Services Convener and Vice-Convener have been consulted in the development of this report.

The Fife Housing Partnership and the Affordable Housing Board have been consulted. The Scottish Government have been consulted on the Transitional AHP.

1.0 Background to the Fife Affordable Housing Programme

- 1.1 The proposal for a Transitional AHP builds on the successful delivery of the 2,700 homes Phase 2 programme from 2012-17, and the current progress towards delivery of 3,500 new houses in the Phase 3 programme to be completed by May 2022.
This report considers initial assumptions around the proposal, including current risks, and the potential components of the Transitional AHP 2022-24.
- 1.2 Following consultation with the Council Administration, this report proposes a 2-year Transitional AHP running between 2022-24, and a specific Town Centre Housing Approach to support the Plan4Fife priority to regenerate our town centres, focussed on the mid-Fife Area.
- 1.3 The Housing 2040 Route map was published on 15th March 2021 by the Scottish Government. The Route map commits to 100,000 new affordable homes to be built between 2022-32, with 70% being social rented houses. The Route map is significant for both new build housing going forward, and energy standards for our existing social rented housing stock. For new build affordable housing, it is proposed that for all new houses built from 2026 will include heating systems that emit no carbon emissions.

- 1.4 The refreshed Plan4Fife will focus on our recovery and renewal priorities. Key ambitions are outlined including building more affordable homes, regenerating our town centres and reducing poverty. The TAHP will make a significant contribution to taking forward these ambitions.

2.0 Phase 3 Affordable Housing Programme - Update

- 2.1 The delivery of the Phase 3 Affordable Housing Programme is managed through the Affordable Housing Board, chaired by the Executive Director (Environment & Enterprise). The Board comprises Housing, Property, Building, Finance, and Legal Services, and the FHAA.
- 2.2 The Phase 3 target for the Council and the FHAA comprised a Council Target of 1500 houses, and a FHAA target of 2000 houses. The Affordable Housing Board is monitoring progress towards the Phase 3 target, including other affordable housing contributions from the Scottish Government's OMSE and other potential forms of delivery to help close the gap between Fife's target against the number of houses deliverable based on current Resource Planning Assumption (RPA) projections.
- 2.3 The table below shows the Programme-wide status as presented to the Board on 24th May 2021. The Board supported the delivery target being to achieve 3,500 units completed or on-site by May 2022, given the impacts of the pandemic. The current position is 2,744 units completed or on-site, surpassing the Phase 2 target.

The Programme Manager's view is that the 3,500 still presents a very challenging target given the extreme volatility in the current market for construction materials, particularly timber. The Board will keep the situation under review as the next wave of sites proceed through tender and pricing stages.

Table 1 – Phase 3 delivery against 3,500 houses target (@24th May 2021)

Workstream	Completed
Complete Fife Council Other Total (FC)	133
Complete Fife Council SCAPE Framework (FC) Total	193
Complete Fife Council (FC)	57
Complete Fife Council Private Sector (FC) Total	30
Complete Housing Assoc (Bield)	30
Complete Housing Assoc (OVH-A)	34
Complete Housing Assoc (KH-A) Total	786
Complete Housing Assoc (KI)	68
Complete Other - OMSE Total	331
Complete LAR Housing Trust Total	7
Complete Housing Assoc (FH-A)	19
Total Completions	1,688
Workstream	Programmed
Fife Council - SCAPE Framework	308
Fife Council - owned site	68
Fife council - private sector	688
Housing Assoc (KH-A)	1,187

Housing Assoc Kingdom Initiatives	124
Housing Assoc (FH-A) Total	0
Housing Assoc (OVH-A) Total	37
Other - EHLF Total	0
Other - OMSE Total	347
Grand Total <small>Notes 1 & 2</small>	4,447
¹ <i>excluding OMSE units</i>	3,769
² <i>units on-site</i>	1,056

3.0 Transitional Affordable Housing Programme Assumptions & Proposals

A 2-Year Transitional Programme

- 3.1 The Phase 3 Affordable Housing Programme will be completed by May 2022. It is recognised that we need to consider a 2-year Transitional Programme to bridge the end of Phase 3 and the start of a future phase of the Fife Affordable Housing Programme.

One of the main lessons learned from the transition from Phase 2 to Phase 3 was a drop-off in new housing starts during 2017/18. We need to ensure that the transition is smooth and effective. To do this, we need to have regard to the following key issues:

- Maintain the stability of staff resources within the Council's Affordable Housing Team and the FHAA Team. Part of our difficulty in failing to sustain a smooth transition between phases was the loss of key staff from both Teams in 2016 and 2017;
- Ensure that there is a significant pipeline of deliverable housing projects with planning consent agreed by December 2021;
- Ensure that there is adequate additional HRA capital borrowing and FHAA Private Finance capacity in place to support the 2-year transitional programme;
- Ensure that there is an adequate supply of land to support the AHP made available by the Council and other community planning partners. Kingdom HA as lead developer for the FHAA has a successful landbank strategy, and it is important to recognise the higher level of risk and uncertainty as well as the longer development timescales inherent with a landbank strategy;
- Drive collaborative working with Developers and Landowners to maximise development opportunities;
- Maintain programme and project allocation efficiencies through agreed robust working practices between the Council and FHAA.
- In the medium term, consider potential new land allocations to support delivery of affordable homes through the forthcoming review of the Local Development Plan.

Affordable Housing Need

- 3.2 Housing need and demand assessments (HNDAs) have been carried out with neighbouring local authorities in respective TAYplan and SESplan areas to inform Strategic Development Plans and the Local Housing Strategy. The combined assessments identified an affordable housing requirement for 594 homes per annum from 2018-2030. This figure remains current until an updated HNDA3 is provided and agreed by the Scottish Government. Discussions with City Deal partners through the Regional Housing Board suggest this could be in place by 2022-2023.

The recently published NPF4 housing numbers estimates will be considered as part of the Local Plan Development by 2024. These should not have an impact on the target number of houses proposed by the Transitional AHP.

Infrastructure Constraints

- 3.3 The Fife Housing Partnership continues to prioritise investment in line with a number of factors e.g., identified need by property type and tenure, land availability, development constraints, and educational capacity. Scottish Water infrastructure constraints are a major issue. Close working with Scottish Water is required to ensure that solutions can be secured to proceed with affordable housing developments.
- 3.4 A successful TAHP must be underpinned by an agreed delivery strategy for projects that cannot be progressed due to the identified constraints as listed in section 3.3. This could be facilitated through planning conditions (Section 75 Agreements on the developer which restrict use as part of allocation initiatives).

Some examples of this approach which could be developed into a strategy are:

- The Council's Kirkcaldy Town Centre project at the High Street with an age restriction as part of a Community Lettings Initiative.
- The FHAA Guardbridge project where Kingdom HA stated that they were seeking planning consent to provide homes for those aged 55 years and over. This will therefore be a condition of the proposed conditional approval.
- Paton Street, Dunfermline – Planning Services have agreed a phased handover /completion programme in line with academic terms to manage the completion in line with school capacity.

Cost of Affordable Housing

- 3.5 The Council's contribution to the Transitional AHP is built around the assumption of Scottish Government grant subsidy being available at the current rate of £59k per unit, with Council funding of £116k per unit funded through HRA capital borrowings. Higher levels of subsidy over and above the agreed benchmark can be made available for delivering higher cost projects such as specific needs housing and complicated town centre developments.

Registered social landlord developments attract a higher level of subsidy of £70k per unit and £72k per unit for a greener standard. The Council and RSL's can also attract £40k for Mid-Market rent units.

- 3.6 The Scottish Government has announced its Capital Investment Plan of £2.8 billion to support the next national Affordable Housing Programme, and has agreed to a review of the current housing subsidy rates to inform the post-2021 position. As

part of the 2021 Programme for Government, additional quality criteria have been applied for new build properties from April 2021 onwards. The new criteria are applied learning lessons from the Covid experience and will increase construction costs for new build housing. The additional proposed criteria will add to the overall development costs. The costs are being assessed as part of the review of housing subsidy.

These are:

- Additional internal space for home working and study.
- Sprinklers for all new build social rented housing. Fife Council was the first council in Scotland to adopt the installation of sprinkler systems to all new build properties in 2012.
- Digital connections for tenants.
- Update on standards for housing for varying needs.
- Secured by Design enhanced standard.
- Sustainability standards (minimum Silver standard).
- Alternative heating systems.
- modular and off-site construction methods.
- Where possible, enhanced design standards to include more amenity green space.
- Inclusive living toolkit compliance, dementia friendly design.
- Telecare and Smart housing technology.

- 3.7 To effectively contribute to the Climate Fife Plan, the council and FHAA need to have further discussion and policy agreement on a range of programme inputs to guide the development of social rented houses from 2024.

Going forward, costs are likely to increase due to the requirement to cease installing gas central heating systems to all new builds by 2024. The Council and FHAA are currently developing options to deal with no gas installations, including areas such as:

- Air source heat pumps are currently installed in a range of housing projects.
- District heating is examined wherever possible and practical.
- Hydrogen heating. Planning application has been made for the H100 project in Levenmouth.
- Use of different site construction approaches to enhance heat insulation of houses.
- Inclusion of Green infrastructure/Biodiversity design.
- Re-skilling existing and future staff in Building Services and maintenance contractors to develop a skill base to support the application of these technologies.

Financial Risks and Funding

- 3.8 The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Medium Term Financial Strategy (2022-25) paper will be concluded by August and reported to this Committee in October 2021. The report will outline the current financial pressures and risks facing the HRA and makes recommendations to mitigate these risks. These risks and mitigations must be considered when assessing the affordability of the Transitional AHP.

- 3.9 The Transitional AHP proposes the HRA builds 500 homes at a unit cost of £175k. The total cost will be £87.5m with subsidy of £29.5m available. The HRA will need to consider additional borrowing of up to £58m additional borrowing to fund the proposal.
- 3.10 Affordability testing is being carried out on the additional borrowing requirement as part of the 2021 HRA Business Plan review which will be concluded by end August 2021.
- 3.11 The council also needs to consider the requirements to meet EESSH 2 for its existing council housing stock of 30,500 houses. A 10-year Delivery Plan is currently under development to inform HRA capital investment plans for the period 2025-35. This will result in significant financial requirement to be met by the council, and has to be coupled with the Transitional AHP in considering the affordability of the new build housing programme.
- 3.12 The Covid-19 emergency is likely to significantly impact on funding available for investment through the HRA. It is anticipated that the HRA will be subject to a range of pressures arising from Covid-19, such as increased construction costs, component replacement costs, void costs, bad debt and rent support for tenants. The agreed rent increase for 2021/22 is below the normal RPI + 1% Business Plan assumption which further dampens the capacity of the HRA to borrow.
- 3.13 A game-changer in the ability of the council to borrow is the current and anticipated level of Scottish Government housing subsidy. The subsidy level for each new council home has remained at £59k for some years, while costs of materials and construction have risen by about £40k in during 2017-20. These additional costs have been borne by council tenants through the HRA annual rent increases. Likewise, RSL subsidy benchmark levels for social rent and MMR have likewise been static since 2016.

The Scottish Government has agreed to conclude the work of the Housing Subsidy Review Group by May 2021 to examine the basis for any uplift in current grant benchmarks for local authorities and housing associations. The final outcome of the review is awaited.

- 3.14 The proposal for the number of council houses and housing association houses that could be provided in the 2-year Transitional Programme are:

Council Option - The council element of the 2-year Transitional Phase 4 Programme will require a HRA Capital borrowing requirement of up to £87.5m based on 500 council houses. The net position based on the current level of Scottish Government housing subsidy of £59,000 per house would be £58m.

FHAA Option - 700 houses. Assuming a 70% (social rent): 30% (MMR) split and current assumptions then the FHAA will require a total grant subsidy of £55m and a borrowing requirement of £55m.

Developing a Town Centre Housing Approach

- 3.15 The Council's Planning, Business & Employability, Estates, Communities & Neighbourhoods and Housing Services and the FHAA have collaborated on town centre housing projects during the Phase 2 and Phase 3 AHPs. These projects are important to stimulate town centre regeneration, economic recovery and to create affordable town centre living opportunities. If we are to make a greater and sustained impact, a more comprehensive approach for the Housing contribution to our town centres is required.

- 3.16 Learning from the projects in Lochgelly, Cowdenbeath, Kirkcaldy, and Cupar, mixed use developments enable us to lever in other sources of funding. Vacant and Derelict Land Fund can support site preparation such as demolition and remediation if there is commercial use. The partners have worked to assembled town centre sites of sufficient scale for 20 - 30 units. These have been assembled from repurposing Council assets, former industrial buildings, sites in the ownership of FHAA partners and also through the use of Compulsory Purchase Orders. The Council is working with all partners in the FHAA. Different approaches are being tested to work within education capacities such as smaller units, targeting older occupiers and mid-market rental units to cater for the widest range of occupiers and funding opportunities.
- 3.17 The Council is also collaborating with FHAA on the Planning Policy context. During 2020, consultation took place on a Development and Noise Planning Policy. Pre-Application Planning Advice is available as well as information on occupancy restrictions, areas of search and designations/zonings. Discussions are underway with the Policy & Place Team within Planning on the review of the Local Development Plan, the Fife Plan due to start in late 2021.
- 3.18 It is proposed that council services and the FHAA continue to work together to produce a Town Centre Housing Approach to be incorporated into the new Local Housing Strategy (2022-27) (Priority 7 Place Making) to be agreed by Community & Housing Services Sub-Committee by February 2022. In the meantime, further projects will be defined to support town centre regeneration focussed on Mid-Fife as part of the 2-year Transitional AHP. There is a need to maximise all available funding sources to facilitate delivery of this strategy, including sources such as TCRF, VDLF, and 2HCT in addition to potentially above benchmark funding to back up their prioritisation by the council.

Our focus will be on securing the following key elements to support the Town Centre Housing Approach:

- Site assembly – at least 6 sites to develop up to 200 houses and flats
- Planning Approvals
- Contracts ready to tender

Delivering for General and Specific Needs

- 3.19 In line with the LHS, the delivery of the Transitional AHP recognises the importance of developing the appropriate type and mix of housing in the right place. The current Phase 3 housing policy priorities are:
- 70% General Needs
 - 30% Specific Needs
 - Building proportionality more larger family houses to alleviate overcrowding
 - Building more specific needs bungalows to assist people with physical and sensory impairments
 - Building more older persons housing, in Care Villages, Extra Care Housing complexes, and Retirement Housing
 - Building 2-bedroom flats in no more than 2 storeys
 - Developing specific lettings initiatives to let Town Centre developments
 - Implementing specific homelessness initiatives as part of the Fife Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (2019-24)

- 3.20 It is proposed in the 2-year Transitional AHP that the current mix of general and specific needs housing will continue to satisfy housing needs, based on a transfer-led allocations approach for the Council. In relation to FHAA build, the policy priorities will apply, with the exception of the development of MMR properties that can be built in more than 2-storey flatted blocks. The FHAA adopts a different allocations approach to new builds, based on a rough 33% of allocations to transfers, FHR applicants, and homeless applicants.

4.0 Transitional AHP Delivery Options (2022-24)

- 4.1 Although the funding position is unclear at this point, it is worth considering the options for the Transitional AHP. The 2021-2026 Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) shows the potential to deliver 3,381 affordable homes during this period which equates to 676 units per annum.
- 4.2 However, there are various development constraints that could affect new build delivery including; availability of land, educational capacity, and the revenue growth pressures and other related service delivery costs for the council. There is also the added complication of the ongoing COVID-19 situation. Therefore, in a bid to establish a realistic, deliverable baseline target for the Transitional AHP, it is proposed to adopt new housing supply targets for the council and the FHAA as outlined in Section 3.14 of this report.
- 4.3 The Transitional AHP will be underpinned by the successful partnership with the Fife Housing Association Alliance, comprising Kingdom Group, Fife Housing Group, Ore Valley HA, and Glen HA. The current partnership agreement runs to the end of the current Phase 3 AHP in May 2022. This report proposes to extend the partnership until 30th June 2024.
- 4.4 In relation to planning consents for new housing developments and Section 75 agreements to meet the agreed affordable housing contribution requirements, Housing Services are proposing an amendment to the Council/FHAA Partnership Agreement, as outlined in section 4.5 to offer increased opportunities to secure council housing in key locations across Fife.

This measure will support a more positive flow of council houses and housing association houses to meet the proposed TAHP target of 1200 new houses by June 2024.

- 4.5 Following discussions with the FHAA, we have agreed to adopt a revised collaborative approach to working with private developers to deliver the Section 75 Agreement for the affordable housing contribution. This approach to place-making and multi-tenure development will enable greater choice of housing options for tenants and other housing applicants in Fife.

It is proposed to add the following clause to the existing Council/FHAA Partnership Agreement:

“In respect of Section 75 Agreements and the contribution of affordable housing by private developers, and sites delivered by the council and the FHAA of 50 affordable houses and above, the partnership will adopt a multi-tenure approach creating council social rent and RSL social rent/MMR properties to offer enhanced housing options to housing applicants on the Fife Housing Register”.

The revised Council/FHAA Partnership Agreement is attached as appendix 2.

- 4.6 The main benefits of adopting this revised approach would be to develop our place-making approach consistent with Priority 7 of the LHS (2020-22) by promoting a multi-tenure housing mix to offer appropriate housing options and choice to tenants and housing applicants. This approach also promotes an improved spatial distribution of council and RSL houses across Fife, and improves the flow of properties to meet the council and FHAA proposed supply targets outlined in section 3.14.

Direct Delivery through Property & Building Services

- 4.7 Housing, Property and Building Services are engaged in a series of discussions to test the viability of the council directly building 50-100 council houses per year in the future. As part of the Business case, Housing Services would need to guarantee house number requirements and funding over an extended period of 5-10 years to 2032.
- 4.8 The Services are considering options to directly deliver new build council housing. Further option appraisal work is required with Property & Building Services to achieve optimum outputs to contribute to the AHP. This work will be carried forward by the Services and be completed by September 2021 to take forward in the latter stages of the Transitional AHP.

Delivery through the New Build Housing Frameworks

- 4.9 A successful delivery vehicle for Phases 2 & 3 is the use of established new build housing framework agreements. In recent years, the council has expanded the number of frameworks it could use to include the Edinburgh Framework and the Scotland Excel Framework. It is proposed to maintain the use of these Frameworks to assist with the delivery of a substantive part of the 2-year Transitional AHP.

5.0 Conclusions

- 5.1 It is vital for Fife to maintain momentum through the end of the Phase 3 AHP. A 2-year Transitional AHP is proposed now for Committee consideration in principle so we can press ahead with the detailed development of the TAHP, including proposed housing projects which can be brought forward by the Council's Affordable Housing Team and the FHAA.
- 5.2 Lessons from the last Transitional Programme between Phases 2 and 3 have been understood and we have put in staff and other logistical arrangements to make a success of the proposed Transitional AHP going forward.
- 5.3 A key pre-requisite for the consideration of the Transitional AHP is the funding requirement to support the construction of new houses in Fife.

John Mills, Head of Housing Services

Elaine Muir, Head of Finance

Ken Gourlay, Head of ATE

List of Appendices

1. Summary of EQIA
2. Draft Revised Council/FHAA Partnership Agreement

Background Papers

The following papers were relied on in the preparation of this report in terms of the Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1973:-

- Housing 2040 – Scottish Government March 2021
- Programme for Government – Scottish Government 2020/21
- Fife Local Housing Strategy (2020-22)
- Fife SHIP (2021-26)
- Fife Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (2019-24)
- Health & Social Care Strategic Plan

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Appendix 1 – Summary of EQIA

Equality Impact Assessment Summary Report

<p>Which Committee report does this IA relate to (specify meeting date)?</p> <p>Policy & Co-ordination Committee – 24th June 2021</p>
<p>What are the main impacts on equality?</p> <p>Positive impacts on the basis that the enhancement in the supply of new affordable housing will increase opportunities for more people and families to access housing.</p> <p>By continuing with the current transfer-led allocations approach to general needs new builds, allocations chains are created that will maximise the number of housing options to reduce homelessness in Fife as part of the RRTP.</p> <p>By continuing with a 30% quota for specific needs housing, older people and people with physical and sensory impairment will benefit.</p> <p>For larger families, we will continue to build larger family housing as a priority to assist with severe overcrowding and enabling children to have their own space for study.</p>
<p>What are the main recommendations to enhance or mitigate the impacts identified?</p> <p>The approval of the Transitional Housing Programme (2022-24) will positively impact on a range of tenants and other citizens' housing needs and requirements.</p> <p>The Transitional AHP will begin to respond to the Climate Fife Plan as we move forward to future phases of the Fife Affordable Housing Programme. The completion of the EESSH 2 Delivery Plan is an important contribution to a housing-led green recovery out of the Covid-19 Pandemic.</p> <p>The delivery of the HNDA 3 will assist with the quantification of wheelchair-user new build housing to meet this need.</p>
<p>If there are no equality impacts on any of the protected characteristics, please explain.</p> <p>N/A.</p>
<p>Further information is available from: Name / position / contact details:</p> <p>John Mills, Head of Housing, Fife Council John.mills@fife.gov.uk</p>

Appendix 2

PROPOSED FIFE COUNCIL AND FIFE HOUSING ASSOCIATION ALLIANCE

PREFERRED REGISTERED SOCIAL LANDLORD (RSL) PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT (JULY 2021 – JUNE 2024)

This partnership agreement is brought forward within the framework of the Fife Local Housing Strategy 2020-22 (LHS), the Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2021-26 (SHIP) and the Transitional Affordable Housing Programme Strategic Guidelines 2022-24.

In order to secure the delivery of the Affordable Housing Programme in Fife, Fife Council wish to establish a partnership agreement with the Fife Housing Association Alliance (FHAA) consisting of the Fife Housing Group, Glen Housing Association, Kingdom Group, and Ore Valley Housing Association. The Scottish Government note this partnership agreement as a key mechanism in the delivery of the Affordable Housing Supply Programme (AHSP) in Fife.

This agreement is not intended to be a formal partnership. The intention is to identify the framework and protocol for joint working and collaboration between the partners and all parties to this agreement will operate through an approach which recognises openness, trust and co-operation.

The purpose of the agreement is to form a strategic and operational collaborative arrangement which allows partners to align their objectives and activities, so they can work effectively to optimise the affordable housing investment in Fife and deliver improvements in housing and related services to the people and communities of Fife.

The aim is to meet the priorities of the Local Housing Strategy through the effective delivery of the Strategic Housing Investment Plan from 1st July 2021 to 30th June 2024.

Key amongst these priorities are:

1. To meet the 30% quota over the 5-year SHIP to build specific needs properties as a contribution to the Fife Health & Social Care Partnership;
2. To develop a balance of property sizes and tenure types on a site-by-site basis to meet an agreed specification of local housing needs;
3. In respect of Section 75 Agreements and the contribution of affordable housing by private developers, and sites delivered by the council and the FHAA of 50 affordable houses and above, the partnership will adopt a multi-tenure approach creating council social rent and RSL social rent/MMR properties to offer enhanced housing options to housing applicants on the Fife Housing Register;
4. To meet agreed minimum design standards for housing;
5. To meet wider community planning objectives, including town centre regeneration and strategic development planning;
6. To satisfy any agreed development process or standard as stipulated by the Scottish Government.

Where a preferred RSL Partner is approached by a developer to provide the affordable housing component of a site, but is unable to agree suitable terms with the developer, the Preferred RSL Partner will discuss the matter with other FHAA members to establish if another member of the Alliance has the capacity to deliver the project. If none of the FHAA members have the capacity to progress the project, it must refer the developer to the Council. The Council will consider whether to engage with the developer or refer the developer to another RSL.

Development within the SHIP period by an RSL out with this agreement will only be considered where it can be demonstrated that there is added value through development by that RSL. In this situation, the Council will firstly discuss the development with the FHAA to confirm if one of the FHAA members has the capacity and the ability to deliver the project and the added value objectives. If the FHAA members do not have the capacity to deliver, the matter will be discussed between the Council and the Scottish Government.

This agreement does not preclude other RSLs accessing the Affordable Housing Supply Programme if the FHAA members do not have the capacity to deliver the agreed projects, and if the delivery by the other RSL is agreed by the Council.

This agreement with the FHAA members is a statement of principle and of intent and is not of a contractual nature. Whilst not legally binding, either party would be required to give a minimum of 6 months' notice to the discontinuance if this partnership agreement.

Monitoring and review of this agreement will be managed through the Affordable Housing Board on behalf of Fife Council, and through discussion and liaison with the Scottish Government.

Signatories

On behalf of Fife Council

On behalf of the FHAA

Councillor Judy Hamilton

Bill Banks

Date:

Date:

Noted by the Scottish Government

Alastair Dee

Date:

Scottish Government Place Based Investment Programme – Fife’s Allocation of £3.163m

Report by: Gordon Mole, Head of Business & Employability

Wards Affected: Fife Wide

Purpose

This report seeks agreement for an approach to disbursing Fife’s allocation of £3.163m from the Scottish Government’s Placed Based Investment Programme, which replaces the Town Centre Capital Fund and builds on the £4.335m awarded in financial year 2019/20 and the £1.56m awarded in financial year 2020/21 from that Fund.

The new round of funding is more flexible than previous allocations and allows investment to be used to support projects over wider spread of settlements.

The Scottish Government has again set rigid timescales and conditions to which Fife Council will be required to adhere, including that monies are to be legally committed and/or spent or projects commenced within financial year 2021-2022, with an expectation that projects will be completed by the end of September 2022.

Recommendation(s)

It is recommended that members:

- (i) note the background to the fund, including conditions and timescales involved in delivering projects;
- (ii) note that there is some flexibility to allow movement of funds from one project to another as necessary with the agreement of the Executive Director (Enterprise and Environment) for changes above £100,000 and that below this is at the discretion of the Head of Business and Employability; and
- (iii) agree that the projects listed in Table 1 are those to receive investment from the fund.

Resource Implications

Financial - the grant is for capital expenditure which is additional to that which is already or would otherwise be allocated to the 2021-2022 budget and must not be used as substitute for existing allocated spend or be transferred to Fife Council’s Capital Fund.

Financial – it is anticipated that through the proposed investment programme there will be elements of spend to save, improving both urban fabric and infrastructure therefore reducing ongoing maintenance costs. In addition, an allowance has been made to mitigate against further cost inflation because of further Covid measures and any material supply difficulties that may result.

Financial – It is imperative that revenue consequences for projects delivered using this funding are manageable and/or mitigated against.

Legal & Risk Implications

It is expected that project work will be completed or at least work started and/or contracts signed, legally committed to and/or commenced within financial year 2021-2022. Any unused portion of the grant, if not re-profiled by the local authority to other town eligible projects, which meet the conditions and ambitions of the fund, will be repayable to the Scottish Government unless prior written agreement is given by Scottish Ministers.

The grant is capital, and it is expected to be used to finance local authority capital investment for projects in places, that meet the needs and aspirations of communities.

The Grant may also be used to fund, subject to stringent conditions, third party town centre capital expenditure in the current year (2021-2022), either directly or through the provision of grants to third parties (public sector bodies, private sector, third sector bodies or individuals) which would, if incurred by the local authority, be considered as capital expenditure.

Impact Assessment

An Equalities Impact Assessment is not required because the report does not propose a change or revision to existing policies and practices.

The Fairer Scotland Duty, which came into force on 1 April 2018, requires the Council to consider how it can reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage when making strategic decisions. Both the Plan for Fife and Fife's Economic Strategy align with this Duty in their commitment to working towards achieving thriving places in Fife's towns and town centres.

Consultation

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services and the Head of Finance have been consulted during the preparation of this report.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The Scottish Government has previously made allocations of £4.335m (financial year 2019/20) and £1.56m (financial year 2020/21) to Fife Council for place-based investments from the Town Centre Capital Fund. This fund was intended to enable local authorities to stimulate and support place based economic investments, which encourage town centres to diversify and flourish, creating footfall through local improvements and partnerships.
- 1.2 In May 2021, Fife Council received an allocation of £3.163m from the Scottish Government's Placed Based Investment Programme. This funding is part of a £140 million, 5-year, stimulus package, aimed at supporting place-based projects that are shaped by the needs and aspirations of local communities and accelerate the Scottish Government's ambitions for place, 20-minute neighbourhoods, town centre action, Community led regeneration and community wealth building. The grant is flexible and may be allocated at the discretion of local authorities within the context of national and local commitments to place and including: The Town Centre First Principle; A New Future for Town Centres; and the Place Principle. However, the key condition is that **all grant expenditure must be completed by 31 March 2022**. The Scottish Government define expenditure as follows: "It is expected that work will be completed; or, at least work or contracts signed or commenced within financial year 2021/2022." The expectation will be that all projects are completed by the end of September 2022.

- 1.3 The 5-year Placed Based Investment Programme will provide a share of the following sums in each financial year, to Local Government:

2021/22	£38m
2022/23	£33m
2023/24	£23m
2024/25	£23m
2025/26	£23m

Whilst this is welcome, and provides some degree of comfort in developing a programme of projects to be delivered, it does not provide a guarantee of annual, defined amounts, of funding that Fife Council will receive in each of the financial years following 2021/22.

- 1.4 The Place Based Investment Programme is a capital source of funding with the aim of supporting the Scottish Government’s aspirations for places. However, as with the Town Centre Capital Fund, grants may be made to third parties for capital works. This may include small businesses, third sector organisations, private individuals and other public bodies, but is subject to the same Scottish Government terms and conditions.
- 1.5 The terms of the Place Based Investment Programme allow a greater degree of flexibility in terms of the settlements where Fife Council may choose to invest, than the predecessor Town Centre Capital Fund.
- 1.6 As with Town Centre Capital Fund, the Scottish Government has set rigid timescales and conditions, which Fife Council will be required to adhere to, including that monies were to be legally committed and/or spent within financial year 2021-2022, with projects expected to be completed by the end of September 2022.

2.0 Issues and Options

- 2.1 The Scottish Government has awarded Fife Council a further capital grant of £3.163m. This is the second largest allocation in Scotland. However, as with the previous allocations, the Scottish Government expect that all expenditure on the fund will be completed within tight timescales. To achieve the aims and timescales, officers believe that the funding allocation for this current financial year (2021/22) would be best utilised in supporting projects which are to some degree “in flight” with business plans, approvals in place and/or projects where it is felt that the Council can provide additionality by investing.
- 2.2 The investment of this grant by Fife Council will need to be considered in the context of the Scottish Government Town Centre Capital programme of projects previously agreed by the Policy and Co-ordination Committee, which due to delays caused during Covid-19 lockdown, is still being delivered. There is also limited time to plan, develop and procure new project streams to achieve spend within the current financial year. We will also need to be mindful of the potential of cost inflation and build a degree of flexibility into project budgets.
- 2.3 The following table provides the proposed disbursement of the Place Based Investment Programme funds for financial year 2021/22.

Table 1 Proposed Disbursement of the PBIP funding 2021/22

Purpose	Value	Notes
Glenrothes Town Centre Masterplan	£1,000,000	Facilitate works at sites identified in the Glenrothes Town Centre Masterplan. Undertake works, where affordable, to existing town centre assets.
Kirkcaldy Waterfront – additional works to public spaces	£1,000,000	Building on the Phase 1 works to make Kirkcaldy waterfront an attractive, active space for the community to use and enjoy for leisure and recreation.
Fife Wide Building Improvement Grant	£250,000	<u>Shopfronts, Building Repair and Upper Floor conversions</u> - A maximum grant of £10K or 90% of total project costs available to town centre businesses across Fife.
St Margaret's House Dunfermline	£423,000	Project led by Abbot House SCIO or a newly formed body. A business plan is in place, including budget costs, to develop a boutique hostel, although this is under review given current circumstances and escalating build costs. It is likely that this will be taken forward now in two phases with this phase fully funded by the PBIP.
Public Realm at Kino Cinema Glenrothes	£200,000	Project to replace tired public open space and provide safe usable space for the community and visitors.
Kings Theatre Kirkcaldy	£290,000	Contribution to the Kings Theatre to develop artists workspace in the former YM building at Kirkcaldy waterfront and helping to provide additional activity.
Total	£3,163,000	

2.4 The context for selecting the proposed projects as outlined in the table above is as follows:

- a) To meet the shortfall in funding for projects.
- b) Projects can meet both the ambitions and conditions of the Fund as set out by the Scottish Government in the timescales available.
- c) Links to the Leading Economic Recovery Action Plan
- d) Links to the Mid Fife Action Plan and Investment Prospectus
- e) Projects are aligned to local and strategic priorities set out by emerging Place Leadership teams and will create transformational change at a local level.
- f) Projects meet the themes identified in A New Future for Scotland's Town Centres

- 2.5 In February 2021, the Scottish Government published “A New Future for Scotland’s Town Centres” a review of the Government’s Town Centre Action Plan, led by Professor Leigh Sparks. This provides the basis for the policy context for towns and town centres and makes several key recommendations on how change may be introduced to meet the challenges facing towns and town centres. Perhaps fundamentally recommendation 3 which seeks to align funding to support the Scottish Government’s aspirations for place, 20-minute neighbourhoods, community action and town centre revitalisation.

3.0 Conclusions

- 3.1 The Scottish Government has allocated a further £3.163m of capital funding from the Place Based Investment Programme to be spent or legally committed in the financial year 2021-22.
- 3.2 The potential impact on revenue budgets continues to be tightly managed. To reduce the Council’s exposure to funding ongoing revenue streams, enhancing existing projects and working with third party end users/beneficiaries is the best route for effective spend of this additional allocation of £3.163m.
- 3.3 There should be some flexibility to allow movement of funds from one project to another as necessary, with the agreement of the Executive Director (Enterprise and Environment). This will be by way of a briefing note to include rationale and purpose of any changes above £100,000. Any awards or changes to the programme below £100,000 will be at the discretion of the Head of Business and Employability.
- 3.4 The Scottish Government funding criteria stipulates that, projects should be aimed at supporting local solutions, shaped by the needs and aspirations of communities and accelerate the Scottish Government’s ambitions for:
- Place
 - 20-minute neighbourhoods
 - Town centre action
 - Community led regeneration
 - Community wealth building
- 3.5 The proposed disbursement of funds outlined in Table 1 reflect the Scottish Government’s priorities, including timescale. The projects identified have the necessary approvals and/or plans in place to allow expenditure to be completed on time.

Background Papers

The following papers were relied on in the preparation of this report in terms of the Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1973:

- Scottish Government Town Centre Action Plan (2013)
- Scottish Government Town Centre Toolkit (2015)
- Scottish Government “A New Future for Scotland’s Town Centres (2021)

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24th June, 2021.
Agenda Item No. 10

Investing in Economic Recovery: Business and Employability Service Capital and Revenue Investment 2021-2024

Report by: Gordon Mole, Head of Business and Employability

Wards Affected: All Wards

Purpose

This report sets out the planned activity for capital and revenue investments agreed through the Fife Council budget setting meeting of 11 March 2021, for Inclusive Growth and Growing the Economy. These investments are aligned to the Council's Plan4Fife and Leading Economic Recovery reform action plan.

Recommendation(s)

It is recommended that the Committee:

1. considers and approves the plans for additional revenue and capital investment for Business & Employability for 2021/22 and future years; and
2. notes that reporting on spend will be received on a regular basis to committee through the revenue and capital monitoring process.

Resource Implications

At its meeting of 11th March 2021, Fife Council approved an investment of £0.375m recurring revenue budget for the Business & Employability service, for the purposes of 'Business Support, Enterprise Hubs and Community Wealth Building'. Fife Council further approved a capital investment of £2.5m to support industrial and commercial development and assist economic recovery including the development of Enterprise Hubs, Industrial Development and Town Centre improvements over the budget period.

Legal & Risk Implications

There are no specific legal implications associated with this report.

Capital investment in the development of industrial and enterprise property requires revenue funding for enabling and managing the asset. This is mitigated through the provision of revenue funding, as set out in this report.

Impact Assessment

An Equalities Impact Assessment has not been completed and is not necessary at this stage, as the proposals within the report do not currently represent a change to policy.

The Fairer Scotland Duty, which came into force on 1 April 2018, requires the Council to consider how it can reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage when making strategic decisions.

An analysis through the Fife Environmental Assessment Tool has not been carried out at this time, but will be undertaken for capital projects set out within this report.

Consultation

The development of the proposals within the report and action plan have been the subject of consultation with the Convener and Vice Convener of the Council's Economy, Tourism, Strategic Planning & Transportation Sub-Committee.

The Head of Finance and Head of Legal and Democratic Services have been consulted on the contents of this report.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The 2020 global Covid-19 pandemic has had an unprecedented economic impact, the full scale of which has still to fully emerge. Government support has so far helped to mitigate the immediate impact on businesses, but to support recovery the Council will need to target activity which supports economic recovery and prosperity, including the provision of industrial and enterprise infrastructure to address market failure and provide fit for purpose business space.
- 1.2 It was also recognised through the budget setting process that in order to engage with businesses in delivering economic recovery, additional revenue would be needed to increase the Business & Employability staffing establishment (as set out in Section 3, below) and provide additional funding for revenue consequences of the above capital investment.
- 1.3 The areas of spend identified within this report accord with the Leading Economic Recovery action plan approved by Policy & Co-ordination Committee at its meeting of 4 March 2021.
- 1.4 The six key actions identified within the plan are to:
 - Provide signposting, advice, guidance & support to local businesses
 - Stimulate economic demand / support access and mobility
 - Protect local employment
 - Continue to make the case and actively lobby for additional funding and investment
 - Support and deliver investment-led economic growth
 - Optimise the role of the Council, and its partners, within the local economy in relation to Community Wealth Building (CWB)

- 1.5 The Plan4Fife refresh consultative draft reaffirms the 12 ambitions of the Fife Partnership. The proposed projects set out in Section 3 below will help to support the ambition of Thriving Places – Fife’s main Town Centres stand out as attractive places to live, work and visit and Inclusive Growth and Jobs – Economic activity and employment in Fife is improving faster than the rest of Scotland and economic activity in Mid-Fife is catching up with the rest of Scotland.
- 1.6 The Mid Fife Economic Investment Prospectus was approved by the Economy, Tourism, Strategic Planning & Transportation Subcommittee on 10th June 2021, and sets out the priority areas for investment across Mid Fife. The proposed capital schemes set out in para xx below are in line with these priorities and focus on two key areas of activity – the regeneration of town centres and the refurbishment of industrial properties to increase the lifespan of the portfolio and attract customers to these units.
- 1.7 Recognising the impact of retail decline, which has been heightened by the Coronavirus pandemic, the proposals also include capital interventions to address the High Street in Dunfermline. The town has recently experienced the loss of Debenhams as a key anchor and requires measures to encourage greater visitor numbers.
- 1.8 Scottish Government’s Infrastructure Investment Plan for Scotland, 2021/22 - 2025/26 builds on the recommendations of the Scottish Infrastructure Commission, including that where possible, existing property assets are enhanced to deliver a net zero carbon economy. The capital plans within this report meet these aims.

2.0 Key Issues

- 2.1 Following the establishment of the Leading Economic Recovery reform programme, an elected member working group considered the issues for enabling economic recovery, as reported to this committee at its meeting of 4th March 2021.
- 2.2 Through these member workshops, a number of key challenges were identified for effective delivery of economic prosperity. These included the need to identify a dedicated sum for revenue consequences of B&E led capital projects, both through the Council’s capital plan and through external funding; revenue support for the programme of Enterprise Hubs, recognising that these need some level of income support in the early phases of delivery; and pressures on staff resources to support key sector propositions for recovery;
- 2.3 The working group further recognised the market failure for building and upgrading employment land and property. Whilst this is being addressed to an extent through the Fife Industrial Innovation Investment (Fi3P) programme, the scale of challenge requires additional intervention.
- 2.4 The Council also established a working group for Community Wealth Building. The action plan for implementation of a Community Wealth Building approach, based on the recommendations of an analysis and report by the Centre for Local Economic Strategies, was agreed by this committee in March 2021. In order to progress actions, a project manager post will be implemented.

3.0 Funding Proposals

- 3.1 The following revenue investments are proposed for Business & Employability to progress the actions required as set out in section 2, above.

- Instigation of a service revenue consequences of capital budget, including project development, feasibility and design work which cannot be capitalised, available for projects within Economic Development and Economy, Tourism and Town Centres on a business case basis - £125,000
- A £60,000 Enterprise Hubs delivery fund, available to support new Enterprise Hubs with trading income for up to 24 months following practical completion. This will initially be used to support the Dunfermline Enterprise Hub, which is due for completion in summer 2021.
- A Community Wealth Building project manager role to support cross-Council development, implementation and delivery of CWB activity, with an additional specific remit to work across the Revenues and Economic Development teams in the delivery of a responsible procurement approach, identifying community benefit opportunities and supporting purchasers in assessment of CWB elements of tenders - £65,000 per annum
- Two project manager posts within Economic Development to lead on sector growth opportunities - £125,000 per annum

3.2 Capital investment for financial years 2021/22 and 2022/23 will include the following schemes. The funding can be used as appropriate to match to external funding opportunities where this would add value and create economies of scale. The investment is a one-off budget of £2.5m

- Fife Food & Business Centre, Glenrothes – subdivision of units and major upgrade works to power supply, welfare facilities and roofs to create greater energy efficiency (£620k).
- Iona House, Kirkcaldy – refurbishment of all floors (£300k)
- Dunfermline Business Centre – roof replacement and upgrade to create greater energy efficiency (£200k)
- Energy efficiency measures across a range of smaller units (£100k)
- Town centre regeneration - £1.24m investment, including upgrade of Volunteers Green, Kirkcaldy and Dunfermline gap site development.

4.0 Conclusions

- 4.1 The economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic continues to provide uncertainty as to the level and extent of recovery. As such, the service continues to remain in a response phase focussed on supporting business survival, resilience, adaptation and diversification.
- 4.2 The measures set out for investment meet with the purposes of the Council's Reform and Recovery programme and economic recovery action plan, and align to areas identified within the Mid Fife Economic Action Plan.
- 4.3 The proposed measures will enable a greater pace in the support of economic recovery in Fife.

Background Papers

The following papers were relied on in the preparation of this report in terms of the Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1973:

- Leading Economic Recovery Action Plan, March 2021
- Plan for Fife 2017-2027
- Fife's Economic Strategy 2017-2027

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24th June 2021
Agenda Item No. 11

Equality and Diversity Scheme 2021-2025

Report by: Paul Vaughan, Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods

Wards Affected: all

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to provide Committee with an update on the Council's Equality and Diversity 2017-2021 and set out another set of equality outcomes and actions for 2021-2025. In line with the Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010, the outcomes will be published online once approved.

Recommendation(s)

Committee members are asked to consider and comment on the contents of this report and approve the outcomes and actions. Members are also asked to agree the Equal Pay Statement.

Resource Implications

There are no immediate resource implications although some elements of the proposed action plan may require the allocation of staff resources and funding.

Legal & Risk Implications

By not producing and publishing a revised set out equality outcome, the Council will be in breach of the Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010.

Impact Assessment

An EqlA is not required as the report does not propose a change to existing policies and practices.

Consultation

Due to the pandemic, it was not possible to consult face to face, therefore an online consultation took place which was facilitated by Fife Centre for Equalities – a summary of responses is included in the Equality and Diversity Scheme.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The Public Sector Equality Duty requires public authorities to publish every four years, a revised set of equality outcomes and progress against the previous four years of outcomes and actions.
- 1.2 Attached at appendix 1 is a set of equality outcomes covering the period 2021-2025 which have been the subject of consultation with equality groups and individuals through Fife Centre for Equalities. The document includes progress on the previous actions covering the period 2017-2021 and the following section sets out some of the achievements.

2.0 Progress on the 2017-2021 Outcomes and Actions

- 2.1 The Equality and Diversity Scheme 2017-2021 was approved in February 2017 and set the following outcomes:
 - People are able to access our services with ease and confidence
 - People feel safe and supported and are able to live free from incidents motivated by hate
 - The Council and its partners lead improvements in equality, diversity and human rights
 - The Council and partners have up to date evidence and information in relation to the protected characteristics to better plan services
 - Raising educational achievement and attainment particularly for those in their early years or in early learning and childcare
- 2.2 The achievements to date include the following:
 - A British Sign Language (BSL) Implementation Group was established with people who use BSL, working together with Fife Council and partner agencies. The purpose of the group is to provide a forum to discuss and monitor the progress of the BSL Local Plan by the partners and BSL members.
 - A hate incidents policy and procedure has been in place since 2019 to ensure that Council Services are aware of how to report and record hate incidents. Fife Centre for Equalities also raised awareness with communities on how to report hate incidents.
 - The Gaelic Language Plan has been in place since 2015 and includes language awareness with staff, communities and work in schools;
 - Closing the equity gap across a range of measures including literacy and numeracy skills has been a priority for schools over the past years as well as supporting more children and young people who had a social work involvement at home, or within Fife;
 - In partnership with third sector organisations, the Council has and continues to raise awareness and support EU citizens to apply for settled status under the EU Settlement Scheme.

3.0 Equality Outcomes 2021-2025

- 3.1 Over a three week period in March 2021, Fife Centre for Equalities undertook an online consultation to seek feedback from communities on the draft equality outcomes to be set and any actions/suggestions for amending the outcomes. 276 responses were received which have been summarised within the document. The equality outcomes set for the next four years are designed to ensure that:
- Council information and services are accessible to communities (outcome 1)
 - Women and girls are able to live free from all forms abuse (outcome 2)
 - The Council works in partnership to ensure that communities are able to participate in decision making and their human rights are respected (outcome 3);
 - The Council better understands its workforce and that it reflects the community (outcome 4);
 - Raising educational attainment and achievement particularly in early years (outcome 5).
- 3.2 In a separate but related piece of work, Fife Council approved a motion to develop an enslavement action plan to raise awareness and educate children, young people and the community about Fife’s historical links to slavery. The Enslavement Education Group met between October 2020 and May 2021 and with input from speakers, developed an action plan – this is being considered by this Committee.
- 3.3 Going forward, the Council will work with Fife Centre for Equalities to ensure that people are able to monitor implementation of the outcomes and actions.

4.0 Conclusion

- 4.1 In line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, the Council has developed a revised set of equality outcomes and actions in consultation with communities. The outcomes are designed to ensure that Council services and information is accessible to communities, that women and girls are protected from abuse and violence; educational attainment and achievement for young learners; that the Council workforce is representative of Fife’s communities and the Council works in partnership to improve people’s quality of life and protect human rights.
- 4.2 In addition, progress against outcomes and actions has been highlighted with work around the Gaelic Language Plan, British Sign Language Plan, hate incidents reporting and support to EU citizens.

List of Appendices

1. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights – Equality Outcomes 2021-2025

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Equality, Diversity and Human Rights

Equality Outcomes 2021 – 2025

To request a copy of this document in a different format, please contact:

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Introduction

The Equality Act 2010 sets out the public sector general equality duty requiring public authorities to pay due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, victimisation and harassment; advance equality of opportunity; and foster good relations. These requirements apply across the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex, sexual orientation, and marriage and civil partnership. The Scottish Government also introduced specific duties requiring Councils to publish a set of Equality Outcomes by 30 April every four years, and publish progress towards the outcomes every two years.

This document presents the Council's next four years of equality outcomes covering the period 2021-2025, builds on the previous outcomes set in 2017 and highlights some achievements over the past four years as well as establishing some new priorities. These outcomes are not meant to encompass all the work the Council does to reduce inequality but set out what are considered to be the priorities.

It is worth highlighting here that the spread of Covid 19 since the beginning of 2020 has had a significant impact on everyone's lives globally and locally. The impact on some people has been more severe than others and particularly so on some of the protected characteristics under the Equality Act. In relation to the Fairer Scotland Duty, there has also been a socio-economic impact on individuals and groups. This document therefore takes account of the current circumstances in which we are living and sets out the equality outcomes and actions which the Council will take forward over the next few years.

Context & Challenges

Public Sector Equality Duty

Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 came into force in April 2011, introducing a new Public Sector Equality Duty that became law across Scotland. The public sector equality duty has 3 parts which all public authorities need to comply with. The 3 parts are called the general duty and public authorities need to consider each of these:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Advance equality of opportunity between those who have a protected characteristics and those who do not
- Foster good relations between those who have protected characteristics and those who do not

The protected characteristics under the Equality Act are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race – this includes ethnic or national origin, colour and nationality. This includes Gypsy Travellers
- Religion or belief – this includes lack of belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

The public sector equality duty under the Equality Act requires the Council to:

- **Mainstream** – How the duty is being integrated into other functions undertaken by the Council.
- **Set equality outcomes** – The results which the authority wishes to achieve. The outcomes must have been set with the engagement of protected characteristics and/or evidence relating to the protected characteristics.
- **Involve** all protected characteristics - and anyone else the local authority considers represents the interests of people with protected characteristics.
- Consider **relevant evidence** relating to people with protected characteristics.
- **Assess** and review policies and practices.
- **Gather** and use employment information.
- **Publish** a revised set of outcomes within a reasonable timescale.

Fairer Scotland Duty

The 'Anti-Poverty Impact - First Stage Report' produced in December 2020, highlighted concerns around poverty and its variations across Fife. The report states that Fife tends to track national trends in income and employment deprivation but shows an increase in health deprivation. Particular issues remain in the mid-Fife area and western Fife, but small pockets of deprivation are seen throughout Fife and child poverty also shows an increasing trend. Some information from the report worth noting includes:

- In 2018/2019, there were 15,641 families living with relative low income in Fife. The majority (61%, 9,531 in total) were working families.
- In May 2020, there were 1,704 people (1,075 men, 627 female) who claimed Jobseeker's allowance in Fife:
- 1,403 were from White ethnicity, 208 were unknown, 66 preferred not to say, 19 Asian and none were Black or Mixed ethnicity.
- In November 2020, 35,317 people were on Universal Credit in Fife, with the majority (63% - 22,278 people) not in employment:
- 1 in 3 claims lasted between 6 months to 1 year
- There were 17,059 claims from males, of which 33% (5,630 people) were in employment.
- There were 18,244 claims from females, of which 41% (7,404 people) were in employment.

The Council is working in partnership with various third sector and statutory agencies to address poverty and there are actions highlighted in this report which aim to reduce poverty for vulnerable individuals, including those from the protected characteristics such as disabled people.

Equalities Profile

Age:

- The population of Fife is growing slowly and was estimated at 373,550 as of June 2019.
- 17% of the Fife population is under 16, 63% of working age (16-65) and 20% are aged 65 and over.
- The 45 to 64 age group is the largest, with a population of 104,664, representing 28% of Fife's population.
- The 75 and over age group is the smallest, with a population of 32,754, representing 8.8% of Fife's population.
- In 2019 8,940,303 concessionary travel journeys were made by bus or train in and out of Fife, whereas in 2020 4,029,809 similar journeys were made as the pandemic and lockdown took effect

Migration:

- The total In-migration (people coming to Fife) in 2018/2019 was 11,860, the total out-migration (people leaving Fife) was 9,560, giving a net migration of +2,300 people.
- Most people coming to Fife were in the 15 -19 age group (900), while those leaving were mainly in the 20-24 age group (423).
- The resulting increase in population Fife over 2018/2019 was of +1,640.

Disability:

- In 2018/2019, it was estimated that one in three (34%) of residents have a long-term physical or mental health condition, an increase of 13% since 2014.
- In May 2020, 10,190 residents were entitled to Disability Living Allowance (DLA) in Fife. The majority (43%) were over State Pension age (4,618 people), 30.8% were children (3,142) and 23.8% were of working age (2,430).

Gender Reassignment

- There is still only limited data about gender reassignment.
- Recent estimates give a range between 4.6 and 9.2 per 100,000 people who are transgender. For the size of the population in Fife, this would give a figure of between 17 and 34 residents.

Marriage and Civil Partnership

- In 2018/2019, 1,490 marriages were registered in Fife, marking a slight increase, compared to the figure for Scotland where the numbers of marriage continue to reduce yearly.
- The number of Civil Partnerships similarly continued to decrease and there were two male and no (0) female civil partnerships recorded during the year.

Pregnancy and Maternity

- The number of babies born in Fife and Scotland continues to decrease slowly every year. In 2018/2019, there were 3,325 births in Fife - 1,726 were male and 1,599 were female.
- The lowest number of teenage pregnancies (145) was also recorded that year, and most women who were pregnant (1,016) were in the 30 to 34 age group.

Race

- It is estimated that 79.1% of Fifers were born in Scotland, 11.7% the rest of the UK, 5.1% from the EU27 and 3.8% from the rest of the world.
- The population of Fife is mainly (91.2%) of White ethnicity, 80.1% being White Scottish and 11.1% White Other British. Minority ethnic groups constitute 8.6% of the population, much lower than the Scotland average of 11.5%.
- Estimates for minority ethnic groups in Fife are 4.9% (18,300 people) White Other (this includes Irish, Gypsy/Travellers), 2% (7,500 people) White Polish, 0.6% (2,240 people) Asian and 1.1% (4,100 people) from all other ethnic groups.
- From the 2011 Census, we also know that 1,282 people speak Gaelic in Fife, with 123,205 people speaking Scots at home.
- There were 167 charges of racially aggravated crime (94 in Kirkcaldy and 73 in Dunfermline) by the Procurator Fiscal Office in 2019/20

Religion and Belief

- It is estimated that the majority of people in Fife (62.3%) have no religion or belief; this is higher than the average across Scotland (53.7%).
- The main religions are 17.2% Church of Scotland (68,800 people), 9.7% Roman Catholic (36,200 people) and 8.2% from other Christian denominations (30,600 people).

Sex

- In 2018/2019, there were more women than men living in Fife, with an estimated 192,136 women and 181,414 men. This represents 51.4% of Fifiers being female and 48.6% male.
- In Fife, life expectancy at age 65-69 is higher than at Scotland level for both females and males by 19.9 and 17.6 years respectively.
- The leading cause of death for males are ischaemic heart diseases (14.8% of all male deaths) while for females it is dementia and Alzheimer's disease (14.7%).
- On average, male full-time workers in Fife earn £15.03 per hour and female full-time workers earn £14.32.

Sexual Orientation

- It is estimated that in 2018/2019, 94.7% of the population, in Fife are heterosexual and 3.4% (12,700 people) are Lesbian, Gay or other.
- There were 67 charges of sexual orientation aggravated crime (45 in Kirkcaldy and 22 in Dunfermline) by the Procurator Fiscal Office in 2019/20.

Impact of Pandemic on Protected Groups

Covid-19 has prompted sudden and substantial changes in employment, schooling and other day-to-day activities. Although everyone has been affected by the pandemic and lockdown restrictions, it is increasingly clear that impacts vary for different population groups. Highlighted below are some of the impacts being felt by people from the protected characteristics.

Impact on Women

Women's experiences are significantly different to men's. They continue to play a significant role in terms of having caring responsibilities, more likely to be in lower paid employment and working part-time and more likely to be furloughed compared to men.

- Where women are working during the lockdown, they are spending fewer hours doing paid work than men and more hours on childcare and housework
- Women are consistently less likely than men to feel comfortable with the resumption of 'normal' activities, such as sending children to school, travelling on public transport or visiting a bar or restaurant, with implications for the government's recovery plans.

A survey published by [IPSOS Mori and the Fawcett Society](#) found that the emotional toll of Covid-19, particularly during lockdown, was having the greatest impact on women. There has also been a global surge in domestic abuse during lockdown restrictions, leading the [UN secretary general to call on governments](#) around the world to put in place policies to tackle violence against women and girls and ensure safe refuge for victims.

Impact on Ethnic Minorities

People from ethnic minorities are at a higher risk of dying from coronavirus, according to a report by Public Health England . It shows that age remains the biggest risk factor, while being male is another. But age and sex apart, the report states people of Bangladeshi ethnicity have twice the risk of death than people of white British ethnicity. The impact of Covid-19 is also disproportionate for other Asian, Caribbean and Black ethnicities. But it remains unclear why.

Impact on LGBT Communities

'Community Matters - The Impact of Lockdown on Scottish LGBT+ Communities', released as part of the Rainbow Responders programme managed by Pink Saltire, details a worrying number of LGBT+ people are dealing with mental health challenges, with many turning to drink and drugs to help them cope.

The information presented above has set out some concerns regarding the impact of the pandemic particularly on some protected characteristics. The pandemic has also exacerbated and / or brought to light some issues such as increasing unemployment, financial and health inequalities (particularly mental health). The equalities profile data has also shown a changing picture for our communities. The Council cannot address all the concerns, inequalities and changes within our communities in isolation. Working in partnership with other statutory and third sector organisations, the outcomes presented later in this document aim to advance equality of opportunity and reduce socio-economic disadvantage for many of the protected characteristics and wider community.

Our Commitment to Equality and Diversity

Equality & Diversity Scheme 2017 – 2021: Progress on Equality Outcomes & Actions

The Council's commitment to equality and diversity goes beyond the equality outcomes which are set in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty. Much of the work carried out is not included in the outcomes and actions, but Council services continue to provide services to communities (including people from the protected characteristics) that are not captured in this document. However, this section will highlight some of the achievements over the past four years in relation to the outcomes. Progress has also been reported annually to Committee and published online – a copy of these reports is available by contacting enquiry.equalities@fife.gov.uk

The previous set of equality outcomes was as follows:

- People are able to access our services with ease and confidence
- People feel safe and supported and are able to live free from incidents motivated by hate
- The Council and its partners lead improvements in equality, diversity and human rights
- The Council and partners have up to date evidence and information in relation to the protected characteristics to better plan services
- Raising educational achievement and attainment particularly for those in their early years or in early learning and childcare

Impact Assessment

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requires the Council to assess the impact of changes in policy and practice in relation to the nine protected characteristics. Similarly, the Fairer Scotland Duty requires a written assessment (in relation to strategic decisions) of how inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage can be reduced. Fife Council has incorporated the requirements of the latter into the Equality Impact Assessment Guidance, and assessments are required as part of the committee reporting process. Report writers are required to: provide an assessment of the equality impact of a policy or practice in relation to the protected characteristics; if there is no equality impact then an explanation is provided of how the policy or practice complies with one or more of the three General Duties under the Equality Act; and an assessment is provided of how the policy or practice will reduce socio-economic disadvantage.

Budget decisions also require the above assessments to be undertaken and impact assessments are available online, in line with the PSED publication requirements.

British Sign Language Plan

Fife Council made the BSL Plan available on the Fife Council website and Health and Social Care Partnership Web pages including their Facebook page. A BSL implementation group (BSLIG) was established with people who use BSL, working together with Fife Council and partner agencies. The purpose of the BSLIG is to provide a forum to discuss and monitor the progress of the BSL Local Plan by the partners and BSL members of the group. The Chair of the BSLIG presents update reports to Fife's Health and Social Care Partnership Clinical and Governance Committee.

Hate Incidents Policy & Procedure

The hate incident policy and procedure was approved by the Senior Equalities Group in 2019 and circulated to Services along with detailed guidance forms on reporting and recording hate incidents. Fife Centre for Equalities also raised awareness of the procedure for hate incident reporting through a number of community workshops and focus groups. Despite the revised policy and procedure, the majority of incidents motivated by hate against a protected characteristic tend to be hate crimes and reported to the Police. Nevertheless, the Council and partner organisations, including Fife Centre for Equalities, will continue to raise awareness of how hate incidents can be reported.

Gaelic Language Plan

The Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005 requires local authorities to put in place actions which promote the Gaelic language and gives it equal recognition to that of the English language. Fife Council's Gaelic Language Plan (GLP) has been in place since November 2015 and sets out a number of commitments to promote Gaelic within the corporate structure, within the community and within schools. The 2011 Census showed that 87,000 people in Scotland had some Gaelic language skills and current estimates show that 5% of Gaelic speakers live in Fife. Since the Plan has been in place, much has been achieved to promote Gaelic within the community and in schools. Some of the achievements worth noting are:

- Gaelic engagement in schools and communities has been targeted at some of the most vulnerable communities in Fife; national funding has been secured to ensure there are no barriers to participation and those wishing to engage can do so within their own communities, often for free.
- Gaelic engagement and development in Fife is a partnership effort. Fife Gaelic Development Group is a small voluntary organisation which works to complement the Gaelic Language Plan at community level and advocate on behalf of the Gaelic community when required. There is also a multi-agency steering group, the Partnership Group for Gaelic in Fife, which brings together smaller voluntary organisations, advocates in the Gaelic community, national organisations and other key stakeholders to work collectively to achieve shared aims for Gaelic development across Fife.
- Staff and volunteers within Fife Council have been able to attend Gaelic awareness training which highlights the barriers to language use and the challenges that face all minority languages. Staff are supported to engage with Gaelic as part of their existing roles and language learning is being rolled out.

Raising Educational Achievement and Attainment

The level of child poverty is increasing in Scotland but there is evidence that poverty in Fife is increasing at a faster rate. For example, outcomes for the vulnerable and most disadvantaged, including those registered for free school meals and/or having an additional support need, were significantly lower than those for an 'average child'. Equity remains a significant challenge for Fife, as for Scotland and many other nations.

However, despite the challenges, Education and Children's Services have made significant progress:

- closing the equity gap across a range of measures, including literacy and numeracy skills;
- 76 positive destinations and participation post-school;
- supporting more children and young people who had a social work involvement at home, or within Fife.

Going forward, the focus for Education and Children's Services will be:

- a targeted focus on those who are most disadvantaged;
- nurturing approaches and trauma-informed practice in helping to recognise and meet individual needs;
- supporting the emotional wellbeing of young people, families and staff;
- valuing choice and participation, allowing young people a greater voice; and
- mitigating the impact of poverty.

Supporting EU Citizens

EU citizens have until the end of June to apply under the EU Settlement Scheme for Settled Status (SS) to continue to live and work in the UK. In partnership with third sector organisations, the Council continues to raise awareness with staff and EU citizens in the community of the need to apply for SS and support them in making an application where language or other support is required. Work carried out to date has included:

- Regular updates in staff bulletins to encourage EU colleagues to record their nationality and apply for SS if they have not done so;
- Third sector organisations such as CARF, Fife Migrants Forum and Fife Centre for Equalities providing individual support and raising awareness, particularly with larger employers;
- The Council's Customer Support Centres will also support EU citizens with applications (by appointment only). As at March 2021 13940 Fife applications have been concluded under the SS scheme.

Corporate Working Group on Equality

The Council has a Senior Equalities Group (SEG) which oversees the implementation of the Equality and Diversity Scheme. The Group is currently chaired by the Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods and meets quarterly with representation drawn from across the Directorates and trade unions. The remit of the SEG is as follows:

- To promote equality and diversity within everything Fife Council does
- To ensure senior managers are engaged in equality and diversity issues in line with legislation and best practice requirements
- To monitor the strategic and corporate impact of the integrated equalities action plan, suggesting amendments as required to improve performance

In terms of monitoring and reporting, an annual progress report is provided to the Council's Policy and Co-ordination Committee. The reports are also published online at fife.gov.uk.

Fife Centre for Equalities

Fife Centre for Equalities (FCE) was established in 2016 as an independent third sector organisation to support Fife Council's engagement with the protected characteristics. The Council has a Service Level Agreement with FCE to undertake certain activities (components) which include the following:

- Ensuring the needs of older people (irrespective of protected characteristics) are better understood and acted on by key services.
- Increasing awareness of and enabling communities to access support for reporting hate incidents to Fife Council and other partners.
- Providing training, guidance and support to private, public and third sector organisations to help improve their employment and service delivery practices.
- Ensuring individuals belonging to the protected characteristics have the confidence to engage with council services to ensure that their needs and priorities are met.
- Collate, analyse and disseminate data on the protected characteristics to inform service providers of any disparities and highlight any emerging issues.

Some of FCE's achievements during the life of the previous Equality and Diversity Scheme include (from 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020):

- The Let's Leave No One Behind report, a research on Poverty and Protected Characteristics conducted in partnership with Fife Council, was launched on 25 November 2019. 17 organisations took part in the survey, 23 participants attended focus groups and 4 personal stories were added to the final report. 27 participants attended the report launch and 170 accessed the report on FCE's website.
- Our Equality in Fife, statistical report on protected characteristics, was updated in July 2019. The report was also accompanied by individual facts on different protected characteristics. The report and individual factsheets were accessed by 583 online users.
- Four specialist briefings accompanied by lunchtime workshops were provided covering topics on legal definitions of Gypsies and Travellers as an Ethnic Group; Equality in Fife: Main themes; Equal Opportunities Monitoring and Census 2021; Paygaps, Lifegaps and Inequality.
- Twelve awareness raising sessions on hate incidents were delivered to 124 participants.
- Twelve training sessions were provided to 178 people – topics covered included: understanding gender identity; understanding diversity; inclusive communication; overcoming unconscious bias.
- Seventeen people aged 55+ took part in the Different Paths video interviews, a collection of life stories to improve understanding of the different experiences of moving through life for people with protected characteristics.

- Eighteen organisations registered with Equality Pathfinder Scheme, a voluntary and non-competitive recognition scheme leading the way in making Fife a fair, equal and inclusive place to live, work and study.
- Equality Collective brought together 310 members of different protected characteristics in four events; Women and Hate Crime, T with Trans, Spotting Signs of Human Trafficking, and Transport in Fife.
- The EU Settlement Scheme referral page was accessed by 738 people. Posters about the Fife EU Settlement Scheme Partnership were distributed widely in public events and social media. FCE's EU Settlement Scheme Partnership social media posts reached 23,049 people.
- FCE's Equalities Monthly newsletter has 1,435 subscribers. In addition, 35 people signed up to receive communications via text.

Procurement Duty

To meet the requirements of the specific duty, a public authority must be able to demonstrate that it has had due regard to whether the award criteria and conditions relating to the performance of a relevant agreement should include considerations to enable it to better perform the equality duty.

Applying 'due regard' means that when making decisions about procurement, an authority subject to the duty must consciously consider the need to: eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations.

Any award criteria or conditions related to the performance of a relevant agreement must, in accordance with the [Public Contracts \(Scotland\) Regulations 2015](#), be relevant to and proportionate to the subject matter of the contract or framework agreement.

The Fairer Scotland Duty, Part 1 of the Equality Act 2010, came into force in Scotland in April 2018. This requires public authorities, in the exercise of their functions, to have due regard to how they can reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage, when making strategic decisions.

Promoting Equality within the Education and Children's Services Directorate

(see outcome 5 below)

Fife's Education and Children's Services Directorate is the second largest in Scotland. The Directorate provides high quality education and social work services to children, young people and families and in relation to criminal justice. The Directorate's vision is to **improve life chances for all**.

The Education and Children's Services Directorate plays a key role in taking forward the wider aims of the Council by:

- Supporting the delivery of the Plan 4 Fife
- Playing a lead role in strategic planning across the wider Children's Services Partnership
- Working collaboratively with local authorities across the South East of Scotland through the South East Improvement Collaborative

The Directorate's approach is founded on the values of:

- Compassion
- Ambition
- Respect
- Equity

Since the start of the Covid-19 Pandemic the Directorate has been implementing alternative ways to raise attainment, ensure inclusion, improve the learning environment, while supporting and protecting the most vulnerable.

The priorities for improvement are:

- **Delivering the Promise** for Fife's vulnerable children & young people
- **Closing the Attainment Gap** for the most disadvantaged
- **Improving Opportunity** for all children & young people
- **Empowering all** through place-based leadership

The commitment in practice will ensure that:

- the most effective practitioners are attracted and recruited, and their professional learning and practice is developed.
- effective partnerships are developed, and services are integrated in a child and family-centred way.
- efforts are focused on prevention, early intervention to break the cycle of disadvantage and protect the vulnerable.
- outcomes improve for all, with a clear focus for targeted support on those facing the greatest equity gaps in outcomes.

Equality & Diversity in Employment

Equality and Diversity in Employment (see outcome 4 below)

Employee Information

The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) Regulations 2012 place specific duties on the Council to gather, use and publish employee information and publish pay gap information every two years. It also requires the Council to publish an equal pay statement every four years.

Equal Pay Statement 2021-25

Fife Council is committed to providing equality of opportunity in employment. We aim to ensure a fair, open and transparent approach to the determination of pay and conditions of employment which does not discriminate unlawfully and is free from bias across all of the protected characteristics including sex, race and disability.

We believe that all employees should receive equal pay for the same or broadly similar work, for work rated as equivalent, or for work of equal value.

We will:

- Use a robust framework of job evaluation which allows an objective and reliable measure of the size and relative worth of each job. The framework is underpinned by equal opportunities practice ensuring that there is no bias related to any of the protected characteristics.
- Ensure that all those involved in decisions about pay and benefits are appropriately trained.
- Allow employees to appeal against job evaluation outcomes.
- Monitor pay statistics regularly.
- Consider the impact of pay practices on the roles, levels and distribution across the Council on the basis of sex, disability and race. We will do this by monitoring areas of occupational segregation of these characteristics.
- Assess and review the findings of monitoring activities and take action where necessary.
- Continue to work in partnership with the recognised Trade Unions on equal pay and equalities in employment.
- Inform employees of how our pay practices work and how their own pay is determined.
- Respond appropriately to all enquiries concerning fairness in pay. We believe that the actions set out above will help ensure we avoid unfair discrimination and reward, in a fair and transparent way, the skills, experience and potential of all employees.

The Council meets the specific duties in relation to the publishing of information about the workforce and pay practices within Equality in Employment Reports (available on ife.gov.uk). These reports provide employee information across all of the protected characteristics including recruitment, training, dismissals, discipline and grievance. The appendix of these reports also provides information about gender, race and disability pay gaps as well as occupational segregation. Key statistics are provided below:

Key Statistics - Workforce Profile as of 31st March 2020

- The percentage of our workforce aged 24 and under continues to slightly increase and this group now represent 5.3% of our workforce.
- The age profile peaks between ages 45 to 59.
- The percentage of our workforce declaring a disability remains below 2%.
- The gender split has remained static with females making up 72% of our workforce.
- 48% of employees are married or in a civil partnership.
- Less than 2% of our workforce are from a Black and Minority Ethnic background.
- 66% of our employees have not disclosed their religion. 19% have no religion. 15% said they belong to a Christian denomination. Fewer than 1% told us they were Buddhist, Muslim, Jewish Hindu or Sikh.
- 69% of our workforce have not disclosed their sexual orientation. 30% told us they are heterosexual. Less than 1% said they were lesbian, gay or bisexual.
- 86% of our employees did not answer the question on gender identity. Fewer than 1% of employees told us they identify with a gender other than the one assigned to them at birth.

Previous Workforce Actions

The Council's Equality and Diversity Scheme 2017-21 set out equality outcomes and within the outcomes we embedded specific workforce related actions. Most of these actions contributed to the Council's outcome to: "work in partnership to lead improvements in equality, diversity and human rights". We said we would:

- Migrate to the new 'Disability Confident' scheme and build on the best practices from the 'Positive About Disabled People' model.
- Improve managers' awareness and understanding of mental wellbeing to help us support employees with mental health issues.
- Put in place the recommendations from the Investors in Young People (IiYP) to help us attract, retain and develop young people.

We also said we would promote reporting of hate incidents experienced or witnessed by staff. This was part of the Council's outcome that: "People feel safe and supported and are able to live free from incidents motivated by hate".

Below is an update on our actions.

Migration to the new 'Disability Confident' scheme

The Council achieved 'Disability Confident' status following a full assessment in December 2017. The self-assessment process was repeated in 2019, extending our scheme membership until December 2022. This scheme builds on the best practices from the 'Positive About Disabled People' model.

Improvement of managers' awareness and understanding of mental wellbeing

In 2019 we introduced a wellbeing programme which included mental health awareness training for managers, a Supporting Mental Wellbeing at Work Policy and refreshed Return to Work documentation specifically tailored for those employees returning to work following an absence related to their mental health.

Mentally Healthy Workplace training was developed by NHS Healthy Working Lives specifically for managers and supervisors. Employees have been trained to deliver the training course to all managers and supervisors.

Other actions include a network of trained individuals across the Council to act as Mental Health First Aiders who provide support and signposting to those experiencing mental health crises.

Following the recommendations from the Investors in Young People (IiYP).

We achieved Investors in Young People Gold accreditation in 2018.

Support and empowerment of young employees and the wider young people of Fife is high on our agenda and will continue to be a priority. Recommendations from IiYP included a Young Person's Network – which is now being run by young employees themselves, with support. We also have a newsletter targeted to young employees as well as guidance for managers to improve support for young employees.

Young employees benefit from the Mentoring Programme for Young Employees which pairs them up with experienced colleagues from another part of the organisation who provide coaching support.

Promote reporting of hate incidents experienced or witnessed by staff.

In 2018 the Council implemented a new policy and procedure to record and respond to hate incidents reported by members of the public. Within this we signpost staff to the appropriate process should they experience or witness another member of staff experiencing a hate incident. We collect details of any incidents relating to violence, aggression or threat toward employees and regularly monitor this information. These reports allow the individuals to record whether it was related to any of the protected characteristics within the Equality Act.

Pay Gaps

Gender Pay Gap

The gender pay gap across the whole Council has fallen to 0.66% (as at 31st March 2020) and continues to be below the Scottish Local Authority average (3.9% as at 31st March 2020).

Within the Education Authority the gender pay gap continues to be wider than that for the whole Council (although it has fallen slightly as it was 26.01% last the time it was reported in 2019 and is 25.38% as at 31st March 2020.)

The overall gender split of employees within the Education Authority is 86% female and 14% male. However, male employees tend to be focussed within the higher and teaching

grades with the lower graded Single Status posts occupied by predominantly female employees. This is not unexpected given many of these posts are Pupil Support Assistants and Early Years Officers – occupations which have high levels of gender segregation. We continue to challenge traditional perceptions for example by using recruitment adverts showing male employees in early years settings.

Women in Senior Positions

Over the last few years we have seen an increasing number of women in the top 5% of earners. As at 31st March 2019 63.93% of those in the top 5% of earners were female and as at the 31st March 2020 this figure had increased to 64.79%, (72.15% of the total workforce as at 31st March 2020 is female).

Disability Pay Gap

The pay gap between our disabled employees and our non-disabled employees for the Whole Council has increased from 9.89% in 2019 to 12.63% in 2020.

In our Education Authority there is a negative pay gap, where on average disabled staff earn more than non-disabled staff.

However, it is important to remember that from anecdotal evidence it is likely that the number of our employees with a disability is higher than the number who have disclosed a disability. We must therefore be careful about drawing conclusions from a limited data set. We will continue to encourage employees to disclose this information.

Race Pay Gap

The “white minority ethnic pay gap” demonstrates any inequality for white minority ethnic staff. It is the difference in average hourly pay between white Scottish and white other British employees when compared to white ethnic minority employees.

As at 2020 our white minority ethnic mean pay gap was –12.50%. This tells us that on average white minority ethnic employees earn more than white Scottish and white other British employees.

The mean “non-white minority ethnic pay gap” was -3.92%. This tells us that on average employees from a BME background earn more than white Scottish and white British employees.

Again, we acknowledge that as disclosure rates of ethnicity is low we cannot rely on the accuracy of these figures.

Disclosure Rates

We acknowledge that more work is needed to improve the percentage of equality information disclosure that we receive from our employees.

We have moved to a new HR/Payroll system, which will allow us to retain equality information submitted as part of the recruitment system and bring it within our core HR data. Previously we had to ask employees to complete equality data in various systems and at various points of the employment life cycle.

As part of our new action “Work to improve the information we hold about employee’s equality information” we will seek to increase the number of employees completing the full equality question set. We will launch an awareness-raising campaign about why this information is collected, and how we use it, to encourage disclosure.

Equality Outcomes 2021-2025

As mentioned in the introduction, the Public Sector Equality Duty requires Councils to develop and publish a set of equality outcomes for the next four years. The equality outcomes that are set out later in this document: demonstrate which part of the three General Equality Duties under the Equality Act are being fulfilled; relate to the Fairer Scotland Duty and make a link to one or more of the Plan for Fife priorities.

In setting the equality outcomes, the following areas of work have been taken into consideration as being important and follow through into the actions which will be taken to implement the outcomes.

Fife Council's Budget Priorities

The physical and mental ill-health caused by COVID-19, together with the economic impacts, including loss of businesses and jobs, have greatly impacted people's standards of living and caused financial insecurity for many more with the risks of poverty and homelessness which this brings. There have been significant consequences for education and communities have felt the economic impacts sharply in how they travel, live, work, and shop. In recognition of these impacts, £72.6m was invested in health and social care and mental health services that are delegated to integration authorities. This additional funding includes a contribution to continued delivery of the Living 52 Wage (£34m) (£2.436m for Fife); uprating of free personal and nursing care payments (£10.1m) (£0.695m for Fife) and implementation of the Carers Act.

Plan for Fife

The Plan for Fife was originally approved in 2017 for a 10-year period. A three-year review was initiated by Fife Partnership in August 2020 and agreed four recovery and reform priorities, in response to the impact of the pandemic and the recovery work required across the partnership. The recovery and reform areas are:

- **Tackling poverty and crisis prevention** – With 11.9% of Fife's population income deprived before the pandemic, Covid-19 is likely to have increased poverty levels for this group and people who were managing or 'just about managing' prior to the pandemic have become reliant on additional financial support or support with basic items, such as food. Partnership work in this area will focus on reducing duplication and improving resource allocation to support vulnerable families and individuals and address issues relating to poverty and food insecurity.
- **Leading economic recovery** - Many areas in the UK are looking at building more sustainable economic development through community-based approaches. These rely on working with 'anchor institutions' to: redirect spend through progressive procurement of goods and services; build local capacity through grants and investment in community assets; and promote fair employment and just labour markets. Fife will be taking a similar approach to leading economic recovery.
- **Sustaining services through new ways of working** - The Covid-19 emergency has required employers to adopt new ways of working both to maintain the delivery of essential services and to respond to the urgent needs of individuals and families.

Reform work in this area will focus on working more flexibly and efficiently across the Fife Partnership.

- **Addressing the climate emergency** - The Covid-19 emergency provides an opportunity to accelerate efforts to reduce carbon emissions through local action in areas such as transport, energy and housing, and by changing the consumption patterns of local citizens.

The Council's outcomes and actions will support partnership work in relation to the reform areas, particularly in tackling poverty and crisis prevention and leading economic recovery.

Social Renewal Advisory Board

The Social Renewal Advisory Board (SRAB) was set up by the Scottish Government in 2020 as a short-term group to come up with transformational ideas on how to deliver real change as Scotland embarks on its journey of renewal after the pandemic. The Board was not set up to suggest small improvements to make some things better and some things "less bad". Rather, the SRAB was calling for a fair and equal society, underpinned by a strong commitment to human rights and economic justice and using existing mechanisms rather than creating anything new. The Board emphasised that social renewal will not be real unless communities of people, of identity and of place have more say, power and influence.

Enslavement Education Group

In September 2010, a motion was passed at full Council requesting the establishment of a working group to look at Fife's historical links to slavery and develop an action plan. The Group met five times between October 2020 and May 2021 and developed an action plan with input from various speakers from the Universities of St Andrews, Glasgow (Beniba Centre) and Heriot Watt. The action plan includes work to inform children, young people and communities about enslavement, its historical links and how the past continues to manifest itself in today's society in areas such as higher unemployment for ethnic minority.

The action plan and report on the work of the group can be found [here](#).

Tackling Poverty and Crisis Prevention

Fife Council and Partners have been working together for some time to tackle poverty and reduce inequality. The report Tackling Poverty and Crisis Prevention brought together previous work in this area combined with lessons learned from the pandemic with a view to looking at how things could be improved and/or changed. The impact of the pandemic meant that services and partners had to quickly adapt and react to a changes in what communities needed and deal with crisis situations.

The report concluded that a combination of social and financial challenges are driving the need to re-think approaches to supporting community wellbeing. Over the last ten years, public services have come under increased pressure, both financially, from the implementation of austerity measures, including a series of welfare reform changes, and socially, from increased need and demand for mitigation and crisis services.

The pandemic has shown the willingness of communities to work together, highlighting that a sense of place matters more than any particular service or area of work. The Multi-Disciplinary Teams (MDTs) established in each of the seven areas have been recognised as being key to the effectiveness of Fife's crisis response to the pandemic. In June 2020, the Council reviewed the initial experience of the Covid-19 response and noted that MDTs were a key contributor to nurturing a common purpose, clear focus and appetite to remove barriers. The report highlighted the role of MDTs as cross-partner groups.

During the early months of the pandemic, the Council and partners established services including the COVID Community Helpline and Fife Voluntary Action's Helping Hand initiative to provide a range of support to people. Community support was coordinated across seven areas through Community Assistance Hubs. These new services involved substantial changes to the way the Council and partners was operating, with many staff undertaking essential roles that were different to their normal duties. Staff reported feeling empowered and able to make educated decisions and managed risks without the need to ask for permission, which allowed them to respond to the emergency and demonstrate leadership on the front line.

Considering elements like an individual's wider situation, particularly their family circumstances and local area, could provide intelligence for building individually targeted support. The community teams reported that in responding to specific requests they got to know individuals and families better and could see where other supports would help.

This **no wrong door approach** is also being developed through reform work on Homelessness and other housing related issues.

Consultation, Engagement and Monitoring

Over a three-week period in March 2021, Fife Centre for Equalities undertook a consultation on the Council's draft equality outcomes. The survey questions were widely circulated through social media, newsletters and the weekly and monthly FCE bulletins, 276 responses were received providing feedback on the following main questions:

- Did people agree with the outcomes?
- Could the outcomes be worded differently?
- Any actions which could be included as part of the outcomes.
- Any other suggestions for actions which could be included in the outcomes.

Many of the responses received overlapped across the different outcomes. A summary of the consultation responses is provided below..

Summary responses:

- There was majority agreement to all of the outcomes and actions proposed with some suggestions on how the outcome and/or action could be reworded to make it clearer
- Respondents were keen to stress that communities (including individuals and groups) should be supported so they can be involved and influence decision making or access services which they needed;
- Services and information should be readily and easily accessible;
- The Council should be speaking to and not at communities with routine involvement and engagement using a variety of methods as not everyone has digital access. However, digital use including social media was also a way of reaching younger and a wider range of people who prefer this method so should be used in addition to other methods of engagement;
- There should be a community led approach to designing services and that includes speaking with community organisations which will reach a larger group of protected characteristics;
- In relation to violence and abuse, people were keen to stress that support should be available for anyone experiencing abuse and education has a key part to play particularly for children and young people to value and respect relationships and be supported if they have experienced trauma;
- With regard to partnership working, respondents suggested that organisations can work together to offer work placements, internships particularly for ethnic minority people to address skills shortages. Respondents also stressed the need for partnership working to involve all people and listen to their voices and be open and accountable in decision making;
- In relation to the workforce outcome, respondents were keen to stress that the Council should undertake to understand its workforce better and that it was a true reflection of the community. In addition, there was also a suggestion that the staff currently employed should be better supported and their specific needs recognised. Respondents also expressed concern that perhaps workforce needs were not better understood and to accurately respond to the question Council and general population demographics would need to be made available;
- Respondents also suggested that there should be a robust recruitment process which was open and transparent, with impact assessments undertaken to address gaps and plans to address workforce diversity;

- In relation to the outcome around raising educational attainment, a number of respondents suggested that at a younger age, wellbeing and play were more important as was outdoor play than a focus on attainment. There was also a suggestion that raising educational attainment should be in partnership with parents to raise attainment across all age groups and individuals (including young people with learning difficulties) using measured, holistic and diverse methods of achievement.
- Respondents also suggested that there should be more funding in early years and for pupil support and increasing the school starting age to 7 years. Respondents also expressed concern about poverty and that if children's basic needs were not met, they would not be able to learn.

By keeping respondents engaged with the Council's outcomes and the implementation of the actions, the full set of outcomes and narrative will be shared widely, including through Fife Centre of Equalities, and by providing regular updates on progress. Respondents should be able to see their suggestions included in the outcomes and actions at the end of this document.

There is a requirement to report and publish progress against the outcomes every two years. Progress will be reported to the appropriate Council Committee and published online at fife.gov.uk.

Previous outcomes and actions have set out measures and timescales for achievement. However, going forward, the actions will be embedded into renewal and recovery plans which Council services are now focussing on having had to adapt their services over the past year and a half.

Equality Outcomes – 2021 – 2025

Outcome 1: Fife’s communities are provided with services and information accessible to them particularly those who face barriers through disability, language and digital exclusion.	
Ref.	Actions
1.1	Provide Council information in a range of formats including BSL and community languages on request
1.2	A range of engagement and consultation tools are provided (including use of social media) to seek the views of people who are ‘hard to reach’. All consultations to be set out and made available in the Consultation Diary
1.3	Provide documents in a range of formats to ensure they are accessible (e.g. using appropriate layout, headings, colour contrasts and font size for use with screen readers)
1.4	More information to be channelled through the Community Portal to enable citizens to keep up to date with local news
General Duties: Eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advancing equality of opportunity; fostering good relations Fairer Scotland Duty: Reducing socio-economic disadvantage Plan for Fife priority: Sustaining services through new ways of working; Leading economic recovery	

Why we have prioritised this outcome

The Council recognises that there will be people from the protected characteristics and other vulnerable groups who are not able to use digital forms of communication and do not take part in decision making. The pandemic has shown that people, for example, from low income households do not have digital access and ethnic minority and disabled people may have missed out on communication about the pandemic. We therefore want to ensure that, using a range of communication methods, the Council provides access to information and services that meets people’s different needs. Being able to take part in democracy and decision making is also important and the Council will ensure that different engagement methods (including online, social media, face to face) are used to ensure that people are engaged at the right time.

Outcome 2: Women and girls live free from all forms of violence and abuse – and the attitudes that help perpetuate it	
Ref.	Actions
2.1	<p>Consult with women, children and young people with lived experience of VAW including those in contact with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VAW specialist services, • Fife Women’s Tent and • Equality Collective <p>and use this information to inform service design</p> <p>FVAWP and individual partners to liaise with local equality groups and identify opportunities for collaborative working including Fife Equalities Forum.</p>
2.2	<p>Fife Council to work with FVAWP to progress actions within the Equally Safe at Work framework addressing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership • Data • Flexible working • Occupational Segregation • Workplace culture • Violence against women • Share learning with FVAWP partners • Fife Council and Partners to highlight VAW policies in context of Covid-19, recognising the impact Covid-19 has had on staff working from home and additional risks.
2.3	<p>Revised Equality and Diversity Scheme to reflect impact of Covid -19 including identifying inequality of outcome and disadvantage on women, children and young people.</p> <p>Share and highlight Supplementary Guidance with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities Fife Partnership • Community Managers • Communities and Wellbeing Partnership • Child Poverty Group

General Duty: Advancing equality of opportunity; fostering good relations
Fairer Scotland Duty: Reducing socio-economic disadvantage
Plan for Fife: Tackling poverty and crisis prevention

Why we have prioritised this outcome

Throughout 2020, Covid-19 has hugely impacted on those with lived experience of violence against women and the way services have been offered. In recognition of the particular risks for women and children the Scottish Government, CoSLA, Public Health Scotland and the Improvement Service published [Covid-19 Supplementary VAW Guidance](#) which recognises that the pandemic has, and will continue to, place women, children and young people experiencing all forms of VAWG at increased risk of harm for the foreseeable future. This includes women and children experiencing domestic abuse, rape and sexual assault, commercial sexual exploitation (CSE), trafficking, forced marriage and female genital mutilation. Fife has agreed a more detailed plan to address Violence Against Women ([FVAWP action plan](#))

Fife Council and partners are committed to addressing crime across all protected characteristics, including all forms of hate crime and hate incidents – this is included in Outcome 3.

Outcome 3: Fife’s communities (including people from the protected characteristics) have increased confidence to participate in decision making, their human rights respected and have an improved quality of life	
Ref.	Actions
3.1	Monitor and receive regular reports around harassment and bullying motivated by hate
3.2	In partnership with Police Scotland, raise awareness with public sector employees of third party reporting centres as an additional method of reporting hate incidents
3.3	Develop a partnership approach to participation in decision making e.g. through a lay-persons People’s Panel
3.4	Use the People and Place local arrangements as the building block of a stronger community led approach
General Duty: Eliminating bullying, harassment & discrimination; fostering good relations Fairer Scotland Duty: Reducing socio-economic disadvantage Plan for Fife: Tackling poverty and crisis prevention	

Why we have prioritised this outcome

Fife Council made the BSL Plan available on the Fife Council website and Health and Social Care Partnership Web pages including their facebook page. A BSL Implementation Group (BSLIG) was established with people who use BSL, working together with Fife Council and partner agencies. The purpose of the BSLIG is to provide a forum to discuss and monitor the progress of the BSL Local Plan by the partners and BSL members of the group. The Chair of the BSLIG presents update reports to Fife’s Health and Social Care Partnership Clinical and Governance Committee.

NHS Fife also hosts a copy of the BSL local plan, this can be found on the equality and human rights pages available for staff and public.

Outcome 4: The Council understands its workforce better and it reflects the diversity of the local population	
Ref.	Actions
4.1	Work to improve the information we hold about employee's equality information.
4.2	Engage with local communities about our workplace practices in partnership with Fife Centre for Equalities.
4.3	Engage with young people in our workforce to identify and act on ways to attract and support other young people (aged 16 - 24) into training and employment opportunities with the Council.
4.4	Demonstrate our commitment to equality of opportunity for trans people throughout recruitment and employment, including supporting trans employees through a transitioning process.
4.5	Further our support to recruit and retain disabled employees.
4.6	Review employee training relating to equality, diversity and inclusion.
4.7	Develop new workstyles to provide support for more flexible and inclusive working across the Council.
<p>General Duty: Advancing equality of opportunity (including for employees with a disability and staff undergoing gender re-assignment), eliminating discrimination, harassment and bullying and fostering good relations Fairer Scotland Duty: Reducing inequalities of outcome Plan for Fife: Leading economic recovery; Sustaining services through new ways of working</p>	

Why we have prioritised this outcome

The Council recognises that as one of Fife’s largest employers we have a responsibility to model fair and inclusive workplace practices. To be better able to support our employees, we need to work harder to improve our data to know our staff and their needs. We also pledge to do more to engage with our local community to understand any perceived barriers to employment with us and identify any improvements we can make to our processes.

Outcome 5: Raising educational achievement and attainment particularly for those in their early years or in early learning and childcare	
Ref.	Actions
5.1	Pupils provided with opportunities to understand Fife’s historical links to slavery
5.2	Improve educational achievement and reduce the attainment gap for individuals with protected characteristics
5.3	Improve educational achievement and reduce the attainment gap for individuals living in SIMD quintile 1 and for the Care Experienced, in support of the National Improvement Framework and the Promise
5.4	Improve early years development of children in Fife Increase participation of parents living in SIMD 1&2 in a range of universal family learning opportunities Improve the coordination of family support services targeted at families with wellbeing needs and vulnerabilities
5.5	Increase the participation of individuals living in SIMD 1&2 in a range of evidence based employability and training programmes
5.6	Increase the uptake of eligible two year places in Fife, in line with Scottish Government stretch aim
5.7	Provide access to 1140 hours of ELC, supporting the principles of funding follows the child, to encourage parents to enter or return to work

General Duty: Advancing equality of opportunity, fostering good relations and reducing socio-economic disadvantage for all protected characteristics including Gypsy Traveller children, ethnic minorities, disabled pupils (including Deaf and visually impaired learners) and those who have multiple barriers to employment.

Fairer Scotland Duty: Reducing inequalities of outcome; Leading economic recovery

Plan for Fife: Tackling poverty and crisis prevention

Why we have prioritised this outcome

- The Fairer Fife Commission report stated that the Fife Partnership should require all schools to develop and deliver a plan for significantly reducing the educational attainment gap.
- Fife Partnership should be inspired and invest in a local programme to reduce financial barriers affecting participation and experiences at school for children from low income households.
- [Scottish Government Statistics School Education Statistics](#)
- [Opportunities Fife statistical data \(Fife Online Referral Tracking\) System](#)

Relevant Strategies and Plans

Fairer Fife Commission

Early Years Strategy

24th June, 2021.
Agenda Item No. 12

Enslavement Education Group – Proposed Action Plan

Report by: Paul Vaughan, Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods

Wards Affected: all

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to present the findings of the work of the Enslavement Education Working Group following the motion agreed by Fife Council at its meeting on 10th September 2020.

Recommendation(s)

Committee members are asked to consider and comment on the contents of this report and approve the proposed action plan.

Resource Implications

There are no immediate resource implications although some elements of the proposed action plan may require the allocation of staff resources and funding.

Legal & Risk Implications

There are no legal or risk implications.

Impact Assessment

An EqlA is not required as the report does not propose a change to existing policies and practices.

Consultation

The Enslavement Education Working Group consulted with several organisations and individuals with expertise in the topic of historical enslavement and its legacy.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 At its meeting on Thursday, 10th September 2020, a motion was proposed and approved by Fife Council as follows:

'Fife Council acknowledges its duty to the Fife community to ensure fairness, transparency and equality are enshrined in everything that we do. We recognise that the issue of slavery and those who benefited and suffered at its hands requires careful review to ensure greater understanding of its local consequences.

The Council therefore agree to the establishment of a Member Officer group to create a draft Slavery Action Plan for Fife which will include:

A) creation of an educational improvement programme which will allow the history of Slavery to be incorporated into Fife Schools

B) identification of any Fife locations which publicly celebrate and/or glorify people or places associated with Slavery with recommended actions which are educationally important.

The group should request input from local/national appropriate representatives from selected groups to help develop the draft Slavery Action Plan and the draft plan should be brought to the Policy and Co-ordination Committee.

Agree to refer to Cross Party Leaders Group to establish the working group.

2.0 Membership and Meetings of the Working Group

- 2.1 The Enslavement Education Group has met on five occasions since October 2020. Its membership comprised the following elected members and officers:

Elected members:

Cllr Sharon Green Wilson	Cllr Neil Crooks
Cllr Derek Glen	Cllr Garry Haldane
Cllr John Beare	Cllr Karen Marjoram
Cllr Ryan Smart	Cllr Donald Lothian
Cllr Dave Dempsey	Cllr Mino Manekshaw

Officers:

Jackie Funnell, Education & Children's Services;
Alan Paul, Property Services;
Tim Kendrick, Ross Martin, Vicky Wilson and Zahida Ramzan, Communities & Neighbourhoods;
Nina Munday, Fife Centre for Equalities.

- 2.2 Over the course of meetings, the group sought input from various organisations and individuals in order to gain a clearer understanding of the historical slave trade and its current and ongoing impacts. Speakers included:

Sid Akbar and Mercy Kessey, Educ8
Sir Geoff Palmer, Heriot-Watt University
Dr. Julia Priest, University of St Andrews
Christina Whyte and Peggy Brunache, Beniba Centre for Slavery Studies,
University of Glasgow.

3.0 Discussion Points

- 3.1 The meetings provided the group members with valuable opportunities to consider the many challenges posed by the historical legacy of slavery and the slave trade from a number of perspectives. Group discussions were wide-ranging, informative and challenging. Of particular interest were the discussions on the continuing legacy of the UK, Scotland and Fife's involvement in the slave trade.
- 3.2 The slave trade and its impacts are far-reaching and complex and have affected every part of society. For example, wealth accumulated as a result of the slave trade was widely invested in properties and businesses, the legacy of which remain in villages, towns and cities throughout the UK.
- 3.3 The legacy of slavery is also manifested in terms of racism and ongoing inequalities in areas such as income, education and health and the continuing under-representation of people from Black and minority ethnic communities in many professions, roles and institutions. As a result, it is not possible to consider issues relating to slavery and the slave trade in isolation from wider issues of inequality and diversity.
- 3.4 It is important that we address some of the physical manifestations of the slave trade, for example, in relation to historical monuments, street names and museum collections. However, of greater importance is the need to ensure that young people and the wider community are educated about the history of slavery and Britain's colonial past and its continuing impact.
- 3.5 Some of the topics considered by the working group are briefly considered in the following sections.

4.0 Fife's Street Names and Historical Monuments

- 4.1 At the October meeting of the Group, a paper was circulated in relation to a joint investigation undertaken by Property Services and Fife Cultural Trust on whether there was evidence of any links between the slave trade and monuments in Fife. A review of the University College London's (UCL) Legacies of British Slave Ownership Database was carried out for people with a Fife address and this highlighted 26 entries that merited further investigation. The UCL database lists the names of slave owners who claimed compensation following the abolition of the slave trade. A review was also undertaken of Fife Archives for possible sources of information relating to individuals mentioned in the UCL database and the funding of local monuments or associated bequeathments. Local heritage groups were also contacted to determine whether they had any information which

might assist with the investigation. The investigation concluded that there was either a lack of information on, or no links to, the slave trade in relation to monuments. A more recent review of the UCL database would suggest no changes to this position.

- 4.2 In relation to street names, the investigation focussed on the legacy of Black African slavery, predominantly related to the West Indies. A search was carried out of the Fife Street Name Gazetteer, the UCL Database, as well as Business and Employability's Property and Planning Research in order to establish any correlation between the UCL names and addresses and recorded Fife street-names. With several of the UCL names being very common family names, both in Fife and across Scotland, this exercise was inconclusive. Much of the address information from UCL was also fragmentary or generic (i.e. "Burntisland", "Dunfermline" or "Dysart" etc.). As a result, most of the UCL names could not be connected to a specific property or location. Study of the UCL information also showed that not all those claimants named as slave owners were successful in receiving compensation, while several were inheritors, beneficiaries or annuitants of estates and wills left by an ex-patriot estate or slave owner. The street names investigation, therefore, concluded that, without considerably more research, the UCL and Fife Street-Name Gazetteer data alone are not a sufficient to identify any direct association between street-names or place-names in Fife and the slave trade.

5.0 Education

- 5.1 Equality and Diversity is covered within all educational establishments as part of the Curriculum for Excellence and helps young people to gain the knowledge, skills and attributes needed for life in the 21st century. More broadly, the whole curriculum is founded on the values of wisdom, justice, compassion, integrity and respect for human rights. It is crucially important that children and young people have a strong knowledge of the past and that they understand the importance of tolerance and anti-racism in the climate we are currently living in. As part of the Social Studies topic area, schools currently have flexibility to teach enslavement in the following ways:
- Within primary schools, aspects may be covered through chosen topics and projects;
 - Within the broad general education, Experiences and Outcomes for Social Studies cover aspects of inequality;
 - Within the Senior Phase, courses in History and Modern Studies provide options which relate to inequality and the slave trade.
- 5.2 The Pedagogy Team in Education is currently developing a resource which will support schools to raise awareness of enslavement at an international and national level, as well as providing more in-depth teaching linked to historical links with the slave trade across Fife.

6.0 Proposed Enslavement Action Plan

- 6.1 A proposed enslavement action plan is attached as Appendix 1. The action plan sets out the following outcomes and actions in line with the motion agreed by Fife Council:

Outcome 1: Creation of an educational improvement programme which will allow the history of slavery to be incorporated into Fife schools

Actions:

- Promote measures to encourage the incorporation of the topic of enslavement into the equality and diversity aspect of the curriculum, including reference to modern enslavement;
- Area Committees to receive updates on the inclusion of enslavement in the curriculum as part of Education updates;
- Seek feedback from teachers and teaching unions on incorporating wider equality and diversity issues within the curriculum;
- Maintain links to groups/individuals who have contributed to the Enslavement Education Group, perhaps playing the role of a critical friend
- Engage further with the University of St Andrews on potential support for further research into historical links between enslavement and Fife.

Outcome 2: Fife's communities have an awareness of Fife's links to slavery

- Enslavement Education Group members gain a better understanding of enslavement and Fife's links to the slave trade through invited speakers and publications;
- Public awareness campaign on Fife's links (positive and negative) to slavery;
- Identification of monuments and street names with links to slavery and provision of contextual information as appropriate, possibly using a QR code;
- Fife Cultural Trust to be asked to carry out further research into Fife links to historical slavery as the basis for further public awareness raising (e.g. via website or exhibition);
- Establish a short life working group to develop adult learning programmes around Fife's links to historical enslavement and the impacts of modern enslavement;
- Consider an option to produce a Fife publication similar to the "West Lothian Connection" created by Fair Justice System for Scotland if sufficient material allows following research and evidence gathering;
- Use the current sugar trade/chocolate/ linen production as a basis to develop education and community understanding around enslavement;

- Produce / procure campaign and materials specifically for Fife around enslavement and modern enslavement;
- Develop a learning resource for use in youth work settings to raise awareness of Fife's links to historical enslavement as well as the impacts of modern enslavement on Fife's communities.
- Presentation to elected members on historical enslavement and its legacy.

7.0 Conclusion

- 7.1 At its meeting on 10th September 2020, Fife Council acknowledged its duty to the Fife community to ensure that fairness, transparency and equality are enshrined in everything that we do. The Council recognised that the issue of slavery and those who benefited and suffered at its hands requires careful review to ensure greater understanding of its local consequences.
- 7.2 The member officer Enslavement Education Group met on five occasions to oversee initial research into the legacy of historical slavery in Fife and the scope for further action to raise public awareness of the issue. This included hosting evidence sessions from a number of experts on the subject.
- 7.3 The Group concluded that the slave trade and its impacts are far-reaching and complex and have affected every part of society. The topic cannot be considered in isolation, but must be viewed in the context of ongoing issues of racism, inequality and under-representation.
- 7.4 The Enslavement Education group has identified a range of actions for the Council and its partners that aim to promote greater awareness among Fife's young people and the wider community of the slave trade and its continuing impact and legacy in Fife, Scotland and beyond.

List of Appendices

1. Enslavement Education Group – Action Plan

Report Contact:

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Enslavement Education Group – Action Plan

Outcome1: Young people are more informed about Fife’s links to slavery

Motion1 - Creation of an educational improvement programme which will allow the history of slavery to be incorporated into Fife schools

Ref.	Actions	Measure	Timescale / Accountability
M1.1	Promote measures to encourage the incorporation of the topic of slavery into the equality and diversity aspect of curriculum’ including reference to modern enslavement		From October 2021 Fife Council
M1.2	Area Committees to receive updates on inclusion of slavery in the curriculum - as part of Education updates	Area Committee reports include how slavery is addressed in the curriculum	October 2021 or as appropriate
M1.3	Feedback from teacher / teaching unions on incorporating wider equality and diversity and inclusivity issues within the curriculum		By October 2021
M1.4	Maintain links to groups/individuals who have contributed to the Education Group perhaps playing the role of a critical friend		Ongoing as required
M1.5	Engage further with the University of St Andrews on potential support for further research into historical links between enslavement and Fife		By August 2021

Outcome 2: Fife’s communities have an awareness of Fife’s links to slavery

Motion 2 - identification of any Fife locations which publicly celebrate and/or glorify people or places associated with Enslavement with recommended actions which are educationally important.

Ref.	Actions	Measure	Timescale / Accountability
M2.1	Enslavement Education Group members gain a better understanding of enslavement and Fife’s links to the slave trade through invited speakers and publications		Ongoing while the group meets
M2.2	Public awareness campaign on Fife’s links (positive and negative) to enslavement		Launched during Black Lives Matter week in October 2021 - Fife Council Communities Directorate
M2.3	Identification of monuments and street names with links to enslavement and provision of contextual information as appropriate, possibly using a QR code	Review undertaken of potential links between the funding of statues and monuments and the slave trade. Review undertaken against UCL database and local records to include those maintained by local history groups, etc. No evidence to date of links.	Property Services Report on monuments provided to the working group on Planning Service. Report on street names provided to the working group in xxxx2021
M2.4	Fife Cultural Trust to be asked to carry out further research into Fife links to historical enslavement as the basis for further public awareness raising (e.g. via website, exhibition)		Fife Cultural Trust / Archives

M2.5	Establish a short life working group to develop adult learning programmes around Fife's links to historical enslavement and the impacts of modern enslavement.	Notes of working group meetings Publication of lesson plans Attendance at, and feedback from, community learning programmes	Group established August 2021 Learning programme published December 2021 Ross Martin, Policy and Community Support
M2.6	Consider an option to produce a Fife publication similar to the "West Lothian Connection" created by Fair Justice System for Scotland if sufficient material allows following research and evidence gathering		Community Learning & Development and Fife Centre for Equalities
M2.7	Use the current sugar trade/chocolate/linen production as a basis to develop education and community understanding around enslavement		
M2.8	Produce / procure campaign and materials specifically for Fife around enslavement and modern enslavement		
M2.9	Develop a learning resource for use in youth work settings to raise awareness of Fife's links to historical slavery as well as the impacts of modern slavery on Fife's communities.	Learning resource published Attendance at staff training around use of the learning resource	December 2021 YOUth Space Fife
M2.10	Presentation to elected members on the subject of historical enslavement and its legacy.		

24th June, 2021.

Agenda Item No. 13

UK Government Funding - Community Renewal Fund

Report by: Michael Enston, Executive Director (Communities)

Wards Affected: All wards

Purpose

This report presents an update on the Community Renewal Fund, including Fife's application to the fund which was submitted on 18th June 2021 to the UK Government's Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

Recommendation(s)

The Committee is asked to note the process in inviting and assessing applications to the Community Renewal Fund for projects to be delivered in Fife and endorse the Fife application.

Resource Implications

If successful, the application to the Community Renewal Fund will draw funding into Fife to deliver activities as set out in this report. Individual applicants, including Fife Council Services, have identified match funding and staff resources to deliver their activities from within existing resources where appropriate.

Fife Council will be responsible for managing the successful programme and will be awarded up to 2% of the award to contribute to staff costs associated with this. Any additional staff resources required will be provided from the Community Investment Team in Communities and Neighbourhoods.

Legal & Risk Implications

There is a risk that the funding awarded to the Fife application does not fully comply with the conditions of grant or within the timescale required and will therefore require to be repaid to the UK Government. This will be mitigated by putting in place agreements with individual projects and monitoring progress throughout the duration of the award.

Impact Assessment

An EQIA is not required as this report does not propose a change to existing policies or practice. Instead the application proposes a range of projects aimed at piloting new activities which may inform changes at a later date – at which point an EQIA will be completed if required.

Applications to the Community Renewal Fund are required to demonstrate the extent to which they contribute to Net Zero ambitions or wider environmental considerations. Each project included in the Fife application has set out how it will do this and has been assessed against this criterion. Additional criteria have also considered how individual projects contribute to the Plan 4 Fife Recovery and Renewal actions.

Consultation

Consultation has taken place with the Council Executive Team and Service Management Teams in Business and Employability and Communities and Neighbourhoods. A Briefing was also circulated to all Elected Members on 18th May, outlining the background to the fund and the intended process to shortlist applications. In addition, meetings took place with key partners to raise awareness of the funding opportunity.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The Community Renewal Fund (CRF) is to be delivered through Lead Authorities across the UK. Each local authority in Scotland has been designated as a Lead Authority and has been asked to invite and assess proposals from their area for projects which aim to test new approaches to delivery or to support feasibility studies in the priority themes listed in the CRF prospectus. The Lead Authority has then to shortlist a number of project proposals from their area – up to a maximum value of £3 million – and submit it to the UK Government by 18th June 2021. The amount available for distribution across the UK is £220 million.
- 1.2 The priorities set out in the prospectus are not intended to be seen in silos and applicants are encouraged to develop and test new holistic approaches across the priorities in the way that best tackles local challenges under the following themes:
 - Investment in skills
 - Investment for local businesses
 - Investment in communities and place
 - Supporting people into employment.
- 1.3 Proposals must also demonstrate their contribution to net zero objectives or wider environmental considerations and alignment with strategic plans relevant to Fife e.g. Plan4Fife; Fife’s Economic Strategy, Climate Fife Action Plan as well as local need. Evaluation must be built into all applications so that the outcomes from successful projects will inform preparation for the Shared Prosperity Fund from 2022.
- 1.4 Fife Council, as a Lead Authority, invited proposals from a range of organisations though publicising the CRF on our website and promoting the funding opportunity through our newsletters and networks as well as those of our partner organisations. The Council was also eligible to submit its own proposals(s).
- 1.5 As noted above, the shortlisted proposals must then be submitted to the UK Government’s Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) by noon on Friday 18 June 2021. MHCLG will confirm which projects will receive funding by late July 2021. It should be noted that 100 priority places have been identified for this fund – and Fife is not one of these. However, UK Government have stressed that good quality projects from non-priority places will still be funded.

- 1.6 If successful, Fife Council will then have responsibility for implementing the approved shortlisted proposals. This will involve making payments and carrying out any monitoring and evaluation requirements. The prospectus notes that up to 2% of the award can be used to meet the costs of this management element.

2.0 CRF Appraisal Process

- 2.1 To allow time for technical assessment, appraisal and shortlisting, a deadline of Sunday 23rd May was set for applications to be submitted to Fife Council. By this deadline, 17 applications were received, requesting funding of £2,831,254. Applications were submitted across all 4 priority themes set out in the CRF prospectus, with many projects contributing to more than one theme. A list of the applications received is provided in Appendix 1.
- 2.2 Officers in the Community Investment Team were remitted to carry out a technical assessment based on the UK Government guidance. The technical assessment sought to confirm eligibility for the fund through consideration against 'Gateway Criteria' and to support the work of an assessment panel to complete the shortlisting exercise.
- 2.3 All applications received were eligible to continue to the scoring process. This includes assessment against two sets of criteria – strategic fit and deliverability, effectiveness and efficiency. The guidance set out 5 sub-criteria under each of these and asked that a score of up to 5 be given for each sub-criterion, giving a total of up to 25 for each criteria. Once scored, each project was given a percentage and presented in bandings determined as follows:
- Band A: Projects that have scored 80% or above on both 'strategic fit' and 'deliverability, effectiveness and efficiency' and predominantly focus on priority places
 - Band B: Projects that have scored 80% or above on both 'strategic fit' and 'deliverability, effectiveness and efficiency' and do not predominantly focus on priority places
 - Band C: Projects that have scored 50% or above on both 'strategic fit' and 'deliverability, effectiveness and efficiency' and predominantly focus on priority places

As Fife is not one of the 100 identified priority places that are referred to in the banding, projects could only be placed in Band B. This means that any Fife proposal scoring less than 80% could not be included in the submission to the UK Government.

- 2.4 An assessment panel was established to undertake the scoring process. The panel consisted of representation from:

Fife Council - a member of the Council Executive Team
Third Sector – a Board Member from Fife Voluntary Action
Further/Higher Education – a Director from St Andrews University
Finance – Accountant from Fife Council Finance and Corporate Services

- 2.5 A representative from the Opportunities Fife Partnership was also invited to join the Assessment Panel but was unable due to time constraints. However, comments were received from the Opportunities Fife Partnership in relation to proposals submitted under the Support into Employment and Investment in Skills themes. These were fed in to the Assessment panel deliberations.
- 2.6 The assessment panel met on Friday 11th June and were tasked with considering each submitted proposal against the criteria and sub-criteria and agreeing a score for that proposal. The proposals were then ranked according to the score provided. Where two projects scored the same, the assessment panel considered the individual scores for strategic fit and deliverability, effectiveness and efficiency and agreed which should be given priority. Following the Assessment Panel deliberations, a number of follow-up actions were agreed to complete the assessment of individual proposals where further clarity was required. This additional information was relayed to the Panel members over week beginning 14th June and the shortlist agreed for the submission to the UK Government.
- 2.7 Lead Authorities were required to follow guidance set out in the 'Technical Note for Lead Authorities in Great Britain'. The Technical Note included a 'Lead Authority Bid Submission Summary' to be completed and submitted along with the shortlisted applications. This document includes a summary of each of the shortlisted applications, the outcome indicators to be achieved by each proposal and the local strategic fit and delivery considerations agreed by the assessment panel. The Lead Authority was also required to submit a series of functional statements describing the proposed systems and processes to be used to carry out their role. A link to the final Lead Authority Bid Submission Summary for Fife will be sent to Committee members after submission on the 18th June.

3.0 Conclusions

- 3.1 The timescales and requirements for Lead Authorities to invite, assess and submit proposals to the Community Renewal Fund have been challenging. The process has been equally challenging for Council services and organisations developing individual proposals. Despite this, a range of good quality proposals have been developed and submitted across all 4 priority themes of the Fund, resulting in the submission of a strong bid to the UK Government's Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

List of Appendices

Appendix 1 - Community Renewal Fund - Applications received – 23rd May 2021

Report Contact

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Community Investment Manager

Communities and Neighbourhoods

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Organisation	Project Title	Requested Funding	Theme
OnFife	Connecting Communities	£563,430.00	Investing in Skills £827,067
FC – C&N	YOUth Space	£50,000.00	
FEAT	Heart, Mind and Soul	£153,637.00	
Fife College	Introduction to Net Zero and Environmental Objectives	£60,000.00	
FC – B&E	Sectoral Business and Innovation Study	£100,000.00	Investing in Local Business £549,200
St Andrews University	Eden Campus, phase 2	£449,200.00	
FC – C&N	Lynnburn Greenspace	£200,000.00	Investing in Communities and Place £642,600
Crail Community Trust	Roome Bay Visitor Centre Feasibility	£25,000.00	
FC – B&E	Feasibility - Fife NOW	£100,000.00	
RSPB	Climate FORTH – Initial Development	£8,600.00	
FC – Kirkcaldy Area	Kirkcaldy Town Centre Renewal - People, Place, Environment	£269,000.00	
FC – S&W Fife Area	Rosyth Charette	£40,000.00	
BRAG	Fife ETC in the Community	£236,811.58	Supporting People into Employment £812,387.08
Communities Trade Hub	Guided Start	£172,120.00	
FC – B&E	Delivering Differently – Back on Track	£100,000.00	
Rural Skills Scotland	Kirkcaldy Rural Skills Programme	£52,342.00	
SCVO	Community Jobs Scotland – Intergenerational Pilot	£251,113.50	
TOTAL (17)		£2,831,254.08	

Sustaining Services through New Ways of Working

Report by: Sharon McKenzie, Head of Human Resources and Charlie Anderson, Head of ICT

Wards Affected: None

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide members with an update on the delivery plan for Future Workstyles which features in the Sustaining Services Through New Ways of Working workstream. This follows the report to Policy and Co-ordination Committee in March where the conclusions from the workstream were reported.

Recommendation(s)

It is recommended that the Committee reviews the progress on Future Workstyles and endorses the outputs and actions set out in the report

Resource Implications

There will be a requirement to resource some backfilling of staff to enable existing staff to focus their time on the project. This is likely to be circa £130k and will be funded via COVID funding. Costs linked to the workstyles will be developed alongside the plan and business case as noted in the proposed timetable in section 4 of this report.

Legal & Risk Implications

There are no specific legal and risk implications associated with this report.

Impact Assessment

An EqlA and summary form relating to the proposed blended workstyle is complete. The summary form is available on request. Further EqlAs will be completed as and when required at various stages of the project.

The Fairer Scotland Duty, which came into force on 1 April 2018, requires the Council to consider how it can reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage when making strategic decisions. A wider consideration of flexibility across all employee groups is being considered which should impact positively on employees and potential applicants.

Consultation

Engagement has taken place previously with elected members through the Members Working Group and continues with the joint Trade Unions. Also, engagement has taken place with Directorate Leadership Teams to ensure service specific business needs are considered. The proposals also reflect the results of recent staff surveys.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Covid-19 pandemic has had an unprecedented impact on the world of work and in a local context we have seen significant shifts in how we work and where we work. Since March 2020 we have had to rethink approaches to service delivery through greater use of technology.
- 1.2 The goal of this reform area was to identify and deliver a programme of work to support new ways of working and promotion of community led services. This includes making the most of digital services and opportunities.
- 1.3 These, together with more flexible working, and a community led culture are key enablers to future productivity, better outcomes and financially sustainable services.
- 1.4 This report will provide members with an update on the delivery plan for New Ways of Working including the arrangements for employees returning to council offices. Initial activity will centre on changes in Glenrothes (Fife House complex and Bankhead) and the same philosophy described in the report will be used in discussions with Services using other office buildings. This will include providing equipment to work from home as well as repurposing offices where this will be of benefit to service provision.
- 1.5 Employees and Trade Unions are key to the success of this work and it is intended to build the necessary changes and support with their active involvement.
- 1.6 Our most recent employee survey results tell us that only 5% of the 2600 employees who responded want to return to the office full time. The survey results also highlighted the main benefits that employees recognise come from a continued blended working approach that include no commuting; a positive impact on the environment; the ability to take breaks; increased time flexibility and the freedom to fit exercise into their daily routine.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 Since the start of the pandemic we have had to be flexible in our policy approach as the guidance “to work from home wherever possible” remained in place following the initial lockdown in 2020.
- 2.2 We have often needed to work at pace responding to challenges and have managed to do this successfully, working with our joint trades unions, always learning lessons as circumstances change. Many of those lessons have been used to shape our approach to New Ways of Working.
- 2.3 The Scottish Government strategic framework on protection levels confirms that employees should work from home where possible at levels four to one (4-1). At level 0, work from home remains the default position but phased and limited return to offices can begin.
- 2.4 The Scottish Government hopes to move to level 0 at the end of June 2021. However, this does not mean an automatic return for our office-based staff.

- 2.5 We have continued to advise through employee and manager communications that any council employee who can work from home must do so. Any return to the workplace must be in line with Directorate recovery plans and take account of the recovery and back to work guidance available on the COVID building and site safety pages. [COVID building and site safety pages](#)
- 2.6 A future workstyles project team, which will include HR, health and safety, property services, facilities management and BTS professionals has been established to support return of Council Services to our buildings.
- 2.7 Clearly, the world of work has changed and for some, there may not be a return to what they had before. It is important to recognise the impact this may have on our workforce and how we approach communications and employee engagement. Looking ahead, work has progressed in a number of areas and CET has agreed a delivery plan on how we will transform our office based working, focussing on 'work is what you do, and not just where you go'.

3.0 Delivery Plan

Future Workstyles

- 3.1 We have established 5 broad workstyle categories built around how and where work is carried out and the available options for staff within each workstyle to work flexibly. Each of these workstyles has associated needs in terms of information and communications technology, and for space within Council properties. Services will be involved in reviewing how the approximately 600 Council job role profiles fit into these workstyles, and in determining equipment need within each of the more mobile roles.
- 3.2 We continue to explore flexible working more widely across all employee groups, especially considering how flexibility can be expanded to location-dependent roles.

New Ways of Working

- 3.3 On the "how we work" aspects, we are now analysing workstyles for all Council roles with a view to establishing the potential future way of working for these roles, enabling us to prepare a "to be" picture of the way Council staff will work digitally in future.
- 3.4 We are also finalising approaches to delivering Council-wide, sustainable mobile technology approaches for those staff who are identified through this as genuinely field-based which will enable them to work increasingly in that way, increasing productivity and reducing building costs in the process.

The New Workplace in Fife Council

- 3.5 We are currently considering how we will use our workplaces to support a hybrid workstyle for those who would previously have been office based full time.
- 3.6 We intend to introduce a hybrid workstyle, to allow employees who were previously office-based access to an office space on set days each week, with the remainder of their working time at home, by September 2021.
- 3.7 Until then our offices remain closed for business unless specific activity / attendance has been classed as essential and, following risk assessment, sanctioned by Directorate Leadership Teams / Future Workstyles Project.

- 3.8 We recognise that not all employees can work from home and there will be desk availability built into the model for employees who need to be in the office beyond their office access days. We anticipate the demand for this will be low based on the employee survey results (only 5% of respondents wanted to return to the office full time – this was in November when restrictions were greater and there were limited options to interact socially).
- 3.9 Discussions are ongoing with Services and employees to determine how offices will be used.
- 3.10 The national position is still that people should work from home wherever possible. On top of this, from a practical point of view, we need offices to be as empty as possible so that spaces can be reviewed and repurposed for the future, while maintaining social distancing and COVID secure requirements.
- 3.11 Employees should not return to offices until there is an agreed timetable in place. The current desk booking system, requiring manager consent, will remain in place and office use will only be for essential purposes until further notice.
- 3.12 This position is endorsed and supported by the Council's Executive Team. We expect managers and supervisors to model the expected behaviours, follow the council's agreed position and encourage employees to do the same.

Flexibility in Recruitment

- 3.13 Work in this area is a key element in our approach to New Ways of Working and is dependent on Oracle Cloud and other workstreams such as the How We Work Matters refresh. During the latter part of this year, opportunities will continue to be explored as part of the work to embed and maximise the functionality of Oracle Recruitment, Learn and Talent modules. This work will enable new approaches around performance, development, recruitment, talent management, agile recruitment and succession planning. Our experiences of resourcing Team Fife through a volunteering pool as well as the Community Testing programme all offer good lessons for future flexibility.

How We Work Matters – not where: developing new norms

- 3.14 The concepts and behaviours set out in our 'How we work matters' framework, have never been more important. We planned to develop a more modern, flexible and positive workplace before the pandemic happened. Changes in the world around us, from safety requirements to individual expectations now make it essential and have accelerated some of our plans.
- 3.15 It is clear that some aspects of life, particularly business life, have changed forever. Many employers are looking at workstyles, property management and employment policy. We won't go back to working in offices the same way we did before so no one should expect that. The question we are now exploring is, what will work for us, as a council and a workforce, in the future. Many considerations are needed as we seek to answer this question and a key consideration will be the shape of the Team Fife 'employee deal' and the terms and conditions that sit alongside it. We will return to this once the new approach to hybrid working has been tested and evaluated and, in the meantime, we are working on interim changes to Terms and Conditions and allowances, liaising with the Joint TUs and with further reports planned for CET.

4.0 Next Steps

4.1 Indicative timetable for future workstyles project:

April	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• CET Meeting agreed position, vision and next steps• Engaged with trade unions• Services surveyed on future workstyles
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Analysis of Service survey returns• Pilots for new office layouts and blended meeting solutions• Develop plans and business case for any investment
June - August	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Scot Gov framework expected to permit a phased and limited return to offices• Council position will continue to be work from home if you can• Finalise plans for hybrid working for office based staff and order equipment as required / approved
September - October	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Given unpredictability of pandemic – be prepared for “work from/stay at home” order to stay in place or return• Implement technology solutions for blended working arrangements, including blended meetings as standard in meeting rooms• Interim working arrangements agreed with trade unions (Team Fife / Employee Deal)• Use of buildings agreed and spaces reconfigured as required
End 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hopefully the Covid situation will have stabilised – will need to remain agile and prepared to shift workstyles if public health needs change or other issues emerge• New workstyles and role-based approaches embedded in services• Further work on wider flexibility for all employee groups• Evaluate progress

5.0 Conclusions

5.1 Once Services have had an opportunity to set out their intentions on a service delivery model using the Future Workstyles approach, this will enable further consideration of organisational impact and enable discussion and challenge on service redesign options. This would be anticipated in the second half of 2021 and into 2022 and will align with the evaluation of our testing period on hybrid working.

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