

People and Communities Scrutiny Committee

Committee Room 2, 5th Floor, Fife House, North Street,
Glenrothes (Blended Meeting)



Thursday, 14 November 2024 - 10.00 a.m.

AGENDA

Page Nos.

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(s) in particular items on the agenda and the nature of the interest(s) at this stage.
3. **MINUTE** – Minute of People and Communities Scrutiny Committee of 26 September 2024 4 - 10
4. **FIFE COAST & COUNTRYSIDE TRUST ANNUAL REPORT** – Report by the Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods. 11 - 13
5. **COMMUNITIES & NEIGHBOURHOODS ANNUAL REPORT** – Report by the Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods. 14 - 38
6. **CITIZENS ADVICE & RIGHTS FIFE – ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2023/2024** – Report by the Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods. 39 - 46
7. **CHIEF SOCIAL WORK ANNUAL REPORT** – Report by the Head of Children and Families and Criminal Justice. 47 - 85
8. **2024-25 REVENUE MONITORING PROJECTED OUTTURN – COMMUNITIES SERVICE** – Joint Report by the Executive Director Finance and Corporate Services and the Executive Director - Communities 86 - 92
9. **2024-25 CAPITAL PLAN PROJECTED OUTTURN – COMMUNITIES** – Joint Report by the Executive Director Finance and Corporate Services and the Executive Director - Communities 93 - 99
10. **2024-25 REVENUE BUDGET PROJECTED OUT-TURN – HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE** – Joint Report by the Executive Director Finance and Corporate Services and the Interim Director, Health and Social Care Partnership. 100 - 107
11. **2024-25 CAPITAL PLAN PROJECTED OUTTURN – HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE** – Joint Report by the Executive Director Finance & Corporate Services and the Interim Director, Health and Social Care Partnership. 108 - 112
12. **PEOPLE & COMMUNITIES FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME** – Report by the Executive Director Finance and Corporate Services. 113 - 119

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.

Lindsay Thomson
Head of Legal and Democratic Services
Finance and Corporate Services

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7 November 2024

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BLENDED MEETING NOTICE

This is a formal meeting of the Committee and the required standards of behaviour and discussion are the same as in a face to face meeting. Unless otherwise agreed, Standing Orders will apply to the proceedings and the terms of the Councillors' Code of Conduct will apply in the normal way

For those members who have joined the meeting remotely, if they need to leave the meeting for any reason, they should use the Meeting Chat to advise of this. If a member loses their connection during the meeting, they should make every effort to rejoin the meeting but, if this is not possible, the Committee Officer will note their absence for the remainder of the meeting. If a member must leave the meeting due to a declaration of interest, they should remain out of the meeting until invited back in by the Committee Officer.

If a member wishes to ask a question, speak on any item or move a motion or amendment, they should indicate this by raising their hand at the appropriate time and will then be invited to speak. Those joining remotely should use the "Raise hand" function in Teams.

All decisions taken during this meeting, will be done so by means of a Roll Call vote.

Where items are for noting or where there has been no dissent or contrary view expressed during any debate, either verbally or by the member indicating they wish to speak, the Convener will assume the matter has been agreed.

There will be a short break in proceedings after approximately 90 minutes.

Members joining remotely are reminded to have cameras switched on during meetings and mute microphones when not speaking. During any breaks or adjournments please switch cameras off.

**THE FIFE COUNCIL - PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE –
BLENDED MEETING**

Committee Room 2, 5th Floor, Fife House, North Street, Glenrothes

26 September 2024

10.00 am – 2.10 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Darren Watt (Depute Convener), Gary Holt (Convener), Alycia Hayes (substituting for Cllr Bailey-Lee Robb), Colin Davidson (substituting for Cllr Alistair Cameron), Ian Cameron (substituting for Cllr Jan Wincott), Lesley Backhouse, Lynn Ballantyne-Wardlaw (substituting for Cllr Blair Allan), Ken Caldwell, Alex Campbell, Altany Craik, Peter Gulline, Donald Lothian, Lynn Mowatt, Sam Steele, Jonny Tepp and Ann Verner.

ATTENDING: Michael Enston, Executive Director - Communities; Fiona Mckay, Interim Director and Lesley Gauld, Team Manager, Health and Social Care Partnership; Diarmuid Cotter, Head of Customer and Online Services and Claire Bates, Customer Service Manager, Customer and Online Services; John Mills, Head of Housing Services, Gavin Smith, Service Manager and Mhairi Mullen, Service Manager, Housing Services; Helen Guthrie, Accountant, Lesley Kenworthy, Finance Business Partner, Finance and Corporate Services and Michelle Hyslop, Committee Officer, Legal and Democratic Services.

Following the resignation of Councillor Eugene Clark as Convener from the People and Communities Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Darren Watt (Depute Convener) chaired the first part of the meeting.

127. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were submitted in terms of Standing Order No. 22.

128. MINUTE

The committee considered the minute of the People and Communities Scrutiny Committee of 27 June 2024.

Decision

The committee agreed to approve the minute.

129. APPOINTMENT OF CONVENER

Motion

Councillor Verner, seconded by Councillor Caldwell, nominated Councillor Backhouse as Convener.

Amendment

Councillor Tepp, seconded by Councillor Lothian, nominated Councillor Holt as Convener.

Roll Call

For the Motion – 7 votes

Councillors Lynne Ballantyne-Wardlaw, Lesley Backhouse, Ken Caldwell, Lynn Mowatt, Alycia Hayes, Sam Steele and Ann Verner.

For the Amendment – 9 votes

Councillors Colin Davidson, Alex Campbell, Altany Craik, Peter Gulline, Gary Holt, Donald Lothian, Jonny Tepp, Darren Watt and Ian Cameron.

Decision

Councillor Holt was duly appointed as Convener of the People and Communities Scrutiny Committee.

The meeting adjourned at 10.05 am and reconvened at 10.10 am to allow Councillor Holt to take the chair of the meeting.

130. CHANGE OF MEMBERSHIP

The committee noted that Councillor Holt had replaced Councillor Clarke and Councillor Craik had replaced Councillor MacDougall as a member of the committee and welcomed them to their first meeting.

The committee thanked Councillor Clarke for his convenership and contribution to the work of the committee during his membership.

The committee thanked Councillor MacDougall for her contribution to the work of the committee during her membership.

131. FIFE HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2023 TO 2024

The committee considered a report by the Interim Director of Health and Social Care Partnership providing members with the assurance that the Fife Health and Social Care Partnership was meeting its legislative requirements under Section 42 (Integration Authority: Performance Report) of the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014.

Decision

The committee noted: -

- (1) the contents of the report;
- (2) that the Health and Social Care Partnership were meeting their legislative requirements under Section 42 of the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014; and
- (3) the progress made by the Health and Social Care Partnership over the latest reporting timescale for 2023 to 2024.

132. HOUSING & SAFER COMMUNITIES – ANNUAL SERVICE REVIEW REPORT 2023/2024

The committee considered a report by the Head of Housing Services presenting an overview of the service. The report outlined the service planning, change and improvement work undertaken in 2023/24 and provided an assessment of the performance to inform scrutiny of future service planning.

Decision

The committee: -

- (1) considered and commented on the remodelled 'annual service review' report format and related products;
- (2) reviewed the progress and performance of Housing Services for 2023/24 and the activity undertaken in 2024/25 to date; and
- (3) noted the service planning objectives for 2024/25 and the three-year direction of travel.

133. ANNUAL ASSURANCE STATEMENT 2024

The committee considered a report by the Head of Housing Services presenting recommendations for submissions of the Annual Assurance Statement to the Scottish Housing Regulator, based on regulatory guidance refreshed in 2024. The risks were assessed against the Councils Annual Return on the Charter for 2023/24.

Decision

The committee: -

- (1) noted the requirements of the 2024 housing regulatory framework, requesting the preparation of an Annual Assurance Statement (Section 2.0 and 3.0 of the report);
- (2) agreed the wording of the draft Annual Assurance Statement 2024 based on the compliance position as at 31 March 2024 (Section 4.0 and Appendix 1 of the report);
- (3) authorised the Scrutiny Committee Convener and the Housing and Building Services Spokesperson to sign the Annual Assurance Statement; and
- (4) agreed on the submission of the final Annual Assurance Statement 2024 to the Scottish Housing Regulator by the deadline of the 31 October 2024.

The meeting adjourned at 11.55am and reconvened at 12.30pm.

134. GYPSY TRAVELLERS & MANAGEMENT OF UNAUTHORISED ENCAMPMENTS

The committee considered a report by the Head of Housing Services providing an update on the current approach to manage unauthorised Gypsy Traveller

encampments within Fife and sought members views on whether the Councils Co-operation Policy should be reviewed.

Decision

The committee: -

- (1) noted the update on the Gypsy Traveller Co-operation Policy and the management of unauthorised encampments;
- (2) considered the operation of the Co-operation Policy and if a review is required; and
- (3) agreed that housing services would facilitate a working group with Councillors Campbell, Steele and Watt to look at the Co-operation Policy and management of unauthorised gypsy encampments within Fife.

135. VOIDS SERVICE IMPROVEMENT

The committee considered a report by the Head of Housing Services advising on the positive progress that Fife has made in reducing the number of empty properties. The report highlights the review processes and performance-based evidence led approach to improving services as part of Theme 2 of the Housing Emergency and Service Improvement Plan reported in late 2023.

Decision

The committee: -

- (1) noted the improvements detailed in the report, particularly with reference to wider sector performance;
- (2) agreed the areas of improvement as a priority focus for the Voids Governance Group and updated Service Improvement Plan linked to the Housing Emergency;
- (3) noted that the on-going work of the Tenant Scrutiny Panel would focus on Voids; and
- (4) agreed that any resultant action plans would be a feature of a future People and Communities Scrutiny report.

136. CUSTOMER AND ONLINE SERVICES – ANNUAL SERVICE REVIEW REPORT 2023/2024

The committee considered a report by the Head of Customer and Online Services presenting an overview of the service, outlining the service planning, change and improvement work undertaken in 2023/24. The report also provided members with an assessment of the performance to inform scrutiny and future service planning.

Decision

The committee: -

- (1) considered and commented on the remodelled 'annual service review' report format;
- (2) scrutinised the progress and performance of the Customer and Online Services for 2023/24 and the activity undertaken in 2024/25 to date; and
- (3) noted the service planning objectives for 2024/25 and the three-year direction of travel.

137. 2023-24 REVENUE BUDGET PROVISIONAL OUTTURN COMMUNITIES

The committee considered a joint report by the Executive Director, Finance and Corporate Services and Executive Director, Communities providing an update on the provisional outturn position for the 2023/24 financial year for Communities and the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) including the areas in scope of the People and Communities Scrutiny Committee.

Decision

The committee considered the current financial performance and activity for the 2023-24 Provisional Outturn as detailed in the report.

138. 2023-24 CAPITAL PLAN PROVISIONAL OUTTURN COMMUNITIES

The committee considered a joint report by the Executive Director, Finance and Corporate Services and Executive Director, Communities providing an update on the Capital Investment Plan and advised on the provisional financial position for the 2023/24 financial year.

Decision

The committee considered the current performance and activity for the 2023/24 Capital Monitoring as detailed in the report.

139. 2024-25 REVENUE BUDGET PROJECTED OUTTURN COMMUNITIES

The committee considered a joint report by the Executive Director, Finance and Corporate Services and Executive Director, Communities providing an update on the projected outturn financial position for the 2024-25 financial year for the Communities Directorate and the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) which are areas in scope of the People and Communities Scrutiny Committee.

Decision

The committee considered the current financial performance and activity as detailed in the report.

140. 2024-25 CAPITAL PLAN PROJECTED OUTTURN COMMUNITIES

The committee considered a joint report by the Executive Director, Finance and Corporate Services and Executive Director, Communities providing an update on

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the Capital Investment Plan and advised on the projected financial position for the 2024-25 financial year.

Members were provided with an updated version of the report and appendices which would be uploaded to the council's website.

Decision

The committee considered the current performance and activity for the 2024-25 Capital Monitoring as detailed in the report.

141. 2023-24 REVENUE BUDGET PROVISIONAL OUT-TURN – HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE

The committee considered a joint report by the Executive Director, Finance and Corporate Services and the Interim Director, Health and Social Care Partnership providing an update on the 2023-24 provisional outturn and movement from December 2023 for Fife Council Social Care Services for Adults and Older People.

Decision

The committee considered the current financial performance and activity as detailed in the report.

142. 2023-24 CAPITAL PLAN PROVISIONAL OUTTURN – HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE

The committee considered a joint report by the Executive Director, Finance and Corporate Services and the Interim Director, Health and Social Care Partnership providing an update on the Health and Social Care Capital Investment Plan and advised on the provisional outturn for the 2023-24 financial year for the People and Communities Scrutiny Committee.

Decision

The committee considered the current performance and activity across the 2023-24 Financial Monitoring as detailed in the report.

143. 2024-25 REVENUE BUDGET PROJECTED OUTTURN – HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE

The committee considered a joint report by the Executive Director, Finance and Corporate Services and the Interim Director, Health and Social Care Partnership providing an update on the 2024-25 projected outturn as at June 2024 for the Fife Council Social Care Services for Adults and Older People.

Decision

The committee considered the current financial performance and activity as detailed in the report.

Councillors Mowatt and Lothian left the meeting during consideration of the above item.

144. 2024-25 CAPITAL PLAN PROJECTED OUTTURN – HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE

The committee considered a joint report by the Executive Director, Finance and Corporate Services and the Interim Director, Health and Social Care Partnership providing an update on the Health and Social Care Capital Investment Plan and advised on the projected outturn for the 2024-25 financial year.

Decision

The committee considered the current performance and activity across the 2024-25 Financial Monitoring as detailed in the report.

145. PEOPLE & COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The committee considered a report by the Executive Director, Finance and Corporate Services, asking members to consider the future workplan for the People and Communities Scrutiny Committee.

Decision

The committee: -

- (1) noted the future workplan of the People and Communities Scrutiny Committee;
- (2) noted that an annual report on public protection would be submitted to the committee and agreed that the new report would replace the previous reports on “adult protection, child protection and Fife Violence against women reports” as part of the wider Fife Partnership Reporting activities;
- (3) agreed that an update on Café Inc would be included in the Communities and Neighbourhoods Annual Report scheduled for 14 November 2024;
- (4) with reference to para 135(4) above, a working group would be established to look at unauthorised gypsy traveller encampments, and an update on the working group findings would be brought back to a future meeting of the committee; and
- (5) agreed that following the Grenfell Report being considered at the cabinet committee, a report or briefing paper would be considered at a future meeting of the People and Communities Scrutiny Committee.

14th November 2024

Agenda Item No. 4

Fife Coast & Countryside Trust Performance Report

Report by: Jeremy Harris, FCCT CEO

Wards Affected: All

Purpose

To present the annual performance report for Fife Coast and Countryside Trust (FCCT) for 2023/24

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- (1) Note the contents of the report and the progress made by FCCT in 2023/24 and;
- (2) Note the effective delivery of Fife Council priorities through FCCT activity.

Resource Implications

Increased demand on Fife's outdoors requires sustained investment if the benefits of high-quality accessible outdoor spaces are to be realised and Fife is to continue to provide well-managed sites to the benefit of local communities and visitors alike.

Legal & Risk Implications

There are risk implications pertaining to the provision of service, and delivery of targets in alignment with the Council's obligation to improve local services and local outcomes whilst demonstrating best value..

Impact Assessment

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

Consultation

None required.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 FCCT has been asked to submit high level covering reports to accompany our published annual report. Please refer to the [PUBLISHED ANNUAL REPORT](#) for further detail including a summary of audited financial statements for the year ending 31st March 2024
- 1.2 FCCT audited accounts are available [here](#)

2.0 Report Summary

2.1 FCCT Structure

- 2.1.1 FCCT is an organisation of between 50 and 60 people (accounting for seasonal fluctuations) committed to our mission of connecting people with the wonderful natural environment that is to be found in the Kingdom of Fife.

The organisation is comprised of four parts, each with closely related but distinct functions. Each of FCCT's Departments have identified their own purpose derived from the approach they take to achieving FCCT's Mission and Vision. These are as follows:

- 2.1.2 *Conservation and Engagement*

Nature has intrinsic value, and we recognise the benefits of spending time in outdoor spaces. We want to restore healthy ecosystems and believe that a closer connection between humans and nature supports our wellbeing. A deeper understanding of, and appreciation for, the natural world is key to our shared future.

- 2.1.3 *Development*

We believe that supporting the transition to regenerative systems that benefit nature, people, and the economy will allow us to tackle environmental and social crises at the local and regional level. Through this work, we will provide sustainable and resilient funding to FCCT.

- 2.1.4 *Operations*

We believe that the effective delivery of all practical aspects of site management is fundamental to supporting responsible access. We know that well-managed and maintained sites offer social, environmental, and economic benefits that promote the connection between environment and people.

- 2.1.5 *Support Services*

Support Services makes the work of all at FCCT as effective and fulfilling as possible while pursuing the highest standards in all functions for which we are responsible. We strive to fully support all who wish to join us in achieving our mission. By implementing well-designed processes, we will remove barriers to achieving our goals and ensure that all FCCT's activity is founded on the best available information.

2.2 Summary of select outputs

- 2.2.1 Through these four departments, FCCT achieves a huge amount across a wide set of priorities and work areas. This includes:

- A litter maintenance service 7 days per week, 52 weeks of the year across more than 70 sites that include the Fife Pilgrim Way, the Fife Coastal Path, and 13 of Scotland's Beach Award winning beaches along 140 miles of Fife coastline.
- Management of 15 award-winning toilet blocks in countryside locations that are open for more hours than previous years.
- Regular maintenance and management of vegetation and infrastructure at more than 70 sites and many miles of path including the Fife Coastal Path and Fife Pilgrim Way making use of in-house skills that include grass cutting, pruning, tree work, path upgrades, countryside furniture installation, and an ongoing replacement program of steps, signage, beach infrastructure, drainage, and much more.
- Implementing sustainable car park management at 12 car parks in coastal and inland countryside locations.
- Supporting sustainable access to Fife's landscapes while carefully balancing conservation priorities, supporting public engagement, and delivering programmatic education sessions.
- Developing and implementing site management plans for designated areas including Local Nature Reserves (LNR's), Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI's), Special Protection Areas (SPA's), Special Areas of Conservation (SAC's), and wetlands of international importance designated under the Ramsar Convention (RAMSAR's).
- Making use of in-house project management skills and experience to deliver projects of various kinds that align with our organisational purpose and take us closer to achieving our Mission and Vision.

2.3 Full report

A link to the full report produced by Fife Coast and Countryside Trust can be found here: [Annual Report](#)

3.0 Conclusions

- 3.1 In line with the Statutory Performance Indicator of the Local Government Act 1992, FCCT plays an important role in supporting the Local Authority to engaged with, responded to, and help empower its communities, including those who require greater support through our care of Fife's outdoors as a valuable resource that is accessible to all regardless of social or economic status.
- 3.2 This cover note, in conjunction with the published annual report and audited accounts provides information that demonstrates a commitment to best value through the transparent reporting of activity undertaken by FCCT on behalf of Fife Council.
- 3.3 FCCT remains committed to delivering the highest possible service with the resources available and taking an entrepreneurial approach to bridging the gap between available funding from the Local Authority and increasing demand on services. We will continue to advocate for greater investment in Fife's outdoors by the Local Authority and others and are fully convinced of the great benefits available to individuals and communities in doing so.

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14 November 2024

Agenda Item No. 5

COMMUNITIES & NEIGHBOURHOODS– ANNUAL SERVICE REVIEW REPORT 2023/2024

Report by: Paul Vaughan, Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods

Wards Affected: N/A

Purpose

To present an overview of the Service, detail the service planning, change and improvement work undertaken in 2023/24 and to provide an assessment of performance to inform scrutiny and future service planning.

Recommendation(s)

The scrutiny committee is asked to:

- consider and comment on the remodelled ‘annual service review’ report format and related products
- review the progress and performance of Communities and Neighbourhood Service for 2023/24 and the activity undertaken in 2024/25 to date
- note the Service planning objectives for 2024/25 and the three-year direction of travel

Resource Implications

There are no resource implications arising from this report.

Legal & Risk Implications

There are risks in not meeting Best Value requirements that can lead to additional monitoring/audit, external intervention and/or loss of public confidence.

Impact Assessment

An EqIA is not required as this report does not propose any changes to policies or services.

Consultation

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

1.0 Purpose of this report

1.1 This is the Communities and Neighbourhoods Services Annual Review for 2023-24. It looks back over the previous year and assesses how the service has performed in relation to its priorities and challenges and looks forward to the changes and improvements that need to be considered next and the Service's priorities for the next 12 months.

1.2 In the report you will find

- An overview of the Service's roles and responsibilities.
- Budget and workforce information to put service delivery into context.
- The key priorities the Service has been working to and how these relate to the Plan for Fife and council reforms.
- An assessment of how the service has performed in relation to these priorities.
- Objectives and themes for service delivery, change, and/or improvement going forward.

This information is then used to inform annual service planning and the strategic direction of the service over the next three years.

1.3 This approach to annual review and reporting is part of the Council's updated public performance reporting and scrutiny arrangements. More information on that and how the Council performs and compares with other local authorities can be found online here www.fife.gov.uk/performance

1.4 Performance information and related case studies for Communities and Neighbourhoods Services will be available online <http://www.fife.gov.uk/performance>

2.0 Service Overview

Key role and responsibilities 2023/24

2.1 The key role of the Communities & Neighbourhoods Service is to deliver:

- People and Place Leadership.
- Integrated community services.
- Community learning and development.
- Anti-poverty and local community planning.
- Projects and programmes and the development of community assets.
- Physical activity, sport, golf, culture, leisure, countryside and greenspace with the council's Trusts and local communities.
- Area regeneration and development.

2.2 The service teams are allocated between the seven Area Teams and two Fife Wide teams.

2.3 The seven Area Teams cover the following functions:

- Community Learning & Development
- Community Management
- Local Community Planning
- Local Anti-Poverty

2.4 The Strategy and Commissioning Team covers

- Community Use (Halls, Centres and Community Use Schools)
- Lochore Meadows Country Park
- Community Development Support
- Active Communities (Physical Activity, Sports Development and Outdoor Education)
- Community Projects (Capital Projects, Parks Development, Allotments and Community Growing, and Access)
- Sponsor service for Fife Sport and Leisure Trust, Fife Culture Trust, Fife Golf Trust and Fife Coast and Countryside Trust

2.5 The second Fife-wide team covers Emergency Resilience and Events.

Budget breakdown 2023/24

2.6 The Service had an annual budget of £62.068million. This included:

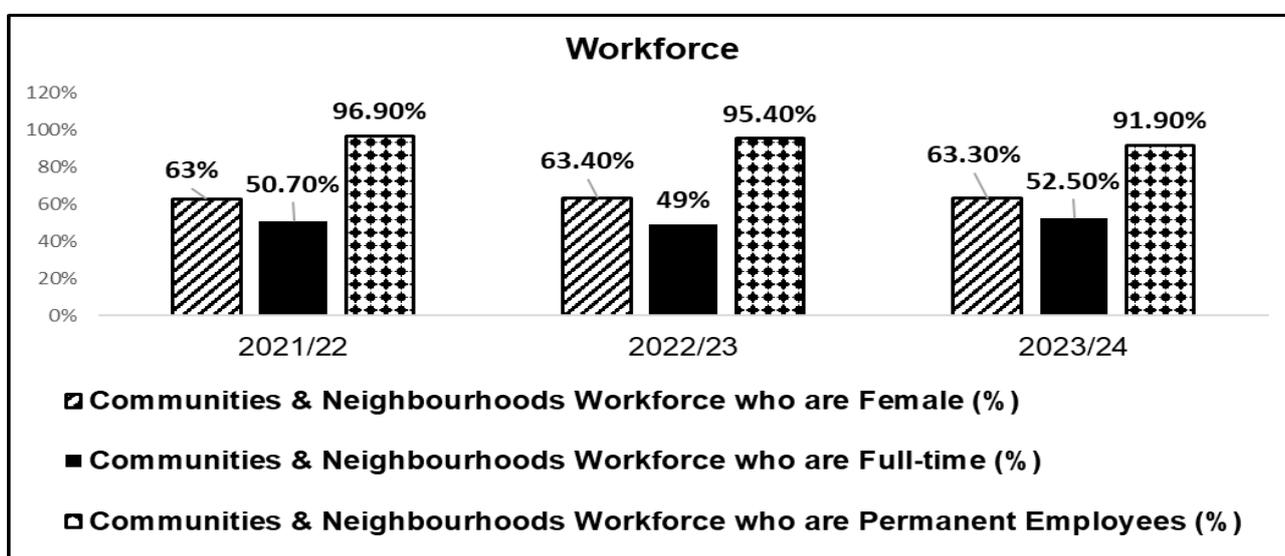
	Net Expenditure by Business Area	Provisional Outturn	Variance
	23/24	23/24	23/24
	£m	£m	£m
Communities & Neighbourhoods	56.975	59.781	2.806
Total Net Expenditure	56.975	59.781	2.806
	Gross Expenditure	Provisional Outturn	Variance
	23/24	23/24	23/24
	£m	£m	£m
Employee Costs	20.759	21.672	0.913
Premises Related Expenditure	7.296	8.879	1.584
Transport Related Expenditure	0.239	0.260	0.021
Supplies and Services	10.774	10.883	0.109
Third Party Payments	22.728	23.420	0.692
Transfer Payments	0.263	0.288	0.025
Support Services Charges	0.009	0.141	0.132
	62.068	65.544	3.476

	Gross Income	Provisional Outturn	Variance
	23/24	23/24	23/24
	£m	£m	£m
Internal Income	-0.671	-1.264	-0.593
External Income	-4.421	-4.499	-0.077
	-5.093	-5.763	-0.670

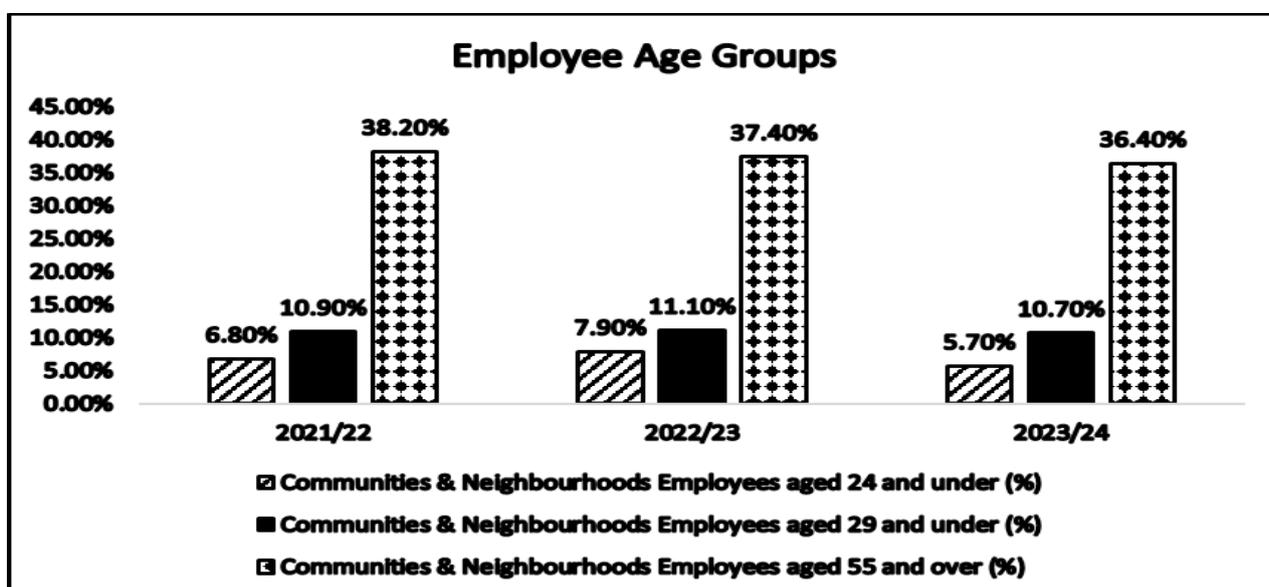
Workforce profile 2023/24

2.7 The service has 466.23 Full Time Equivalent Posts – employing 668 people in total. 47.5% of staff are part-time with 91.9% of permanent employees, 36.4% aged 55 and over and with 63.3% of the Service female.

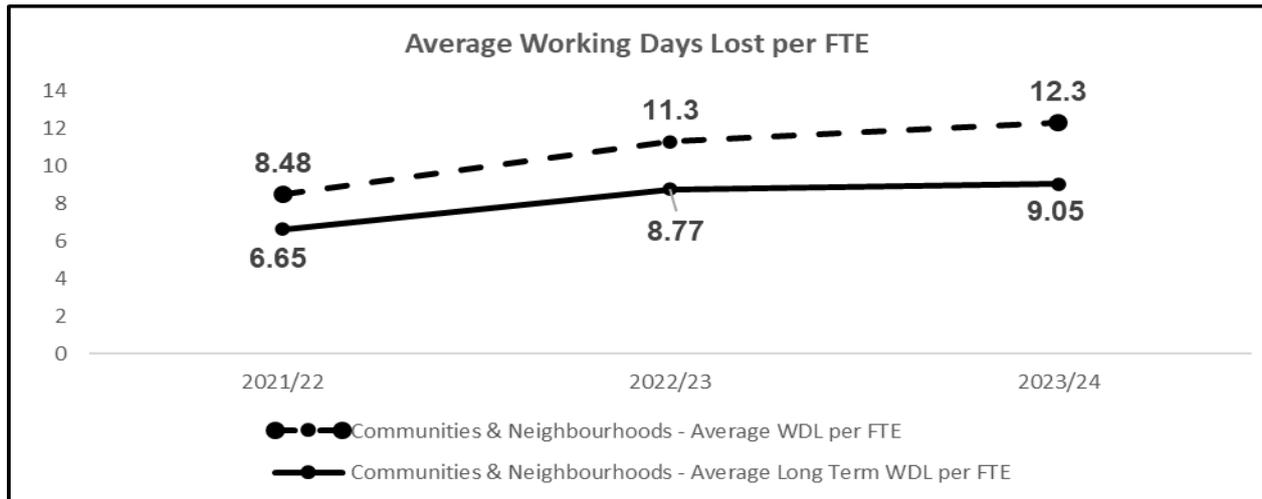
Workforce



Employees age groups



Working Days Lost (WDL) per FTE



3.0 Priorities and Performance

Service Priorities 2023/24

3.1 The service works to 5 strategic priorities:

- Reducing poverty through prevention and mitigation.
- Improving health and wellbeing through participation.
- Citizens improving the places where they live.
- Improving life chances for all through learning, personal development and active citizenship.
- Stronger, more resilient, supportive, influential communities.

How we delivered

Priority 1: Reducing Poverty through prevention and mitigation

What we said

We would: deliver actions with partners tackling poverty and preventing crisis within communities.

What we achieved

- The development and use of a Low-Income Family Tracker (LIFT) to target resources and respond to change.
- Delivery projects supporting income maximisation.
- Providing welfare support through community job clubs.
- Supporting individuals across areas to tackle disadvantages from poverty.
- Supporting individuals and communities through the winter programme and Café Inc.

How we know

- 3.2 Targeted work around income maximisation to mitigate the impact of the benefit cap, has seen £1.3 million allocated directly to beneficiaries. Over 550 households have taken up their eligibility for pension credit of more than one million pounds. Seventeen households have increased the uptake of other allowances, including the attendance allowance, by £400,000.
- 3.3 In addition to the council delivery of the Scottish Welfare Fund, locally targeted approaches to support individuals are also delivered. In Northeast Fife (NEF), Fife Voluntary Action administer the NEF discretionary fund which can be goods, vouchers or cash into a bank account, which helps to prevent people moving into or further into poverty. The fund can be used for crisis intervention, small household appliances or essentials, clothing (including for interviews) and travel to and from work or volunteer placements. £11,308 was spent during 23/24.
- 3.4 Welfare Support Officers distributed 205 dayrider bus tickets and £4460 of shopping vouchers to ensure that those accessing Community Job Clubs can access food, household essentials, and travel to essential appointments.
- 3.5 2494 people have accessed welfare support via the welfare support assistant appointments and through the community job clubs. This is a small increase from the previous year. There is a decline in the number of people accessing welfare support via telephone contact. 2022/23 it remained high post COVID at 865 over 12 months but has reduced to 182 in 2023/24.
- 3.6 Following the review of the local concessionary travel scheme in NEF, Moffat and Williamson tickets are now included and more agencies have become involved this year expanding the reach of the scheme in the area to ensure those most in need can access free transport. The development of the work with the local health and social care partnership has resulted in increased promotion of the patient transport scheme.
- 3.7 The Winter Programme was supported with £5.3 million of funding. This was in addition to a £1.8million top up to the Scottish Welfare Fund. The support has been shared across fuel, food, and cash support, mostly accessed at the point of crisis (see below).
- 3.8 £200k of Community Recovery funding supported CARF to train and raise the capacity of staff and volunteers to give first level advice. This is helping to build the foundations for a No Wrong Door approach where people can get the early advice and support to avoid falling into crisis.
- 3.9 Welfare support assistants have built networks with key partner agencies and community groups across the 7 Areas providing early support and advice to people at risk of reaching crisis.
- 3.10 Café Inc in 2024 has served 171,601 meals. The changes agreed to delivery is allowing the project to stay on budget whilst ensuring our children, young people and their carers have access to a nutritional meal during holiday periods.

Area	2023			2024		
	Easter	Summer	October	Easter	Summer	October
Cowdenbeath	19138	61544	19360	9131	26386	8040
Dunfermline	4488	11407	4100	2525	5745	1425
Glenrothes	4336	15231	5240	5615	17930	4710
Kirkcaldy	4855	18171	5830	4152	17512	4980
Levenmouth	6053	21787	6710	5091	20820	5650
NEF	1891	6920	2360	2259	7793	2310
SWF	5015	17422	3738	2743	13193	3531
Fife	45776	152482	47338	31516	109379	30646

Café Inc Comparison Data

- 3.11 Café Inc venues were a mixture of voluntary sector and Fife Council provision with slightly more voluntary sector providers on board in comparison to October 2023. There were 65 venues during the 7-week summer holiday period with 18 venues staffed by catering.
- 3.12 During the last two weeks of the summer holidays, families were given the opportunity to participate in a piece of research. This was done by including QR cards inside lunch bags and with Communities staff attending venues and engaging with families. The findings from 128 respondents included:
- 84 respondents were not eligible for free school meal payments but of those 38 were eligible for Universal Credit.
 - 112 respondents were parent/carer(s).
 - Without Cafe Inc 51 respondents would've made lunch for their children but skipped lunch themselves.

Food



171,541 meals

were provided by Fife Council over the school holidays for the year



17,112 food parcels

distributed by Trussell Trust in Fife 2023/24 from 11 centres

£1.3 million

was spent on crisis awards for food from the Scottish Welfare

Fuel



£155,317

worth of fuel top ups issued

1,220 people

have received first level energy advice



199 frontline workers

trained to give energy advice

33 households

benefited from Boiler Repair Scheme, with a spend of **£73,147**



£30,000

spent on Winter Warmer packs to help those in crisis situations, including heated blankets, fleeces, gloves, hat and scarves

87

Welcoming and Warm Places were provided

Additional £1.8m

provided by Fife Council on top of Scottish Government SWF allocation



8,865

completed benefit checks over the past 12 months

44,190 views

on the Our Fife/Get Help website

Benefit Maximisation

£6.7 million

Large scale benefit uptake campaigns gain to date is estimated to be

867

have increased their income by **£860,870** through Pension Credit campaigns - an estimated lifetime value of **£3.9 million**

Approx. £470,980

additional financial gains from Pension Credit campaigns, with a lifetime value of **£2.8 million**

440

new Tax-Free Childcare accounts, saving each family **20%** of their total childcare costs each month.

Priority 2: Citizens improving the places where they live

What we said

We would:

- Deliver local community planning priorities and finalising local community plans in areas including the City Plan for Dunfermline.
- Deliver changes to decentralisation across the council and partners.
- Promoting and supporting multi-disciplinary working across local community planning partners.
- Managing the delivery of new community buildings, community building refurbishment, play parks, and nature restoration projects.

What we achieved

- Approval of Local Community Plans across Fife.
- Introduction of new reporting arrangements to area committees.
- Delivered projects including indoor, outdoor and green infrastructure projects for new builds, refurbishment or enhancements to existing facilities or outdoor space.

How we know

- 3.10 40 allotment sites accommodate over 1450 plot holders. Waiting lists to access plots have exceeded 2360. (info as per July / Aug 24). New allotment sites developed during 2023/24 included St Monans, Smeaton (Kirkcaldy) and Spittlefield (Inverkeithing).
- 3.11 A successful grant scheme was developed to provide local support for existing and new growing projects. 21 community groups benefited from the scheme delivering training, solar panels used for tool charging, security, fencing, irrigation, water butts, composting units, sheds, purchase of horticultural sundries, fruit trees and seeds.
- 3.12 Over £0.660m of the 2023/24 Scottish Government Nature Recovery Fund (NRF) has been distributed to various biodiversity enhancement projects across Fife and has included specialist equipment for Grounds Maintenance and FCCT to enhance grasslands across Fife as well as enabling the early stages of the Fife Climate Forest. Other projects have included the replacement of the Earlshall Muir boardwalk and a wetland habitat creation initiative has also been built into the allotment expansion in Crossford.
- 3.13 With additional funding from Scottish Government of £0.681m and supporting community funding the team have delivered a range of Play Park projects in 2023/24 at a value of £2.310m.
- 3.14 To date Fife Council has secured £3.600 m funding SEPA water environment fund (WEF) including:

- £1.500 m Lynburn River phase 3 was completed in 2023/24 which has improved river restoration works and greenspace improvements
 - The River Leven Restoration Project phase 1 completed in 2023/24 with funding from SEPA of £0.607m. Phase 2 with a value of £1.663m has commenced.
 - Blackburn River project funding was secured with £0.850m SEPA funding, £0.200m Nature Restoration funding and £0.100m from Glenrothes area committee
- 3.15 The service is engaged in delivery of over 140 capital projects. Key updates over 23/24 include:
- Adam Smith Theatre refurbishment & enhancement project was completed in 2023 at a cost of £8.000m.
 - Abbeyview Community Hub project opened September 2024 at a cost of £7.500m.
 - Templehall Community Hub project budget was agreed and secured at a value of £15.300m and since then project has moved to detailed design stage with expected start date in 2025.
 - East Sands Leisure Centre project - finalisation of the feasibility has been developed with several options including options for redesign through a new build option/PassivHaus build.
 - Carnegie Hall (Dunfermline) - Detailed feasibility commissioned with the need for significant investment to upgrade the facility to the similar standard to the completion of the Adam Smith Theatre project.
 - Glenrothes Golf Depot - Designs and options finalised with an estimated cost of £0.900m with expected start date early 2025.
 - Lochore Meadows Destination Play Park was delivered in 2023/24 at a cost of £1m.
- 3.16 Across each of the areas of Fife Local place projects are included in Local Community Plans for example Dalgety Community Trust (see case study in Appendix).
- 3.17 In Glenrothes, Riverside Park secured almost £5 million investment from the UK Government's Levelling Up Fund to restore the quality of, to rejuvenate and to provide more opportunities for family and community activity.
- 3.18 The Cowdenbeath area will see investment from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund 2022-25 investment plan. Community projects approved to date include Auchterderran Church Hall, Lochgelly Brass Band, Lochore Meadows Climate Biodiversity project, Brucefield allotment project, the Knights Templar Community Orchard and Biodiversity project and The Clearing. All these approved projects will contribute towards Fife's net zero targets and targets for reduction in carbon dioxide equivalent (carbon) emissions.
- 3.19 Two projects benefitted from UK Shared Prosperity Fund awards in North East Fife during 23/24. Friends of Craigtoun were awarded £17,000 to purchase an electric vehicle and the Larrick Centre in Tayport were awarded £20,000 to install solar panels.
- 3.20 In 2023/34 lease arrangements were instigated for two large park areas in Leven, and a hall in Methil, to become community run facilities.

- 3.21 In Kirkcaldy development of the Town Centre and Waterfront has included:
- Installation of a Sun Dial the end of the waterfront to tell the story of Sir Sandford Fleming
 - Completion of Volunteers Green in 2024
 - Replacement of Bins across the Town.
 - The installation of public art at the newly regenerated waterfront, the 'heart of Kirkcaldy' provides a focal point for the town.
 - Celebration of the 60th anniversary of the twinning arrangements with Ingolstadt.
 - Celebration of the Adam Smith Tercentenary.
 - A Memorial to mark the Seafeld Disaster took place near Seafeld beach.
- 3.22 A Dunfermline Strategic Tourism Evaluation report was launched in October 2023 and from this a Tourism Action Plan has been developed.

Priority 3: Improved health and wellbeing through participation

What we said

We would:

- Deliver the Physical Activity and Sport Strategy and engage in the development of a Cultural Strategy for Fife.
- Manage community facilities and support the return of usage post pandemic

What we achieved

- Increased attendances at Community Use
- Delivery of Fife's Cultural Summit in May 2024
- Increasing participation in Active Fife projects

How we know

- 3.23 Community Use Attendances have increased with a new plan developed [CU Plan final 2023-26.pdf \(fife.scot\)](#)

	Schools	Halls & Centres	Total
21/22	537018	517039	1,054,057
22/23	812680	669749	1,482,429
23/24	825950	807098	1,633,048

- 48,800 attendances in our swimming pools (CU Schools).
- 417,052 attendances at our indoor sport and physical activities (CU Schools).
- 366,775 attendances at our outdoor sport and physical activities (CU Schools).

- 3.24 Community Use delivered

- 59 new social opportunities in partnership with community events or interactions that involve engaging with other people, typically in a leisurely and informal context.
- 12 new Advisory Groups were established to encourage ownership and shape programmes
- Developed a standardised start-up scheme to help new clubs and groups become sustainable.
- 22 more community venues now have public access Wi-Fi.
- Reviewed and refreshed marketing material leading to over 10,500 followers on social media platforms.
- Supporting over 27,500 partnership lets which equals a £650,000 investment in local communities.
- Supporting weekly bookings on behalf of Grounds Maintenance for 65 clubs, 161 teams, across 45 pitches for a variety of sports and activities.
- Providing 25 new volunteering opportunities to develop and enhance the skills, knowledge, experience and wellbeing of all participants.

3.25 For one week in November 2023, Community Use asked our customers - *How likely are you to recommend us to a friend or colleague?* We used the responses to calculate our Net Promoter Score (NPS). Top companies generally have an NPS of 70 and above. We are delighted to say, that from 1125 responses received across the Kingdom, Community Use Fife received a Net Promoter Score of **78**.

3.26 The below data highlights some of the key performance indicators set against Physical Activity & Sport over the past 3 years:

	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Total participation in Active Communities programmes	54,408	40,904	169,033
Total number of Active Communities classes / sessions	3,565	3,569	8,302
Female participation in Physical Activity	22,408	26,259	67,104
Older Adult Participation in Physical Activity	11,793	11,797	7,949
Participation from SIMD postcodes in Physical Activity	3,230	3,231	3,339

3.27 The general trajectory during the above period has seen an increase in physical activity and sport participation across Fife post-COVID, with a significant increase in female participation and a steady increase in participation from SIMD 1-3 areas. Our early data for 2024-25 indicates we continue along this trajectory with a more deliberate approach to reach the least active in our communities.

3.28 Bums Off Seats (a walking initiative targeted mostly at older adults) illustrate this growth since 2020 by engaging people who are most vulnerable to poor health associated with ageing and residing in areas SIMD1-3.

Year	New participants	Total number of walks	SIMD1	SIMD2	SIMD3
2020	195	280	30	124	124
2021	255	448	88	344	344
2022	232	629	202	556	556
2023	283	670	247	587	587

Year	Diabetes	Heart Disease	Mental Ill Health	Overweight	COPD	High Blood Pressure	Cancer	Dementia	Other
2020	15 (7%)	11 (5%)	2 (1%)	8 (4%)	6 (3%)	47 (24%)	7 (3%)	2 (1%)	29 (14%)
2021	13 (5%)	11 (4%)	22 (8%)	16 (6%)	5 (1%)	36 (14%)	4 (1%)	3 (1%)	31 (12%)
2022	10 (4%)	13 (5%)	28 (12%)	20 (8%)	4 (1%)	35 (15%)	0	1 (0%)	35 (15%)
2023	13 (4%)	7 (2%)	23 (8%)	21 (7%)	1 (0%)	39 (13%)	3 (1%)	1 (0%)	50 (17%)

3.29 Since September 2023, the Outdoor Education Fife team have been aligned to the management and leadership of Active Communities, and over the course of the last six months of 2023-24, Outdoor Education Fife registered a total participation of 1,300, which is reflective of the low season. During the first quarter of 2024 alone, the centre has registered a total participation of 4,539 which has been reflective of the start to a busy high season that demonstrates the potential contribution of the centre to Lochore Meadows Country Park's as a key destination.

Priority 4: Improving life chances for all through learning, personal development and active citizenship

What we said

We would:

- Deliver local community learning and development (CLD) activity in line with local CLD plans supporting more participation and engagement in delivering with local communities.

What we achieved

- Data gathered over the last two years shows increasing trends across the majority of national CLD key performance indicators. Participation and engagement with CLD services is almost similar to pre-pandemic levels across Fife.
- Refreshing our ESOL Partnership with Fife College.
- Targeted community capacity building (CCB) activities are supporting community led development and voluntary organisations
- Delivery of Employability and lifelong learning opportunities.

How we know

3.30 A recent progress visit by HMle (December 2023) highlighted some particular strengths of across CLD activity in Fife **HMle Report - Fife Council Community Learning and Development Progress Visit Report 13/02/24** (education.gov.scot)

3.31 Implementation of revised CLD performance metrics:

PI		Fife Total
1. Adults participating in Adult Learning		2118
2. Young people aged 10-18 participating in youth work programmes		3570
3. Attendances by 10-18 year olds in youth work programmes		64480
4. Community Groups receiving more than 4 hours support per month		15
5. Community Groups receiving less than 4 hours support per month		158
6. Number of young people aged 10-18 volunteering in a CLD setting		13
7. Number of adults volunteering in a CLD setting		126
8. Attendances at Community Job Clubs		4134
9. Individuals engaging with Welfare Support staff		2485
10. Welfare Support Services – Number of engagements (inc Job Clubs)		2711
11. Welfare Support Services – SIMD areas (inc. Job Clubs)	num	1147
	%	42.3%
12. Referrals to specialised support services		545

3.32 The Employability Access Support for Young People is a Fife wide employability pathway for young people aged 16-19 years who meet a ‘no one left behind’ criteria. A case study of the approach in South and West Fife is included in the appendix.

3.33 Rural Skills Scotland (RSS) are a not-for-profit learning provider directly delivering Apprenticeships and SVQ’s across Scotland. Working with the service we saw the re-use of a long-derelict Council Parks Service Nursery in Kirkcaldy as an employment and training hub for green jobs, primarily in the land-based sector. RSS, in September 2022, secured a 20-year lease on the site from Fife Council. The RSS national Apprenticeship programme will be based there, as will it’s contracting business and employability programme. RSS and Fife Council were then successful in attracting an additional £491,582 from the Scottish Government’s Vacant and Derelict Land Innovation Programme. Significant work to clear and prepare the sight has taken place.

3.34 Employability programmes have been running at Lochore Meadows Country Park over the last 18 months. Working with Fife Council’s Employability Team, Outdoor Education Fife, Rural Skills Scotland and Fife Coast & Countryside Trust over 22 participants have successfully completed programmes with most going on to further training opportunities or employment.

3.35 Various courses have been developed in collaboration with community partners to empower residents in Glenrothes. Notably, the “Lifeskills” course adopts an asset-based approach, helping participants build on their existing capabilities. The course focuses on practical skills that can reduce living costs while increasing participants’ abilities to manage their daily lives more effectively. Collaborating partners in this initiative included Castle Furniture, YMCA, Men’s Shed, Auchmuty & Dovecot Tenants and Residents Association, the CLD team, Leslie Community Pantry, and Fife Voluntary Action. As a result of these efforts, one participant secured

employment by being linked to Community Use, where they were offered a casual contract to deliver sewing classes. Additionally, six individuals have signed up for a follow-up “PAT Testing” course.

Priority 5: Stronger, more resilient, supportive, influential communities

What we said

We would:

- Promote People and Place Leadership in the areas through facilitating multi-disciplinary action and developing the decentralisation of services.

What we achieved

- Promoting and supporting participation and engagement, community leadership, and volunteer roles
- Responding to emergency situations within Fife
- Supporting the delivery of events
- Promoting local action and decision-making

How we know

- 3.36 The Emergency Resilience Team was involved in the response to 38 incidents during this period. The majority of these were minor incidents but there were two notable incidents, one a fire and the other flooding, that had a large impact on the affected residents resulting in evacuation and both temporary and alternative permanent housing accommodation being provided. Working with the emergency services, the Council supported those impacted.
- 3.37 Lessons identified from all incidents have been captured and improvements are being made to existing resilience plans and arrangements.
- 3.38 Staff from across all service areas participated in either internal and/or external training and exercises throughout the year to raise awareness of their role and gain experience in responding to incidents. In recognition of the increasing risk of cyber-attacks, two Council-wide resilience workshops were held during 2023 to develop the Council’s plans and arrangements in response to a potential cyber-attack. A plan has now been drafted and awareness increased across the Council on any potential impacts on services.
- 3.39 Approximately 480 events were held across Fife during 2023/24, an increase of over 100 events since 2022/23. The majority of these were community events organised by local community groups such as galas, funfairs, sporting events and parades such as remembrance, with the Events Team providing support and guidance where needed.
- 3.40 August 2023 saw Fife being part of the UCI World Cycling Championships with the Men’s Elite Road race route coming into Fife giving the opportunity for areas of Fife

to be televised across the world. The Council's events management process continues to be developed to support event organisers throughout the event planning process.

- 3.41 Participatory Budgeting continues to be an important feature in the delivery of community engagement. Across Fife Area strategic assessments highlighted that there is a need to better connect with people to have more of a sense of influence and control. In Kirkcaldy, an allocation of £300,000 allowed partners to develop a robust framework to distribute this money including opportunities to engage local communities across the Kirkcaldy Area in dialogue, discussion and deliberation leading to a direct influence on the spend. The planning to deliver Participatory Budgeting across the Kirkcaldy area is shaping up.
- 3.42 Alongside colleagues in Glenrothes, Team members benefitted from support from DEMOTEC a European Consultancy specialising in initiatives which engage citizens in decision-making. A citizen led steering group has been formed to ensure that the design and delivery of the programme is shaped and influenced using a bottom-up approach. Priorities will reflect those of the Local Community Plan.
- 3.43 The use of Local Community Planning Funding also supports local community groups. Four groups including St Andrews, Crail, Auchtermuchty and Cupar have been supported with funding from the local community planning budget to support community engagement with local place plans. Fife Council Communities and Neighbourhoods staff have supported the engagement of young people's voices in the Auchtermuchty and Strathmiglo Place Plan and the Cupar Place Plan.
- 3.44 Fife Council Communities and Neighbourhoods Service staff are also supporting residents in Aberdour and Blairhall to create Neighbourhood/Community Action Plans. The development of a Blairhall Community Action Plan was highlighted by residents after hearing about the success of the North Queensferry Action plan. In Blairhall, a group of six residents formed the nucleus of a steering group and decided to create a 3 Wishes postcard. This postcard, distributed to households, formed part of a community consultation and allowed residents the opportunity to highlight what they wished for in the village. Post boxes were placed in the community centre and the local primary school, and a QR code was included on the postcard, which gave the residents the chance to complete their wishes online. 118 responses were received.
- 3.45 The findings highlighted that the main area of focus is around play and recreation in the village, along with facilities and maintenance. The forum has met on 4 occasions and continue to work on developing community engagement methods to fully develop an action plan for the village. The work is also supported by Coalfields Regeneration Trust and the Headteacher from the primary school. The next phase is a wider community consultation.
- 3.46 Neighbourhood Development Plans in Kirkcaldy Area are being delivered with key target neighbourhoods for over 8 years. There have been 2 dedicated posts covering 4 of the most disadvantaged and disengaged areas.

4.0 Priorities ahead

- 4.1 The priorities for the coming years remain around the five strategic priorities. Specific actions being developed are:
- 4.2 **No Wrong Door** – increasing focus on community capacity building and participation, more preventative, dignified action on poverty, less emergency reactive mitigation, promoting opportunities for lifelong-learning, employability, family and individual development.
- 4.3 **Community Facilities** –Working with services, communities and partners, consolidate through sharing and rationalising to improve community venues.
- 4.4 **Decentralisation** –Increasing local decision making and helping to plan and deliver local responsive services.
- 4.5 **Physical Activity and Sport** –promoting integrated health and wellbeing opportunities.
- 4.6 **Culture and wellbeing** –supporting increased wellbeing, lifelong learning, community wealth building and participation.
- 4.7 **Outdoors and Nature** –addressing climate change and promoting sustainable outdoor space for leisure and recreation.
- 4.8 **Improving efficiency, effectiveness and digitally enabled services.** Including updating our performance management approaches with the corporate performance team and working on refreshing our quality framework.

Report contacts

Paul Vaughan, Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods

Appendix - Case Studies

South & West Fife Financial Inclusion Case Study

In early April 2023, Kingdom Community Bank (KCB) successfully recruited a Financial Development and Education Outreach Officer to be based solely in South and West Fife having received Community Recovery funding of £40,704. This project was jointly developed with KCB and Fife Council C&N Services Anti-Poverty & CWB Project Manager.

KCB track sign-ups by postcode and thus monitor those signing up in South and West Fife; they also look at the membership sign-up trend over time. Prior to this project, they saw an average of 30 new members from S&WF each year from 2021 to 2023. This is around 5% of the new member applications received in Fife for each of those years. The number of new members in S&WF increased by over 300% during this first year of funded activity and represented just over 15% of the new members across Fife in the same period.

The initial focus of the project was to work with community food providers and parent and toddlers' groups in the area. The pantries and community cafés in S&WF attract high numbers of local people and fulfil a crucial role in offering affordable, locally sourced food. While they are all open to everyone, it is acknowledged that many people on low incomes benefit from the food on offer, as well as the social contact from attending.

KCB worked with five pantries in the local area to encourage their members to join their local credit union and start saving. The expectation was to help people with limited financial resources to begin their savings journey at a modest level and try to develop the habit of saving. Through this work, KCB secured 107 participants and invested just under £3,500 in saving incentives (matching the pantry charge for an initial 12 week period to ensure they were not directly out-of-pocket to start with). The incentive scheme was funded through the South and West Fife Poverty Action Group budget. At the time of writing, these members have saved just under £3,500 of their own money, almost exactly matching the subsidy level. A significant achievement with a demographic who may not have found it very easy to save at this time.

The 'Find-a-Fiver' savings challenge was targeted at local parents and toddlers' groups, as a pilot, to encourage small scale savings through the local credit union. This was designed to develop a savings habit, make people feel better that they had some savings and give them a gateway to save more and borrow at an affordable cost should they need to. This project was piloted in Valleyfield and Saline and was successful in securing savings that outstripped the subsidised contribution. The pilot saw nine members join, receive a total savings contribution of £500 and then go on to save £800 of their own monies.

Levenmouth Anti-Poverty Case Studies

Several anti-poverty initiatives have been supported in the Levenmouth area over the past year. The general focus has been to start the move away from crisis interventions towards establishing support mechanisms that move individuals and families on to a more sustainable footing. The overall objective is to create a cash first framework to support local people in a dignified way. Examples of the approaches taken towards this goal are noted below:

Plus Partnership – In partnership with Furniture Plus this initiative employs one full time welfare support assistant embedded with Furniture Plus. The approach provides ongoing

case management and community-based welfare support to people in Levenmouth who are identified as being in material deprivation. Over a period of 10 months since its inception, 165 referrals have been made to the project. In total over £86,000 of financial gains or savings have been secured for those referred.

Levenmouth Independence Initiative – In partnership with Castle Furniture local people can receive support for the purchase of furniture, white goods, and other household items through the issue of a voucher. This allows the client to directly purchase the items they want and that best meets their needs from the Castle Furniture stock. We have made provision for up to 60 households to benefit from this approach with an average package of assistance being in the region of £450. It is also important to note that most items distributed to households will be reused and reconditioned, which supports the areas stated aims on progressing activity that has a positive impact on climate change concerns.

Justice Social Work – Welfare Support Worker – Working with colleagues in Justice Social Work (JSW) the identification of concerns relating to the families of offender's was highlighted at the Welfare Reform and Anti-Poverty and Levenmouth People meetings. The need to provide guidance, information and practical interventions for people being liberated from custodial sentences was highlighted as key in promoting resilience. The choice was made to install a support worker within the JSW team to work alongside colleagues who had already built trust with the clients. A typical caseload for JSW shows a third of all clients have dependent children who are negatively affected by issues related to the benefits system. Accordingly, this type of targeted support is key to preventing financial harm to both to the individual client and those connected to them. In terms of sustainability the support worker also provides ongoing training to JSW colleagues to ensure their understanding of the benefits system is robust and up to date.

Handy Person Service

As part of the Housing Plus Programme, market testing was undertaken to explore demand for a handy person service in Fife. An online survey was the chosen methodology for respondents to share their views anonymously. The survey link was shared with staff, partner organisations, and service users via email, word of mouth, and social media and everyone was encouraged to participate and share. The survey ran for six weeks with 232 responses. A variety of age groups, from different tenure types, responded to the survey from age 16 – 85+. This displays the necessity for an inclusive service for all age demographics and all tenure types.

Findings identified a clear need and want for a handy person service with the majority of people responding stating they would use this service. Different services, residents and tenants have also promoted the need for this type of trusted, reliable, accessible, and affordable service.

The Handy Person Service will be delivered by The Community Trade Hub who have years of experience with key objectives and goals linking with education, training and youth development. They are a not-for-profit organisation with links to several areas in Fife. This test of change will provide an opportunity for school pupils, leavers and volunteers, in the Kirkcaldy area, to work with the Community Trade Hub delivering the Handy Person Service. This will include training in practical trade skills, customer care skills, real life working experience, and the development of a personal development plan/portfolio for each individual.

Dalgety Bay Community Trust

At the South and West Fife Area Committee on 25 January 2023, members approved £30,000 of Community Recovery funding for Dalgety Community Trust to conduct a comprehensive feasibility study in relation to the creation of a new Community Hub in the heart of Dalgety Bay.

Dalgety Community Trust (DCT) stated that this initial phase of the project would include:

- Understanding and interpreting the community's requirements in the context of a new community hub.
- Developing a project brief including considering the project budget.
- Helping to refine the initial business case for the new community hub.
- Producing initial architectural concepts.
- Undertaking and participating in community engagement around the architectural concepts with the local community and with other key stakeholders.

Dalgety Community Trust have made significant progress with this initial phase of the project and, in most instances, concluded the required work.

Since March 2023, the Trust have spent 11 months preparing a full feasibility study for the new hub, including developing architectural concepts, a comprehensive business plan and conducting further engagement work with the local community. Working with Community Enterprise Scotland, and Lee Boyd Architects, DCT have gained valuable insights into the potential design and viability of the community hub in Dalgety Bay. This work has produced a Feasibility report, comprising:

- Architectural design concepts for new hub
- Cost estimate prepared by professional quantity surveyor
- Environmental Strategy
- Structural Engineering report
- Landscaping design
- Business Plan including the project brief.
- Community engagement research report prepared by Community Enterprise

'Community Enterprise' conducted a comprehensive community-wide survey, receiving responses from 255 individuals. In addition, DCT reached out to a wide range of individuals representing various organisations including Dalgety Parish Church, Primary Schools and local businesses. Through the survey results 'Community Enterprise' confirmed strong support for development of the new hub, with 92% expressing favourable views. Only 4% remained unsure and another 4% were not in favour.

Based on the consultation and community engagement and the continued discussions, the community have stated that they want a multi-purpose community space, café, local produce outlet, wellbeing activities space, enterprise, learning zone, events and heritage space.

Fife Council has committed to support the project with a further allocation of £2m of funding. The Community Manager is working closely with and supporting Dalgety Community Trust with their aspirations and delivery of this project.

Glenwood Housing and Community Hub Development:

Extensive member and public consultation began with the Glenwood Neighbourhood Charrette in 2016-17, covering the Glenwood Shopping Centre and flats. The redevelopment of this site was widely supported and confirmed that a Community Hub should be provided as part of the overall site development.

Following the CPO process by the Council, a Steering Group and Design Team was established in April/May 2023 to start discussing housing options for the redevelopment of the Glenwood Centre site. This partnership is led by Housing Services and Kingdom Housing Association and includes Communities and Neighbourhoods as a key partner in the ongoing community engagement and consultation required to progress Housing, Community Hub and Community Space designs.

The regeneration of the former Glenwood Centre site will bring new housing, social and economic opportunities for the area. The design and outline plan for Glenwood is directly linked back to the "Golden Glenrothes" Charrette completed in 2017, when the local community were involved in informing the Charrette outcomes.

A substantial programme of community engagement and consultation commenced in December 2023, concluding in February this year. Led by Communities & Neighbourhoods, in partnership with Housing Services, this involved several community events held at local schools and church spaces, online promotion and consultation, paper surveys and information posted to households in the area and publicised in local spaces. The Housing, Hub and Community Space design and layout has since developed in response to aspects of the findings from this exercise.

This redevelopment has provided an opportunity for Communities and Neighbourhood Services to initiate new local interest in the co-production of a joint Macedonia Neighbourhood and Housing Plan.

Kirkcaldy

Choice First:

Building on the success of a choice first pilot partnership initiative with Greener Kirkcaldy and Kirkcaldy Foodbank led by the area FC Anti-Poverty Manager in 2022 the initiative was further developed. The evidence and learning generated from this partnership pilot highlighted how vouchers alongside support packages can make an immediate difference to a person's financial situation. This has led to a Fife wide SG application to test out other cash/choice first approaches.

Winter and Spring Boost:

Working alongside the Foodbank is not a new way of working for the FC Welfare Team. However, with the addition of 2 new Welfare staff (funded through CRF) the team were able to increase their reach and test out different ways of working in a more intensive way. Feedback from participants and foodbank volunteers have stated that this was a highly successful approach as people accessing the foodbank were supported by experienced staff who checked their entitlement to means based benefits often resulting in maximising their income. The data reinforced this and highlighted that having a wider range of support on site can enable a wider range of support to be accessed to help situations escalating. A Spring boost was then delivered and the Welfare Support team are also now able to offer outreach at local help hub settings, Nourish, Philp Hall, Cornerstone Café Burntisland

and Gallatown Hub. Additionally, the team have increased capacity to deliver support to clients at the KY2 club, the Well and at Foodbank distribution points on a regular basis.

Fundraiser @ Foodbank

Rather than give an allocation of funds (from area CRF) for food a contribution was allocated to get a fundraiser to support the volunteers and trustees to raise the profile of the organisation as well as raise much needed funds. Early indications are this is a much more sustainable investment.

North East Fife

"Warm Welcome" Venues

Venues have continued to operate throughout the year, providing support beyond the winter months. Partner agencies, alongside the Welfare Support and CLD teams, regularly visit these venues to ensure attendees are aware of the available local resources, including food and fuel support.

Thirteen venues were allocated funding totalling £47k to support Warm Welcome, providing warm spaces where refreshments, food and activities are provided. Groups also carried out preventative work during these sessions, signposting to Welfare and cost of living support and agencies such as Cosy Kingdom. The Cosy Café based at the East Neuk Centre in Anstruther started in October 2022 as a community-based adult learning group and East Neuk Centre community project with Fife Council's Warm Spaces Funding. After its initial success, further funding was awarded through Warm Welcome to support long term self-sustainability of the project in partnership with the East Neuk Centre Trust. 5 volunteers now work at the project. 2 volunteers have gained their food hygiene certificates. Each week, staff and volunteers meet and cook from scratch around 50 2 course hot meals for their community. Around 20 people attend the Cosy Café, with remaining hot meals portioned up and put into the Community Fridge for the community to benefit from. Some of the meals are also set aside for the St Monans based 'Oor Space' group who provide mental health and addiction support. Approximately 50% of the attendees have been going regularly for over 6 months, with many attending to make new friends and get to know other people.

Warmer Items (112 electric throws, 112 hoodies, 50 warm packs) were allocated through local 'People Group' partners. A need was also highlighted by Link Living who were supporting Afghan refugees in Leuchars for more warm items due to the change in environment and fear of excessive fuel bills. 2 of each item were allocated to each household.

South & West Fife EASYP

EASYP 16+ Employability programme and Next Steps 16-18yrs Employability programme will continue to provide accredited courses in general life skills, including financial resilience, health and wellbeing and capacity resilience. EASYP is a Scottish govt funded programme for 52 weeks 16hrs per across the 7 areas.

EASYP contributes to Fife's Opportunities for All commitment to engage with young people at risk of not achieving a positive outcome and supporting them to progress to further learning, training and employability opportunities.

EASYP helps young people engage on a progressive journey that suits their circumstances and goals for the future. EASYP staff support young people to cope with personal, family, financial and health challenges that may be holding them back from taking part in training, employability programmes, work placements or paid work. Depending on the young person's situation, in certain circumstances the programme can provide funding to pay for clothing etc, resources and other provisions that improve their ability to achieve their potential.

During 2023 – 2024, 24 individual clients were engaged on the S&WF EASYP programme. Most of the young people are key worked by Communities and Neighbourhoods Service staff to sustain their engagement within the programme. Fife Employability Access Trust (FEAT) also support young people within the programme to enable and support individuals to reach their full positive mental wellbeing in a culture where there is no stigma.

Qualification/Certificate	Number of young people
ICT Level 4	6
Employability Level 4	4
Literacy Level 4	5
Numeracy Level 4	5
Youth Achievement Bronze Award	5
7 Habits of Effective Teens	9

On Thursday 22nd August in Camdean Youth Facility, Rosyth, a celebration of Achievement was held for young people aged 16-22yrs who attend Youth Employability courses (EASYP & Next Steps) in the South and West Area.

23 young people collected 14 different SQA awards totalling an amazing 69 individual accreditations, ranging in level 4 and 5. Subjects as varied as Youth achievement awards; Adult achievement awards, Introduction to Customer Care, Introduction to Tourism Communication and numeracy.

Over the year they also completed personal development courses such as 6 Pillars of Self Esteem, 7 Habits of Effective Teens, First Aid and Health in the Communities (HICCS).

All learners have moved on to their next destination in either work or further education.

South & West Fife Community Assistance Hubs

Approximately 18 months after the creation of the 'Community Assistance Hub' model in S&WF, there is considerable progress to note. Working collaboratively, there is now an increased awareness and usage of the four hubs in the area (Inverkeithing Civic Centre, Parkgate Community Centre, Oakley Community Centre and High Valleyfield Community Centre).

Welfare Support Assistants (WSAs) have been redeployed to work within the designated area covered by each of the four community hubs. It is proving to be more beneficial to the areas served and gives the WSA a more directed role within their area. The WSAs are in the process of developing stronger links within each community with key services and third sector organisations. Staff are also working with Community Education Workers to develop additional provision within each of the local hubs.

Through the Hubs, the Welfare Support Assistants have supported local people to access a range of services and advice. As the Community Assistance Hubs model has evolved and developed, there is now input from: Kingdom Community Bank, Fife Law Centre, Social Security Scotland, The Well, Christians Against Poverty, Fife Sports and Leisure Trust, Citizens Advice and Rights Fife, Fife Voluntary Action and key Fife Council services including Housing, Children and Families/Adult Services Social Work. As this 'wraparound' support model is further developed, the number of people accessing these hubs continues to increase.

Community Assistant Hub Open Days - 4 Open Day events were organised in November 2023 which highlighted and promoted S&WF's Community Assistance Hubs. These events were aimed at increasing people's awareness that their local community centres (CAH) are available as safe places not only to get warm but also a place to socialise, meet people and be informed of the support available to them should they need it.

The aim of the Open Days was to promote local provision for people who may need additional, extra support and assistance with food and fuel poverty, mental wellbeing, benefit advice as well as providing access to local learning opportunities. Activities and hot food were also available at the events.

A dedicated South and West Fife 'The Well' Link Worker was appointed in mid-December, funded from the South and West Fife area anti-poverty budget. The Link Worker post is for one year and they will work closely with Welfare Support Assistants, Community Workers and other partners to further develop The Well model. As well as increasing footfall, referrals to and awareness of the Wells/Community Hubs, they will share learning and knowledge about resources within the local area.

'The Well' is a light touch service where people can drop-in, both in their community and online and find out information and receive general advice to help people stay well and independent within their local community. People can drop-in to a Well or they can also be referred by professionals, family, friends and carers.

Although not specifically targeted at older people, the data from drop-ins and enquiries shows that more older people have benefited from the support of their local Well in the past year. The top three enquiries for The Well in SWF in this period were community support, mental health, financial support with many individuals receiving information for more than one area after speaking to The Well staff.

Welfare Roadshow

Through the Cowdenbeath Area Poverty Action Group, partners came together to deliver a Welfare Roadshow providing advice, support and signposting across a number of themes including benefit maximisation, citizens' rights, wellbeing, physical and social inclusion. This was delivered across seven communities within the Cowdenbeath Committee Area, helping ensure it was an accessible event for all.

Community Food

The Cowdenbeath Team supported development and capacity building with Community Food providers across the area to support the delivery of sustainable, dignified and joined up food support services which meet local needs. This has helped to support groups in sourcing external funding, making changes to their delivery models and helping develop and recognise volunteers within the community. Oor Wee Cafe, based in Kelty, won the 'Tackling Poverty' award at the FVA awards in June 2024 following their hard work over the course of 2023/24.

Partnership Impact

Working in partnership with new community based CARF advisors, funded through the Community Recovery Fund, Cowdenbeath has been linking local Welfare Support Assistants and other key staff to ensure holistic support can be delivered in a timely and dignified way within our communities. This joined up approach led to one individual being supported to secure £11,000 of additional annual income, which was lifechanging and has lifted him out of poverty.

Area CLD

In Dunfermline, the Step In Course (18 week programme) has been delivered to 8 members of the community, 7 members of which progressed on to college. Participants completed a range of certificated and noncertificated learning modules including Cooking Skills and First Aid. Skill Up has also taken place with up to 10 local people attending, building their skills and academia. Through the 2023-24 period 112 participants have engaged with Adult Basic Education, 120 local people have participated in community-based learning programmes, 183 people have been engaged through ESOL programmes and 37 people have been involved in the Multiply Programme. 60 Learners from SIMD areas have participated.

Community Support Hub

In Dunfermline, the Community Support Hub was officially opened in February 2024. The space will accommodate a wide range of partner organisations offering crisis support, advice, signposting as well as access on site to Kingdom Community Bank.

Community Capacity

In Dunfermline, Local groups have successfully been awarded with a range of internal and external funding to support community-led activities and local projects. Brucefield Tenants & Residents Association have secured £100k towards upgraded paths within the King Malcolm Park, Feel Good Friday have secured £500 towards social activities, whilst the Greenspace Scio successfully attracted £200k towards developing their vision and strategy. A range of groups and organisations have been supported with the process in applying for small grant Local Community Planning Funding and larger scale Community Recovery Funding.

14 November 2024

Agenda Item No 6

Citizens Advice & Rights Fife – Annual Performance Report 2023/24

Report by: Paul Vaughan, Head of Communities & Neighbourhoods

Wards Affected: All Wards

Purpose

This paper and its appendices provide information on the performance of Citizens Advice & Rights Fife (CARF) during 2023/24.

Recommendation(s)

It is recommended that People & Communities Scrutiny Committee:

- (a) Consider this paper and CARF's Annual Report and comment as necessary;
- (b) Consider the pro-active steps being undertaken by CARF to better meet the needs of demand;
- (c) Comment on CARF's role in income maximisation activity across Fife, particularly in co-ordinating benefit campaigns and organisational capacity building.

Resource Implication(s)

No resource implications at this stage.

Legal & Risk Implications

CARF is monitored in line with the Council's Monitoring & Evaluation Framework therefore legal and risk implications are minimal.

Impact Assessment

An EqIA has not been completed and is not necessary as this report does not propose any change or revision to existing policies and practices.

Consultation

No formal consultation was carried out or is required, however the report has been developed alongside CARF's Chief Executive Officer David Redpath, who will attend Committee with CARF's Business Development Manager Sarah Somerville.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 CARF is a voluntary organisation with charitable status providing advice and support across a wide spectrum of advice areas including welfare benefits, money advice and tribunal representation, amongst many others.
- 1.2 2023/24 represented CARF's final year of a three-year SLA (Service Level Agreement). A three-year evaluation of the SLA conducted by Council officers found that the organisation had delivered well against its objectives.
- 1.3 CARF's Annual Report for 2023/24 is available [here](#).
- 1.4 CARF was awarded £1,955,191 core grant support in 2023/24.

2.0 CARF demand and capacity

- 2.1 Demand for CARF services continues to be driven by various external factors including, but not limited to, the well-documented cost of living crisis. The organisation dealt with over 41,000 issues, almost 12,000 calls and just under 23,000 active clients during the 2023/24 year. Their work contributed to a client financial gain of over £10m for the year.
- 2.2 CARF regularly assesses its ability to meet existing demand and data continues to show that for 2023/24, 33.5% of calls made to CARF were not fulfilled.
- 2.3 In response to this ongoing demand-capacity deficit, CARF has been reutilising resource to increase telephony capacity whilst balancing this against the need for face-to-face appointments and increasing its community-based presence.
- 2.4 In January 2024, CARF repurposed part of the Money Advice Team to become Generalist Advisers, thereby increasing resource on its telephone lines. CARF has more recently diverted core funding to create another Generalist Adviser post.
- 2.5 Following changes in national project funding, CARF created new roles known as Frontline Relief Advisers. This role is multi-disciplinary and has the ability to undertake face-to-face advice, telephony advice, cover representation work as well as provide community-based advice in venues across Fife.
- 2.6 CARF has been hampered by significant absence with 15.5 days lost per employee. There has been significant long-term absence. Despite the obvious difficulty high absence can cause, the organisation has taken the opportunity to redistribute workloads and adapt its internal processes. The changes to working practices has resulted in improved client experience and an increase in resource available to undertake certain types of work.
- 2.7 As reported last year, CARF identified three main strands aimed at further tackling the demand-capacity gap. These continue to be:
 - increasing benefit take-up rates
 - increasing access to basic income maximisation across Fife
 - utilising Artificial Intelligence.

3.0 Benefit Take-up

- 3.1 In 2022, CARF employed a Benefit Take-up and Campaign Lead to develop and co-ordinate a rolling programme aimed to increase benefit uptake across a range of benefits. This unique post has successfully formed an active Benefit Maximisation Subgroup, reporting to the Tackling Poverty and Preventing Crisis Board, incorporating a range of partners from across the Third Sector, various council services and other agencies including DWP, NHS Fife and SSSA.
- 3.2 An initial Pension Credit Campaign took place between during November 2022 with the impact being assessed during 2023. The campaign saw an additional 867 new households in Fife receive the benefit. As we continue to assess the overall impact of the campaigns, we know 184 households (included within the 867 reported above) have increased their income by £860,870 this year.
- 3.3 Consequential financial gains as a result of the Pension Credit campaigns are approximately £470k, primarily due to applications for Attendance Allowance, entitlement to Council Tax Reduction, Housing Benefit and free TV licences.
- 3.4 The first Tax Free Childcare campaign achieved 440 new accounts that were opened and being used, saving each family 20% of their total childcare costs each month.
- 3.5 Phase 2 of this campaign took place during April 2023 and achieved 525 new accounts being opened and used. That is 655 more children than the previous year.
- 3.6 Phase 3 was launched in March 2024, and although the full data is not available yet, indications already show a further 360 families (incorporating 485 children) have opened and used a Tax Free Childcare account during the campaign period.
- 3.7 Unpaid Carers campaign: 578 households benefitted from the campaign, 37 of which were low income and had received proactive contact as part of campaign activity. By February 2024, there was a 6.4% increase in the number of people claiming and receiving payment of Carers Allowance compared to February 2023.
- 3.8 DWP statistics show the average weekly amount awarded in Carers Allowance is £76.64, therefore, through extrapolation, this equates to an annual client financial gain of £2,140,095.30. It is not possible to evidence the additional financial gain secured from carer's premiums or other benefit entitlement linked to the award of Carers Allowance for this group or for those with underlying entitlement.
- 3.9 Further campaign activity includes various health related benefits, Young Carers Grant, Job Start Payments, benefits relating to school age children, 5 family payments, Best Start foods extended criteria and Funeral Support Payment. These have been carefully planned to coincide with relevant times in the year and the full impact of each is evaluated when official statistics become available. Most data that is required to evidence impact is scheduled for release in November/December 2024.
- 3.10 It should be noted that the above financial gains are **not** included in CARF's overall financial gain figure of £10.2m

4.0 Enablement and Upskilling

- 4.0 During the year 2023/24, CARF has continued to supplement the benefit uptake work with an enablement programme whereby CARF's Income Maximisation Capacity Building Co-ordinator identifies and engages with a variety of services and agencies to enable them to undertake basic, first stage income maximisation advice (level 1 of the Fife Advice Framework), primarily through the Fife Benefits Checker.
- 4.1 Since the establishment of the Benefit Uptake post, 59 agencies and almost 600 individuals have been trained in the use of the Online Benefit Calculator.
- 4.2 A wide range of community organisations including Andy's Mans Club, Glenrothes Strollers Football Club, Knights Templar Cowdenbeath, Fife Carers Centre and YMCA have taken part in capacity building training.
- 4.3 A recent case study indicated a client engaging with Fife Young Carers received over £8k extra per annum following the income maximisation training taking place. A case study from Fife Shopping and Support Services reported a service user was awarded over £4.5k in previously unclaimed benefits.
- 4.4 An exercise to better understand the impact and efficacy of the capacity building work being carried out is to be completed over the next 6 months. This exercise will also evaluate the role in line with the next phase of No Wrong Door, where an increased number of frontline workers will be able to give benefits advice, to mitigate against and prevent crisis situations developing.
- 4.5 From October 2023, CARF started to deliver welfare benefits advice alongside existing Fife Council Welfare Support Assistants (WSAs), to provide support where complex issues are identified and to further strengthen the wider welfare support within job clubs across Fife. This work has extended across all 7 Local Authority areas and timetables for all CARF activity is included in Appendix 1 of this report.
- 4.6 An early survey of clients asked whether the provision of the service enabled them to gain easier access to welfare benefit advice; 100% of respondents replied yes.
- 4.7 This provision will influence the ongoing development of the Advice Framework.
- 4.8 There may be value in further exploring the relationship between WSAs and CARF staff in line with emerging models of work through No Wrong Door.

5.0 Use of Artificial Intelligence

- 5.1 As reported to last year's committee, CARF was chosen as a test site for an AI pilot relating to online transcription. This would mean that interviews would be transcribed, sorted and auto-populate CARF's case recording system meaning a reduction in administration time.
- 5.2 CARF worked alongside Citizens Advice Scotland and developers and phased in testing of the AI system across all areas of the business in October 2023, following a smaller scale rollout to CARF's frontline services from May 2023.

- 5.3 As the pilot progressed, the expected improvements were slower than anticipated with adviser time continuing to be impacted with revisions to transcripts necessary.
- 5.4 In August 2024, with the expected reduction in adviser downtime failing to materialise as was anticipated, CARF, CAS and the developers have now significantly scaled back the project to enable a new system to be tested.
- 5.5 A debrief is taking place across all parties to establish learning points from the pilot in order to better inform future AI exercises.
- 5.6 CARF continue to believe that AI is likely to play an important role in the future provision of advice. The pilot undertaken showed the difficulties with AI and its ability to be applied in a complex advice environment although the learnings are likely to positively contribute to any future iteration of any such project. The smaller scale project is underway now with a new AI platform and time will tell whether this has an improved impact.

6.0 Summary

- 6.1 As reported to Committee last year, CARF's change in strategy to incorporate a more preventative approach is starting to embed and it is hoped that the emerging No Wrong Door work within Fife Council will complement CARF's future direction.
- 6.2 Whilst the organisation is continuing to deliver high quality advice (as evidenced through CAS audits) and a high quality volunteer experience (evidenced through its Investing in Volunteers award), the organisation still has a demand-capacity deficit.
- 6.3 The organisation has already taken steps to redeploy resources as appropriate to reduce the deficit and will continue to monitor further areas for improvement and change to improve efficiency and capacity.
- 6.4 Despite the AI pilot not achieving the desired results, CARF is continuing to explore the potential use of AI in its service delivery in order to improve efficiency.

List of Appendices

1. CARF activities and timetables
2. [CARF Annual Report 2023/24](#)

Report Contact

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Appendix 1

CARF– Activities by location as at October 2024

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Dunfermline Office Dunfermline Community Support Hub, Kingsgate Shopping Centre, KY12 7QU APPOINTMENTS AVAILABLE	Face to face appointments (all day)	Triage line (all day) Callbacks (AM)	Face to face appointments (AM) Triage line (PM)		
Cowdenbeath Office 322 High Street, Cowdenbeath KY4 9NT APPOINTMENTS AVAILABLE	Triage line (all day). Callbacks (AM)			Callbacks (all day) Face to face appointments (AM) Triage line (AM)	Face to face appointments (AM)
Glenrothes Office Units 7-8, Craig Mitchell House, Glenrothes KY7 5QF APPOINTMENTS AVAILABLE		Triage line (AM) Face To face appointments (all day) Callbacks (PM)		Triage line (AM) Face to face appointments (AM)	Triage line (AM) Face to face appointments (AM)
Kirkcaldy Office New Volunteer House, 16 East Fergus Place, Kirkcaldy KY1 1XT APPOINTMENTS AVAILABLE	Face to face appointments (AM)	Triage Training (AM)	Face to face appointments (AM)	Callbacks (AM)	Face to face appointments (all day) Triage line (AM) Callbacks (PM)
Cupar Office County Buildings, St Catherine Street, Cupar, KY15 4TA APPOINTMENTS AVAILABLE		Face to face appointments (AM)	Face to face appointments (AM) Triage line (all day)		Triage line (all day) Callbacks (all day)
Leven Greig Institute, Forth Street, Leven, Fife KY8 4PF APPOINTMENTS AVAILABLE	Triage line (all day) Callbacks (all day)	Callbacks (all day) Face to face appointments (AM) Triage Line (PM)		Face to face appointments (AM) Callbacks (all day) Triage line (PM)	

Community Outreach venues:

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1000-1230 New Volunteer House, Kirkcaldy, KY1 1XT Week One		1100-1300 Broomhead Flats Hub Dunfermline Week Two	1000-1200 Valleyfield Community Centre High Valleyfield Week Two	1400-1600 The Hive 10 Whytescauseway Kirkcaldy KY1 1XF
1200-1330 Maxwell Centre 70 Stenhouse Street Cowndebeth KY4 9DD Week Two	1100-1300 Oor Wee Café Kelty Community Centre Main Street Kelty KY4 0AQ Week One	1400-1600 The Hive 10 Whytescauseway Kirkcaldy KY1 1XF Week One		
1400-1600 Buckhaven Community Centre Kinnear Street Buckhaven KY78 1BH Week One	1300-1500 Inverkeithing Community Centre Queen Street Inverkeithing Week One		1400-1600 St Andrews Job Club Abbey Walk St Andrews KY16 9LB Week One	1200-1500 Auchmuty Job Club 81 Alexander Road Glenrothes KY7 4EF

Proposed Well Clinics:

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
<p>1000-1200</p> <p>Rosyth Well EATS Rosyth 115 Queensferry Road KY11 2PS</p>	<p>1000-1200</p> <p>St Andrews Well NEF Community Hub St David's Centre 47 Albany Park KY16 8BP</p>	<p>1030-1230</p> <p>Leven Well Leven Library 16 Durie Street KY8 4HE</p>	<p>1000-1200</p> <p>Ballingry Well Benarty Centre 82 Flockhouse Avenue KY5 8JH</p>
<p>1000-1200</p> <p>Queen Margaret Well Whitefield Road KY12 0SU</p>	<p>1230-1430</p> <p>Glenrothes Well Lukes Larder Ninian Quadrant KY7 4BL</p>		<p>1000-1200</p> <p>Kirkcaldy Well St Bryce Kirk KY1 1ET</p>

The above tables are subject to change and accurate as of 24th September 2024.

General Advice, Debt Advice, Macmillan and Welfare Benefits phone lines are open from 10am to 3pm Monday to Friday.

Client call backs take place between 9-5pm Monday to Friday

www.CABFife.org.uk is available 24 hours per day, 365 days per year, including an advice database for assistance out with these hours. In addition, a Client Self Service Portal for debt advice is available 24/7 so clients can request debt appointment.

14th November 2024

Agenda Item No. 7

2023-24 Chief Social Work Officers (CSWO) Report

Report by: James Ross, Head of Children & Families and Criminal Justice Services

Wards Affected: All Wards

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to share with members the CSWO report covering the period 2023-24.

Recommendation

Members are asked to consider the Chief Social Work Officer (CSWO) report.

Resource Implications

There are no specific resource implications.

Legal & Risk Implications

There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

Impact Assessment

An equality (EqIA) Impact Assessment has not been completed for this report and is not necessary as no change or revision to existing policies or practices is proposed.

Consultation

None.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise members of activity across Social Work services during 2023-24, as well as outline the associated challenges within the context of the current climate within public services. This reporting year has presented both ongoing opportunities and ongoing challenge.
- 1.2 The CSWO should assist local authorities and their partners in understanding the complexities and cross-cutting nature of social work service delivery - including particular issues such as corporate parenting, child and adult protection and the management of high-risk offenders. The CSWO also has a contribution to make in supporting overall performance improvement and management of corporate risk across the local authority.
- 1.3 Following presentation at Committee this report and the associated relevant material for inclusion will be posted on the Council website and will be shared with the Chief Social Work Advisor to the Scottish Government.

2.0 CSWO Report

- 2.1 The CSWO covers the following aspects: -
 - Governance & Accountability
 - Service Quality & Performance
 - Children and Families
 - Adult and Older Adult Social Work and Social Care
 - Justice Services
 - Quality Assurance & development
 - Training, Learning & development
 - Challenges & improvements
- 2.2 Further information about Fife Council Social Work Services is available on our websites [Home | Fife Council](#) and [HSCP Homepage | Fife HSCP](#)

3.0 Conclusion

- 3.1 Across all of Fife Council Social Work, there have been many positive and encouraging developments during the last year and these have included: a focus on developing trauma informed service delivery and listening to the voices of those with lived experience

- 3.2 A key emphasis in the delivery of **Social Work Services** going forward into 2024/25 remains in line with those identified last year as we continue to recover from the impact of the coronavirus pandemic and what is meant by a new normal - this will remain a significant piece of work over the few next years, which will require flexibility and close collaboration with our partners to address:
- Increased complexity in need and demand for specialist services
 - Overall increase in psychological and social support needs across all areas of society impacted by loneliness, wellbeing, and mental health as well as physical health.
 - The very real impact of poverty and increasing poverty in our communities
- 3.3 **Children and Families Services**, we will continue to manage our integration into a Communities Directorate maximising the opportunities created by this and developing a No Wrong Door approach to improve support at the earliest point for families.
- 3.4 **Justice Services** our priorities include:
- In the year ahead, we intend to implement our 3-year Outcome Improvement Plan, which will act as a 'roadmap' for overall Service improvement.
 - We will maximise the use of diversion as an early intervention strategy, while promoting its use as an appropriate response to offending behaviour.
 - There will be an increased focus on the availability of robust, communitybased interventions to ensure people are supported in the most appropriate and effective setting.
 - We will ensure that those given community sentences are supervised and supported through the provision of robust, high quality, trauma informed services and programmes.
 - There will be a focus on improved partnership working to strengthen the leadership, engagement and impact of local and community justice partners, both in respect of raising awareness of community justice and improving outcomes.
 - We will increase opportunities for Service User Involvement in the design, delivery and development of our Services. We intend to do this by creating a specific post which will be aligned to this work, and by utilising evidence, research and best practice in this area.
- 3.5 **Adult and older people social work and social care services** our priorities include:
- Workforce Resilience: Exploring further how we can support our workforce to show the value we place in their contribution to services and our community, embedding a supervision framework, recognising and promoting best practices, and creating spaces for colleagues to come together and reflect.
 - Transitions: Strengthening how we support people entering our services using a "team around the person" approach, GIRFE principles, and multi-agency meetings to enhance person centred support.
 - Professional Assurance Framework: Embedding tools and processes to gather meaningful data for improvement, with a focus on service user, carer, and workforce feedback through surveys and supervision.

- **Prevention & Early Intervention:** Enhancing collaboration with community-led services and ensuring staff confidence in having transparent, open conversations about meeting needs, and our eligibility criteria. 100 35
- **Crisis Response and Mental Health:** Taking action to ensure people requiring intervention through AWI are regularly reviewed and that those needing emergency detention under the MH Act have an MHO involved in their detention.
- **Carer Support:** Including quality assurance in our collection of the number of carer support plans offered so we know the impact of our interventions on the lives of carers.

Report Contacts

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Chief Social Work Officer Report

2023 to 2024



Foreword

The requirement for each Council to have a Chief Social Work Officer (CSWO) was initially set out in the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968 and further supported by Section 45 of the Local Government etc (Scotland) Act 1994. The role of the CSWO is to provide professional governance, leadership, and accountability for the delivery of social work services, not only those provided directly by the Council or from within the integrated Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP), but also those commissioned or purchased from the voluntary and private sector. The CSWO should assist local authorities and their partners in understanding the complexities and cross-cutting nature of social work service delivery - including particular issues such as corporate parenting, child and adult protection and the management of high-risk offenders. There is also an obligation to ensure partnership understanding of the key role social work plays in contributing to the achievement of a wide range of national and local outcomes, for example the UNCRC.

The CSWO also has a contribution to make in supporting overall performance improvement and management of corporate risk across the local authority. Social work services are delivered within a framework of statutory duties and powers and are required to meet national standards and provide best value. The purpose of this report is to provide information on the statutory work undertaken on the Council's behalf during the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 as well as outline the associated challenges within the context of the current climate within public services. This reporting year has presented both ongoing opportunities and ongoing challenge.

Over this last year we have continued to strengthen the established partnerships in Fife and pursue opportunities to develop our respective and collective contributions to effecting positive change within a reform agenda. Keeping connected was a key feature of the 'pandemic' and in many ways this has become more pronounced as we begin to better understand the longer-term impact on individuals and communities, exacerbated by the changing economic climate and the increasing visibility of the impact of poverty. Despite increasing challenges, the context, and the significant uncertainty facing the sector, our social work and social care workforce, our carers and other partners across all services have remained committed to providing services that empower, support and protect local people. As ever, my appreciation goes to everyone who works in social work and social care, and those who otherwise support this important work, for all that they have done in the last year for children, young people, adults, and families.

I would like to acknowledge all the colleagues who have supported the production of this report and the associated relevant material for inclusion.

This report will be posted on the Council website and will be shared with the Chief Social Work Advisor to the Scottish Government.

Introduction and Background

In Fife, the Chief Social Work Officer (CSWO) is responsible for monitoring Social Work activity across the Council and within the Fife Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) to ensure that agreed targets are being met and that professional standards are maintained. As a Head of Service, the CSWO has direct operational responsibility for the management of the Children and Families and Justice Social Work Services, assuring quality of practice and adherence to national legislative and policy obligations. The role also has oversight of the practice and standards involved in the delivery of social work within Adult and Older People's Services.

The CSWO has a role to play in specific advisory bodies such as the Chief Officer Public Safety Group and in advising the Council in relation to matters affecting social work services arising from community planning and other partnership bodies. The CSWO also has access as required to the Council's Chief Executive and elected members.

The wide reach of the role of the CSWO across the entirety of the profession is nationally recognised as comprehensive and vital to the safe delivery of the social work and social care functions carried out on behalf of the local authority and across the Health and Social Care Partnership. To support the CSWO in Fife a Principal Social Work Officer (PSWO) was recruited in 2023 within the HSCP who holds delegated accountability for CSWO functions within Adult, Older Adult and social care services. The PSWO directly reports to the Director of Health and Social Care but critically provides clear accountability to the CSWO of the social work and social care functions carried out by the workforce in the Health and Social Care Partnership, identifying areas of good practice and any developing areas of concern.

Further information about Fife Council Social Work Services is available on our websites: www.fife.gov.uk and www.fifehealthandsocialcare.org.

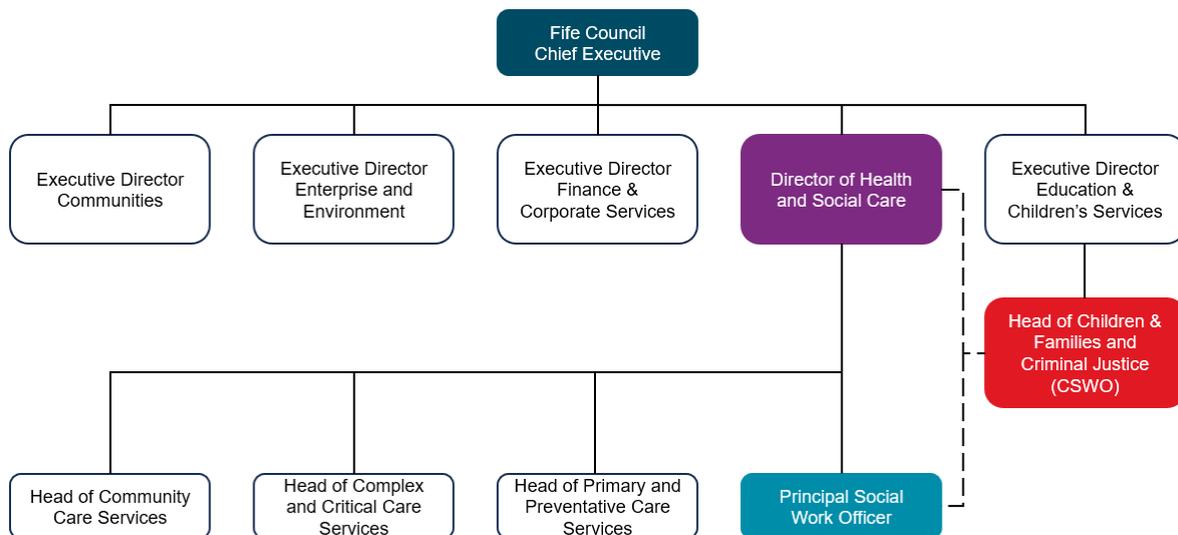
Governance and Accountability

Fife Council Political Structure

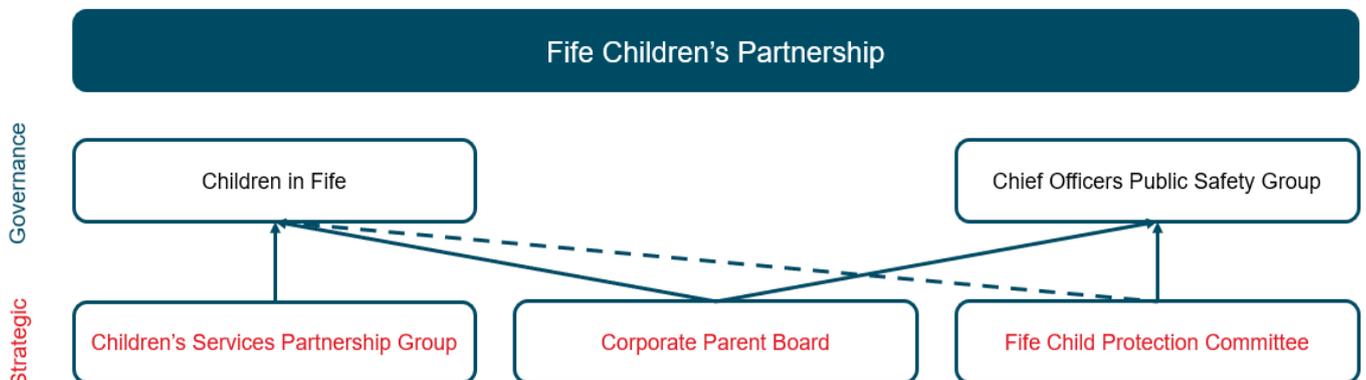
There are 22 electoral wards in Fife and each ward has three or four councillors who have been elected by the people of that ward to represent them. In total, there are 75 councillors. They are responsible for setting policy for the Council and may sit on various committees where they can vote on a range of matters from local planning to decisions on welfare or education.

Breakdown by political groups	
Scottish National Party	34
Scottish Labour Party	19
Scottish Conservative and Unionist Party	8
Scottish Liberal Democrat Party	13
Independent	1
Total	75

Fife Council Strategic Governance and Accountability



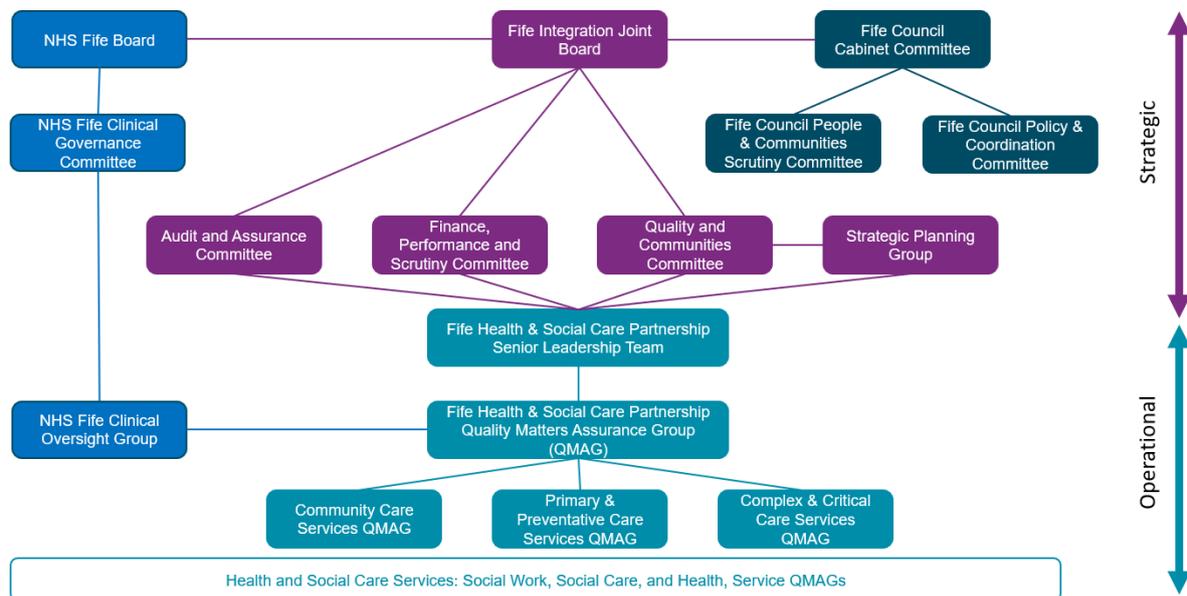
In November 2023 it was agreed that the Children and Family and Justice Social Work Service would move to the Communities Directorate and the 2024 – 2025 CSWO report will contain that diagram.



The partnership between services for Children in Fife is well established at both a strategic level and across local areas. The responsibility for the Children's Services Plan (2023-2024) is held by the Fife Partnership, represented by the Children in Fife Group. This partnership binds Fife Council, the voluntary sector, Police Scotland, Scottish Children's Reporter Administration, NHS Fife, and the Health and Social Care Partnership in common purpose. The Children in Fife Group reports to the Fife Partnership. There are four main areas of improvement:

- Health & Wellbeing
- Supporting Families
- Engagement of our Children, Young People and Families
- Equity and Equality

Fife Council Social Work Governance Arrangements: Health and Social Care



In accordance with the Public Bodies (Joint Working) Scotland Act 2014 and the agreed Scheme of Delegation, Fife’s Adult and Older Adult Social Work Services, along with the provision of social care through Care at Home, Care Homes, and Adult Residential and Community Services, are delegated to Fife Health and Social Care Partnership. The above diagram reflects the governance arrangements for Fife Council functions and details how the Chief Social Work Officer aligns to this to enable the role to continue to retain oversight and accountability in the social work and social care practices within the H&SC partnership.

Service Quality and Performance

Children and Families

The following pages provide an overview of the primary functions of the Children and Families service delivery in Fife. Key challenges in service delivery across all teams in Fife has been the increasing volume and complexity of referrals into social work – likely impacted by local, national and global poverty related challenges as well as ongoing understanding of the impact of Covid on children and their families. In addition to this there are concerning trends relating to recruitment of qualified social workers, retention, and significant budget challenges. Resources remain scarce with national shortages of placements for children requiring alternative care. Staff in Fife remain hugely committed to the Promise and value-based policies, but the number of new policies and changing legislation have been a challenge on our teams. While commitment to core social work values and legislative duties are central to all the work undertaken across Fife, creativity and flexibility are required to meet the needs presented when engaging with individuals and their families.

Belonging to Fife

The Belonging to Fife strategy continues to provide the vision, governance, and direction for our work with children and their families. The strategy is underpinned by the following principles:

- Reflecting the principles of GIRFEC and The Promise – what will it take, from the whole of the team around the child, to keep this child safely at home, additional supports, scaffolding, family strengths etc.
- Keeping the needs of children at the centre of all planning.
- Whole partnership understanding that children have a right to live within their own communities, with their siblings and where possible within their own family.
- Outcomes Focused/Strength based planning reflecting the strengths and capacities of the young person and their family while recognising and managing any risk.
- A whole system approach is required as Keeping The Promise necessitates a commitment from all services: Education, Health, Police Scotland and third sector providers.

The strategy effectively directs all the practice within the Children and Family Social Work service and 2023 – 2024 has seen a further embedding of a strong focus on earlier and more effective intervention utilising whole family strengths and whole family support through a developing ‘no wrong door’ approach.

Early Intervention

The Children and Families Contact Centre operates as the “front door” for the service and continues to manage all initial referrals from partners and families. The Multi-Agency Improvement Team (MAIT) using Whole Family Wellbeing Funding, supported earlier and more effective screening of referrals received from Health and Education colleagues. This was captured in partnership work supporting a refresh of GIRFEC allowed for agreement of a new process for referring into the social work service by confirming the need for consistency in referral information, assessment and the use of chronologies across the partnership. This new development is part of a range of initiatives to support transformational change in respect to systems, processes and practice. The focus on earlier intervention within communities was piloted through a ‘Community Social Work’ approach in Kirkcaldy and Cowdenbeath and the learning from this work is contributing to wider whole system change, as part of Fife Council reform, in respect of a No Wrong Door approach to supporting people and their families with a focus on People and Place.

Family Support Service

Open Involvements	FSS Central	FSS East	FSS West	Total
April 2021	153	117	154	424
April 2022	186	115	193	494
April 2023	154	114	172	440
April 2024	136	97	162	395

The Scottish Government's focus on Whole Family Support has provided the opportunity to further develop and enhance family support services, considering areas of improvement through self-assessment using the "How Good is Our Family Support" Framework. In Fife we have enhanced our offer to further develop and enhance family support services, with the intent to shift resources to support prevention and earlier intervention.

The service has benefited from opportunities to test out different ways of working and offering intervention at an earlier stage: senior practitioners based in schools, re-introducing parenting programmes, clear focus on co-production as well as developing capacity to consider data more efficiently to inform improvement activity.

In terms of the work of the family support service we identified that:

- Education is the highest referring agency followed by Health and Social Work which is broadly the same as the previous year.
- The highest number of referrals relate to primary aged children which is the same as previous year.
- Emotional wellbeing and behaviour are the main areas indicating an improvement in outcomes delivered by a whole family strength-based approach. Parenting skills and family relationships are in the main the key areas for support in terms of referrals to the service.
- Tools used to evaluate the impact of the service for example the outcome star are more embedded but timescales for reviewing progress is an area for improvement.
- Feedback on communication with the service and referral processes was **Very Good or Good** and was the case for the previous year of reporting. However further effort will be required across services to increase the number of respondents to surveys supporting continuous improvement.
- The workforce is equipped to deliver flexible and adaptable services which is making a difference to children, young people, and families.

Whole Family Wellbeing

The partnership as a whole has continued to benefit from additional funds from the Scottish Government and the social work service has particularly found value from a focus on the workforce through multi -agency practice development sessions; early intervention in Schools involving Social Work Senior Practitioners; additional post within our Emergency Support Team; creation of specialist home maker posts, embedding of a range of evidence based group work, for example, Incredible Years and Mellow programmes; and further development of commissioned services evidencing impact though an earlier intervention approach to supporting families.

Children and Families Area Teams

	Total Open Involvements	S. 22 (vol)	Number of LAC	CPR	Pending Cases: Initial Assessment	Total
31/03/2021	3093	2096	847	150	278	3371
31/03/2022	3172	2268	778	126	477	3649
31/03/2023	3004	2172	742	90	512	3516
31/03/2024	3102	2321	742	139	448	3550

During the reporting period, we have recorded an ongoing stabilisation in the number of open cases within our Area Teams since the impact of Covid noted in the 2020 data. The last year has evidenced an ongoing commitment and ability to respond to the Setting the Bar report and average caseloads within our 13 front line teams have been significantly reduced and this number sustained at between 12 and 17 children per worker. The development of two permanence teams has allowed staff to focus on both earlier and crisis intervention for children at the edge of care.

Relationship based, trauma-informed practice is central to how we engage with children and their families, and the partnership appointment of a Promise Lead has allowed these principles to be better shared and developed across the partnership. In addition to our Area Teams, we have several Fife-Wide and specialist Teams, and these include:

- Children affected by Disability Team
- Child Protection Team
- Close Support Team
- Emergency Support Team
- Multi-systemic Therapy Team
- 2 x Permanence Teams
- Young People's Team
- Reviewing Service
- Corporate Parenting/Quality Assurance Team
- Residential Services
- 2 x Fostering/adoption Teams
- Kinship Team
- 3 family Support Teams

Child Protection

	CPR
31/03/2021	150
31/03/2022	126
31/03/2023	90
31/03/2024	139

The number of children and young people subject to child protection registration in Fife has increased in the last year and evaluation of this indicated that there was a whole system 'reset' after Covid which took time to become apparent. The impact of the New National Child Protection Guidance continues to be evaluated and it may be that further work around new processes (in Fife) for IRD is also impacting overall numbers of children registered.

The Child Protection team have completed SCIM training during the reporting period and data shared mid 2023 stated that all child interviews now follow this new methodology. Reports considering the quality of SCIM interviews, the difference between this methodology and JII and the impact on children have been shared within the Social Work Service and with the Child Protection Committee ensuring we are keeping children and their needs at the centre of our improvement activity.

The council was accepted as a pathfinder for Bairns Hoose and work continues across the partnership to ensure that together we continue to reflect on our intervention and keep the needs and risks to children at the centre of planning.

Looked After Children

	residential	CSO at home	Foster Care	Kinship
31/03/2021	63	143	388	724
31/03/2022	38	148	352	746
31/03/2023	49	160	340	730
31/03/2024	63	157	306	746

As of March 31st, 2024, there were 742 looked after children in Fife. The overall size of our Looked After population has remained at or below the Scottish average. The graph above provides a breakdown of the placement type and balance of care. Many of our children in kinship placements are no longer looked after. The service is rightly proud of being able to shift the balance of care - reduce residential and foster care and increase Kinship care - and maintain this for the last 5 years. Our self-evaluation activity evidences that this reflects a change in culture across the service, the impact of a highly motivated and well-resourced Kinship Service and a commitment to the Belonging to Fife Strategy and the Promise.

Residential Care

The number of children and young people in high-cost residential placements (HCRP) have increased during the reporting period. Analysis indicates that this reflects a number of areas of change. Firstly, an internal children's house was closed for refurbishment reducing internal placement numbers, secondly the service responded to Care Inspectorate concerns relating to matching processes resulting in a further reduction in the use of internal resources whilst effective improvement work was undertaken and thirdly there was a re-evaluation of the use of internal resources to respond to identified changing need, for example the need to be able to provide a singleton placement.

We are aware that 2024-2025 will be a year of additional challenge as nationally there is a recognition that there are fewer available placements and there is an impact on capacity relating both to cross border placements and our commitment to supporting unaccompanied children and young people (UASC). Added into this will be the potential impact of the Care and Justice Bill and changes to the age of 'children' who may need to access secure care.

All of our children's homes have improvement planning at the centre of their team plans and opportunities for specialist training has been enhanced over the last year alongside additional staffing being agreed and additional senior practitioners in post to support reflective and child centred practice.

Fostering

Despite our ongoing strenuous efforts to recruit, we have seen an overall decline in our number of foster carers. Nevertheless, our data does evidence a declining trend in the use of foster care which can be explained by the increasing use of kinship care but also by effective family strength-based intervention and flexible and immediate support to families at the time of the crisis.

Our scope to further reduce the number of purchased fostering placements is limited by the reality that approximately 89% of those placements are permanent care arrangements for children and young people. There has been a reduction from our 2021 data which reflects, children 'aging out' of the system but also reflects some placement breakdowns and changing birth family circumstances which have supported positive rehabilitation.

The Fostering Team continues to be ambitious and ensure that carers and supervising social workers are trauma informed and able to support and sustain foster care placements. Fife is unique in that it has a dedicated therapeutic service (Springfield) for looked after children providing direct support and assistance to foster carers, the child and the professional network. This service offers expertise from social work practitioners, psychotherapy, clinical psychology and play therapy. The reach of this service has recently extended to supporting kinship families and family relationships.

Kinship Care

The drive to increase the number of kinship carers has been central to our Belonging to Fife strategy and reflects the national commitment to valuing family-based care which is supported both by policy and legislation.

The increase in kinship care arrangements coupled with legislative and financial changes has led to a significant reduction in unpaid kinship care arrangements and a reduction in the use of family support arrangements.

Fife were successful in a funding bid from CORRA which was centred on understanding 'the system' and partners attitudes to Kinship Care and everyone's contribution to improving outcomes for children and young people in Kinship Care arrangements. Findings from an independent review of Kinship Care in 2022-2023

suggested a number of partnership improvements which are being taken forward across the partnership, led and reviewed by the multi-agency Kinship Steering Group.

Home-Based Compulsory Supervision Orders (CSOs)

Our Belonging to Fife strategy promotes the use of home-based CSOs. However, likely as a consequence of our Child Wellbeing Pathway and the use of a Child’s Plan, we have not seen an increase in the number of children ‘looked after’ at home. It is difficult to benchmark this data against other local authorities due to the specific local nature of the Child Wellbeing Pathway in Fife.

We continue to monitor our rates of referral to the Children’s Reporter, ensuring that our Social Workers are referring in a timely manner when compulsory measures of care need to be considered. However, this needs to be carefully balanced through professional assessment and judgement in line with the minimum intervention principle.

Fife’s Children’s Hearing Improvement Partnership, CHIP, continues to consider referral rates from all services and offers challenge to partners relating to early and effective intervention and the appropriate use of legislative powers.

Aftercare

	Supported Lodgings Carers	Supported Lodgings Placements	Continuing Care Placements	Supported Lodgings UASC	House Project
March 2021	55	43	59	6	8
March 2022	55	51	56	10	10
March 2023	53	53	48	17	8
March 2024	57	44	54	19	7

There has been an ongoing increase in the number of carers recruited to offer a supported lodgings provision and staff in this part of the service continue to be highly active in recruiting more carers. The Government’s ambition to support UASC is having a significant impact on placement availability as these vulnerable and displaced young people become looked after by supported lodgings carers to ensure they have a family and community care setting personalised to meet their needs.

However, the impact on capacity affects both children moving on from care in Fife and children coming into care in Fife as additional demand is exceeding placement availability.

In common with colleagues across Scotland, the social work service works hard to provide care and homes for UASC. The challenges of this work are well known but in the last year Fife has been able to maintain a commitment to home these displaced and vulnerable young people largely within supported lodgings care although we had

a number, we were able to secure within Kinship arrangements and 2 younger children in fostering arrangements. The service successfully recruited 2 additional workers based in the Young People's Team whose work will primarily be to support this cohort of young people, building expertise in relation to their specific needs.

The service has benefited from the recruitment of a senior mental health nurse who is also based in the Young People's Team which has allowed easier and more timely access to support for some of our young people whose mental health needs or experience of trauma requires support. This post is funded through our partners in Health and is a joint initiative from Adult Mental Health and CAMHs with the worker being supervised in a matrix manner with Social Work and health participation.

Fostering, Permanence, Kinship and Supported Lodgings Panel

A full-time Panel Chair was appointed in September 2021 and a second in January 2024. The Panel Chairs provides consistency across all four panels and have oversight on all matters relating to: recruitment, training and appraisal of panel members. In the last year, a total of 144 Panels were arranged, this included: 68 Fostering Panels; 31 Permanence Panels; 34 Kinship Panels and 11 Supported Lodgings Panels.

Strategic Commissioning

Fife families continue to benefit from a wide range of third sector provision both at an early intervention and intensive level from the numerous partners providing support across the council. As such, the Third sector remain key partners in terms of the delivery of family support and there has been a review of the strategic commissioning model to take account of changes in Directorate arrangements undertaken towards the end of the reporting period and currently embedding. The focus going forward will be to develop a more integrated community-based approach aligned to redesign activity across Children & Families and the wider Council. The main drivers for change relate to the need for services to be local, accessible, evidence based, coordinated and co-produced. A whole system approach to commissioning has been informed by whole family wellbeing and the How Good is Our Family Support framework, as well as consideration of national developments to ensure best practice underpins the current commissioning strategy in Fife.

Additional/Enhanced Resources and Improvement Work 2023/2024

- Partnership working with The House Project has provided supported tenancies for 8 young people in cohort 1, 10 YP in cohort 2 and 8 YP in cohort 3. There are 7 YP in cohort 4 currently awaiting a tenancy.
- Creation of additional social worker and social work assistant capacity to support children in crisis either in our residential homes or edge of care, through outreach support, enhanced close support and social workers within the residential estate.
- Review of the residential service to respond to identified need for a singleton house to support more vulnerable young people

- Change of use of residential homes to dynamically respond to changes in profile of need to ensure we are utilising our physical resources for their best purpose
- Creation of additional posts for the Emergency Support Team and Close Support Team through Whole Family Wellbeing fund to enhance capacity to creatively support children to remain at home or in their local community
- Positive evaluation of the impact of school social worker posts utilising an earlier intervention model and enhancing understanding within Education of the Social Work role
- Positive evaluation of the impact of new home maker posts in supporting young parents and consideration of expanding their offer through additional capacity
- Review of the Quality Assurance team to allow effective and timely evaluation and audit activity to support and improve practice
- Creation of a partnership post to lead both The Promise and Corporate Parenting, supported by additional social work funded posts, has allowed the service to dedicate resources to progressing and prioritising these strategic responsibilities
- Permanence Teams becoming established allowing a focus on improving support for children who will not return to family care
- Creation of a children affected by disability transitions worker post to improve family experience of transition between C&F service to adults
- Additional posts funded by partners to enhance the offer from the kinship team with a focus on supporting school attendance and promoting health and wellbeing
- Completion of consultation and evaluation of kinship care in Fife and families lived experience with an action plan developed and implemented 2023-2024
- Review and sharing of the positive impact of the additional CAMHs nursing post recruited for the Young People's team to specifically support care leavers access to this type of support for their emotional wellbeing
- Evaluation and learning from 'This is Us' groupwork with mothers who have had their children removed from their care, to support understanding of this trauma and enable learning from conversations around change

Adult and Older Adult Social Work and Social Care

Over the past year, the PSWO has been working with services to embed care governance across the existing Clinical and Care Governance process in the HSCP. This has culminated in the Social Work and Social Care Professional Assurance Framework, supporting services to develop quality assurance processes that enable them to evidence their practices in alignment with legislative requirements and supporting continuous improvement activities.

Throughout this report there are clear examples of effective collaboration and partnership working, creating positive outcomes for those who use our services. Some highlights include; streamlining hospital discharge processes; enhancing our approach to reablement; strengthening our approach to Early Intervention and prevention by supporting the development of the Wells, the initiation of the Social Work Compass

Team; Improving pathways for support for individuals leaving prison with health and care needs, and using SDS to facilitate creative and cost effective breaks.

Early Intervention

The Adult and Older People Social Work Contact Centre (SWCC) provides a single point of access for new Social Work Service inquiries from both service users and professionals. From April 2023-March 2024, **35,657** referrals were made to the Social Work Contact Centre, the vast majority relating to referrals for assessment of need with significant and increasing contacts relating to Adult Support & Protection (ASP).



The Contact Centre plays a key role in promoting early intervention and supporting independence through collaboration with The Well, which offers light-touch support and information to help people connect with local resources. The Wells are staffed by a range of Health & Social Care workers including Social Work staff. In 2023-24, The Well saw:

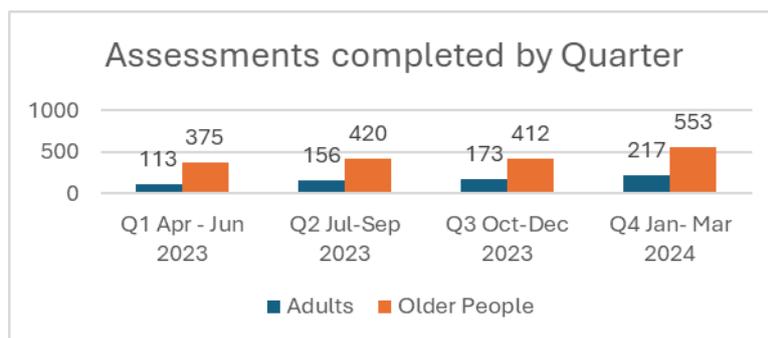
- **1,654 referrals** (a 38% increase from the previous year), mainly related to community support, mental health, and financial support.
- 2,037 Good Conversations (referrals/drop-ins), a 43% increase.
- 99% of referrals were contacted within 3 days.

Most referrals (67%) came from Social Work, with **950** from the Social Work Contact Centre (22% increase) and **157** from other social work teams. Over the next year the SWCC will be developing a bespoke audit tool and service user engagement approach to assist us in understanding the impact of our interventions at the front door to social work services.

Adult and Older Adult Social Work Locality Teams

Services are provided across twelve teams, six covering Older Adults (over 65) and six covering Adults (from 16 – 65). Each of the teams are led by a social work qualified Team Manager and consist of senior practitioners, social workers, and social work assistants. There are 3 social work qualified Service Managers that lead locality teams. The Principal Social Work Officer provides professional advice and guidance to the teams and professional supervision to all Service Managers.

Between 1st April 2023 and 31st March 2024, **659** Personal Outcomes Support Assessments (POSAs) were completed by the Adults Service and **1760** by the Older People Service (total 2419). The average caseload in Adult Social Work Teams ranges between 30-40 with Older People's Teams averaging 20-30 cases.



In 2023-24 the Adults Service supervised 176 Local Authority Welfare Guardianship orders and 537 private welfare guardianships. To ensure good practice is embedded the service has updated Fife Council Supervision of Proxy Guidance to reflect MWC’s best practice guidance and is developing a governance and oversight group to ensure effective and ongoing monitoring.

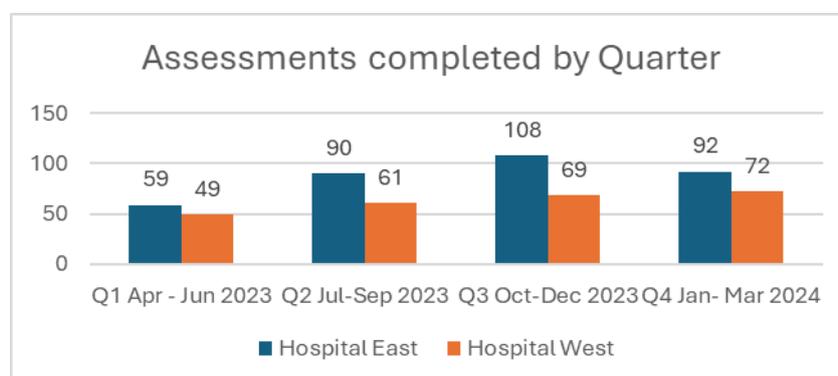
Feedback from service users on our use of “Just Checking” and “Near Me” to support increased independence has been positive.

Key challenges experienced by the service include managing transitions between services and securing appropriate resources for individuals with complex needs. An ongoing commitment to collaboration between Children and Families and Adult Services aims to address this through a "team around the person" approach, building on learning from the national GIRFE pathfinder work. Improving service user and carer feedback will be central to all practice developments and this is a priority for all services in the coming year.

Social Work Hospital Discharge Team

The Hospital Social Work Team has grown over the year and is responsible for facilitating safe and effective transitions from hospital, ensuring that individuals receive the necessary support to live independently.

The team have completed **600 assessments** over the reporting period, with an observed increase in complexity of need and requirement for nursing care.



The team utilise Assessment Beds within care homes as interim arrangements for individuals who require additional support to return home, or who may require a move

into a care home, from hospital. Fife have 100 assessment beds which are routinely full of individuals awaiting long term support assessments. The team have 2 Mental Health Officers and a solicitor in place to support situations involving individuals lacking capacity to consent to discharge plan discussions and this has enhanced the team's ability to expedite medical report requests, contributing to more efficient discharge planning. Hospital discharges are overseen by a multi professional group that meets weekly to oversee the timely approach to discharge. Going forward, the Hospital Team are developing an audit tool and performance indicators to monitor practices, such as service user and carer feedback, and adherence to legislative functions.

Mental Health Officer Team

The dedicated Mental Health Officer (MHO) Team take forward MHO functions in line with AWI and MH Acts. The demand for MHO services is significant and rising, with increasing requests for assessments and a notable rise in Emergency and Short-Term Detentions and out of hours detentions where MHOs are not present, all of which pose challenges to the service. Fife have experienced an increase in private AWI Guardianships, with the resulting increased requirement for MHO services placing demand on the team.

The MHO team are strengthening relationships with other social work teams, offering shadowing opportunities, and engagement with new staff to enhance understanding of MHO role and to encourage training.

Despite pressures, the MHO team demonstrates key strengths in performance and professionalism, consistently meeting statutory timescales and handling high demand with a skilled and dedicated workforce. The introduction of Social Work Assistants (SWAs) has enhanced the team's capacity by supporting practical tasks, enabling MHOs to focus on statutory duties and improving discharge planning. Strong partnerships with NHS Mental Health Services and increased collaboration with other teams have further strengthened service delivery and communication.

Compass Team

Compass is a holistic, intensive care management social work service for individuals affected by long-term alcohol and drug use. The service launched in September 2023 and has received **86** referrals, with most cases currently allocated and active. Despite full staffing, the service is at capacity with a waiting list. The team is co-located with the NHS Addictions Service, and works closely with the hospital liaison teams, third sector, housing and health colleagues. The focus on collaboration supports a "team around the person" approach which helps to deliver more personalised experiences and improve outcomes for people supported by the service.

The Compass Team are regular attenders at local support groups for people who use substances across Fife and have received multiple messages of positive feedback for adults with lived experience and their families over the past 11 months. Going forward, the team will incorporate critical information from substance use risk assessments, formulation, and information based on the SURE (Substance Use Recovery

Evaluation) structured assessment tool and develop a programme of audit activity to support quality assurance oversight.

Self Directed Support Team

The Self-Directed Support Team (SDS Team) have a critical role in ensuring that people experience high quality social care in line with the duties, principles and values of the SDS Act. They offer a creative Short Breaks Service to maximise use of budget to purchase respite and also serve as a support to locality teams for information and guidance. All social work assessments are carried forward in line with SDS statutory requirements and are quality assured through our Social Work Annual Audit.

In 2023-24, the Self-Directed Support team introduced prepaid cards for Option 1, reducing administrative burdens for service users and improving financial monitoring. The team offers effective induction and 1:1 support sessions for new staff, which have received positive feedback, and collaborate with organisations like SDS Options (Fife) and ENABLE to ensure clear and consistent access to independent information for service users. The team are also leading our drive in supporting people to access the Independent Living Fund (ILF) to maximise funding available to support independence.

Carers Support

Fife HSCP work in partnership with a wide range of third sector commissioned partners to identify and support carers in line with the Carers (Scotland) Act 2016. It is because of this wide range of accessible points for a carer that the HSCP is unable at present to report on the total number of carers supported or the number of Carers Support Plans completed. We are developing ways to collect this information across the wide range of third sector commissioned partners to better understand the impact and quality of our support to carers. The graph below shows the number of Adult Carer Support Plans completed within the HSCP reflecting an increase in Support Plans completed which we attribute to the introduction of 10 Social Work Assistants whose role it is to identify and reach out to unpaid carers.



Adult Support & Protection

Locality Social Work Services lead the coordination and response to all adult support and protection (ASP) activities. During 2023/24, ASP referrals in Fife rose by 57% (from 2,816 to 4,435). These referrals involved 3,371 adults.



Multiple factors could contribute to the increase in referrals, including economic challenges, the impact of COVID-19, social care sector issues, awareness campaigns, and improved identification of harm.

Partnership working under ASP remains a strength, with awareness raising activity, and shared learning from significant events. Fife took a multi-agency approach to enhancing our ability to consider system learning by commissioning training from SCiE for key partners in our ASPC. This work has resulted in improved mutual understanding of role and responsibility, shared decision-making platforms, and reflects the values of all partners in the ASP process.

Accommodation with Care & Housing Support Service

The Accommodation with Care and Housing Support Service provides support to **259** adults with learning disabilities, physical disabilities, and to adults with other support needs. All services are regulated and maintain quality assurance processes that reflect adherence to the Health and Social Care, and the My Health, My Care, My Home Standards, and contribute to National Wellbeing Outcomes. The service undertakes regular self-evaluation activity which includes feedback from people using services.

Shared Lives Fife team are effectively gathering feedback through surveys and a consultation group, leading to improvements like updates to the carer handbook and efforts to raise awareness of the service. The whole service actively supports recruitment, hosting apprenticeships, with three young people being offered permanent positions at the conclusion of their placements with the service this year.

Fife Community Support Service (Adult Resources Day Services)

The service aims to progress people's life skills, develop, and maintain friendships, enhance confidence and promote independence through the provision of a range of activities which promote physical and mental wellbeing, both within the wider community and from four hubs located in Kirkcaldy, Cowdenbeath, Leven and Cupar. In 2023-2024 the service supported **199** adults to access day activities.

The service promotes careers in care, providing opportunities to two school students to shadow social care workers through the Foundation Apprenticeship (FA) in Social Services and Health care scheme, and in hosting two four-week placements through the Princes Trust Scheme.

Care at Home

The Care at Home service supports individuals in the community to maintain their independence. The service consistently supports around **950** individuals across Fife with a staff team of approximately 800. The service works within a finite budget which requires a tight adherence to the critical eligibility criteria is applied to direct the resource available.

The service faces significant challenges, including increased demand, persistent sickness levels and staff retention issues, like other areas in the country. Developments are underway to consistently capture and systematically analyse feedback from service users to drive service improvements.

Reablement (START)

The Short-Term Assessment & Review Team (START) take forward a reablement approach to Care at Home support and during the reporting period they received **2655 referrals**. Referrals are primarily from hospital settings and instigated at discharge, however the ability for those in the community to be referred into START commenced in early 2024 which is a welcome addition to the support we can offer to people requiring care at home services. The reablement approach allowing the workforce to build people's independence to its maximum ability, giving satisfaction to the service user and the workforce as they see this ongoing progress.

Fife's Care Homes

Older People's Service provides **338** residences across eight residential facilities with 229 staff. These Care Homes offer residential, respite, and STAR (reablement) care service. Each care home is committed to continuous improvement, and all homes have improvement planning in place based on Care Inspectorate and rights based standards. The service is aligning their quality improvement practices with the Professional Assurance Framework and the care governance programme in place. The service demonstrates strong performance, with high levels of satisfaction from service users and families received, supported by effective feedback systems and oversight from a quality assurance team.

Future plans include leading the development of the care home replacement program, reviewing staffing structures to align skill levels with care needs, and enhancing the service training plan for social care staff. A newly appointed Business Change Manager will help develop a Quality Improvement and Involvement Plan, with regular reviews and stakeholder feedback driving continuous improvements.

Community Alarms

The Community Alarm Service is a key service in supporting people to remain independent in the community. The service currently supports approximately **8500** service users and 33 sheltered housing complexes. The service embraces technology in care and have installed 3000 digital alarms during the reporting period to support the change over from analogue to digital. Waiting times for the installation of a community alarm were significant in April 2023, with a 20 week waiting list for an alarm. By the end of March 2024 this wait time has been reduced to 5 days through targeted actions by the team and the service have put in place mechanisms to review service user feedback which will be reported on annually.

The service is also involved in a Dunfermline falls prevention test for change that is seeking to reduce falls for service users and are actively working to reduce their waiting list for Nightlink overnight support service.

Deaf Communication Service

The Deaf Communication Service (DCS) supports Fife's Deaf and hard-of-hearing community through various activities including:

Translation Services: Provides weekly BSL translations of Fife Council news and key documents (including Adult Protection), making information accessible for Deaf staff and service users.

Assessments: Collaborates with NHS Fife to run specialist clinics and conducts workplace, home, and care home assessments for those with hearing loss.

BSL Classes & Training: Delivers Deaf Awareness sessions, along with tailored Level 1 and 2 BSL classes for Fife Council employees and the public. Developed bespoke one-on-one sessions, including in languages like Ukrainian Sign Language.

Support & Advice: Offers communication support, specialised social work, and one-on-one assistance, with almost 2,000 BSL interpreter jobs in 2023/24. Additionally, DCS advises on equipment loans and accessibility for BSL users.

The team comprise of one senior development worker and three development workers and this group are the lead team for carrying forward Fife's BSL Local Plan and the See Hear Strategy. Accessible meetings will be setup twice yearly to enable people who are users of BSL to give feedback on how the implementation of the plan is impacting on their lives and discuss areas where further improvement is required in Fife. Progression reports will be produced and presented to relevant governance groups of all Stakeholders, including the Health and Social Care Partnership's Clinical and Care Governance Committee.

Justice Services

The strategic landscape for community justice social work over this period has continued to be influenced by the national 'Vision for Justice', and the revised 'National Strategy for Community Justice'.

At a local level, Fife's Justice Service Annual Performance and Improvement Plan 2023-24 identifies areas for priority in the Service over a 12 month period. The areas detailed below provide an overview of these priorities, whilst showcasing the range of

creative and innovative practice taking place in Fife Justice Service. All of these services continue to be delivered against a backdrop of challenges including financial pressures and recruitment of qualified staff to manage increasing complex casework.

Our priorities during this year have been:

- Maximisation of diversion as an early intervention strategy
- Development of robust community based disposals
- Ensuring those involved in services are supported in a trauma informed way
- Developing the leadership and engagement with Community Justice partners
- Improving service user involvement in the design and delivery of services

Early Intervention Service

Our Bail Supervision service continues to operate in the Dunfermline and Kirkcaldy Sheriff Courts. The service offers the Court a robust and credible alternative to remand, whilst supporting the early identification of risk and needs. Our bail supervision service is deeply welfare orientated and the team takes a proactive, community-based approach to deliver holistic support. Integral to our bail supervision service is recognising the critical role of stable accommodation, and the service works in close collaboration with housing services to ensure that from the point of assessment, individuals have access to safe and secure housing. The service has also been pioneering a range of therapeutic interventions designed to address emotional regulation and negative thinking patterns. From traditional psychological approaches to a variety of holistic therapies, the service offers a broad spectrum of support aimed at fostering mental and emotional well-being.

Historically, facilitating bail supervision assessments for external Courts (including Dundee Court where many individuals from Northeast Fife appear) have proved more of a challenge, due to the disparity of bail supervision services nationally. However, with the new National Guidance for Bail Supervision, alongside bail incentivisation monies, it is hoped this will result in greater consistency of service provision nationally.

The Early Intervention Service also encompass other early interventions such as Diversion and Structured Deferred Sentence for all males open to Fife Justice. This has proven to be a very successful model which has resulted in the team working in a pro-active, welfare-oriented way with those who are deemed to require lower-level intervention and supervision by Justice Social Work. Developing and delivering on offence focused work for such short timescale interventions such as Structured Deferred Sentences and Diversions has also been a primary focus for our service.

Linking in with our Safer Communities Service a 12-week Road Traffic Safety Programme was developed which can delivered on one-to-one basis. The programme combines education with practical interactions such as road safety videos and discussions to promote responsible driving behaviour. The service is acutely aware with ascending prison numbers, the demand for bail supervision workstreams is ever increasing, and the workload of the team will require to be monitored to ensure we have the correct resources in place.

Community Payback Orders

Offence focused intervention continues to be integral to the delivery of Justice Social Work services, regardless of whether that engagement is mandated through Community Payback Order, Statutory Licence, Structured Deferment or Diversion from Prosecution. Specific offence focussed work occurs on a one-to-one basis and often involves work around understanding and controlling strong feelings, handling conflict, improving relationships, and managing impulsive behaviour. Service users are supported to collaboratively develop individual plans, informed by structured assessment tools, to identify priority areas of need which are then reviewed dependant on progress and outcomes.

In order to promote rehabilitation, it is essential that Justice services are person-centred, and trauma informed. Nearly all our social workers (and many social work assistants) have completed Enhanced Trauma Level training or are registered to do so in 2024. Our staff employ a trauma informed approach, considering wellbeing and individual responsivity to support others to recognise the links between wellbeing and risk. Employment, leisure, and community connections are key elements of this and remain an important component of ongoing assessment and intervention.

Over this reporting period, the Service has collaborated with Fife Leisure Trust to offer Justice Service Users the opportunity to attend a block of supported gym sessions, with a 6-month gym pass provided after the sessions have ended. This initiative promotes exercise and wellbeing for all, with an emphasis on the physical, emotional, psychological, and social benefits of exercise. As this project moves into its next phase, we intend to measure and evaluate the impact of this initiative via quantitative and qualitative data.

Unpaid Work

During the COVID 19 Pandemic, individuals made subject to Court mandated Unpaid Work Requirements had the timescale for completion extended by 12 months. As of October 2022, the extended timeframe ceased, however our experience was that sentencers continued to impose Orders with the extended timescales, which was in turn having a detrimental impact on the motivation of individuals to complete their Court Order and having a negative impact on service delivery. Communication between local Sheriffs and community justice partners is critical in decision making and the ability to effectively deliver community sentences.

We provided structured inputs to both Courts in Fife to develop a shared understanding of service availability and delivery processes, in addition to new UPW initiatives, which has hopefully led to greater confidence in community sentencing and better outcomes for individuals.

We have a successful social media page which we regularly use to raise awareness of local unpaid work projects of particular interest to the community. These posts receive positive feedback and help to increase public knowledge around the benefits of community sentences. We also work closely with the Council's communication team to further raise awareness both internally and externally regarding unpaid work projects and the positive impact of the work undertaken.

Groupwork Services

Our Groupwork Services team continue to deliver the Moving Forward: Making Changes (MF:MC) programme for men over the age of 18 who have committed sexual offences. The MF:MC programme has recently been redesigned to reflect a developing evidence base, advice from SAPOR, and evaluation recommendations and the revised programme will be called MF:2C. Four members of staff from our Groupwork team attended MF2C training in March 2024, with other staff attending the training throughout 2024. The service plans to deliver our first MF2C programme in October 2024.

Fife Justice Social Work continue to deliver the Caledonian Programmes for men who commit domestic abuse offences. The programme is delivered through effective collaboration between supervising social workers and staff in our Groupwork team. These are intense and demanding interventions which require a high level of commitment and reflection from participants as they are supported to better understand the connection between their thoughts, feelings and behaviours, and to develop safer, more effective strategies in complex and challenging situations. We are in the process of improving how we gather feedback from men who attend the Caledonian Programme and their partners, and this has already outlined some very positive case studies.

The Groupwork team have also developed a Healthy Relationships Workbook which can be used to undertake focused work with perpetrators on a 1:1 basis. The workbook can be used as part of any community-based sentence (including Diversion and Structured Deferred Sentence) where there are concerns around the development of healthy relationships. Service wide training is being provided by the Groupwork team and the initiative increases the reach of our early intervention and preventative work.

Our Groupwork Services Team were delighted to be shortlisted as finalists in the 2023 Scottish Social Service Awards under the 'Excellence in Justice' category.

Women's Services

Many of our female service users have experienced complex trauma and associated mental health issues. Our Women's Justice Teams have a dedicated NHS Team comprising of a Mental Health Nurse, Clinical Psychologist and Assistant Psychologist. The benefits of this holistic approach have been significant in addressing underlying needs for women involved in the justice system. The NHS team provides direct service user support, consultation, and training for the wider team. The team are in the midst of an evaluation of their partnership -using both quantitative and qualitative data to evaluate the multidisciplinary and multi-agency support the team provides. The result from this evaluation, including feedback from those who use our services, will support our continued commitment to learning and development.

As well as clinical work, the NHS Team also supports our Women's Justice Teams with Service improvement. The teams have recently taken part in a Trauma Informed Practice Audit, using the Quality Standards for Fife, developed by Fife Trauma Training Collaborative. It has been a rewarding process to reflect on our achievements as a Service around the work we are doing to provide trauma-informed service delivery and support. It has also been helpful to understand where there might be scope for

improvement and further development across the Service. Following on from the audit, the team aims to implement an action plan which will support the continued development towards having a trauma informed Service, as well as sharing the process of completing the audit with the wider Service and beyond.

There have been several new initiatives regarding unpaid work for women - the focus of which is to provide unpaid work opportunities which are community based, person-centred, and trauma informed. This includes a weekly sewing group which is based in Greener Kirkcaldy, which is a local community resource. At present, the group is making bonding hearts for babies in the local neonatal unit. The team have also created an excellent partnership with the Scottish Deer Centre based in the East of Fife, and Lochore Meadows Country Park based in the West of Fife. Every week the women alternate between these two locations to undertake UPW tasks at the projects.

Throughcare Pre and Post Release Support Service

The challenges faced by people leaving custody have long been recognised, and these have been exacerbated in recent times by the impact of the Covid pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis. Our Throughcare teams have always offered guidance and support to service users (in addition to statutory supervision of licences). However, it was determined that this required to be bolstered to ensure people were consistently receiving focused and individualised welfare support, which would hopefully increase the likelihood of positive engagement whilst reducing overall levels of risk. Two additional Social Work Assistants were recruited to support delivery of the service, which was officially launched in April 2023.

Since April 2023, 80 men have received or are receiving support across the two Throughcare teams. The support offered covers a range of issues relating to the individual's welfare needs under six main areas including accommodation, finances, health, substance use, support networks and education / employment. Our recent review of the Service has informed us that 12 men have required support beyond the first review stage at 12 weeks post release, and that support has lasted between 5 weeks and 8 months, depending on individual needs.

The teams are continually measuring progress by recording levels of need in the 6 key areas at the outset of support, and again when the intensive post release support comes to an end. Finances and accommodation are among the needs most frequently identified and also where greatest improvements have been seen (improvements in 69% and 65% of cases respectively). The team are aiming to refine outcome tools in the second year of the service to make it more sensitive to improvements which may be more incremental than are reflected by the current tool.

Resources

With a 'flatline' budget for Justice Social Work Services nationally, the challenge is how we continue to deliver high quality services as staffing costs steadily increase. As a Service, actions were taken to reduce costs wherever possible, however how the Service manages capacity, demand and pressures within budget constraints remains a significant challenge.

Over this reporting period, we have continued to utilise the COVID 19 consequential funding to recruit staff, however the recruitment of experienced staff and retention of staff generally, remains a challenge. Increasing the duration of fixed term contracts to 2027 has supported with this to some degree, however, the temporary nature of the funding is inevitably linked to higher staff turnover as staff seek the security of permanent posts.

As a Service, we have continued to drive forward with a number of new initiatives, which evidences our commitment to improving performance, the quality of our services, and outcomes for those who use our services. In the previous reporting period, we had created a dedicated Service Manager post which has responsibility for Performance, Quality Assurance and Quality Improvement. In February 2024, we created a third Service Manager post which has responsibility for operations, including unpaid work delivery. This structure change reflects our renewed commitment to service improvement, and improving outcomes for those who use our services.

Quality Assurance and Development

Children and Family Social Work

Throughout the reporting period we continued to evaluate how best to utilise our Quality Assurance and Development officers to maximise value and dynamically respond to areas of improvement identified to ensure we were supporting our improvement agenda. The work included:

- Undertaking audit activity to monitor compliance with policy, legislation and practice standards.
- Supporting improvement activity through joint working and ongoing review of action plans in partnership with the Senior Management Team.
- Supporting and developing the work of the Corporate Parenting Board and The Promise – working with the Promise Lead and the Children’s Services Partnership and Corporate Parenting Board.
- Leading the work relating to our people with Lived Experience Groups: Embrace.
- Supporting the use of MOMO to ensure we are hearing from children.

The Quality Assurance and Development Officers work closely with our Reviewing Team and Panel chairs and there is a circularity of learning from practice embedded across these three key areas.

The service continues to commit to quarterly performance and data reporting using a self-evaluation improvement agenda to support continuous improvement. This has been impacted by the new electronic management system which has created a data gap of several months, but this is being addressed as a priority within the council.

Training, learning and development

During 2023-24, HR Workforce Development Team continued to work collaboratively with Children's, Justice and Adults' Social Work and Social Care Services, and multi-agency partners, to provide effective and meaningful workforce development opportunities to all workforce colleagues. Respective Training Needs Analysis took place across Children's, Justice and Adult services, whereby specific workforce development plans have been developed – this link to Fife Council 'Learning Lounge' gives an overview of the range of Learning & Development plans that are in place and include ongoing activity from 2023 onwards.

This work is underpinned by discussions with workforce / service providers, related stakeholders, and informed by national and local strategic priorities, including Fife Health and Social Care Partnership's Strategy and Action Plan, Children's Services and Justice Services Plan and correlates with a number of national developments, including the Health and Care (Staffing) (Scotland) Act 2019, the Trauma Informed Practice agenda, national H&SCP agenda, The Promise and Whole Family Wellbeing, Newly Qualified Social Worker (NQSW) supported year activity and SSSC registration changes.

There is an annual budget from the CSWO which provides consistent investment for the provision of workforce development and training. This allows for structured development activity and attendance at relevant conferences and national events. The funding available is used innovatively to ensure priorities are met with the acknowledgement that there is an increasing demand on budgets given the national development and legislative expectations at play. Specifically, resource provision to support future NQSW SY, Whole Family Wellbeing, Trauma Informed Practice and provision for SSSC Registration requirements across services will result in added financial pressures.

The development opportunities provided comprise of a range of e-learning, webinars and 'in person' training. It is booked via our Oracle system which is a council wide system.

Alongside the 'business as usual' training provision, which is significant across services, specific training priorities emerged and have been action during this period. This is not an exhaustive list but looks to reflect national priorities:

- The provision of Trauma Informed Practice training, which is provided via e-learning for levels 1 & 2 and 'in person' commissioned training for level 3 for social workers across all services.
- NQSW Supported Year activity has now been further developed and embedded within operational teams, with focussed support and planning from the workforce development team.
- A range of SQA (Scottish Qualifications Authority) activity is in place to ensure registration needs are met across services, in line with the revised SSSC registration requirements and CPL requirements.

- Multi Agency Practice Development sessions, related to Whole family Wellbeing approach and areas of process and practice linked to social work.
- Leadership agenda: Availability of a range of leadership and management opportunities, including access to Coach Approach workshops Solihull approach to reflective supervision, SVQ Level 4 leadership and management awards, Post grad supervision and management modules, in house First Line Managers programme
Specific offering for H&SCP social work – provision of leadership course in adult services - Leading, Managing and Caring – in collaboration with Fife College Care Academy.
- Social work pathways- the work began in 2023-24 and continues in terms of supporting social work assistants across the service to undertake the Advanced SW Degree, with a view to transitioning to a Graduate Apprenticeship programme in the future.
- Specific training provided for Justice Services underpinned by emerging practice issues: Gambling Awareness courses, Court skills,

We have used course evaluations, stakeholder feedback, and in some cases, financial records to assess the impact, value for money and potential outcomes of the training and development opportunities that have taken place. In essence, we would look for the training which takes place to ensure that the workforce become competent and confident in their respective areas of practice. The feedback we receive indicates that participants in a variety of development activities feel more confident and competent in undertaking their respective roles

Children and Families

We have worked alongside our colleagues in Workforce Development to create a 'People Plan' for the Service. There are key areas within the plan which prioritises the recruitment and retention of staff, investment in our Senior Practitioner cohort, and the growth of our management team by identifying a range of training and development opportunities.

We also offer a range of practitioner groups which are invaluable at highlighting and addressing key issues impacting on the workforce. Through shared decision-making forums such as the practitioner groups, staff can raise issues which the management team may not have been aware of. Being part of creative and effective problem solving also ensures that staff feel part of the decision-making process for the service and that their voices are heard.

The service has been committed to developing opportunities for social work assistants to train as social workers and have funded 8 staff to undertake their social work degree. We continue to be highly committed to offering post qualifying opportunities as practice educators, MHOs as well as qualifications in permanence planning and child protection.

Adult and older adult Social Work and Social Care

The HSCP is committed to continuous learning and development across all services. For example, the Adults and Older People Social Work teams hold monthly protected learning days for staff. This year, 20 social work staff completed post-qualifying courses such as ASP, Dementia Postgraduate, Leadership and Management, MHO, Practice Educator, and Advanced Social Work courses. The introduction of a new supervision approach, which prioritises learning and development, has been well-received. Additionally, the service provided placements for 18 social work students in 2022-23, many of whom joined the workforce in permanent roles.

Various apprenticeships and internship programs—such as the Princes Trust, Foundation Apprenticeship in Social Services and Healthcare scheme, and the Life Chances scheme—offer prospective employees hands-on experience and help grow the social care workforce. Within our Accommodation with Care and Support Service, three young people were offered permanent positions following their placements.

Our Self-Directed Support Team, Adult Protection Team, and Deaf Communications Team also provide a range of learning and development opportunities for both new and existing staff through webinars, courses, and learning materials, including induction packs.

Justice

Ongoing professional development has been an area of priority for the Service over this reporting period. Ensuring staff have the appropriate learning and experience to support service users is an ongoing priority for the Service. Working in conjunction with HR Workforce Development and Strategy, a training plan was created, including core training required as a baseline for those working in Justice Services.

We have supported staff to work towards their Diploma in Higher Education Social Care (Scotland) via the Open University, staff to work towards their social work degree via the Advanced Degree pathway and to undertake their Mental Health Officer training.

We have continued to have worked closely with colleagues in Workforce Development and University establishments to offer high quality social work placements for students on a regular basis. We have supported Social Workers to embark on their Professional Development Award in Practice Learning. As a Service, we value the many contributions that social work students can bring and see this approach as being a valuable recruitment strategy, with many students applying for qualified social worker posts with the Service upon completion of their course.

In respect of training, we provide a bespoke package of training and learning which is renewed on an annual basis in consultation with staff across the Service. We also deliver a 'New to Justice' Forum, themed learning sessions and have a dedicated Justice Learning Platform for the Service.

Challenges and Improvements

Workforce

The temporary CSWO 2023/2024 undertook a listening tour across all areas of social work to hear directly from workers about what was going well and areas of concern within the work force. Whilst there were some service specific issues there were key professional messages which spanned the workforce:

Areas for improvement

- A need for better connections and collaboration across all areas of the profession
- Concerns relating to recruitment difficulties and the impact on teams of vacancies
- Concerns regarding the new electronic recording system and lack of training available
- Workspace availability

Strengths

- Quality supervision and good support from managers
- Strong supportive teams who value their passionate and committed members
- A commitment to being allowed to be creative in intervention and practice
- Manageable caseloads was raised by staff in Children and Families social work front line teams who reported average caseloads of around 15 as a maximum

Staff overwhelmingly shared their appreciation about being given an opportunity to speak directly to the CSWO and to be 'heard'. The CSWO being appointed for 2024 onwards will be repeating this exercise and ensuring that staff are given real opportunities for views to be shared and responded to. It appears that Covid interrupted established forums for meeting staff, and it was positive to reestablish these during 2023-24.

Children and Families and Justice

Within Children and Families, our highest priority is to protect children who have suffered harm or may be at risk of suffering harm. When those children cannot live at home safely, our focus is on providing the best quality of care away from home. To achieve this goal, we work in partnership with other agencies, ensuring that families receive an integrated and co-ordinated response that seeks to meet the range of complex needs that families experience.

Ensuring the views, wishes and contributions of children, young people and their families are reflected in service development, design and delivery is a key priority for us in the forthcoming 12 months.

The challenges facing the Children and Families workforce have been well-documented and subject to national coverage – those challenges remain very relevant in Fife and include:

- The legacy of the COVID-19 pandemic for vulnerable and disadvantaged families.
- Poverty and the cost-of-living crisis.
- Retaining and recruiting qualified and experienced social workers.
- Austerity measures facing local authorities.
- The shortage of resource relating to residential and foster care placements.
- Responding to and implementing the, at times, overwhelming tide of new policy and legislation.
- The impact of increasing numbers of UASC requiring care.

Despite the context described above, we continue to report:

- A reduction in the number of children and young people subject to statutory measures of care.
- A reduction in the number of children and young people being placed in high-cost residential placements and.
- An increase in the number of children living in Kinship arrangements.

The lack of suitable foster or residential placements for children or young people who require to be looked after away from home is a significant challenge and is worthy of further description. This challenge is particularly evident relating to children aged 10-14 years – the pool of foster carers offering a home to children within this age range is diminishing and this has resulted in several children being placed in residential care. We have employed a range of strategies in attempt to attract carers willing to care for older children – to date, these have been met with limited success. A new recruitment and retention strategy for foster carers is written and will be implemented later in 2023/24 with an increased focus around offering fostering for teenagers requiring care. This will predominantly be centred around advertising on Facebook as local evidence tells us this has yielded the most success. There is an increased offering of training and support to foster carers who do or would offer care within the older age group. An increased focus on scaffolding foster placements for the older age group with intensive support being offered from our Emergency Support Team and the Springfield Service who continue to offer consultation for carers.

With Children and Families Social Work, Fife mirrors the national picture as set out in the “Setting the Bar” report (Social Work Scotland 2022). This report identifies a challenge with social work retention and recruitment, an increase in the complexity and volume of referrals and an ever-changing policy and legislative landscape. Workload pressure is further impacted by changing demographics, the geography of Fife, the hybrid working environment, pressures/capacity issues in partner resources and poverty, this all reflects the national picture.

Practitioner groups are invaluable at highlighting and addressing key issues impacting on the workforce. Through shared decision-making forums such as the practitioner groups, staff can raise issues which the management team may not have been aware

of. Being part of creative and effective problem solving also ensures that staff feel part of the decision-making process for the service and that their voices are heard.

We have responded to these challenges by:

- reconfiguring the staffing structure
- reducing caseloads within front line teams and reviewing these regularly
- front loading services to deal with initial referral demands
- developing a social work qualification pathway for social work assistants
- introducing quality assurance posts
- reviewing and updating supervision and personal development planning
- training and development around leadership
- creating additional permanent posts across teams using re-investment money sufficient to staff 2 permanence teams
- utilising whole family wellbeing money to enhance support at both an early intervention level but also increased posts to offer intensive wrap around support
- ensuring our recruitment campaigns highlight the ability to work flexibly

Within Justice specifically, priorities continue to be clearly focussed on a social justice, rights-based approach, valuing individuals whilst ensuring public protection at the acute end in relation to managing individuals who present significant risk.

Fife Justice Service continues to utilise the COVID-19 consequential funding in terms of additional staffing to meet the increasing demands as a result of COVID-19 related court closures. Despite there not being the backlog of cases originally forecast by the Scottish Government, there has been a steady increase of business, moving back to pre-COVID levels. Increasing the duration of fixed term contracts to 2027 has supported the recruitment and retention of staff in the service.

With a 'flatline' budget for Justice Social Work Services nationally, the challenge to continue delivering good quality services is significant as staffing costs increase. As a Service, actions have already been enacted to reduce any costs wherever possible, however it is a concerning position as we move forward.

Adult and older adult Social Work and Social Care

The service is committed to continuous learning and development, with monthly protected learning days, and strong participation in post-qualifying courses such as MHO, ASP, and Practice Educator. The teams provided placements for 18 social work students in 2022-2023, many of whom have joined the service, linking closely with our preparations for supporting the NQSW year. A new supervision approach, focusing on learning and staff wellbeing, has been tested and positively received and will be formally adopted soon.

Like other areas nationwide, our HSCP continues to face recruitment and retention challenges. Services, particularly Care at Home, have been affected by high vacancy and sickness absence rates. In response, the service has introduced changes to work patterns, revised its induction process, and launched various recruitment initiatives.

Recruiting and training Mental Health Officers (MHOs) also remains a challenge. Locally, we have responded by offering shadowing opportunities, engaging new staff to enhance understanding of the MHO role, and encouraging participation in training programs. This year, two staff members completed the MHO PGD course and a further 2 are enrolled for 2024-25.

Staff wellbeing remains a central focus. This year, we have enhanced the social work supervision policy to prioritise wellbeing and development, conducted wellbeing assessments in care homes, and addressed workload pressures by reviewing capacity in line with the Health and Care Staffing Act. Wellbeing has been promoted in weekly staff briefings, and resources such as Access Therapies Fife have been highlighted. Additionally, we launched Menopause Cafes to support staff. Leadership development courses have helped foster positive working environments, and collaboration among teams ensures staff feel valued and supported. Many teams use SWAY to celebrate successes and share learning. Feedback indicates that while challenges remain, the belief that their work makes a difference is a key motivator for staff. Next year, we will focus on developing processes to capture feedback through staff supervision and exit surveys.

In 2023-24, EDISG launched webinars and events supporting the “What Kind of Fife do you want to Live in?” discussions, which helped Fife achieve Bronze status in the Equality Award scheme. The group is also advancing toward Silver and Gold awards and will take forward anti-racism actions as part of future work.

The service has been equally challenged and across all teams in Fife there has been an increasing volume and complexity of referrals. Workforce capacity to meet demand has been a challenge with demand continuing to stretch our resources. This has placed significant pressure on finances, and while the budget for services has not reduced this complexity has required services to strictly adhere to eligibility criteria, increasing the threshold for accessing resources, making creativity and flexibility a requirement when seeking to meet the needs presented by the people we engage with. This has in turn impacted on social work professionals who have to balance these organisational demands alongside the professional values requirement to be person centred and rights focussed.

Social Care Service provision within the HSCP and with voluntary, third and independent sector colleagues enables the delivery of high quality and supportive services to the people we work with. Fife’s Care at Home Teams, Care Homes, and Adult Resources, provide support and short breaks to those individuals and families living at home or in one of our Care or Residential Homes. Feedback received from people accessing the short breaks service is consistently positive.

It is however recognised that demand outweighs capacity and there are waiting lists within our services for young people transitioning from childcare or school provision and for adults awaiting care services following hospital discharge. Our Adult social work services have experienced an increasing demand to assess and provide packages of care to enable hospital discharge and the capacity of the social workers in teams has been stretched to its limit to meet this need. The ability to recruit and retain the necessary care at home and care home support required for individuals has

been increasingly challenging, with resources stretched and not able to cover all the need identified.

Looking Ahead

Across all of Fife Council Social Work, there have been many positive and encouraging developments during the last year and these have included: a focus on developing trauma informed service delivery and listening to the voices of those with lived experience.

A key emphasis in the delivery of Social Work Services going forward into 2024/25 remains in line with those identified last year as we continue to recover from the impact of the coronavirus pandemic and what is meant by a new normal - this will remain a significant piece of work over the few next years, which will require flexibility and close collaboration with our partners to address:

- Increased complexity in need and demand for specialist services
- Overall increase in psychological and social support needs across all areas of society impacted by loneliness, wellbeing, and mental health as well as physical health.
- The very real impact of poverty and increasing poverty in our communities

These challenges must be considered against a backdrop of:

- Staff resilience.
- Recruitment and retention of staff.
- Managing capacity, demand and pressures across services within increasing budget constraints.
- Demographic and socio-economic pressures including food and fuel poverty and loss of income.
- Service transformation and the implementation of new legislation and policy including the National Care Service.
- National lack of capacity in resources to meet the needs of those with complex and challenging behaviours

The uncertainty relating to the future delivery of social work requires our workforce to be agile, flexible and resilient whilst always retaining a focus on meeting local needs in our communities by engaging with individuals and families to drive forward improvement.

We will continue to take forward the key priorities identified across Justice and Children's Services and the Health and Social Care Partnership.

Children and Families Services, we will continue to manage our integration into a Communities Directorate maximising the opportunities created by this and developing a No Wrong Door approach to improve support at the earliest point for families. Our children's specific priorities are established in the Children's Services Plan, Child Protection Committee and Corporate Parenting Plans which set out long-term aspirations and priorities for children, young people and their families. These include:

- Our approach to implementing The Promise
- Hearing and responding to the voices of our children and their families.

- An increased focus on preventative and whole family support through whole service redesign
- Continuing to address the balance of care and ensure families are supported and scaffolded early and effective use of kinship as a support
- Continue to engage with staff applying visible and compassionate leadership support which is underpinned by a revised workforce development strategy aimed at upskilling, succession planning and paying diligence to the emotional needs of the workforce
- Ongoing investment in developing internal residential resources to ensure a home in Fife for all children and young people
- Developing a Youth Intervention Service to ensure Fife is creative and innovative in realising the ambition of the Care and Justice Act.

Justice Services our priorities include:

- In the year ahead, we intend to implement our 3-year Outcome Improvement Plan, which will act as a ‘roadmap’ for overall Service improvement.
- We will maximise the use of diversion as an early intervention strategy, while promoting its use as an appropriate response to offending behaviour.
- There will be an increased focus on the availability of robust, community-based interventions to ensure people are supported in the most appropriate and effective setting.
- We will ensure that those given community sentences are supervised and supported through the provision of robust, high quality, trauma informed services and programmes.
- There will be a focus on improved partnership working to strengthen the leadership, engagement and impact of local and community justice partners, both in respect of raising awareness of community justice and improving outcomes.
- We will increase opportunities for Service User Involvement in the design, delivery and development of our Services. We intend to do this by creating a specific post which will be aligned to this work, and by utilising evidence, research and best practice in this area.

Adult and older people social work and social care services our priorities include:

- Workforce Resilience: Exploring further how we can support our workforce to show the value we place in their contribution to services and our community, embedding a supervision framework, recognising and promoting best practices, and creating spaces for colleagues to come together and reflect.
- Transitions: Strengthening how we support people entering our services using a “team around the person” approach, GIRFE principles, and multi-agency meetings to enhance person centred support.
- Professional Assurance Framework: Embedding tools and processes to gather meaningful data for improvement, with a focus on service user, carer, and workforce feedback through surveys and supervision.
- Prevention & Early Intervention: Enhancing collaboration with community-led services and ensuring staff confidence in having transparent, open conversations about meeting needs, and our eligibility criteria.

- Crisis Response and Mental Health: Taking action to ensure people requiring intervention through AWI are regularly reviewed and that those needing emergency detention under the MH Act have an MHO involved in their detention.
- Carer Support: Including quality assurance in our collection of the number of carer support plans offered so we know the impact of our interventions on the lives of carers.

14 November 2024

Agenda Item No 8

2024-25 Revenue Monitoring Projected Outturn – Communities Service

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

Michael Enston, Executive Director, Communities

Wards Affected: All

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to give members an update on the projected outturn financial position for the 2024-25 financial year for the Communities Directorate & the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) which are areas in scope of the People & Communities Scrutiny Committee.

Recommendations

Committee is asked to consider the current financial performance and activity as detailed in this report.

Resource Implications

None.

Legal & Risk Implications

There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

Impact Assessment

An EqIA has not been completed and is not necessary as no change or revision to existing policies and practices is proposed.

Consultation

None.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise Members of the projected outturn for the Communities Directorate and the HRA for the 2024-25 Revenue Budget, and to highlight the major variances as at August 2024.
- 1.2 For 2024-25 no specific savings proposals were approved by the Council as part of the Revenue Budget. There is therefore no requirement to include a Savings Tracker as part of financial reporting for the 2024-25 financial year.

2.0 Projected Outturn

2.1 Projected Outturn

- 2.1.1 There is a projected variance of £4.069m for the Communities Directorate, this is a movement of (£0.465m). A summary of the 2024-25 projected out-turn for the areas under the scope of this committee is detailed in Appendix 1. Where there are significant variances (+/-£0.250m) to budgets a brief explanation is provided at Section 3.
- 2.1.2 The HRA is projecting nil net balances for 2024-25. There is a planned withdrawal from balances of £2.722m which has been approved at Cabinet Committee and Full Council.

3.0 Major Variances

Communities & Neighbourhoods - Projected Overspend £0.970m, movement of (£0.157m)

- 3.1 A legacy from the pandemic continues to impact on level of demand and income received for some services, these include Fife Sports and Leisure Trust and Fife Cultural Trust which have a projected deficit of £0.932m. Council officers continue to review the areas where the level of income received has been impacted by the pandemic. Also impacted is Community Use and Halls and Centres where there is an under-recovery of income of £0.540m. Work continues to develop and implement a more targeted approach to marketing and consultation with communities to ensure they are offering what communities want and that there are no barriers preventing the community from accessing these services.
- 3.2 Unachieved historical savings of £0.339m are being offset by a projected underspend of (£0.398m). This underspend is due to a reduction in the level of funding required by the Opportunities for All programme. The remaining overspend is offset by (£0.271m) external funding received for expenditure incurred in 2023/24 and staff vacancies across the service.
- 3.3 The movement of (£0.157m) relates to the increased support required from FCT offset by the improved income position for Community Use and Halls & Centres and the income received for expenditure incurred in the previous financial year.

General Fund Housing – Projected Overspend £0.378m, movement of £0.262m

- 3.4 There is an overspend of £0.173m, movement £0.061m relating to the cost of maintaining and servicing Disability Adaptations equipment installed in customers' homes. The cost of maintaining and servicing equipment has grown over time as the both the volume of equipment and the price of maintenance and servicing contracts has increased. The service is carrying out a review to determine how this cost can be mitigated without impacting the delivery of adaptations into customers' homes.
- 3.5 Homelessness is projected to overspend by £0.167m, movement £0.167m. Due to the ongoing Housing Emergency there has been a sustained high number of homelessness presentations throughout the year which necessitated the use of Hotels and B&Bs in the earlier part of the year to meet homelessness demand. The total overspend however is being mitigated as a result of the service moving away from Hotel and B&B use and focusing on lower cost alternatives. The service is also working to maximise the use of any temporary funding from either internal or external sources to help further mitigate anticipated costs. there continues to be a high level of demand for homelessness services and this high level of demand must be balanced with the need to keep spend within budget.

Children and Families – Projected Overspend £3.371m, movement of (£0.545m)

- 3.6 The dominant factor in the projected overspend is £5.365m on purchased placements, which is due to the full year effect of placements made during the previous year. Projected overspends of £0.488m on continuing care, £0.420m on Direct Payments, and £0.252m on throughcare rents, all in line with last year's spend are also included. Overspend on £0.795m on Children Affected by Disability (CABD) respite due to a new ongoing high cost package,
- 3.7 These projected overspends are partially offset with projected underspends of (£0.336m) overachievement of income for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children, (£2.180m) staffing due to staff turnover and budget for permanent posts/staff who are currently undertaking other work, and (£1.262m) Whole Family Wellbeing (WFW) funding which will be carried forward into 2025/26 to support the planned spend for next year.
- 3.8 The movement is due to a reduction of (£0.674m) in forecasted pay costs (excluding WFW) due to staff turnover and continued vacancies, and a reduction of (£0.440m) on Whole Family Wellbeing funding due to delays in recruitment, changes in planned projects and allocations of funding. This is offset by £0.795m in CABD respite due to the placement of a new high cost package.

Criminal Justice Service (CJS) – Projected Underspend (£0.713m), movement of (£0.089m)

- 3.9 The projected underspend of (£0.713m) has arisen on the permanent flexible element of CJS funding and is due to staff turnover creating vacant substantive posts as staff have been redeployed to undertake Covid and Bail Funded work. The funding for this work is temporary. There may be a requirement for the Service to fill some of these posts going forward and this may reduce the level of underspend in future reports. A further factor in the underspend is that, whilst this report covers service managed budget, a proportion of the underspend is in respect of central support services, which are allowable within the grant funding, but are not charged to services within this report.

Housing Revenue Account - Net Balance nil, movement nil

Repairs & Maintenance – Projected Overspend £0.674m, movement £0.674m

- 3.10 Responsive Repairs is overspent by £1.662m, movement £1.662m. Spend has increased in previous years due to high inflation and material cost increases. The service is now working to assess what the required budget for Responsive Repairs is going forward based on current cost and volume of repairs required in year. This is partially offset by an underspend on Change of Tenancy (COT) of (£1.033m), movement (£1.033m). Several improvements have been made over the past year to the Change of Tenancy which has reduced the length of time properties are vacant for and the cost of each COT has also been reduced. This has resulted in the projected underspend in year.

Revenue Contribution (Including CFCR) – Projected Underachievement (£2.047m), movement (£0.913m)

- 3.11 The CFCR is projected to underachieve by £2.047m in year as a result of overspends projected across the HRA. The result is a lower than planned contribution to the HRA Capital Programme. There will be an impact on the Capital Plan and the funding required to support the HRA Capital Programme as a result of the reduced CFCR.

Voids – Projected Underachievement (£0.308m), movement nil

- 3.12 There is an underspend on Voids of £0.308m. The improvements in the Change of Tenancy process has resulted in a reduction in the number of days which properties are empty for, resulting in a reduction in voids rent loss for dwelling rents anticipated in year. The service is working to reduce dwelling rents voids to 1% by the end of 24-25 which will help to offset pressures across the HRA.

Other Expenditure – Projected Overspend £2.222m, movement £0.663m

- 3.13 Other Expenditure is overspent by £2.222m. This mainly relates to hostels which is projecting an overspend of £1.520m, movement £0.179m. Each hostel has high operating costs which have continued to represent a pressure for the HRA. The Homelessness service are working on delivery models which will look to reduce or eliminate the hostels overspend. This will include measurements proposed in the Fife's Homelessness Reduction Plan 2023-25 presented to Cabinet Committee on 5th October.
- 3.14 There is an overspend of £0.265m, movement £0.265m relating to High Rise Costs, the majority of this overspend relates to additional staffing and security costs at Swan & Memorial Court whilst works are underway to make improvement to the cladding on the building.
- 3.15 The remaining overspend mainly relates to Property Insurance which is projected to overspend by £0.218m. Property insurance costs are estimated to be 20% higher than the previous financial year which has resulted in the overspend in year. Consideration is being given to the potential further pressure that Property Insurance may put on the HRA in future years.

4.0 Conclusions

- 4.1 The projected outturn position for the areas under the scope of the People and Communities Scrutiny Committee is £4.069m.
- 4.2 The HRA is projecting nil net balances for 2024-25. There is a planned withdrawal from balances of £2.722m which has been approved at Cabinet Committee and Full Council.

List of Appendices

- 1 Projected Outturn 2024-25 Summary Communities Directorate
- 2 Projected Outturn 2024-25 Housing Revenue Account

Background Papers

None

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BUDGET MONITORING REPORT SUMMARY PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES								Appendix 1	
COMMUNITIES	CURRENT BUDGET 2024-25 £m	COVID FORECAST 2024- 25 £m	NON-COVID FORECAST 2024 -25 £m	FORECAST 2024 - 25 £m	VARIANCE £m	VARIANCE %	PREVIOUS REPORTED VARIANCE £m	MOVEMENT FROM PREVIOUS REPORTED VARIANCE £m	
TOTAL COST OF SERVICES	171.466	0.002	175.533	175.535	4.069	2.37%	4.534	(0.465)	
LESS: CORPORATELY MANAGED ITEMS	11.502	0.000	11.502	11.502	0.000	0.00%	0.000	0.000	
SERVICE MANAGED NET BUDGET	159.964	0.002	164.031	164.033	4.069	2.54%	4.534	(0.465)	
ANALYSIS OF SERVICE MANAGED BUDGET									
COMMUNITIES & NEIGHBOURHOODS	56.055	0.002	57.022	57.025	0.970	1.73%	1.126	(0.157)	
GFH - HOUSING & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES	16.886	0.000	17.264	17.264	0.378	2.24%	0.116	0.262	
COMMUNITIES EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	0.239	0.000	0.240	0.240	0.001	0.34%	0.000	0.001	
CHILDREN & FAMILIES	70.523	0.000	73.894	73.894	3.371	4.78%	3.916	(0.545)	
CRIMINAL JUSTICE SERVICE	0.461	0.000	(0.252)	(0.252)	(0.713)	-154.79%	(0.624)	(0.089)	
CUSTOMER & ONLINE SERVICES	15.800	(0.000)	15.863	15.863	0.063	0.40%	0.000	0.063	
	159.964	0.002	164.031	164.033	4.069	2.54%	4.534	(0.465)	
SUBJECTIVE GROUPING									
SERVICE MANAGED NET BUDGET	159.964	0.002	164.031	164.033	4.069	2.54%	4.534	(0.465)	
INCOME	(41.136)	(0.000)	(45.158)	(45.158)	(4.022)	9.78%	(0.067)	(3.955)	
EXPENDITURE									
EMPLOYEE COSTS	86.769	(0.001)	84.541	84.540	(2.228)	-2.57%	(1.974)	(0.255)	
PREMISES RELATED EXPENDITURE	18.776	0.000	19.326	19.326	0.550	2.93%	0.335	0.215	
TRANSPORT RELATED EXPENDITURE	2.288	0.000	2.409	2.409	0.121	5.29%	0.000	0.121	
SUPPLIES & SERVICES	20.449	0.003	19.718	19.721	(0.727)	-3.56%	(1.003)	0.276	
THIRD PARTY PAYMENTS	64.553	0.000	73.917	73.917	9.364	14.51%	6.618	2.746	
TRANSFER PAYMENTS	5.343	0.000	6.307	6.307	0.964	18.05%	0.625	0.339	
SUPPORT SERVICES CHARGES	2.923	0.000	2.970	2.970	0.047	1.61%	0.000	0.047	
	201.100	0.002	209.189	209.191	8.091	4.02%	4.601	3.489	
TOTAL	159.964	0.002	164.031	164.033	4.069	2.54%	4.534	(0.465)	

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) 2024-25					Appendix 2 MOVEMENT FROM PREVIOUS REPORTED VARIANCE	
	CURRENT BUDGET 2024-25 £m	FORECAST 2024 - 25 £m	VARIANCE £m	VARIANCE %	PREVIOUS REPORTED VARIANCE £m	PREVIOUS REPORTED VARIANCE £m
Budgeted Expenditure						
Repairs & Maintenance	46.239	46.913	0.674	1.46%	0.000	0.674
Supervision & Management	21.579	21.461	(0.118)	-0.55%	0.000	(0.118)
Funding Investment:						
Cost of Borrowing	39.153	39.049	(0.105)	-0.27%	0.000	(0.105)
Revenue Contribution (including CFCR)	24.468	22.421	(2.047)	-8.37%	(1.133)	(0.913)
	131.439	129.844	(1.596)	-1.21%	(1.133)	(0.462)
VOIDS						
VOIDS	2.571	2.262	(0.308)	-11.99%	(0.308)	0.000
Housing Support Costs	(0.467)	(0.467)	0.000	0.00%	0.000	0.000
Garden Care Scheme	0.446	0.387	(0.059)	-13.14%	0.000	(0.059)
Bad or Doubtful Debts	3.108	3.108	0.000	0.00%	0.000	0.000
Other Expenditure	12.261	14.483	2.222	18.12%	1.559	0.663
	149.357	149.616	0.259	0.17%	0.117	0.142
FINANCED BY						
Dwelling Rents (Gross)	(139.112)	(139.112)	0.000	0.00%	0.000	0.000
Non Dwelling Rents (Gross)	(3.774)	(3.722)	0.052	-1.38%	0.000	0.052
Hostels - Accommodation Charges	(2.257)	(2.441)	(0.183)	8.13%	(0.183)	0.000
Other Income	(1.492)	(1.620)	(0.128)	8.57%	0.066	(0.194)
Budgets transferred to/(from) Balances (previous years carry forwards etc)	(2.722)	(2.722)	0.000	0.00%	0.000	0.000
	(149.357)	(149.616)	(0.259)	0.17%	(0.117)	(0.142)
Net Balance	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.00%	0.000	0.000

14th November 2024

Agenda Item No. 9

2024-25 Capital Plan Projected Outturn – Communities

Report by: Eileen Rowand, Executive Director, Finance and Corporate Services
Michael Enston, Executive Director, Communities Directorate

Wards Affected: All

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the Capital Investment Plan and advise on the projected financial position for the 2024-25 financial year.

Recommendation(s)

Committee is asked to consider the current performance and activity for the 2024-25 Capital Monitoring as detailed in this report.

Resource Implications

None.

Legal & Risk Implications

None.

Impact Assessment

An EqlA has not been completed and is not necessary as no change or revision to existing policies and practices is proposed.

Consultation

None.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Based on current information, this report summarises the projected capital outturn for the areas falling under the scope of this Committee for 2024-25. At this stage it is forecast that the projected expenditure will be £143.811m, resulting in a variance of (£4.146m).
- 1.2 Appendix 1 shows an analysis of specific projects in the current capital investment plan which have a budget greater than £1m and analyses total project cost rather than only in year spend.
- 1.3 Appendix 2 details the actual expenditure and income against budget for each project. A brief explanation of any significant forecast variances is provided at section 3 within this report.

2.0 Governance

- 2.1 On 21 June 2016 the Executive Committee approved revised governance and scrutiny arrangements for major capital projects. At that meeting the Committee agreed an enhanced level of reporting on capital projects through the quarterly capital expenditure monitoring report.
- 2.2 Major projects are defined as projects with a value of £5m and over. Projects with a value of less than £5m may also be subject to enhanced governance and scrutiny arrangements where there may be greater risk of overspend against budget, a risk of overrun on timescales or where expected benefits may not be delivered. The Investment Strategy Group is currently working to identify these projects as part of a review of the Capital Plan. Elected members will also be able to suggest when a particular project should be scrutinised in more detail.

3.0 Issues, Achievements & Financial Performance

Key Issues / Risks

- 3.1 Appendix 1 details the total cost projected position for all capital projects within the areas under the scope of the Committee with an overall value of £1m and over. At this stage of the financial year there are no key issues associated with the major projects.
- 3.2 Across the Capital Investment Plan there continues to be risk that both the timing and the costs of projects are adversely affected by the current economic climate. Throughout the programme, issues are continuing to be identified in relation to the supply of construction materials, the consequences of which have been considered and reflected in the Capital Investment Plan review which was approved by Fife Council on 22 June 2023. Monitoring of the impact of any additional costs on projects still in their infancy will continue and any significant impact on timescales and associated risks will be reported to this committee. Where appropriate, any known impact on timing of delivery of projects has been built in to the rephased plan

and the overall scale of any additional costs or further delays will be considered as part of the review of the Capital Investment Plan.

- 3.3 These potential risks cover all aspects of the capital plan including both General Fund and the HRA.

Major Projects – Potential Risks and Actions

- 3.4 There is a variance of £0.500m on Glenwood Regeneration project as a result of the Compulsory Purchase Orders being higher than anticipated.
- 3.5 There is underspend of £2.373m for Abbeyview Integrated Hub due to the tender price being less than originally anticipated.
- 3.6 The Golf Depot Hub is projecting slippage of £0.621m at present but discussions are ongoing in relation to this project with expenditure expected in 2024-25 and 2025-26.

Financial Performance – 2024-25 Projected Outturn

- 3.7 Appendix 2 provides a summary of the projected outturn for each project for the financial year 2024-25. The appendix shows a projected outturn of £143.811m against a Capital Investment plan of £147.957 m, a spending level of 97%.
- 3.8 The reasons for significant variances (+/-£0.500m) are detailed below.
- 3.9 Slippage is the term used to describe projects that are expected to spend less than the budget allocation in a particular year due to a delay in timing on the delivery of the project. This is not uncommon in the capital programme and the reasons for this can be wide and varied. Advancement is the term used to describe projects that are expected to spend more than the budget allocation in a particular year due to an acceleration of the budget from future years.

Significant Variances

Area Community & Corporate Development – Variance of (£4.255m)

- 3.10 Countryside Programme has slippage of (£0.530m), (£0.366m) relates to Nature Restoration funding however this has been retracted by the Scottish Government. Sports and Golf Programme has an underspend of (£0.709m) mainly due to the Golf Depot costs being less than anticipated. Community Facilities has a projected overspend of £0.929m, the majority of which relates to an advancement of enabling works on site for Templehall Integrated Community Hub and a projected overspend of £0.500m due to the value of Compulsory Purchase Orders for the Glenwood Regeneration project. Funding options to offset this overspend are being explored.
- 3.11 Improving Health Through Leisure and Sport has slippage of (£0.562m), (£0.365m) relates to slippage within approved projects relating to several playpark projects across Fife, these projects are delayed aligning with the outcome of the play space strategy which is to be agreed by each area committee and the desire to involve communities to seek match funding against council and Scottish Government funding for play parks. (£0.198m) remains unallocated.

- 3.12 Sport & Leisure Facilities has slippage of (£1.814m), (£0.525m) is enabling works issues causing a delay to start on site for Cowdenbeath Leisure centre. (£0.575m) remains unallocated. The remaining slippage is due to Synthetic Turf Pitch costs being less than anticipated alongside securing external funding.
- 3.13 Plant & Machinery Replacement programme has slippage of (£0.466m), this is a result of a delay to the replacement of machinery with Fife Golf Trust. Discussions are ongoing to identify additional budget to enable the replacement programme to commence. Parks development projects have slippage of (£0.571m) due to the utilisation of the Play Park Renewal funding over core budget.

Countryside Programme Income – variance £0.739m

- 3.14 The variance relates to Back Burn Restorations project income received in advance. Income is drawn down once expenditure has been incurred.

Specific Needs / Sheltered Housing Income – Advancement (£1.848m)

- 3.15 The advancement relates to anticipated subsidy income which will be received from the Scottish Government for properties purchased in year as part of the Property Acquisitions Programme.

4.0 Conclusions

- 4.1 The total 2024-25 approved programme for the areas in scope of this Committee is £147.957m. The projected level of expenditure is £143.811m, which represents 97% of the total programme, resulting in a variance of (£4.146m).
- 4.2 The management of capital resources require us to look across financial years, as well as within individual years. The current year performance is only a snapshot of the existing plan, and the Directorate will adjust expenditure levels within future years of the plan to accommodate the advancement or slippage of projects.

List of Appendices

1. Total Cost Monitor
2. Capital Monitoring Report by Service

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Project	Theme	Original Approved Budget £m	Current Project Budget £m	Total Projected Outturn £m	Variance £m	Variance %	Current Project Status	Expected Project Completion Date
Abbeyview Integrated Hub	Thriving Places	1.500	9.506	7.133	(2.373)	-24.96%	Current Project	2024-25
Templehall Community Hub	Thriving Places	1.500	15.304	15.304	-	0.00%	Current Project	2026-27
Cowdenbeath Leisure Centre - Phase 2	Thriving Places	1.600	7.368	7.368	-	0.00%	Current Project	2025-26
East Sands Redevelopment Project	Thriving Places	6.000	6.000	6.000	-	0.00%	Future Project	2026-27
Affordable Housing	Housing Revenue Account		205.092	205.092	-	-	Future Project	2027-28
Total Major Projects over £5.000m		10.600	243.270	240.898	(2.373)	-0.98%		
Silverburn	Thriving Places	1.000	3.750	3.750	-	0.00%	Current Project	2025-26
Glenwood Regeneration	Thriving Places	1.500	2.529	3.029	0.500	19.77%	Current Project	2024-25
Back Burn Restoration	Thriving Places		1.513	1.513	-	0.00%	Current Project	2025-26
Beacon Leisure Centre - Upgrade Enhancements	Thriving Places	1.000	1.000	1.000	-	0.00%	Future Project	2026-27
Inverkeithing Community Swimming Pool	Thriving Places	1.000	1.000	1.000	-	0.00%	Future Project	2028-29
Lochgelly Community Hub	Thriving Places	1.000	1.000	1.000	-	0.00%	Future Project	2026-27
River Leven Restoration	Thriving Places		2.161	2.161	-	0.00%	Current Project	2025-26
Rockgelly	Thriving Places		1.186	1.381	0.195	16.44%	Current Project	2024-25
Lochore Meadows Phase 2	Thriving Places		1.127	1.127	-	0.00%	Completed Project	2024-25
Golf Depot Hub Glenrothes	Maintaining Our Assets	0.650	1.650	1.029	(0.621)	-37.65%	Future Project	2025-26
Reprovision Glenmar Childrens Home	Opportunities for All		2.525	2.525	-	0.00%	Future Project	2025-26
Affordable Housing	Housing Revenue Account		23.927	23.927	-	0.00%	Ongoing Project	On-going
Total Major Projects over £1.000m		6.150	43.368	43.442	0.074	0.17%		
Total Major Projects		16.750	286.638	284.339	(2.299)	-0.80%		

Expenditure	Current Budget £m	Actual to Date £m	Projected Outturn £m	Projected Variance £m	Projected Outturn as % of Plan
Community Facilities Programme	2.880	0.643	3.080	0.200	107%
Countryside Programme	2.689	0.677	2.159	(0.530)	80%
Libraries, Museums, Galleries & Theatres	0.030	(0.024)	0.030	0.000	100%
Plant & Machinery Replacement Programme	0.466	-	-	(0.466)	0%
Major Parks Programme	0.040	0.000	0.000	(0.040)	0%
Allotments Programme	0.214	0.054	0.135	(0.078)	63%
Parks Development Projects	3.517	0.505	2.946	(0.571)	84%
Future of Leisure	0.011	-	-	(0.011)	0%
Sports & Golf Programme	0.841	0.038	0.132	(0.709)	16%
Improving Health Through Leisure & Sport	0.925	0.153	0.362	(0.562)	39%
Area Community Facilities	3.951	1.332	4.880	0.929	124%
Area Capital Investment	0.438	0.015	0.133	(0.305)	30%
Sport and Leisure Facilities	7.421	1.229	5.606	(1.814)	76%
Fife Tourism Infrastructure Programme	0.522	0.005	0.246	(0.276)	0%
Sports, Leisure and Community Assets	0.148	0.023	0.127	(0.021)	86%
TOTAL AREA COMMUNITY & CORPORATE DEVELOPMENT	24.093	4.651	19.838	(4.255)	82%
Disability Adaptations	1.200	0.536	1.200	-	100%
TOTAL GENERAL FUND HOUSING	1.200	0.536	1.200	-	100%
Looked After Children Homes Re provision	0.800	0.054	1.050	0.250	131%
Looked After Children	0.350	0.024	0.320	(0.030)	92%
CHILDRENS CAPITAL	1.150	0.077	1.370	0.220	119%
Minor Works	1.025	0.349	1.025	-	100%
Policy Options	2.588	0.379	2.588	-	100%
Regeneration/Estates Action	1.547	0.629	1.478	(0.069)	96%
Component Replacement	34.500	12.078	34.500	-	100%
Specific Needs/Sheltered Housing	10.798	3.546	10.798	-	100%
Structural Works (Specialist)	1.381	0.387	1.381	-	100%
Affordable Housing	68.016	27.291	67.974	(0.042)	100%
Major Projects	1.659	0.279	1.659	-	100%
Affordable Housing Phase 3	-	0.001	-	-	0%
TOTAL HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT	121.514	44.939	121.402	(0.112)	100%
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	147.957	50.202	143.811	(4.146)	97%

Income	Current Budget £m	Actual to Date £m	Projected Outturn £m	Projected Variance £m	Projected Outturn as % of Plan
Community Facilities Programme	(1.670)	(1.670)	(1.670)	-	100%
Countryside Programme	(2.545)	-	(1.806)	0.739	71%
Libraries, Museums, Galleries & Theatres	-	-	-	-	0%
Allotments Programme	-	-	-	-	0%
Parks Development Projects	(0.440)	(0.100)	(0.440)	-	100%
Improving Health Through Leisure & Sport	(0.114)	(0.067)	(0.112)	0.002	98%
Area Capital Investment	-	-	-	-	0%
Sport and Leisure Facilities	(0.050)	(0.050)	(0.050)	-	100%
Fife Tourism Infrastructure Programme	(0.007)	-	(0.007)	-	100%
TOTAL AREA COMMUNITY & CORPORATE DEVELOPMENT	(4.827)	(1.887)	(4.085)	0.741	85%

Looked After Children Homes Reprovision	-	-	-	-	0%
Looked After Children	-	-	-	-	0%
CHILDRENS CAPITAL	-	-	-	-	0%
Regeneration/Estates Action	-	-	-	-	0%
Component Replacement	-	(0.044)	(0.053)	(0.053)	0%
Specific Needs/Sheltered Housing	-	(0.250)	(1.848)	(1.848)	0%
Affordable Housing	(16.879)	(11.409)	(16.879)	-	100%
TOTAL HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT	(16.879)	(11.702)	(18.779)	(1.901)	111%
TOTAL INCOME	(21.705)	(13.589)	(22.865)	(1.160)	105%

14 November 2024
Agenda Item No. 10

2024-25 Revenue Budget Projected Out-turn – Health & Social Care

Report by: Fiona McKay, Interim Director, Health & Social Care Partnership
Eileen Rowand, Executive Director, Finance & Corporate Services

Wards Affected: All

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to give members an update on the 2024-25 projected out-turn at August 2024 and the movement from June 2024 for Fife Council Social Care Services for Adults and Older People.

Recommendation(s)

Committee is asked to consider the current financial performance and activity as detailed in the report.

Resource Implications

None

Legal & Risk Implications

The Service requires to manage the risk to individual clients and the community in Fife whilst undertaking its statutory duties within the budget approved by the Council for 2024-25.

Impact Assessment

An EqIA has not been completed and is not necessary as no change or revision to existing policies and practices is proposed.

Consultation

None

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise Members of the Health & Social Care projected outturn for 2024-25, taking in to account the actual expenditure incurred. Explanations of major variances are highlighted at Section 3. This is the second monitoring report to the Scrutiny Committee for the 2024-25 financial year.
- 1.2 Section 4 of the report summarises the progress on delivery of approved budget savings and provides an explanation of any variances to the delivery of the savings target.
- 1.3 Section 5 of the report summarises the Risk share apportionment for each Partner.

2.0 IJB

2.1 IJB Budget

- 2.1.1 The Health & Social Care Partnership (H&SCP) consists of parts of NHS, Social Care for Adults and Older People and an element of Fife Council Housing, specifically adaptations to houses. It does not include any social care expenditure incurred through Education & Children's Services. The budget is managed by the Integration Joint Board (IJB).
- 2.1.2 The IJB budget was approved on 31 March 2024. The cost to deliver services at existing levels required more funding than was currently available from both partner organisations and therefore a £39m package of savings plan to close the funding gap was presented and approved at that meeting. Additional allocations are awarded in year through Health budget allocations and the current budget for 2024-25 as at August is £718.794m.
- 2.1.3 Total reserves of £4.731m are held by Fife Council on behalf of the IJB. This is made up of £3.496m reserves that are ear-marked for specific use e.g. Mental Health, Community Living Change Plan etc. and, £1.235m of committed reserves which is to cover the cost of replacing existing Analogue Community alarms with Digital alarms. There are no general reserves available for use in 2024-25.

2.2 IJB Integration Scheme

- 2.2.1 To reflect the partnership working between the NHS and Fife Council through the Health & Social Care Partnership, an agreement has been reached on how any overspends should be shared between the partners. This is known as the risk share agreement and is part of the Integration Scheme. The share is Fife Council funds 38% and NHS funds 62% of any overall H&SCP overspend, regardless of where the overspend is incurred.
- 2.2.2 The H&SC Partnership is managed by the Integration Joint Board (IJB). Included in the budget is the recognition that resources will transfer from the NHS as more care is moved from a hospital setting to a home or homely setting. The budget and

projected outturn to August 2024 includes projected income from NHS of £4.049m for this transfer of resources.

- 2.2.3 Expenditure of £1.633m on adaptations to houses by Fife Council Housing Services is included in the overall budget for IJB. Housing expenditure is reported to this Committee in the Communities Finance reports and is therefore out with the scope of this report.
- 2.2.4 Part of the budget within Fife Council Social Care is excluded from the overall budget managed by IJB. The excluded element is the Contracts team, who manage the commissioning of services. The budget for this area is £1.935m, forecasted expenditure of £2.149m resulting in a small overspend. As this is not part of the budget managed by IJB, 100% of any over- or under-spend is funded by Fife Council.

3.0 Major Variances for Social Care

3.1 The budget allocated to Fife Council for Social Care for Adults and Older People is £233.150m which includes the budget for Contracts Team of £1.935m.

3.1.1 The projected overspend prior to risk share for Social Care for Adults and Older People within Fife Council is £12.771m or 5.48% of the net service managed budget which, is a reduction of (£2.521m) from the projected June overspend position. A summary is detailed in Appendix 1. As per the Integration Scheme a recovery plan has been developed to address the current overspend position and went to IJB Committee in September for approval.

3.2 **Integrated Complex and Critical Care** has a projected overspend of £2.420m, movement of (£2.305m). The main variances and reasons for movement are detailed as follows:

3.2.1 Adults Placements – overspend £4.785m, movement (£1.653m)

£3.400m relates to the under achievement of Commissioning and Transforming Overnight Care savings. The Commissioning saving of £2.4m is forecasting an under achievement of £0.7m in the current year, a resource to review Commissioning has been allocated and is progressing. The under achievement of £2.7m of the £3m Transforming overnight care saving is due to scoping out what the model will look like and delays in allocating a dedicated resource which has now been resolved.

£0.739m is due to increased demand for taxis transporting service users to college or day care provision and a reduction of £0.456m in Housing Benefit Income with the move to Universal Credit.

The movement is favourable and relates to (£1m) from increased delivery of the Commissioning saving. The balance relates to a reduction in the cost of adult packages.

3.2.2 Adults Supported Living – underspend (£0.899m), movement £0.084m

Within Community Support Services – vacancies are being held whilst the future design of the service is established

The movement is due to additional staff costs required to cover vacancies within the existing structure.

3.2.3 Adults Fife Wide – underspend (£0.244m), movement (£0.500m)

The underspend relates to vacancies within Dementia Care.

The movement of (£0.500m) is favourable and relates to the increased delivery of Re-imaging the Voluntary sector saving. Working with Voluntary organisations to identify possible reductions in the current year where the full allocation has not been fully utilised allowing a high level of reserves to be retained has been effective in achieving the saving.

3.2.4 Social Care Fieldwork Teams – underspend (£1.222m), movement (£0.236m) mainly relates to staffing due to delays in recruitment.

3.3 **Integrated Community Care Services** has a projected overspend of £9.596m, movement (£0.709m). The main variances and reasons for movement are detailed as follows:

3.3.1 Care at Home (CAH) – overspend £4.111m, movement £0.569

The main variance is due to £2.386m overspend on Care at Home packages due to more packages being commissioned than budgeted. £1.305m on Self Directed Support Payments. £0.804m overspend on Travel and Fleet, £0.227m overspend on Meals on Wheels and £0.100m on Community Alarms.

The position is partially offset by underspends due to vacancies in Internal Homecare and capacity in the community funding of (£1.584m). The capacity in the community was planned to be used for recruitment, however the increase in uptake of Direct Payments has utilised this funding.

£0.750m relates to the under achievement of the Single-Handed Care saving £1.5m in total. Single handed Care training is being finalised and will be rolled out to CAH staff; it is estimated that savings will only be achievable from October to March 2025.

The movement is due to an increase in external CAH packages and an increase in fleet charges.

3.3.2 Older People Residential & Daycare – overspend £1.812m, movement £0.253m

The main variance is due to projected costs for Agency across Care Homes of £2.025m and £0.794m on Catering and Cleaning charges. This cost is partially offset by vacancies (£0.897m) and over-recovery of income (£0.209m) which is in line with last year. Close monitoring of Agency is ongoing.

The movement is due to recruitment of relief staff and to existing core vacancies within the Care Homes with a view to reducing Agency. Catering and Cleaning agency projection has increased due to sickness & vacancies.

3.3.3 Older People Nursing & Residential – overspend £3.098m, movement (£1.674m)

There is a projected overspend in Long Term care beds £5.3m and Assessment beds of £1.5m due to a greater number of beds being utilised than budget available. This is partly offset by (£4m) over recovery on Income.

£0.500m relates to the under achievement on re-provision of Care Home beds saving which totals £2.5m.

The movement is favourable and relates to an improved projection in relation to financial assessments and the increased delivery of the re-provision of Care Home beds saving.

3.3.4 Occupational Therapy & Fife Equipment Loan Store – overspend of £0.537m, movement (£0.016m) mainly due to the increased cost of equipment in the Loan Store. Equipment such as beds, dynamic mattresses, riser recliner chairs, toileting and bathing equipment have all increased in price as has shipping costs and are all essential to support hospital discharge and prevent admission into hospital or long-term care.

4.0 Progress on Budget Savings

4.1 This section details revenue budget savings for Social Care for Adults and Older People, detailing achievements against the current year approved budget savings as at March.

4.2 Of the overall IJB savings plan £39m, £28m is expected to be achieved overall, leaving a shortfall of £11m unachieved. Fife Council Health and Social Care's allocation was £11.170m along with previously unmet savings of £5m (£4m was funded by reserves last year and £1m made on a temporary basis), giving total savings of £16.170m which require to be met in 2024-25 to balance the IJB budget. The service expects £10.620m (66% of target) to be achieved leaving unachieved savings of £5.550m.

5.0 Position after Risk Share

5.1 The risk share agreement means that the council is obligated to meet 38% of the overall IJB overspend. The overall projected position of the IJB at August, both NHS and Fife Council, is an overspend of £23.996m.

Per the Integration Scheme a recovery plan has been developed to reduce the projected overspend by £13m.

The risk share stipulates that any remaining overspend is to be funded 62% (£14.878m) from NHS and 38% (£9.118m) from Fife Council. The terms of this agreement mean that Health will transfer £3.429m to Fife Council per Appendix 2.

6.0 Conclusions

- 6.1 The projected outturn for Social Care for Adults and Older People for the 2024-25 financial year as at August 2024 is an overspend of £12.771m.

Per the Risk Share agreement Fife Council will pick up 38% of the overall IJB overspend of £23.996m, giving an overspend of £9.118m for Fife Council per Appendix 2.

List of Appendices

Appendix 1: Social Care – Revenue Budget 2024-25

Appendix 2: Risk Share

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BUDGET MONITORING REPORT SUMMARY AUGUST 2024 PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES						Appendix 1	
HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE	CURRENT BUDGET 2024-25 £m	FORECAST 2024 - 25 £m	VARIANCE £m	VARIANCE %	PREVIOUS REPORTED VARIANCE £m	MOVEMENT FROM PREVIOUS REPORTED VARIANCE £m	
TOTAL COST OF SERVICES	233.465	246.236	12.771	5.47%	15.293	(2.521)	
LESS: CORPORATELY MANAGED ITEMS	0.315	0.315	0.000	0.00%	0.000	0.000	
SERVICE MANAGED NET BUDGET	233.150	245.921	12.771	5.48%	15.293	(2.521)	
ANALYSIS OF SERVICE MANAGED BUDGET							
INTEGRATED COMMUNITY CARE SERVICES	114.772	124.369	9.596	8.36%	10.305	(0.709)	
INTEGRATED COMPLEX AND CRITICAL SERVICES	115.461	117.881	2.420	2.10%	4.725	(2.305)	
H&SC PROFESSIONAL AND BUSINESS ENABLING	0.981	1.522	0.541	55.19%	0.193	0.348	
FC CONTRACTS	1.935	2.149	0.214	11.05%	0.069	0.144	
HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE	233.150	245.921	12.771	5.48%	15.293	(2.521)	
H&SC PAYMENT FROM HEALTH PER RISK SHARE	0.000	0.000	(3.429)	0.00%			
TOTAL	233.150	245.921	9.342	4.01%			
SUBJECTIVE GROUPING	CURRENT BUDGET 2024-25 £m	FORECAST 2024 - 25 £m	VARIANCE £m	VARIANCE %	PREVIOUS REPORTED VARIANCE £m	MOVEMENT FROM PREVIOUS REPORTED VARIANCE £m	
SERVICE MANAGED NET BUDGET	233.150	245.921	12.771	5.48%	15.293	(2.521)	
INCOME	(98.810)	(101.913)	(3.103)	3.14%	(0.804)	(2.300)	
EXPENDITURE							
EMPLOYEE COSTS	110.263	107.782	(2.481)	-2.25%	(3.579)	1.098	
PREMISES RELATED EXPENDITURE	4.223	4.288	0.066	1.55%	(0.071)	0.137	
TRANSPORT RELATED EXPENDITURE	2.545	4.157	1.612	63.32%	1.567	0.045	
SUPPLIES & SERVICES	9.364	11.715	2.351	25.10%	1.776	0.574	
THIRD PARTY PAYMENTS	195.647	207.431	11.783	6.02%	12.921	(1.138)	
TRANSFER PAYMENTS	9.905	12.451	2.546	25.70%	3.482	(0.936)	
SUPPORT SERVICES CHARGES	0.012	0.010	(0.001)	-10.11%	0.000	(0.001)	
	331.959	347.834	15.875	4.78%	16.096	(0.222)	
HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE	233.150	245.921	12.771	5.48%	15.293	(2.521)	
H&SC PAYMENT FROM HEALTH PER RISK SHARE	0.000	0.000	(3.429)	0.00%			
TOTAL	233.150	245.921	9.342	4.01%			

Risk Share allocation between Fife Council and NHS
August 2024 Monitoring

Appendix 2

Overall Position	Budget	Forecast	Actual Overspend by Partnership	Risk Share Contribution	Overspend Adjusted for Risk Share	Reallocation between Partners
	£m	£m	£m	%	£m	£m
Total H+SC - per ledger (incl Risk Share)	233.150	245.921	12.771			
Total Fife Council H+SC - before Risk Share	233.150	245.921	12.771			
Less:						
Fife Council Contracts Team (not included in IJB)	1.935	2.149	0.214			
Fife Council H+SC (relevant to IJB)	231.215	243.772	12.557			
Add:						
Total Housing	1.633	1.623	-0.010			
Total relevant to Risk Share agreement	232.848	245.395	12.547			
Fife Council position for Risk Share agreement	232.848	245.395	12.547	38.0%	9.118	-3.429
NHS Position for Risk Share agreement	485.946	497.395	11.449	62.0%	14.878	3.429
IJB Total	718.794	742.790	23.996	100%	23.996	0.000

14 November 2024

Agenda Item No. 11

2024-25 Capital Plan Projected Outturn – Health & Social Care

Report by: Eileen Rowand, Executive Director, Finance and Corporate Services
Fiona McKay, Interim Director, Health and Social Care Partnership

Wards Affected: All

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the Health and Social Care Capital Investment Plan and advise on the projected out-turn for the 2024-25 financial year for People and Communities Scrutiny Committee.

Recommendation(s)

The Committee is asked to consider the current performance and activity across the 2024-25 Financial Monitoring as detailed in this report.

Resource Implications

None.

Legal & Risk Implications

None.

Impact Assessment

An EqlA has not been completed and is not necessary as no change or revision to existing policies and practices is proposed.

Consultation

None.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Based on current information, this report summarises the projected capital outturn as at 31 August 2024 for the areas falling under the scope of this Committee. Total expenditure is expected to be £8.995m, representing 106% of the approved capital programme for 2024/25.
- 1.2 Appendix 1 shows an analysis of specific projects in the current capital investment plan which have a budget greater than £1m and analyses total project cost rather than only in year spend.
- 1.3 Appendix 2 details the forecast expenditure against budget for each project.
- 1.4 Slippage is the term used to describe projects that are expected to spend less than the budget allocation in a particular year due to a delay in timing on the delivery of the project. This is not uncommon in the capital programme and the reasons for this can be wide and varied. Advancement is the term used to describe projects that are expected to spend more than the budget allocation in a particular year due to an acceleration of the budget from future years.

2.0 Issues, Achievements & Financial Performance

2.1 Major Projects – Potential Risks and Actions

- 2.1.1 Appendix 1 shows an overspend of £4.142m on H&SC Major Projects.

Anstruther Care Home is projecting a £3.342m overspend, this is due to the latest Stage Two Cost Plan reporting increased costs on Individual components e.g. internal walls and partitions have more than doubled in cost at 166.3% and windows and doors at 71.6%. In addition, Cabinet agreed to bring forward the programme budget to meet the increases for Methilhaven and Cupar which has also impacted the budget remaining for Anstruther.

Methilhaven is projecting a £0.800m overspend which is the last part of the estimated final bill and relates to various elements including an emergent requirement regarding Legionella, enhanced drainage and commercial kitchen adjustments prior to opening last year,

The overspends for both Methilhaven and Anstruther will be considered as part of the forthcoming Capital Plan Review

2.2 Progress/Achievements

- 2.2.1 Methil Site – operational from July 23, final bill expected imminently.
- 2.2.2 Cupar Site – the current programme position is 25 weeks on site, approx. 32% progress of the build. Works are currently estimated at 8 to 12 weeks behind schedule due to the delay with the steel structure, however, the initial steel structure arrived onsite 4th September for erection. The Site Team are working hard to pull time back with value engineering and re-organising works. Re-tendering of packages is progressing with some now appointed to sub-contractors. Finding a suitable contractor capable of sourcing and installing the proposed window system remains

challenging. Construction is still expected to be completed by September 2025, followed by an 8-week fit-out period.

2.2.3 Anstruther Site – discussions are ongoing between Housing and H&SC around the options appraisal exercise carried out to look at reducing the cost of the build. The programme will be revisited once an instruction to proceed is given by the Board. The new timeline will consider any future design changes to implement from the options appraisals exercise.

2.2.4 Glenrothes Respite Provision – the next stage will be to develop a business case.

2.3 Financial Performance – 2024-25 Provisional Outturn

2.3.1 The significant variances (+/- £0.500m) are explained below-

Re-provision of Care for Older People – overspend £0.650m – this is mainly due to due to the expected final bill for Methilhaven Care Home as explained in 2.1.1 above, partly offset by slippage in the Anstruther Care Home build.

3.0 Conclusions

3.1 The total 2024-25 approved programme for the areas in scope of the Health & Social Care Scrutiny Committee is £8.474m. The level of projected expenditure is £8.995m, resulting in an overspend of £0.521m which is mainly due to the Care Homes and slippage in the minor works programme.

3.2 The management of capital resources require us to look across financial years, as well as within individual years. The current year performance is only a snapshot of the existing plan, and the Directorate will adjust expenditure levels within future years of the plan to accommodate the advancement or slippage of projects.

List of Appendices

1. Total Cost Monitor
2. Capital Monitoring Report

Report Contact

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FIFE COUNCIL
PEOPLE & COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE
CAPITAL INVESTMENT PLAN 2024-33
TOTAL COST MONITOR - MAJOR CAPITAL PROJECTS

Project	Service	Original Approved Budget £m	Current Project Budget £m	Total Projected Outturn £m	Variance £m	Variance %	Current Project Status	Expected Project Completion Date
Methil Care Home	Opportunities for All	6.620	8.876	9.676	0.800	9.01%	Current Project	2024-25
Cupar Care Home	Opportunities for All	5.580	10.254	10.254	0.000	0.00%	Current Project	2025-26
Anstruther Care Home	Opportunities for All	6.145	8.864	12.206	3.342	37.70%	Feasibility	2026-27
Total Major Projects over £5.000m		18.345	27.995	32.136	4.142	14.79%		
Glenrothes Respite Provision	Opportunities for All		2.000	2.000	0.000	0.00%	Feasibility	2026-27
Total Major Projects over £1.000m		-	2.000	2.000	0.000	0.00%		
Total Major Projects		18.345	29.995	34.136	4.142	13.81%		

FIFE COUNCIL
 PEOPLE & COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
 HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE
 CAPITAL INVESTMENT PLAN 2024-33
 MONITORING REPORT 2024-25

Appendix 2

Expenditure	Current Budget £m	Actual to Date £m	Projected Outturn £m	Projected Variance £m	Projected Outturn as % of Plan
Adult Services (Resources)	0.335	0.014	0.206	(0.129)	61%
Older People's Residential/Day Care	0.070	0.050	0.070	0.000	100%
Re-Provision Of Care For Older People	7.769	0.865	8.419	0.650	108%
Telehealth Care	0.300	-	0.300	0.000	100%
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	8.474	0.929	8.995	0.521	106%

14 November 2024

Agenda Item No. 12

People & Communities Scrutiny Committee Workplan

Report by: Eileen Rowand, Executive Director Finance & Corporate Services

Wards Affected: All

Purpose

This report supports the Committee's consideration of the workplan for future meetings of the Committee.

Recommendation(s)

It is recommended that the Committee review the workplan and that members come forward with suggestions for areas of scrutiny.

Resource Implications

Committee should consider the resource implication for Council staff of any request for future reports.

Legal & Risk Implications

Committee should consider seeking inclusion of future items on the workplan by prioritising those which have the biggest impact and those which seek to deal with the highest level of risk.

Impact Assessment

None required for this paper.

Consultation

The purpose of the paper is to support the Committee's discussion and therefore no consultation is necessary.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Each Scrutiny Committee operates a workplan which contains items which fall under three broad headings: performance reporting, planning; and improvement work. These items will often lead to reactive rather than proactive scrutiny. Discussion on the workplan agenda item will afford members the opportunity to shape, as a committee, the agenda with future items of business it wishes to review in more detail.

2.0 Conclusions

- 2.1 The current workplan is included as Appendix one and should be reviewed by the committee to help inform scrutiny activity.

List of Appendices

1. Workplan

Background Papers

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

None

Report Contact

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People and Communities Scrutiny Committee of 16 January 2025			
Title	Service(s)	Contact(s)	Comments
Fife Coast & Countryside Trust Annual Report	Communities	Paul Vaughan	Annual report last presented 29.02.24 Next due February 2025
Fife Sports & Leisure Trust Annual Report	Communities and Neighbourhoods Service	Paul Vaughan	Annual report last presented (Stand alone report) on 29.02.24 Scheduled January 2024 Next annual report due early 2025
Fife Golf Trust Annual Report	Communities and Neighbourhoods Service	Paul Vaughan	Annual report (stand alone report) last presented 29.02.24 Scheduled January 2024 Next annual report due January 2025
OnFife (Fife Cultural Trust) Annual Report	Communities and Neighbourhoods Service	Paul Vaughan	Annual report (stand alone report) last presented 29.02.24 Next due February 2025
Allotment & Community Growing Strategy 2024-2029	Communities and Neighbourhoods Service	Paul Vaughan	Report to be submitted to the People and Communities Scrutiny Committee on progress of the Strategy in six months - agreed at cabinet committee on 8.2.24 4/9 - PV Email asking to move to november 2423/10 - PV email asking to move to next cttee meeting
Delivery of Fife Affordable Housing Programme	Housing Services	John Mills, Helen Wilkie	Requested by Cllr Goodall on 31/10/23 agreed with John Mills on 2/11/23 To be considered after the cabinet committee in April 24 agreed at agenda planning meeting on 13.2.2428/03/24 - Email John Mills - Unfortunately, the Scottish Government have not released the Fife Resource Planning Assumption for Affordable Housing and may not do so until later April. Can we defer this report until May/June?

People and Communities Scrutiny Committee of 16 January 2025			
Title	Service(s)	Contact(s)	Comments
			5/6 - email Helen Wilkie, need to await the review of the affordable housing programme need to postpone for 3 months 03/9 - email John Mills defer to November 23/10 - defer to Jan 2025
Review of Dampness, Condensation and Black Mould in Council Properties		Helen Wilkie	03/09 - New report added by John Mills 23/10 - Email John Mills move to Jan 2025.

People and Communities Scrutiny Committee of 13 March 2025			
Title	Service(s)	Contact(s)	Comments
Fife Community Safety Partnership	Housing Services	Patricia Spacey	Last presented - 08.06.23 Scheduled - 27.06.24 Moved to earlier reporting - themed reporting March 2025
Police Scotland Local Policing Plan - Annual Report	Police Scotland		Last presented 29.02.24 Annual report due February 2025
Fife Duty of Candour Annual Report	Health and Social Care	Avril Sweeney	Jennifer Rezendes - Principal social work officer - last presented 29.02.24 Annual report due February 2025
OnFife - Fife cultural trust - update on pilot initiatives	Fife Cultural Trust	Heather Stuart	agreed at cttee on 29.2.24 - para 105 - agreed to bring back a report on the pilot initiatives
Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Local Plan Annual Performance Report	Scottish Fire & Rescue Service		Kenneth Barbour/Lee Turnock Last presented 27 June 2024 Moved to March 2025 themed reporting
Public Protection Annual Report		James Ross-fc-d1	Single public protection report to replace existing reports on child protection, adult

People and Communities Scrutiny Committee of 13 March 2025			
Title	Service(s)	Contact(s)	Comments
			protection, violence against women partnership - partnership reporting

People and Communities Scrutiny Committee of 15 May 2025			
Title	Service(s)	Contact(s)	Comments
Tackling Dampness and Mould in Private Sector		Mhairi Mullen	Cabinet Committee - 9/5/24 remitted to scrutiny - see para. 241 - Tackling Dampness and Mould in Private Sector Housing - Proposed Action Plan - agreed that an update report would be submitted to P&C Scrutiny in a year's time (Mhairi Mullen)
Outcomes of Care Inspectorate Inspection and Grading Process	Health and Social Care	Alan Adamson, Fiona Mckay	Last presented 27 June 2024 Scheduled May 2025 Next due May/June 2026
Fife Corporate Parenting Board	Education	Fiona Balloch	Annual report scheduled 25.04.24 Next annual report due April 2025
2025 Equality & Diversity Outcomes Report		Zahida Ramzan	Last presented 8.6.23 - due every 2 years Next due June 2025

People and Communities Scrutiny Committee of 25 September 2025			
Title	Service(s)	Contact(s)	Comments
Cafe Inc update report - on review of changes from 2024	Communities and Neighbourhoods Service	Paul Vaughan	agreed at cttee on 29.2.24 - further review to take place on cafe inc end of summer 2025 and report back to committee (para 107 refers)
2025 Health & Social Care Annual Performance Report	Health and Social Care		last presented 26.09.24 Next due - September 2025
Annual Assurance Statement	Housing Services	Mhairi Mullen	Last presented - 31.08.23 Scheduled - 26.09.24 Next due September 2025

People and Communities Scrutiny Committee of 25 September 2025			
Title	Service(s)	Contact(s)	Comments
2025 Customer & Online Services Annual Report		Diarmuid Cotter	Last presented - 16.11.23 Scheduled - 14.11.24 Next due November 2025
Housing - Garden Fencing Policy Update	Housing Services	John Mills	Added to FWP - following recommendation from cabinet committee 2024 CC 151 - Para 185 (4) - agreed that the fencing policy be reviewed September 2025.

People and Communities Scrutiny Committee of 20 November 2025			
Title	Service(s)	Contact(s)	Comments
2025 Chief Social Work Annual Report		Christine Moir	Last presented - 16.11.23 Scheduled - 14.11.24 Next due November 2025
2025 Citizen Advice & Rights Fife Performance Report	Communities and Neighbourhoods Service	Ashley Birrell	Last presented - 16.11.23 Scheduled - 14.11.24 Next Due November 2025

Unallocated			
Title	Service(s)	Contact(s)	Comments
Armed Forces Covenant Report	Legal & Democratic Services	Carol Connolly	Last presented at Policy & Coordination committee on 20.01.2022. 29.2.24 - para 117 refers - cttee asked if this report can be brought to the June 2024 meeting as armed forces day on 29 June 2024.29/5 - Email Lindsay Thomson move awaiting info from KenGourlay and unable to submit due to election23/10 - Carol Connolly is now responsible. Lindsay asking Carol to allocate date.
Housing Adaptations	Housing Services, Health and Social Care	Fiona Mckay, Audrey Valente	agreed at cttee on 29.2.24 - (para 111 and para 117) refers - joint report by

Unallocated			
Title	Service(s)	Contact(s)	Comments
			housing & health & social care on housing adaptations
Staff vacancies across all services	Communities	Michael Enston	agreed at cttee on 29.2.24 - para 117 refers report on staff vacancies across all services under the scope of committee
Workshop on Gypsy Traveller Encampments in Fife		Paul Short	agreed at committee on 26.9.24 (para 134 (3) refers - workshop to be set up with Cllrs Steele, Campbell, Watt
Grenfell Update Report following cabinet committee	Housing Services	John Mills	agreed at cttee on 26.9.24 - para 145 (5) refers - update report for scrutiny following consideration at the cabinet committee.