

To: Finance, Resources and Customer Services Policy Board

On: 13 June 2024

Report by: Director of Finance and Resources

**Heading: Finance and Resources Service Improvement Plan Outturn Report
2023/24**

1. Summary

- 1.1 The Finance & Resources Service Improvement Plan 2023-26 was approved by the Finance, Resources & Customer Services Policy Board in June 2023. The plan set out the priorities for the development of the service over a three year period. These priorities are aligned to those set out in the 2022-27 Council Plan. The Service Improvement Plan sets out the actions which will ensure continuous improvement across the service and the performance indicators which ensure the impact can be measured. These reflect the priority themes of the Council Plan and the refreshed Community Plan, both approved by Council in September 2022.
- 1.2 This report provides a summary of the Finance & Resources service's performance against the actions and performance indicators agreed within the Service Improvement Plan for 2023/26. An outturn report is included as an appendix to this report.
- 1.3 An updated Service Improvement Plan for 2024-27 is being presented to this Board for approval, aligned to the priorities of the new Council Plan.

1.4 Over the past year, the service has made good progress in delivering positive outcomes for Renfrewshire and its residents. This is within an operating context that remains complex and fast-moving. Economic conditions are currently changing rapidly and both households and organisations are experiencing cost pressures and supply issues, and this is unlikely to change in the near future.

1.5 More detail of achievements is given in Section 4 but the list below notes some highlights:

- Leading on the Council's Financial Sustainability programme;
- Delivery of the annual accounts;
- Implementing a leadership development programme for senior management;
- Producing a new Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategy and a Health and Wellbeing Plan for staff, as well as continuing the revising of other HR policies;
- Ongoing work to support residents with the cost-of-living through the administration of grant support, signposting to benefits and related entitlements, and through the work of Advice Works;
- Work to deliver on the Council's Plan for Net Zero through initiatives such as the Green Print Strategy, and by building in climate considerations to our procurement processes;
- Continuing the work with Council colleagues and partners to deliver a Meet the Buyers Renfrewshire event, supporting local businesses to bid for public sector contracts;
- Completion of the Fibre to the Premises infrastructure work, which means that more than 80% of areas in Renfrewshire now have access to a high-speed fibre internet connection;
- Delivering a new Customer Strategy, with the team prioritising the use of artificial intelligence in the first phase of implementation;
- Continuing to provide a range of strategic and operational support to other Council services to support the delivery of financial sustainability programmes, the Plan for Net Zero, large scale infrastructure projects and strong universal services.

2. Recommendations

2.1 It is recommended that the Finance, Resources and Customer Services Policy Board:

- a) the contents of this report;
- b) the progress to date on delivering the actions contained within the Finance & Resources Service Improvement Plan;

- c) the current performance of the service as measured by the scorecard indicators.

3. Background

- 3.1 Our Service Improvement Plans are a clear statement of the outcomes each service wants to achieve, the actions it will take to achieve this, and the performance measures it will use to monitor progress and measure success. Updates on the actions and performance measures are included as an appendix to this report.
- 3.2 Service Improvement Plans fit within the wider framework provided by the Council Plan and the Community Plan. They allow elected members to have oversight of developments within the service and to consider and develop policy options which reflect customer need and resource availability.
- 3.3 Section 4 of this report gives details of service activity and achievements in 2023/24. Section 5 discusses actions delayed or cancelled since the Service Improvement Plan, and any new actions added to reflect additional priorities identified since the plan was approved. Section 6 provides a narrative on performance.
- 3.4 In line with our approach of refreshing Service Improvement Plans annually to ensure they still reflect our organisational priorities, an updated Plan covering the period 2024 to 2027 is also being presented to this Policy Board.

4. Key achievements in 2023/24

- 4.1 As well as strategic initiatives and customer-facing work, Finance & Resources delivers support services to all other parts of the council including:
- Payroll;
 - Support with recruitment;
 - Training and organisational development;
 - ICT Servicedesk;
 - Provision of ICT equipment;
 - Invoicing and Payments;
 - Administrative support;
 - Project and programme management;
 - Property services;
 - Legal and information governance advice;
 - Accountancy services;
 - Internal audit and risk management.

4.2 Specific achievements in relation to the Service Improvement Plan are highlighted below.

Place

4.3 The service continues to support delivery of the Council's Cultural Infrastructure programme. A key milestone – the completion of Paisley Town Hall – was noted in the mid-year update on this Service Improvement Plan. Since then, a further milestone has been reached with the completion of Paisley's Learning and Cultural Hub.

4.4 In 2023/24 the Director of Finance and Resources highlighted, through updates to Council, that the rate of progress in delivering financial sustainability actions was not sufficient to fully address medium-term targets. Further workstreams have been developed to bring forward proposals to elected members. In 2023/24, £4.3m of savings were delivered against a target of £4.4m; the remainder will be delivered in 2024/25.

4.5 Good progress is being made with the implementation of the new licensing regime for short-term lets. Most applications were made close to the deadline date, and the service has 61% of these. A small number have escalated to the Regulatory Functions Board for consideration.

Economy

4.6 Renfrewshire Council was one of four local authorities to take part in a Scottish Government pilot on Community Wealth Building (CWB). CWB is at the heart of the Council's approach to inclusive economic growth and developing a wellbeing economy. A Council Framework is being developed and will be finalised once the details of the forthcoming Community Wealth Building Act are known. A new Lead Officer for CWB will be recruited shortly to allow for greater focus in this area of work.

4.7 The Procurement and Economic Development teams continue to work together to support local businesses to bid for Council contracts and related work. Most recently, a 'Meet the Buyer' event was held for local construction companies, focusing on sub-contractor opportunities for two large Council building projects.

Fair

4.8 Finance and Resources have supported thousands of Renfrewshire families with the cost of living in 2023/24 through:

- Providing Discretionary Housing Payments to eligible residents who may be struggling with rent payments;
- Distributing the Scottish Welfare Fund, including an additional £400,000 of funding directly provided by the Council;
- Administering the application process for free school meals and school clothing grants for over 7,500 children;
- Introducing a new element to the application for free school meals and clothing grants which allows families to refer themselves to Advice Works for support, resulting in 520 families accessing benefits they were entitled to but had not claimed.

4.9 The People and Organisation Development team continue to be closely involved with the development of the Trauma Informed and Responsive Renfrewshire programme, and revised HR policies have a greater focus on wellbeing. A number of teams within Finance and Resources have undertaken trauma-informed learning.

Green

4.10 As noted in the mid-year update on this plan, Procurement have now built in sustainability criteria to their processes to ensure climate considerations are part of the procurement strategy and, where appropriate, form part of the award criteria in the tendering process. For relevant contracts, this includes bidders having to set out what action they will take to mitigate the climate impact of a contract.

4.11 Work on the Green Print Strategy has progressed. The 'Think Digital First' approach will not only reduce print costs substantially but will contribute to the reduction of carbon emissions. Analysis of usage has been undertaken and it is expected that the roll-out of printers will start in June 2024, with an internal communications campaign to promote the key messages of the strategy.

Living our Values

4.12 The Purchase to Pay (P2P) programme is making good progress and should deliver efficiencies process for making payments by the end of next year. Workstreams are up and running and will finalise the deliverables, timeline and priority tasks for the programme.

4.13 A new Customer Strategy has been approved and the team are now working on implementation, with a current focus on how artificial intelligence (AI) could be used to enhance services for customers.

- 4.14 A number of new or refreshed HR policies were approved this year, including a new Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, a Health and Wellbeing Plan for staff, and an updated Carers Policy. The programme of refreshing policies and ensuring a wellbeing focus will continue into 2024/25. The HR and OD team have also successfully implemented a new online learning system.

Improving Outcomes for Children and Young People

- 4.15 The new recruitment strategy will include elements focused on removing barriers to employment. This will include the specific barriers faced by care-experienced people, as part of the Council's ongoing commitment to delivering The Promise.

5. Actions which have been delayed or cancelled

- 5.1 As noted in paragraph 4.4 above, the realisation of the full £4.4m of savings to be delivered in 2023/24 was delayed. The outstanding £100,000 will be delivered in 2024/25.
- 5.2 The due date for the completion of a new strategic recruitment and talent management plan has been revised to the end of 2024. The delay was due to the service redesign within People and OD, and the prioritisation of other revised policies.
- 5.3 The delivery of the 2023/24 Internal Audit plan was behind target by the end of the financial year; it was 92% complete rather than the anticipated 95% complete. This was due to a short-term reduction in staff capacity.

6. Progress against performance measures

- 6.1 Finance and Resources measured 17 performance indicators as part of the 2023/26 Service Improvement Plan. Of these, 15 are collected quarterly and 2 are collected annually.
- 6.2 In 2023/24, nine indicators met or exceeded the target set, four narrowly missed the target set, one missed their target by 10% or more and three indicators are still to be updated.
- 6.3 The indicator which missed the target by 10% or more was the completion of FOI requests within 20 days. Performance for FOIs dropped from 97.2% in 2022/23 to 89.6% in 2023/24. The target for this indicator has always been set at 100% but in light of the considerable increase in volume and complexity of requests, the target will be revised to 95% in 2024/25.

- 6.4 Three of the four indicators which narrowly missed their target relate to council income – two to the collection of council tax and one to the collection on non-domestic rates. The cost-of-living crisis is likely to have impacted on the collection of council tax, which is behind target at 94.28% collected against a target of 96% for this year. This will also have impacted collection rates for monies owing from previous years. The collection of non-domestic rates is improving but still short of the 98% target, with 96.95% collected in 2023/24.
- 6.5 The fourth indicator which narrowly missed target relates to completion of the Audit Plan, which was noted in paragraph 5.3 above
- 6.6 The processing of housing benefits applications is once again exceeding targets, after a short term issue experienced in 2022/23 caused average processing time to reach 38 days. The current average is 18.99 days, well within the target time of 24 days. The same issue had also impacted the processing of change of circumstances applications, and performance has recovered to an average of 8.08 days against a target time of 10 days.
- 6.7 The processing of crisis grants continues to meet its target of a two-day turnaround, and the processing of Scottish Welfare Fund applications is currently averaging 10 days against a target time of 15 days. The Customer Service Unit consistently exceeds its target of answering 90% of all calls, with 95% answered in 2023/24.
- 6.8 Complaints response times exceed targets – 86.6% of frontline complaints were dealt with within 5 days and 94% of investigation complaints within 20 days. Both indicators have a target of 85%.
- 6.9 Invoice processing for small and medium sized businesses continues to be an area of strong performance, with these dealt with in 7.5 days, on average; this is against a target of 28 days. After a fall in performance last year, the overall invoice processing indicator has exceeded its target of 96% of all invoices to be processed with 30 days. Performance for 2023/24 was 96.82%; the service received over 240,000 invoices in the year.
- 6.10 Staff absence for 2023/24 is similar to the previous year and, at 8.9 days per FTE, remains above the target of 8.5 days.
- 6.11 The measure of procurement spend on local suppliers is part of the Local Government Benchmarking Framework. Updates are provided by the Improvement Service and data for 2023/24 will not be available until December 2024.
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Implications of the Report

- 1. Financial** - The Service Improvement Plan highlights resourcing pressures arising from increasing demand for services and the current financial environment. Finance & Resources will lead on work relating to financial stability and sustainability.
- 2. HR & Organisational Development** – No direct implications but the report notes work ongoing by the People and OD team.
- 3. Community/Council Planning** – the report details a range of activities which reflect local council and community planning themes.
- 4. Legal** – No direct implications but the report notes work delivered by Legal and Democratic Services.
- 5. Property/Assets** - None
- 6. Information Technology** – Digital resources are now key to the delivery of services and strategies are in place to manage this. The report notes progress on delivery of work in this area.
- 7. Equality & Human Rights** - The recommendations contained within this report do not require an impact assessment as they are asking member to note progress only.
- 8. Health & Safety** –none
- 9. Procurement** – There are no direct implications but the report updates on progress for actions impacting procurement.
- 10. Risk** – Risks related to the delivery and management of services are regularly monitored and included in Renfrewshire Council's Corporate and Strategic Risk Registers.
- 11. Privacy Impact** - none
- 12. COSLA Policy Position** – none.
- 13. Climate Risk** – There are no direct implications but the report updates on progress on actions to tackle the climate risk.

List of Background Papers: None

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Finance and Resources

Service Improvement Plan 2023 – 26

Outturn Report 2023/24

We are **fair**, We are **helpful**, We are great **collaborators**, We value **learning**



Renfrewshire
Council

Outturn Report for 2023/24

- This outturn report details progress on delivery of our Service Improvement Plan, highlighting areas where we are already making progress and some areas we want to focus on more, perhaps because performance isn't moving in the direction we anticipated or because of other pressures or factors that makes this even more of a priority for us.
- The following pages shine a spotlight on some great projects or practice, and highlight areas where we'd like to improve or develop further. At a service level, there is a stronger focus on some of the Council Plan Strategic Outcomes than other. Towards the end of this document, you'll find a full update against all the actions and performance indicators we use to measure progress.
- We report on 17 performance indicators, 2 which are reported annually and 15 reported quarterly. In this report, annual data is provided for 2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24 to show recent trends.

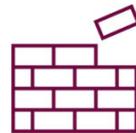
Place and Economy

Achievements

Support for the Cultural Infrastructure Investment Programme, which has now delivered the new Paisley Learning and Cultural Hub as well as Paisley Town Hall.



Held 'Meet the Buyer' events to help increase the use of local suppliers by subcontractors on Council construction projects



Delivered on our aim to have 80% of Renfrewshire's geography covered by full fibre broadband.



Areas for improvement and development

Our work to increase the amount of Council spend with local businesses will continue, and we are targeting 23% of spend for 2024/25.



Fair and Green

Achievements

Supported 520 families who were not receiving all the benefits they were entitled to, generating £109,000 of extra income for them



Administering more than 7500 clothing grants and/or free school meal payments for Renfrewshire families.



Performance Indicators

Average of 19 days to process new housing benefit claims



Areas for further development

Pilots of our Green Print Strategy will commence in the summer of 2024. By taking a 'Think Digital First' approach to documents, the reduction in printing will contribute to our Net Zero goal.



Living our values

Achievements

Introducing new policies to support staff, including our Health and Wellbeing Plan and our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy



Launched a new Customer Strategy



Areas for improvement and development

Not all planned Internal Audit actions were completed this year, with 92% complete rather than the expected 95%.

Fewer Freedom of Information requests were dealt with on time this year – 89% of the 422 received.

Performance Indicators



8.9 days absence per FTE



95% of Customer Service calls answered



Average of 7.5 days to pay invoices to small and medium sized businesses



Actions and indicators

Position at year end 2023/24

We are **fair**, We are **helpful**, We are great **collaborators**, We value **learning**



Renfrewshire
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Delivering the Council Plan – Place

What we will do	Due Date	Status	Progress update
Work with Children’s Services to deliver the new Paisley Grammar Community Campus	31 July 2026		<p>A Multi-Disciplinary Design Team (MDDT) has been appointed and Stage 3 design is complete. A contractor has been appointed for pre-construction services. Due to a service restructuring, this action will now be monitored as part of the Environment, Housing and Infrastructure Service Improvement Plan.</p> <p>This action was closed in summer 2023.</p>
Support delivery of the Council’s infrastructure investment programme	31 March 2026		<p>Paisley Town Hall is now complete, the building has opened to the public and has hosted numerous successful events, including the Mod 2023.</p> <p>Paisley Learning & Cultural Hub has also completed construction and fit out, and has been open to the public since 30 November 2023. The building has been a great success with the public, so far seeing 18,000 visitors pass through the doors in the first month.</p> <p>Paisley Arts Centre is scheduled to complete construction imminently and will then progress to fit out with a target to complete this process by late spring 2024.</p> <p>Paisley Museum is expected to complete construction in late 2024 and will then move to an intense exhibition fit out and operational readiness process that will see the doors open in 2025.</p>
Implement the actions arising from the Council’s financial sustainability workstreams	31 March 2024		<p>Progress with the development and delivery of agreed financial sustainability actions is not at the pace required in order to fully address the Council’s financial sustainability over the medium term, and the CMT has developed further workstreams for member consideration.</p> <p>A total saving of £4.4m was targeted for these new workstreams within 2023/24, with 97% (£4.3m) achieved at the end of the financial year. The balance is due to the timing of savings realisation, and will be delivered in 2024/25.</p>

Delivering the Council Plan – Place

What we will do	Due Date	Status	Progress update
Delivering strong universal services to all Renfrewshire citizens	31 March 2027		<p>The Service continues to action any changes notified by customers and issue updated bills and reminders, where appropriate for Non-Domestic Rates and Council tax charges. Council Tax customers can report changes online using a range of regenerated forms including a new customer enquiry form.</p> <p>Teams continue to consider and process applications for Discretionary Housing Payments, Crisis Grants, Community Care Grants, within targeting/legislative timescales.</p>
Implement the first phase of the Scottish Government’s new licensing regime for short-term lets	31 March 2024		<p>The Council’s policy on Short Term Lets was agreed and the process for dealing with the applications established. As previously advised, the Scottish Government extended the date for first applications to 30 September 2023 and, as was anticipated, completion of the first phase by 31 March 2024 proved impractical requiring the date for completion of that phase to be extended to 30 September 2024. 128 applications have been received, the vast majority of which were received at or around the deadline. Good progress has been made with 78 applications having been granted, mainly under delegated authority. However, 7 of these have been granted at the Regulatory Functions Board, with further applications scheduled to be taken to RFB in the coming months.</p>

Delivering the Council Plan – Economy

What we will do	Due Date	Status	Progress update
Actively engage with Renfrewshire suppliers to increase the percentage of procurement spend	31 March 2024		In order to increase local spend through sub-contracting opportunities, two sector specific local ‘Meet the Buyer’ events were held for projects being delivered in Renfrewshire. We supported Morrison Construction to engage with local sub-contractors for opportunities on the New Paisley Grammar Community Campus project. In addition, we supported Fleming Build to engage with local sub-contractors for the Bishopton Dargavel Satellite Facility.
Develop a Community Wealth Building Plan for Renfrewshire	31 March 2025		<p>Community Wealth Building [CWB] is at the heart of the council’s approach to inclusive economic growth and aims to support a wellbeing economy in Renfrewshire. A new Community Wealth Building Act is expected next year, and a council framework/plan is currently being prepared. Key actions to report are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring the Council CWB plan is aligned to a regional approach with Glasgow City Region. • Reporting quarterly to the Scottish Governments Community Wealth Building Policy Manager and liaising directly with colleagues in the SG CWB policy team • Contributing to Economic Development Association Scotland (EDAS) and Centre for Local Economic Strategies [CLES] workshops. • As part of a Scottish Government pilot, Renfrewshire Council (Economic Development and Procurement) were one of four local authorities to participate in a CWB project delivered by Scotland Excel. The project involved data analysis of local spend, practice sharing workshops and a Spotlight on Community Wealth Building from the Scottish Government’s Heads of Procurement. • Economic Development are working on a draft paper which will provide an overview of CWB practice within the Council and will outline the Council’s key objectives and levers to maximise the impact of CWB at a local level. In order to ensure the paper is aligned to national policy, the draft paper will be revised to reflect the proposed new CWB Bill due to be put forward during the current parliamentary term. <p>A new Community Wealth Building Lead Officer has been approved and will shortly be recruited to allow more prominence to the agenda. The due date for this action has been revised to 31 March 2025.</p>
Under Connectivity As A Service (CaaS) complete the rollout of Fibre To The Premises (FTTP) across 75% of Renfrewshire as a geography by the summer of 2023	31 August 2023		The fibre infrastructure – provided by City Fibre - now covers 80%+ of Renfrewshire as a geography.

Delivering the Council Plan – Economy

Indicator	Current Status	Short term trend	Long term trend	2021/22		2022/23		2023/24		Explanation of performance
				Value	Target	Value	Target	Value	Target	
% of procurement spend spent on local enterprises				18.87%	23%	19.3%	23%	n/a	23%	23/24 data is provided by Improvement Service and will not be available until end of 2024.

Delivering the Council Plan – Fair

What we will do	Due Date	Status	Progress update
<p>Continue to support residents with the cost-of-living crisis through the provision of advice services, grants and other funding</p>	<p>31 March 2024</p>	<p></p>	<p>Provision of financial support in the form of Discretionary Housing Payments and Scottish Welfare Funds continues to be provided by the Business Services Function. The Service distributed the funds allocated by Scottish Government for the Scottish Welfare Fund, including £400K in top up funding provided by the Council.</p> <p>Discretionary Housing Payments (DHPs), also administered by Business Services continued to be made to eligible residents struggling with rent payments with funding provided by the Scottish Government, for the remainder of the financial year and encouraged take-up of DHPs from residents affected by the UK Government Benefit Cap, in line with the Scottish Government’s commitment to mitigation.</p> <p>Free School Meals (FSM) and clothing grants are administered by Customer and Digital Services with applications for clothing grants now closed for the current year. Work is underway to update the process prior to re-launching for next year at the end of May. The process will include an option for families to access Advice Works as was the case last year. The Customer Services team have processed applications for FSM and Clothing Grants for over 7500 children. 5800 have received a clothing grant payment and 4700 have been approved to receive Free School Meals.</p> <p>Free School Meals (FSM) and clothing grants are administered by Customer and Digital Services with applications for clothing grants now closed for the current year. Work is underway to update the process prior to re-launching for next year at the end of May. The process will include an option for families to access Advice Works as was the case last year. The Customer Services team have processed applications for FSM and Clothing Grants for over 7500 children. 5800 have received a clothing grant payment and 4700 have been approved to receive Free School Meals. 1383 Families requested support from Advice Works during the current school year, however just over 800 were already receiving their full entitlement of benefits. The remaining 520 were not receiving their full entitlement so Advice Works were able to work more intensely with these families to boost their income which has resulted in a total income generation of £109,703.</p>

Delivering the Council Plan – Fair

What we will do	Due Date	Status	Progress update
Engage and participate in trauma informed and responsive Renfrewshire programme	31 March 2024		People and OD continue to be closely involved with the development of this programme, and revised HR policies have a greater focus on wellbeing. A number of teams within FAR have undertaken trauma-informed learning and the service will continue to engage with the programme.

Delivering the Council Plan – Fair

Indicator	Current Status	Short term trend	Long term trend	2021/22		2022/23		2023/24		Explanation of performance
				Value	Target	Value	Target	Value	Target	
Time taken for processing new housing benefit applications up until the posting of notification of outcome of the application (cumulative)				18.1	24	38.51	24	18.99	24	Processing speed for New Claims was well within target for 2023/24.
Time taken for processing change of circumstance housing benefit applications up until the posting of notification of outcome of the application (cumulative)				7.94	10	14.35	10	8.08	10	Processing of Changes of Circumstance was well within target for 2023/24.
Average speed of processing a Crisis Grant (Scottish Welfare Fund) in days				2	2	2	2	2	2	The service continues to meet the target for processing Crisis Grants. Average days to process during 2023/24 was within the 2 day target.
Average speed of processing a Community Care Grant (Scottish Welfare Fund) in days				10	15	13	15	10	15	Processing speed for Community Care Grants was well within target for 2023/24.

Delivering the Council Plan – Green

What we will do	Due Date	Status	Progress update
Develop costed, targeted interventions and actions to support our net zero journey within the Council and working in partnership with key stakeholders	31 October 2023		All council services contribute to the delivery of net zero actions, with Finance Business Partners involved in costing activities and supporting projects such as the Sustainable Communities Fund.
Ensure that climate considerations are taken into account in our procurement strategies and tenders with a focus on reducing emissions	31 March 2025		<p>At strategy stage: A sustainability test is completed for all relevant procurements. This identifies risks and opportunities which ensure that climate considerations are taken into account. The procurement climate emergency adviser supports the team with advice about policy and highlights opportunities and good examples of best practice from the public sector at strategy stage. The evaluation methodology is agreed including whether climate should be assessed at Selection Stage or as part of the award criteria.</p> <p>Tender Stage: Where relevant and proportionate procurements include the new Selection Question 4C.7.1 which requires that bidders should evidence that their organisation has taken steps to build their awareness of the climate change emergency and how they will respond; Where relevant and proportionate bidders will be asked to provide responses specific to the procurement confirming action that will be taken to mitigate climate impacts during the life of the contract; Where relevant environmental action will be built into the service specification, requiring that these actions are delivered as a fundamental element of the contract.</p>

Delivering the Council Plan – Green

What we will do	Due Date	Status	Progress update
Implement the Green Print Strategy in order to reduce our reliance on paper, drive down printing costs and support the organisation's work towards net zero	31 March 2025		Following the presentation to Head Teachers in January, volumetric packs were sent to Head Teachers including the 'as is' and 'to be' print fleet numbers for their school, plus a breakdown of their 2022 school mono and colour print volumes and costs. Canon have provided a high-level project plan. Technical discovery activities have started. Trial devices ordered and due for delivery 11th April. Pilot sites to be identified. Work ongoing on refining the full site lists and printer requirements. It is anticipated the roll out of printer will commence early June 2024. Work continues with Communications to flesh out the approach and key dates to promoting the key messages of the Green Print Project.

Delivering the Council Plan – Living our values

What we will do	Due Date	Status	Progress update
Implement the next phase of the Council’s transformation programme	31 March 2025		Weekly updates are highlighted to the CMT including Digital, Financial Sustainability, Net Zero, etc and this activity is now part of business as usual.
Support the Council in developing New Ways of Working	31 March 2024		Review of policies continue with the Carers Policy, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion and Health and Wellbeing plans being presented at the next board.
Support the Council with improving attendance and reducing absence	31 December 2023		This policy is now in place and work continues to embed and review.
Develop a Wellbeing Strategy that meets the needs of our workforce as we emerge for the pandemic and look towards the future	31 August 2023		The Health and Wellbeing plan has now received board approval and in place
Develop an overall strategic recruitment and talent management strategy	31 December 2024		We are continuing to look at different ways to recruit in what is a very challenging environment. An international recruitment pilot has commenced which has been positively received. Deadline date changed to Dec 2024.

Delivering the Council Plan – Living our values

What we will do	Due Date	Status	Progress update
Develop and new equality, diversity and inclusion strategy for the council	31 December 2023		ED&I Strategy has now been approved and we will start to work on the plan.
Deliver the Purchase to Pay programme which will streamline payments and deliver a more efficient process	31 December 2025		<p>Defined nine P2P Workstreams in February 2024.</p> <p>The P2P Strategic Board approved the bolt-on technology in March 2024. A variation of contract is being finalised with the current ERP provider.</p> <p>A P2P Roadmap and P2P Communications (Purpose, Objectives and Approach) was presented to the CMT in March 2024.</p> <p>Workstream kick-offs have started to finalise the scope, objectives & deliverables of those Workstreams. The follow-up sessions will focus on resource allocation, timelines and prioritising tasks.</p> <p>The P2P Communication Strategy is being finalised and will be presented at the P2P Strategic Board for ratification.</p>
Develop a new Customer Strategy in order to ensure we continue to deliver excellent customer services that best meet the needs of our customers and utilise the opportunities within new and emerging technologies	31 March 2024		Work is ongoing around the actions within the new Customer Strategy. The procurement of an Artificial Intelligence (AI) solution is underway following a ‘try before you buy’ and will be completed by the end of April 2024 with an estimated delivery timeline of 6 months.

Delivering the Council Plan – Living our values

What we will do	Due Date	Status	Progress update
Deliver the Internal Audit Plan for 2023/24	31 March 2024		92% of the Audit Plan was delivered which is slightly below our target of 95%. There are 2 main reasons for this - our unplanned absence was higher than planned for and the Chief Auditor attended a senior management development programme which was planned part way through the year
Support the wider workforce with learning and professional development opportunities.	31 March 2024		The learning management system is now live and all the records from the previous system has been transferred. Phase 2 has commenced, and new reporting is in draft format and continues to be developed.
Contribute to the Council’s commitment to The Promise for all care experienced people	31 March 2026		As part of the review of the priorities in the Council’s ‘Our People’ strategy, removing barriers to employability identified by The Promise (and others) will feature in our revised recruitment processes.
Continue to implement a range of technical and non-technical measures to bolster our cyber resilience, protecting our digital assets	31 March 2024		Report submitted and approved by the CMT in March 2024. The procurement of an M365 Backup Solution will be completed by the end of April 2024. The procurement of Phishing Prevention Software will be completed by the end of April 2024. In addition, a review of Business Continuity Plans (BCP) is being undertaken with the support of an external organisation to review our approach in the event of a cyber- attack. A written update including an action plan will be provided to the CMT in the next month or so following this review.

Delivering the Council Plan – Living Our Values

Indicator	Current Status	Short term trend	Long term trend	2021/22		2022/23		2023/24		Explanation of performance
				Value	Target	Value	Target	Value	Target	
Customer Service Unit - % of calls answered				97%	90%	96%	90%	95%	90%	The service has consistently met the performance target throughout the year and answered above 90% of all calls.
Cost of collecting council tax per chargeable dwelling				8.04	11.5	7.97	11.5	n/a	11.5	The 2023/24 figure will not be available until August 2024.
Percentage of Council Tax due in the year, collected by the end of the year (cumulative position to date)				95.48%	96%	95.31%	96%	94.28%	96%	Council Tax collection for 2023/24 was down by 1.03% on the 2022/23 position. During the previous year awards of £150 were made on behalf of the Scottish Government to 62,130 households to attempt to offset some of the effects of the cost of living crisis. No such payments were made during 2023/24 year which contributed to the decrease in collection. Recovery of Council Tax remains challenging with continued pressure on many household budgets. The service will continue to maximise collection through timeous recovery activity and utilising all tools at its disposal, including working with our recovery agents. Collection performance may be relatively static until the cost of living crisis eases.

Delivering the Council Plan – Living Our Values

Indicator	Current Status	Short term trend	Long term trend	2021/22		2022/23		2023/24		Explanation of performance
				Value	Target	Value	Target	Value	Target	
Total % of investigation (Stage 2) complaints responded to within targets by Finance & Resources (cumulative to date)				87.73%	85%	84.9%	85%	94%	85%	150 Investigation complaints were received in total during 2023/24. To date, 141 complaints have been completed within the required timescale and 9 were complaint completed outwith timescale. The service has achieved target (85%) for this annual reporting period.
Number of invoices paid within 30 days of receipt, as a percentage of all invoices paid council wide (cumulative)				95.5%	96%	90.21%	96%	96.82%	96%	At the end of 2023/24 a total of 241,143 invoices were received of which 233,387 were processed within 30 days (96.78%). Performance has exceeded target (96%) for the 2024/25 annual reporting period and year on year is a marked improvement on last years performance reported as 90.21%.

Delivering the Council Plan – Living Our Values

Indicator	Current Status	Short term trend	Long term trend	2021/22		2022/23		2023/24		Explanation of performance
				Value	Target	Value	Target	Value	Target	
Average number of work days lost through sickness absence per employee (F&R) (FTE)				7.77	8.5	8.95	8.5	8.9	8.5	During 2023/24 FAR has recorded a provisional overall absence rate of 8.9 days lost per FTE employee which is 0.4 days above the FARS target of 8.5.
% of Finance and Resources FOI requests completed within timescale				97%	100%	97.2%	100%	89.6%	100%	There were 422 single service FOIs dealt with by FAR in 2023/24 of which 378 were completed within timescale. Target has not been achieved and performance has decreased year on year.

Delivering the Council Plan – Living Our Values

Indicator	Current Status	Short term trend	Long term trend	2021/22		2022/23		2023/24		Explanation of performance
				Value	Target	Value	Target	Value	Target	
Percentage of income due from Council Tax for prior years (cumulative position to date)				97.21%	97.27%	97.21%	97.27%	97.19%	97.27%	Follow up continues to be run each month. Both the current year and previous years' collection is monitored. The 2023/24 previous years' position is slightly behind that for 2022/23 (0.02% down).
Percentage of Non Domestic Rates due in the year, collected by the end of the year (cumulative to date)				92.61%	98%	95.67%	98%	96.95%	98%	Business rates collection levels for 2023/24 are up by 1.28% from the 2022/22 position. Whilst current year performance is also better than that for 2019/20, rates collection has yet to reach typical pre-pandemic levels.
Percentage of Audit Plan completed (cumulative)				92.1%	95%	93.2%	95%	92%	95%	92% is the final reporting position for 2023/24 which is noted as slightly below target. This was a result of two main factors - we had a higher level of unplanned leave than was budgeted for and also the Chief Auditor participated in a senior management development programme which was unplanned for as it commenced part way through the year. Target of 95% was not achieved (although targets were achieved for Qtr 1 & 2) and year on year performance has slightly declined.

Delivering the Council Plan – Living Our Values

Indicator	Current Status	Short term trend	Long term trend	2021/22		2022/23		2023/24		Explanation of performance
				Value	Target	Value	Target	Value	Target	
F&R Front Line complaints (Cumulative)				75.87%	85%	86.6%	85%	86.6%	85%	584 Complaints were received in total during 2023/24. 506 have been completed within timescale, 70 completed outwith timescale and a further 8 are still being followed up outwith timescale. Target has been achieved for this annual reporting period.
Average days Small and Medium sized businesses invoices paid				11.84	28	13.06	28	7.5	28	At the end of 2023/24 reporting year (01/04/23 – 16/04/24) 93,030 SME invoices were received of which 81,642 were processed within 28 days with the average days to process an invoice reported at 7.5 days – well within target (28 days) and a year on year improvement of 5.56 days from 2022/23.

Delivering the Council Plan – Improving Outcomes for Children and Young People

What we will do	Due Date	Status	Progress update
Contribute to the Council's commitment to The Promise for all care experienced people	31 March 2026		As part of the review of the priorities in the Council's 'Our People' strategy, removing barriers to employability identified by The Promise (and others) will feature in our revised recruitment processes.

Finance and Resources

Service Improvement Plan 2023 - 26
Outturn Report 2023/24

For more information, please contact:
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We are **fair**, We are **helpful**, We are great **collaborators**, We value **learning**