
To: Infrastructure, Land and Environment Policy Board

On: 15 March 2023

Report by: Director of Environment & Infrastructure

Heading: Operational Performance Report

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report provides an overview of key service activities since the last Policy Board report on 25 January 2023 and an operational performance update on the services and key projects delivered during this period.
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2. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Infrastructure, Land and Environment Policy Board:

- 2.1 Approves the operational performance update detailed within this report.
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3. Background

- 3.1 Environment & Infrastructure provides essential services to every household in Renfrewshire and works in partnership with the local community, other service areas and Community Planning Partners, to deliver key Council priorities and initiatives. A progress update on the main activities delivered by the services within Environment & Infrastructure, in respect of the areas of activity delegated to this Policy Board, is detailed below.

- 3.2 For Operational Services while most of the COVID-19 restrictions have now been removed, Covid related absences continue to be a challenge to service delivery. In addition, whilst assisting the services to continue to operate last year, staff accrued annual leave which they have now been using this year.
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Updates for Infrastructure Land and Environment Policy Board

4. Fleet, Roads and Transportation

4.1 Fleet Services - Employee Upskilling

Following a full training program, 9 operatives from Roads, Streetscene and Waste Services have successfully passed their LGV driving test. This offers an opportunity for employees to further their career and provides a welcome increase in the number of LGV drivers available across the service. The service is planning to run a similar LGV training program in the new financial year.

4.2 Roads Capital Investment Program

The carriageways program for 2022/23 is substantially complete with 78 of the programed 90 now complete. Four additional resurfacing schemes (Broomlands Street, Paisley; Maxwellton Road, Paisley; Neilston Road, Paisley and Torr Road, Bridge of Weir) will be completed on a phased approach with the first due to start week commencing on 3 April. Completion of these works will take the scheme to 82. The remaining 8 were unable to progress due to conflicts within the Scottish Road Works Register and will be rescheduled into next year's program.

- 4.2.1 The large area patching program, the surface treatment and pre-patching in advance of next year's surface dressing contract are now complete.

- 4.2.3 The carriageway reconstruction contract (Old Greenock Road Inchinnan, Brick Lane and William Street Paisley) will commence on site in March and complete by the end of April.

- 4.2.4 The service is currently reviewing the capital investment program for 2023/24, this revised program will take cognisance of the additional £3m allocated from the capital budget taking the total Capital Investment to £6.7m, this includes £700k of CWSR funding. The schemes delayed in 2022/23 including many of the originally programed footways, will be delivered from funds carried forward from the current program.

- 4.2.5 In January 2020 the ILE Policy board increased fees and charges in relation to roads and infrastructure related services. The increased charges were designed to ensure there was a fiscal incentive to utility companies and contractors working on our road network, as it would be to their financial benefit to carry out work in Renfrewshire in a timely fashion, minimising disruption to road users and communities in Renfrewshire. Appendix 1 to this report sets out the new fees proposed for the financial year 2023/2024 for road related fees and charges.

4.3 Winter Maintenance

To the 27 February 2023, the Winter Maintenance program has used a cumulative total of 3,823 tons of salt gritting Renfrewshire roads. The service has gritted primary network

routes 79 times and our secondary network on 20 occasions. Grit bin stocks continue to be replenished as and when required.

4.4 **#YouDecide**

The successful #YouDecide projects were announced at an event held at the start of February. The event was well attended with over 90 people from communities across Renfrewshire. Following the announcement, officers have attended each Local Partnership meeting to give an update on progress and advise on next steps.

4.5 **20mph Zones**

The Council is progressing its plans for the roll out of 20mph zones across Renfrewshire. This work is being carried out over two phases.

4.5.1 The first phase is the conversion of previous advisory 20mph zones to permanent mandatory 20mph zones. The Traffic Regulation Order has been put through its 1st phase consultation and will be due to go to 2nd stage consultation by the end of March 2023.

4.5.2 Transport Scotland have also provided funding for Council's to assess their remaining road network for other areas that may be suitable for 20mph zones, and this work is progressing well. The Council has to return the information back to Transport Scotland by the end of March 2023 to allow an overall national position to be reviewed prior to moving forward with implementation plans.

4.6 **Active Travel & Infrastructure Improvement Update**

Renfrewshire Council Environment & Infrastructure have been awarded £1,485,000 SPT Capital funding for 2023/24 for bus corridor improvements, traffic signal upgrades, new pedestrian crossing installations, Paisley to Renfrew active travel route, Linburn Road bus turning circle construction and Milliken Park Rail Station drop off / pick up zone design.

4.7 Renfrewshire Council and City Deal Teams applied to Transport Scotland's Active Travel Transformation Fund on Friday 27 January. The application covered a range of Capital Infrastructure funding for construction ready projects in 2023/24 including Clyde Waterfront River Regeneration, AIMDS South Gallowhill link to existing Paisley to Renfrew active travel route and Erskine (Red Smiddy to Southholm roundabouts) active travel links.

4.8 Environment & Infrastructure have been working with Peel Ports maritime group, Siemens, Scottish Power and haulage contractors to facilitate the safe transportation of long trailer with a new 300 Ton electrical transformer from King George V Docks near Braehead to the Scottish Power substation in Gleniffer Braes, this is scheduled for 21 March 2023. To allow safe use of the road network there are planned activities with Police Scotland including the temporary removal of traffic lights and street furniture on the route of Grahamston Road, Caplethill Road, Glenburn Road and Gleniffer Road. These will be reinstated once the safe transportation has been completed.

5. Parks Investment

- 5.1 The complete renewal of the Elm Drive & Sycamore Avenue play area in Johnstone was successfully completed at the end of February 2023 and reopened to the public.
- 5.2 Refurbishment of the play equipment and safer surface at Moss Road Park in Bridge of Weir was completed on schedule in January 2023.
- 5.3 Further planned refurbishment of Howwood Park Toddler / Junior, Houston Public Park and Inchinnan Playing Field play areas will advance to the Procurement phase in late March / April 2023 with the works anticipated in early summer.
- 5.4 A joint bid from the Council, working in partnership with OneRen, has been submitted for the funding of refurbishment of two sets of tennis courts within Renfrewshire. The Lawn Tennis Association have agreed to the bids for Robertson Park and Brodie Park in principle, with a third bid for Johnstone being considered in the next tranche. The bids approval will be subject to formal internal approvals to ensure that the courts are transferred to the One Ren portfolio to manage.

6. Climate Change

- 6.1 **Electric Vehicle Charge Points**
Installation of Electric Vehicle Chargers, providing 18 EV charging bays, have been completed at Gallowhill Community Centre, Hunterhill Community Centre, Hawkhead Road, Williamsburgh Court, Arkleston Road and Barochan Road Children's Homes. Works have been fully funded by Energy Savings Trust for Fleet Charging Infrastructure.
- 6.2 **Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Study**
Renfrewshire Council have been awarded £60,000 and partnered up with Glasgow City Region partners to establish a regional feasibility study on the future EV charging requirements over the next 5-10 years. The interim report concluded in February 2023 providing projected numbers of EV Chargers required and the associated costs. This report will be submitted to Transport Scotland for future funding.
- 6.3 **Biodiversity**
Engagement on the next phase of Biodiversity sites was completed in January 2023. Following the engagement, storyboards have been enhanced to reflect feedback.
- 6.4 Preparation of the wildflower corridors / areas has commenced and will continue throughout April; this involves treating the grasses and pervasive weeds which out compete the wildflowers. Following these works, seeding will commence when the ambient temperature rises, which is expected to be early May.
- 6.5 For ease of reference for Elected Members, the next tranche of sites as agreed through the Climate Change Board are at the following locations with a link to the storyboard ([Biodiversity link](#)):
 - Mill Lade, Linwood

- Shaw Place, Linwood
- Knockhill Park, Renfrew
- Cunningham Road, Kilbarchan
- Woodside Park, Paisley
- Nursery Area at Oldhall Road, Ralston
- Station Road Playing Fields, Langbank
- Erskine Pool Area (rear of), Erskine
- Auchenlodment Road, Johnstone
- Barscube Terrace to Ladykirk Crescent, Paisley
- Arkleston Road, Renfrew

7. Team Up to Clean Up

- 7.1 Team Up to Clean Up member numbers and engagement levels continue to steadily grow, there are currently 4,168 group members. Volunteers, previously unknown to one another, are meeting through the group to join forces in clearing large open spaces. In February, 65 bags of litter and some flytipping were removed from Lawn Street Car Park by 5 volunteers. This resulted in the land being secured to prevent further litter and flytipping, as well as a donation of £500 to Renfrewshire Food Bank from the private landowner who is working in partnership with Renfrewshire Council to regenerate the site.
- 7.2 The Environmental Taskforce have had a focus on creating connections with local Housing Associations, ensuring the responsibility and limitations of each organisation are understood and the appropriate contacts are identified. The Housing Associations have further raised awareness of the partnership, the Environmental Taskforce, and the issues of flytipping, through their social media.
- 7.3 Meetings have further taken place with 4 private landowners who cleared their land of flytipping as instructed, and have installed, or are installing, measures on site to prevent further instances.
- 7.4 As well as daily patrols to local hotspots, the Taskforce have invested in a suite of CCTV cameras to deter and detect flytipping. Overt cameras, already onsite, offer automatic number plate recognition, zoom high resolution images up to 150 metres, 360 view and stream to laptops and mobile phones. These have proven an effective deterrent in large open spaces prone to heavy flytipping from commercial organisations. Smaller cameras have been deployed to deter/detect flytipping at garages, lockups and residential areas. Investigations are ongoing to establish an appropriate solution for rural roads with no power source. The Taskforce are working alongside one mobile phone provider to trial a suitable solution.
- 7.5 The Taskforce has met with one of the Procurator Fiscal's at Paisley Sheriff Court and Scotland's Environmental & Wildlife Procurator Fiscal who have both been updated on the creation of the Taskforce and its role. SEPA are further aware of the Taskforce and have been providing guidance and support.

*Figures below detail work from the period 1 December 2022 to 31 January 2023

Action	
Proactive visits to identified hotspot areas	226
Number of reports investigated	292
Tonnes of flytipping removed	42
Number of sites secured to prevent further flytipping	4
Letters to private landowners	14
Visits to businesses to ensure Waste Disposal Arrangements in place	23

8. Waste and Recycling Services

- 8.1 New skips, compactors and roller packers purchased using the award from the Recycling Improvement Fund (RIF) have been delivered to the HWRC sites, these will be operational by the end of March. The new equipment will allow us to remove soil and turf and hard plastics from the mixed waste, also they will provide us with additional capacity for cardboard. In addition, we have implemented the recycling of paint across all sites. All of these will bring an enhanced offering to residents and allow them to recycle more material on-site increasing the quantity & quality of the material and reduce the cost of extracting it from the mixed waste. The site staff will be on hand to advise site users of the correct location for each material.
- 8.2 The Council agreed to introduce a garden waste permit scheme. Implementation planning is underway and this will be supported by a full communications campaign. Drop-in elected member awareness sessions will be arranged in due course.
- 8.3 The Council currently provides a free waste collection and disposal service to around 75 churches across Renfrewshire and from 100 charities as part of the Council's commercial waste service. This service provision varies greatly from weekly uplifts of a 240l bin to multiple uplifts of bins up to the 1280l capacity. The Council currently levies no charge on churches or charities for collecting their waste.
- 8.4 Under the Waste Scotland Regulations, Councils are obliged to provide churches with a free waste collection service in the same way they do for the majority of household collections. Under the Waste Scotland Regulations, Council are allowed to charge for collection of charities waste, but not the processing of their waste.
- 8.5 The Council propose to provide churches with a free household collection and disposal services where the general waste bin is collected every 3 weeks and the recycle bins are collected every 4 weeks. If churches generate food waste this will be collected fortnightly and if garden waste is generated by a church, the church can choose to participate in the garden permit scheme. Where a church wishes to receive a more frequent service and/ or a larger volume of waste collected, the church will be offered this commercial service on the same basis it is proposed for charities as set out in the next paragraph
- 8.6 A charge levied at 55% of the commercial waste charge, is proposed for charities collections, on the basis that we will be charging for collection only. The cost will reflect

the volume and frequency of waste collections undertaken, this will be effective from 1 April 2023.

8.7 The Council's waste advisors will work with churches and charities to support the new arrangements over the coming months. It is expected following review of existing arrangements there will be opportunities to increase the recycling that is presented by both churches and charities as part of these service changes.

8.8 Following World Mental Health Day, the waste services team have been raising awareness and highlighting Cervical Cancer Prevention Week which took place from 23–29 February. Scotland have on average 1,700 cases per year, many of which could be prevented by knowing how to protect yourself. Most people think cervical cancer can only affect woman. The campaign has raised awareness throughout the Waste Services team that Human Papillomavirus (HPV) infection can infect both men and woman.

9. Street Scene

9.1 The grass cutting season commences on 27 March 2023 with the details of the program available on the Council webpage for the public to access the information. The recruitment of seasonal staff to assist in the grass cutting has been completed.

9.2 A focused winter maintenance program was carried out during January, February and will continue throughout March to enhance the appearance of the cemeteries. This involved removal of excess detritus, scrapping paths & kerbs, edging grass areas, and cutting back shrubbery.

9.3 Following the motion to Council regarding grass-cutting in cemeteries and around war memorials, the Convener of the ILE board, with the relevant officers, have engaged with the mover and seconder. It was agreed that the new program of intense winter works mentioned in 9.2 was extended to all 9 cemeteries ensuring that they all had a focused winter maintenance programme, prior to the start of the grass cutting season and continue to cut and leave the grass on the 14-day schedule.

9.4 Memorial Safety Inspections continue and are expected to be completed by June 2023. 85% of initial inspections have been complete. A program of annual re-inspections has commenced on memorials identified as requiring to be monitored at the initial inspection.

9.5 To date the Council has inspected 21,305 headstones of these 1,571 were carefully laid flat or barriered off as they were deemed to be in an unsafe condition. A further 5,047 headstones were issued with an advisory notice advising lair holders that they will require some future work to ensure that the headstone remains safe. There have been 28 public/elected member enquiries in relation to headstones that were laid flat since the project began in early 2020.

10. Glyphosate

10.1 Following the Council decision last September, StreetScene trialed a few different weed control methods over the course of the 2022 growing season, this included the use of hot foam, chemical products, and manual methods.

- 10.2 The hot foam machine relied on a diesel boiler to heat up the water and adds to the CO₂ emissions produced. The machine was very slow, difficult to maneuver and not suitable for many areas with trailing hoses and trip hazards. The solution was deemed poor for effective weed control.
- 10.3 The chemical alternative was also deemed ineffective, having only a short duration impact on weed control and secondary intervention was required to control growth with additional strimming / scrapping and respraying. In particular, it was ineffective at controlling weed growth on school pitches. Following this trial, the service proposes using glyphosate on school grounds. Any treatments will be undertaken during school holiday times when there are no children or adults present within the school grounds.
- 10.4 StreetScene reverted to increased manual strimming and scrapping to address the weed growth and whilst this removes the heads, concerns remain this is not killing into the roots and increased root growth will continue with potential damage to surfaces (break up of assets). Strimming and scraping to control weed growth is slow and very expensive, with additional short-term funding being allocated to this area for 2022/23 to deliver the change that will need to continue.

11. Clyde Muirshiel

- 11.1 In preparation of the busier summer season, winter maintenance has continued at Clyde Muirshiel and Castle Semple Country Parks. Staff, with the help of volunteers, have been working on paths at The Maze, removing sitka at Muirshiel and Rhododendron at Parkhill. Camera traps have been placed in Parkhill to confirm presence of Badgers before forthcoming clearance of larger rhododendron areas.
- 11.2 Countryside Rangers continue regular sessions with schools, community network activities, talks to local communities and Duke of Edinburgh youth groups. The sowing of yellow rattle to improve biodiversity at Lochwinnoch meadow has been done in partnership with local youth groups.
- 11.3 Outdoor Activity staff have remained busy with groups throughout winter along with equipment servicing in readiness for a busy 2023. Demand for outdoor activity experiences remains very high. 2023 is nearly full, booking requests are already being received for 2024 and 2025.
- 11.4 The café and gift shop (CSCP) are fully accessible and will continue to operate 'winter hours' (10am to 4pm) until the end of March. 'Summer hours' (10am to 5pm) begin in April. The cafe has been supporting various 'Warm Spaces' activities, Men's Shed and community events including the ever-popular Renfrewshire Walking Network, 'Tartan Walk', led by a Countryside Ranger.

Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – There are ongoing challenges with the impact of COVID and cost of living pressures, these are captured in the financial outturn report presented in a separate paper to this policy board.

2. **HR & Organisational Development** – None

3. **Community & Council Planning**

Our Renfrewshire is thriving / Reshaping our place, our economy and our future - the service is actively involved in the Invest in Renfrewshire scheme and investing in road network to support and facilitate economic growth.

Creating a sustainable Renfrewshire for all to enjoy - working in partnership with the community to deliver a cleaner Renfrewshire. Promoting and encouraging waste minimisation through reducing, reusing and recycling. Reducing carbon emissions, through LED streetlights and electric and low emission vehicles within the Council fleet.

Our Renfrewshire is well - the service encourages use of our parks and open spaces to promote a healthy and active lifestyle.

4. **Legal** – None

5. **Property/Assets** – The Council's roads, fleet and open space infrastructure is maintained and enhanced.

6. **Information Technology** – None

7. **Equality & Human Rights** - The recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website

8. **Health & Safety** – None

9. **Procurement** – None

10. **Risk** – CRMG are continuing to review the Council's risk profile in light of the coronavirus pandemic.

11. **Privacy Impact** – None

12. CoSLA Policy Position – None

13. Climate Risk – The Council continues to explore opportunities to secure external funding to deliver sustainable, green infrastructure projects.

List of Background Papers: January 2020 – Fee's & Charges Report

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Appendix 1 – Roads & Infrastructure Fees & Charges

Roads & Infrastructure Charges	Current Charges	New Charges
	April 2022 - March 2023	Apr 2023
Road Opening Permit - First week of opening	£315.20	£400
Road Opening Permit – First week of opening, arterial road	£682.90	£800
Road Opening Permit - Charge for each additional week or part week thereafter	£367.75	£550
Road Opening Permit – Charge for each additional week or part week thereafter, arterial road	£735.40	£880
Portable traffic light permits	£137	£200
Road Occupation Permit	£157.60	£250
Footway crossing permits and works	£105.10	£230
Skip permits	£52.55	£130
TTRO's	£303	£550
TTRO's Short Term Notices	£70	£350