

To: Infrastructure, Land and Environment Policy Board

On: 8 November 2023

Report by: Director of Environment, Housing & Infrastructure

Heading: Service Update Report

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report provides an overview of key service activities since the last Policy Board report on 30 August 2023 and an 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 Service Updates detailed within this report.
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3. Background

- 3.1 Environment, Housing & 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 in respect of the areas of activity delegated to this Policy Board, is detailed below.
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Updates for Infrastructure, Land and Environment Policy Board

4. Fleet, Roads and Transportation

4.1 Fleet Services

- 4.1.1 Fleet Services have provided roads winter gritting vehicles for the winter programme – winter operational driver training has been provided to the road's drivers over two sessions. This also forms part of their driver CPC qualification.
- 4.1.2 Fleet Services (FS) are currently implementing the replacement tracker system procured from a new provider which will offer greater functionality as technology evolves to support service delivery. Working in conjunction with other Services, FS are taking the opportunity to cleanse the data going into the new system, this includes current vehicles, drivers, and users.

4.2 **Roads & Transportation**

4.2.1 **Roads Capital Investment Programme**

As of 1 October 2023, we have completed the resurfacing of 31 carriageways and 14 footways. The remaining 50 footways and 3 carriageways will be completed by the end of the financial year.

- 4.2.2 Within Infrastructure & Assets we have recently recruited two invest trainees, one as a trainee Inspector and the other as a trainee vegetation officer. Within Road Operations, two trainee roadworkers, a trainee clerical assistant and a trainee flooding officer are being recruited.

4.2.3 **#YouDecide**

There were 50 successful #YD projects. Most recently these include: a new pelican crossing at Magnus Rd, Houston, a dog exercise area in East End Park, Paisley, improvements to the playing surface at Howwood Park, new kickabout goals at Spateston Park being completed and works have started in Gleniffer Country Park to improve paths and signage.

4.2.4 **Street Lighting**

The streetlighting maintenance service has now moved over to the Roads Service. Work is underway to establish the current position in relation to the condition of the streetlighting network and identify areas where concerns have been raised about dark lamps.

The Council has procured consultancy support from Amey Consulting to assist the Council in reviewing current practices and identifying any opportunities for improvement.

The maintenance team and capital team will now work more closely together preparing capital investment schemes for delivery each year. A separate report will be brought back to a future Infrastructure, Land and Environment Policy Board with respect to the Council motion raised at the Council meeting of 28 September 2023.

4.3 **Active Travel & Infrastructure Improvement Update**

- 4.3.1 Beat the Street has been completed in Renfrew, Erskine, Bishopton, Inchinnan and Langbank after a 6-week programme from September to October 2023. The project aimed to increase people's activity levels, improve health and promote behavioural change. The service worked in partnership with OneRen to promote the project in

schools and local communities. Beat the Street finished on 25 October. In total, there were 7,573 players who covered a total of 118,459 miles during the 6-week period. This included schools and community groups who benefitted from being encouraged to travel actively, therefore feel fitter and being rewarded through vouchers for local businesses.

- 4.3.2 The next phases of the Paisley to Renfrew active travel route including upgraded shared footways connecting Nethergreen Road to Kirklandneuk Primary School and Craigielea Road to Fulbar Avenue have been completed. The accessibility ramp connecting Wright Street Renfrew to the off-road section to Paisley has been started by Ambassador Homes as part of their development planning consent.
- 4.3.3 A public engagement on Bus Partnership funded interventions at the Mill Street/Glasgow Road junction and Gauze Street/Lawn Street junction is currently live. The consultation feedback will inform the final designs.
- 4.3.4 Pedestrian crossings on Magnus Road, Houston and Newshot Drive, Erskine have been installed. These crossings are part of Council You Decide and SPT funded programme to address concerns over crossing safety and speeding at locations around schools, nurseries and key junctions in towns and villages.
- 4.3.5 The contract for the refurbishments of three signalised junctions from “old” technology to more efficient LED systems has been awarded with installations at High Street/Collier Street Johnstone, High Street / Millburn Drive Renfrew and Gallowgreen / Douglas Street Paisley. This project is fully funded by SPT.
- 4.3.6 Construction of a replacement Plymuir Bridge in Gleniffer Braes Paisley started on 9th October 2023 for a period of around 10 weeks. This will bring the last council-owned bridge up to national requirement of being able to carry 40 tonnes, when built.
- 4.3.7 Renfrewshire Council have been successful in their application for an embedded Sustrans Senior Officer who will work over the next three years with our Active Travel team to improve links on the National Cycle Network in Renfrewshire.
- 4.3.8 Following the withdrawal of McGills Bus service 64 in Gallowhill Paisley, engagement between Renfrewshire Council and the bus operator noted that the road network was a factor in their decision to remove the service. A public consultation for a one-way system in the Gallowhill loop area is currently being undertaken during October and November. The results of the consultation and any subsequent requirements for a revised traffic regulation order will be reported to next ILE Policy Board.

5. Climate Change

5.1 Biodiversity

Biodiversity Areas in Renfrewshire

- 5.1.1 The Autumn cut-and-lift maintenance of the wildflower meadow habitat at the 17 delivered biodiversity areas is underway, with 2023's annual management complete at 11 sites. This will reduce soil nutrients and prepare for the perennial plants to flourish and flower next year.

5.1.2 Selection of the next 11 sites has been finalised with site-specific biodiversity enhancements prescribed, these will be established in autumn 2023 and spring 2024, this is dependent on weather conditions and seed availability.

Restoring Renfrewshire’s Rivers

5.1.3 The Council secured £350k through a competitive strand of the Nature Restoration Fund. This will assist with the delivery of a community-based survey, removal, and biosecurity monitoring of 5 invasive non-native plant species from 5 Renfrewshire watercourses. The recruitment and procurement exercises are in progress to enable commencement of project activities in early 2024.

5.1.5 The coordinator of the Team Up to Clean Up project has agreed to involve volunteer workforce in the project.

5.1.6 Scotland’s Invasive Species Initiative (SISI) have provided input to the Restoring Renfrewshire’s Rivers (RRR) project plan and have agreed to share knowledge, experience and resources going forward, including site visits at SISI and RRR project sites.

5.1.7 Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA) has been contacted to provide best practice guidance to ensure compliant riverbank works.

5.2 Energy Management

5.2.1 ECO4 Flex

ECO4 Flex will allow the Council to approve funding to Renfrewshire’s private sector, fuel poor households that do not meet criteria for other schemes, as well as low-income households that are vulnerable to the effects of the cold. The scheme is part of the UK Government Energy Company Obligation and is managed by Ofgem.

The qualifying criteria for ECO-Flex, as set by Ofgem, is published on our website in a document called a Statement of Intent. Renfrewshire’s Statement of Intent can be found here: https://www.renfrewshire.gov.uk/media/15354/ECO4-flex-statement-of-intent/pdf/Renfrewshire_Council_Statement_of_Intent_for_ECO4_flex.pdf?m=1675687584337ECO-flex. ECO-flex, does not apply to Council Housing or Registered Social Landlords.

The energy efficiency measures being installed within Renfrewshire include: boilers, loft insulation, cavity wall insulation, air source heat pumps, solar panels, heating controls, first time central heating etc.

The table below highlights the savings ECO4 Flex has achieved to date based on annually recurring savings:

Financial Year	Value of Grant Funding Requested (£)	Total Annual CO2 Saving in Kg	Total Annual Cost Saving (£)
2023/24	£1,755,502	385,405	£119,032

5.2.2 Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategies (LHEES)

Renfrewshire Council is required to publish our LHEES strategy before the end of 2023. An internal working group has been formed with key officers from across the Council meeting to help shape the strategy.

A public stakeholder engagement event was undertaken on 28 June 2023 with internal and external stakeholder events taking place during September and October 2023. All stakeholder events will feed into the core themes of the strategy.

Funding has been secured from Zero Waste Scotland and the Scottish Futures Trust to allow Renfrewshire to undertake 2 feasibility studies. These studies will look to investigate the potential district heating opportunities within 2 areas of Renfrewshire. A further 3 applications have been submitted to explore a further 3 zones within Renfrewshire.

Renfrewshire have applied to join a district heating mentoring programme run in conjunction with the Scottish and Danish Governments.

6. Team Up to Clean Up

6.1 Spotless September, an annual event, facilitated 357 litterpicks across the month with over 1,500 volunteers participating. Engagement with schools increases over the period with 27 presentations delivered highlighting the negative impacts of litter on local wildlife, the climate and their community. Increased bin provision has been provided at Gleniffer High to encourage pupils use of bins. Litterpicks were delivered by businesses, schools, guides, scouts, individuals, and even a swimming group, to clean their waterway.

6.2 Winter Warriors, a sub project of Team Up to Clean Up, will again actively respond to volunteer requests to make available a limited supply of salt spreaders and salt for distribution to communities.

6.3 The Environmental Taskforce continue to adopt a community and 'one Council' approach to investigations. A case where a resident, who paid for a private waste uplift and, along with other waste, had sensitive financial details dumped, was passed to Trading Standards. Painted boards have been installed at a privately owned gap site in Paisley town centre to prevent further flytipping and fire-raising complaints from nearby residents and businesses, and a large scale clean up, together with the installation of preventative structures, has been delivered at another Paisley location supported by StreetScene, Transportation, Lighting, as well as Sustrans.

6.4 The table below offers some key statistics of the work delivered by the Taskforce over this period:

Action	August – To date	Cumulative from 1 December
Proactive visits to identified hotspot areas	483	1,764
Number of reports investigated	348	1,529

Tonnes of flytipping removed	40	400
Number of sites secured to prevent further flytipping	2	10
Letters to private landowners	11	76
Visits to businesses to ensure Waste Disposal Arrangements in place	24	105
Fixed Penalty Notices Issued	18	65

7. Waste and Recycling Services

- 7.1 The Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) have now published Scotland's Household Waste Recycling figures. For the 2022 calendar year, the Scottish household waste recycling rate was 43.3%, an increase of 0.3 percentage points from the 43.0% rate achieved in 2021. Renfrewshire Council achieved a recycling rate of 53.7% for 2022, up 2.0 percentage points from 2021. This is Renfrewshire's highest recorded recycling rate to date and ranks the Council in the top quartile across Scotland.
- 7.2 Over the coming months the service will continue to explore ways to enhance our recycling rate and are currently liaising with the Councils Comms & Marketing team regarding running a recycling campaign to further improve our performance.
- 7.3 The festive collection arrangements are in place for the forth coming year, these will be set out in the annual recycling & waste collection calendars which will be arriving with households in November. The Councils five Household Waste Recycling Centres will close at 4pm on Christmas Eve & New Years Eve, reopening at 8am on the 26th of December and the 2nd of January.
- 7.4 During late October / early November, officers from Waste Services have been visiting church and charity premises to offer advice and guidance on individual waste and recycling needs on a one-to-one basis. This is to ensure that the correct infrastructure and Duty of Care requirements are in place before charges are being applied for the service.
- 7.5 Waste Upholstered Domestic Seating / Persistent Organic Pollutants (WUDS/POPs). SEPA have written to all Council Chief Executive Officers in Scotland to update on the soon to be published Guidance Document for the handling and disposal of this waste stream. A report will be brought to the ILE Board in 2024 detailing the operational, logistical and financial implications of this guidance.

8. StreetScene

- 8.1 Street Scene have completed the rural verge cutting this year and are completing the second round of path maintenance during the winter period.
- 8.2 The Service has concluded the fortnightly grass cutting for the season including carrying out additional works on behalf of Communities and Housing Services. This involved tidying gardens of the Council's void properties to improve estate management and appearance. Due to wet ground conditions and to avoid damage, some panels are outstanding and these will be progressed as a priority in the new season.

- 8.3 The service has completed the autumn maintenance on the biodiversity areas to allow these to respond next year. Checks will also take place over the winter to determine any other required actions to establish these fully.
- 8.4 To help tackle the issues that the autumnal leaf fall causes, the service is liaising with the roads department to utilise the nightshift winter maintenance team to increase road sweeping activities during milder spells of weather. This is aimed at preventing leaves blocking the gullies and drainage systems.
- 8.5 In addition, the service has retained some of the seasonal employees to undertake edging, weed scraping and winter shrub cutting tasks over the winter period across Renfrewshire. They will also support the roads winter maintenance program.

9. Play Parks

- 9.1 Refurbishment of Howwood Park Toddler / Junior, Houston Public Park and Inchinnan Playing Field play areas is ongoing with completion of all sites anticipated by the end of March 2024. Four play areas to be renewed as part of the #YouDecide project and are out to tender with a bid submission date set for early November. These are Jenny's Well, Paisley; South Candren Village Green, Paisley; Glebe Street, Renfrew, and Station Road, Langbank. Installation of these sites is estimated to begin in Spring 2024, on the basis of valid bids being received for all contracts.
- 9.2 A further 6 play areas tenders have been advertised with a bid submission date set for early November. These are Miller Street, Johnstone; Anne Avenue, Renfrew; Netherhill Road, Paisley; Victory Gardens, Renfrew, Tannahill Crescent, Johnstone and Urquhart Crescent, Renfrew. Installation of these sites is estimated to begin in Spring 2024, based on valid bids being received for all contracts.
- 9.3 Refurbishment of the Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) at Netherhill Road in Gallowhill commenced early October 2023 and is scheduled to take about 3 weeks on site, depending on the weather.
- 9.4 Work to repair the pond edge area at Durrockstock Park is now complete.
- 9.5 A second phase of improvement works is being costed for Renfrew Skatepark. It is anticipated that these works will be completed before the end of 2023, depending on the weather.

10. Cemeteries

- 10.1 Two bespoke memorial pillars have now been installed in the Baby Garden at Hawkhead Cemetery so that loved ones can have the option of a plaque dedicated to their baby. An additional custom-built memorial pillar has been installed at the Woodland Burial Site in Lochwinnoch Cemetery.

Implications of this report

1. **Financial** – The implementation of the WUDS & PoP's legislation mentioned in 7.5 is likely to have financial impact on Council budget.

2. **HR and Organisational Development** – The service is investing in a trainee's as detailed in section 4.2.2 of this report.
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** – There is a legal requirement to implement the WUDS/POP's legislation detailed in section 7.5 of this report.
5. **Property/Assets** – The Council's roads, fleet and open space infrastructure is maintained and enhanced.
6. **Information Technology** – Detail in 4.1.2 demonstrates the change in vehicle telematics hardware and software being used across all Council fleet vehicles.
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 and Safety** – None.
9. **Procurement** – None.
10. **Risk** – None.
11. **Privacy Impact** – None.
12. **Cosla Policy Position** – None.
13. **Climate Risk** – None

List of Background Papers: None

Author: Gordon McNeil, Director of Environment, Housing & Infrastructure