

To: Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Board

On: 20 May 2024

Report by: Chief Executive

Heading: Actions Monitoring Report - Dargavel Primary School

1. Summary

- 1.1 Following the findings of an independent review into the circumstances of the errors in planning and delivery of primary school provision in the Dargavel area, a SMART action plan was developed detailing the Council's response with a commitment that updates on this plan would be provided to Audit Risk & Scrutiny Board meetings going forward.
- 1.2 At a meeting on 11th January 2024, the Accounts Commission was presented with a statutory S.102 report, as circulated to Councillors on 5th January 2024, by the Controller of Audit on School Accommodation for Dargavel. In the report, the Commission has set out its findings, alongside several issues on which it requires further investigation. In response, the Council have developed an action plan based on the recommendations.
- 1.3 On 29th February 2024, elected members at Council considered a report on the outcome of the review of corporate governance arrangements by the Cross Party Working Group and agreed a number of actions set out in that report. Council further agreed that those actions would be incorporated into the independent review response monitoring arrangements reported to this Board.

- 1.4 Appendix 1 provides an update on open actions related to the Bowles independent review report, the Accounts Commission S.102 report, and the actions related to the report of the Cross Party Working Group. Appendix 2 is a summary of all completed actions from each of these three reviews.
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2. **Recommendations**

- 2.1 Note and consider the update provided in Appendix 1 in relation to the Council's response actions to the independent review and S.102 report.
- 2.2 Note the completed actions provided in Appendix 2.
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Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – whilst there will be significant capital and revenue implications for the Council in resolving the Dargavel issue, there are no financial implications for the Council as a result of this update report.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – the report outlines a leadership development programme with a focus on key issues raised in the independent review around governance, risk management, corporate working and culture.
3. **Community/Council Planning** – the report outlines ongoing action being taken to develop an engagement and ongoing communication process with affected communities.
4. **Legal** – none
5. **Property/Assets** – none
6. **Information Technology** – *n/a*
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 as it is for noting only. 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** – *n/a*
9. **Procurement** – *n/a*
10. **Risk** – the report outlines the action being taken in relation to risk management.
11. **Privacy Impact** – *n/a*
12. **Cosla Policy Position** – *n/a*
13. **Climate Risk** – *n/a*

Author: *Alan Russell, Chief Executive*

| Action | Target Completion | Responsible Officer | Update |
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| <p>Bowles Report Recommendation 1</p> <p>Build a more robust model of primary school need for Dargavel - the Council should continue to refine its pupil forecast model for Dargavel.</p> | | | |
| <p>Response Objectives</p> <p>Deliver robust projection modelling for Dargavel and PMHS which: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • considers live information arising from NHS, pupil & ELC registrations, the pace of development to date, certainty over development size and likely pace of future build out rate, • utilises external data analytics and projection expertise to augment and enhance the Council’s in-house forecasting approach to ensure modelling is robust, underpinned by external challenge and specialist input reflecting the complexity and significant portion of Dargavel that has yet to be developed out over a circa 10 year period, • provides modelling output which considers potential future upper scenarios reflecting the high yield factors reflected in the 2023/24 P1 intake to inform immediate decisions on scale of capacity to be delivered as well as planning for potential additional interventions at a future time, • delivers modelling output which provides a long-term view beyond the anticipated completion timeline for Dargavel to ensure the long term impact of Dargavel is modelled and understood, • provides modelling output over the long term which indicates both the scale, timing and shape of an anticipated peak in demand that will accompany a development of this scale and nature. This will provide visibility of the anticipated short-lived peak in demand and long term settled demand to ensure this is appropriately reflected in estate/capacity decisions and in particular to mitigate against delivery of excessive long term / permanent increase in capacity that would result in excess unused surplus capacity over the long term. • Provides modelling that can be tested and revised as necessary as new key data becomes available such as P1 and S1 registrations, actual scale and pace of the development and any new developments, which will continue to inform decisions on any future estate interventions if required. | | | |

| Action | Target Completion | Responsible Officer | Update |
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| <p>Update Edge Analytics modelling for newly released national Census data and expand across the whole school estate and establish modelling dashboard to support ease of updating and rapid re-assessment of revised projection that will be utilised on an ongoing basis over future years, both for Dargavel / PMHS but also as part of the strategic Learning Estate programme.</p> | <p>January 2023</p> | <p>Director of Children’s Services</p> | <p>The Edge Analytics modelling for newly released national census data was completed last year. A modelling dashboard was also designed last year with further discussions to take place on how this is used to inform the wider learning estate. Edge have been commissioned to expand the model to include the whole estate and we are expecting a data output in 6-8 weeks. A schedule has been developed which outlines re-assessment and monitoring timescales.</p> |
| <p>Bowles Report Recommendation 2</p> <p>Use of Bishopton Primary - in its future plans the Council should reconsider how surplus capacity at Bishopton can be used effectively.</p> | | | |
| <p>Response Objectives</p> <p>Consider and assess how existing capacity within Bishopton Primary School may be best utilised to support the Dargavel catchment over the immediate term and potentially over the longer term, taking into consideration the uncertainty and risk over the long-term demand levels that will ultimately emerge for primary education from Dargavel as well as the expectation of a temporary peak period of demand.</p> <p>Provide a report to Education and Children’s Services Board setting out a clear overview as to how Bishopton PS capacity will be utilised to support temporarily over the short term period and how it may be considered amongst other options for use to support Dargavel in the longer term (noting that any such longer term use will be subject to detailed consideration and decision at an appropriate point in future years).</p> | | | |
| <p style="text-align: center;">ALL ACTIONS COMPLETE FOR RECOMMENDATION 2</p> | | | |
| <p>Bowles Report Recommendation 3</p> <p>As the Council progresses its plans to issue supplementary guidance on developer contributions for education it should seek to learn from other Councils in Scotland.</p> | | | |

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| <p>A development the size of Dargavel is exceptional and would need its own modelling techniques. However, for smaller developments the Council should create an evidence base to calculate specific yield factors derived from recent developments in Renfrewshire. Such robust data will ease future negotiations.</p> | | | |
| <p>ALL ACTIONS COMPLETE FOR RECOMMENDATION 3</p> | | | |
| <p>Bowles Report Recommendation 4</p> <p>Council needs to work co-operatively with BAE. Unless the Council and BAE can work together to resolve the current problems, BAE may face accusations, whether founded or not and regardless of Council incompetence, that it has increased its profits at the expense of Council taxpayers.</p> | | | |
| <p>Response Objectives</p> <p>Secure legal ownership of suitable land to facilitate delivery of a second school within Dargavel Village as well as additional land next to existing school site to provide increased flexibility to meet potential future extension of the school and or establishment of greater outdoor space.</p> <p>Secure legal commitment from BAE to provide land remediation and associated infrastructure requirements as part of legal agreement at nil cost to the Council.</p> <p>Secure as part of the legal agreement certainty on consented planning numbers and any associated adjustments to s.75 agreement to reflect revised agreement.</p> | | | |
| <p>ALL ACTIONS COMPLETE FOR RECOMMENDATION 4</p> | | | |
| <p>Bowles Report Recommendation 5</p> <p>Corporate working and organisational culture - although I understand that the Council has sought to improve and strengthen corporate working in recent years, the evidence would suggest there is a long way to go; simply establishing corporate working groups is insufficient if staff are in a mindset of ‘not my problem’.</p> | | | |

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| <p>The failure of management oversight, if symptomatic of the Council as a whole, would be deeply disturbing. The Council needs to consider a significant change programme, not just on the of issue of corporate working and personal responsibility, but also its organisational culture and values. It needs plans to build a stronger organisation where constructive challenge is welcomed and there is a clarity of what is expected of all of those in a leadership role.</p> | | | |
| <p>Response Objectives</p> <p>Provide assurance that established programme governance framework and operations of governance for other major capital investment programmes and specifically that the Bowles findings on the historic failings on the handling of Dargavel by officers are not representative of the Council’s current culture and approach to the management and delivery of major programmes.</p> <p>The Council is committed to living its values as a learning and collaborative organisation and post COVID was already in the process of re-establishing an Leadership Development programme for senior leadership teams and managers across the Council in recognition that this required to be reinvigorated post COVID and that there has been significant turnover in management and senior positions over the past three years and this would support growing and maturing the current culture and collaborative connections across the organisation.</p> <p>In response to the Bowles recommendations, the objective is to ensure the new Leadership Development programme is appropriately cognisant and reflective of the key learning points from the Bowles report and takes the opportunity to ensure its coverage seeks to re-enforce the development of skills related to governance, risk management, commercial risk, corporate working and culture etc and effectively utilises failures referenced in the Bowles report as key examples for learning throughout the programme. Collective reflection and learning of such significant failures – albeit historical – is recognised as an important element of building an effective future culture and ways of working across the organisation.</p> | | | |
| <p>ALL ACTIONS COMPLETE FOR RECOMMENDATION 5</p> | | | |
| <p>Bowles Report Recommendation 6</p> <p>Risk management</p> | | | |

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| <p>From documents I have seen the Council was unaware of the scale of risk it was taking in the calculation of pupil numbers. The identified risk in Council documents related to providing the school on time, not that the size of the school may prove to be inadequate. The failure to identify that risk has had two consequences; first the Council has been slow to react to the increase in pupil numbers and second the Council did not negotiate with BAE with that risk in mind.</p> <p>The Council needs to review how it both identifies risk and manages it.</p> | | | |
| <p>Response Objectives</p> <p>Progress actions to provide reassurance in relation to the Council’s current risk management approach, in particular how this is approached, deployed and managed as part of major projects as well as considering and assessing the seniority / appropriateness of officer involvement and related skills across officers involved in the process.</p> | | | |
| <p>ALL ACTIONS COMPLETE FOR RECOMMENDATION 6</p> | | | |
| <p>Bowles Report Recommendation 7</p> <p>Whilst protecting the integrity of the planning process, the Council needs to ensure the appropriate involvement of members in such developments.</p> <p>Additional Council Motion Council agrees that in light of the Independent External Review of Dargavel that there is a requirement to convene a cross party body to discuss and review existing governance arrangements of Renfrewshire Council.</p> | | | |
| <p>Response Objectives</p> <p>Assess the extent to which major investment projects have provided sufficient engagement with elected members through both formal governance routes as well as through briefing sessions, engagement sessions, group presentations, site tours etc. Identify any adjustments or improvements required moving forward.</p> | | | |

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| <p>Provide officer support to a cross party group to of elected members to agree the remit and progress a discussion and review of the Council’s formal governance arrangements in line with the motion approved.</p> <p>Carry out an assessment of the Audit Risk and Scrutiny Board against CIPFA’s published good practice guide for audit committees.</p> | | | |
| <p>Carry out an assessment of the Audit Risk and Scrutiny Board against CIPFA’s published good practice guide for audit committees and identify any recommendations for change in remit or operational arrangements.</p> | <p>December 2023</p> | <p>Director of Finance and Resources</p> | <p>The self assessment is complete with recommendations for improved clarity of roles and remits agreed by the ARSB, with a further report to Council in May 2023 seeking agreement of these recommendations.</p> |
| <p>Bowles Report Recommendation 8</p> <p>Public confidence</p> <p>These recent events and the matters described in this report will dent public confidence in the Council. The Council should work in an open and transparent manner in the resolution of these issues and particularly with the residents of Dargavel, who have legitimate concerns about the implications for their children during both their primary and secondary education.</p> | | | |
| <p>Response Objectives</p> <p>The key aim has been to provide straightforward messaging and up to date sitreps to ensure publics (and council representatives) have the most up-to-date position and the complexity of the issue is explained in a simple and honest way and that parental/carers concerns in respect to the school and educational environment are able to be appropriately discussed through structured engagement arrangements with the parent councils with appropriate agreed actions taken forward.</p> <p>The strategy has been designed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improve the flow and regularity of information to parents and carers and the wider Dargavel community, so they are first to hear about decisions impacting their community. | | | |

| Action | Target Completion | Responsible Officer | Update | |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure parents and carers have access to all projection data available to the council. - Introduce direct communication channels with Dargavel residents, enabling all sections of the community to engage on matters that are important to them and making sure the latest information is accessible and easy to find. - Provide residents with a feedback loop to enable them to ask questions of the council in relation to the development and have questions answered quickly. - Include the community in formal planning and design of a new primary school and high school extension. <p>It is recognised that effective communication and engagement is important to building a new relationship between the Council and the Dargavel community, but ultimately it will take the delivery of the solution and investment in long term engagement to reduce local anxiety and fully rebuild trust and confidence in the Council.</p> | | | | |
| <p>Establish and track key indicators of community sentiment.</p> | <p>Ongoing</p> | <p>Head of Marketing and Comms</p> | <p>Ongoing</p> | <p>Over 800 people submitted formal responses to the Statutory Consultation on a proposed new primary school for Dargavel and over 150 individuals attended events that were part of the consultation programme. Exit surveys were provided at all events included in the programme to understand if engagement was helpful. General feedback indicates the flexibility of events was helpful and being able to ask questions of officers was useful, but community concerns about ensuring the right solutions are delivered remain. This will take time to significantly change.</p> |

APPENDIX 1

Action Plan Response Monitoring (Open Items) – May 2024

| Action | Target Completion | Responsible Officer | Update | |
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| | | | | <p>We continue to provide regular updates to the community through a variety of channels – including face-to-face forums, monitoring reach, engagement and feedback. We continue to grow membership of our opt-in community newsletter.</p> <p>From qualitative analysis of the statutory consultation, parts of the community continue to express frustration at the council’s previous error and carry concern about current planning and projections. This will require ongoing and steadfast commitment to information sharing and using established community forums for ongoing engagement.</p> |
| <p>Develop, deploy (at appropriate key points post formal consultation period) and evaluate a community pulse survey to assess and track community sentiment and view of ongoing handling and satisfaction with delivery of key interventions within the community.</p> | <p>Expected September 2024</p> | <p>Head of Marketing and comms</p> | <p>In development</p> | <p>The Consultation Institute is supporting the service to carry out a thorough assessment of the effectiveness of the council’s engagement strategy with the Dargavel community (Bishopton and wider Park Mains High School community) so far. This includes:</p> <p>Development of a process based on tCI’s Certificate of Consultation Readiness to assess the current Dargavel process and produce a report making recommendations on what to do in future consultations based on that process – this involve desk research and is underway.</p> <p>Following this, in May, we will launch an community pulse survey, to understand if our engagement approach is helping to improve public trust and a more positive relationship</p> |

APPENDIX 1

Action Plan Response Monitoring (Open Items) – May 2024

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| | | | | <p>between the council and the Dargavel community.</p> <p>This timeline was confirmed to first allow the Statutory Consultation on a proposed new primary school for Dargavel to conclude and be reported.</p> <p>The results of the analysis and opinion survey, with recommendations for our future strategy will be reported to Audit and Scrutiny Board in September. Our agreed plan has been shared with the council's auditors to inform their update report to the Accounts Commission in June.</p> |

| ACCOUNTS COMMISSION SECTION 102 REPORT – FINDINGS & COUNCIL RESPONSE/UPDATE | | | |
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| Community and Other Engagement | | | |
| <p>The council must, as a matter of urgency, conduct a robust and transparent assessment of the effectiveness of its community engagement and then move swiftly to implement any improvements needed.</p> | <p>February 2024</p> | <p>Head of Communications and Marketing</p> | <p>Please see above</p> <p>The Consultation Institute is supporting the service to carry out a thorough assessment of the effectiveness of the council’s engagement strategy with the Dargavel community (Bishopton and wider Park Mains High School community) so far. This includes:</p> <p>Development of a process based on tCI’s Certificate of Consultation Readiness to assess the current Dargavel process and produce a report making recommendations on what to do in future consultations based on that process – this involve desk research and is underway.</p> <p>Following this, in May, we will launch an community pulse survey, to understand if our engagement approach is helping to improve public trust and a more positive relationship between the council and the Dargavel community.</p> <p>This timeline was confirmed to first allow the Statutory Consultation on a proposed new primary school for Dargavel to conclude and be reported.</p> <p>The results of the analysis and opinion survey, with recommendations for our future strategy will be reported to Audit and Scrutiny Board in September. Our agreed plan has been shared with the council’s auditors to inform their update report to the Accounts Commission in June.</p> |

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| <p>The Commission is particularly concerned by the council’s failure both to transparently consider alternative options in relation to expanding secondary school capacity in the area, and to consult or engage appropriately with the community, whom their decision directly affects.</p> | <p>This engagement activity will remain ongoing as part of the PMHS extension project through to August 2027 and beyond recognising the long-term monitoring of school roll projections at the high school.</p> <p>August 2024</p> | <p>Director of Children’s Services</p> | <p>It is accepted that the report to the Education and Children’s Services Policy Board in May 2023 could have articulated the reasons why no other options to address secondary school capacity beyond an extension to Park Mains High School were deemed viable for detailed consideration.</p> <p>Additionally, although engagement in relation to updated school projections and developing plans for a larger extension to PMHS were shared and discussed with the PMHS parent council prior to the May report, plans to expand this engagement process to a wider group to encapsulate all feeder primaries following the board meeting could have been outlined in the report and or considered earlier in the process.</p> <p>Council officers have since May 2023 been progressing positive and ongoing community engagement in relation to the Park Mains extension, principally through the Park Mains Liaison Group which was established to provide a single engagement forum with representatives from the Parent Councils of Park Mains High School and all associated feeder primaries.</p> <p>This engagement process has shared and explained detailed pupil projection data, the underlying rationale for the proposed extension decision as well as listening and responding to</p> |

APPENDIX 1

Action Plan Response Monitoring (Open Items) – May 2024

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| | | | <p>concerns and or requests for further information from the wider parent and carer community. This included sharing detailed information on an option promoted by some community representative from Dargavel and Bishopton for a new secondary school for Dargavel, Bishopton and Langbank. As reported through the Education and Children’s Services Policy Board in August 2023, such an option had significant negative implications from a financial, educational, value for money and school estate perspective that discounted it as a credible option for detailed consideration.</p> <p>The Park Mains Liaison Group is proving to be a highly valuable engagement forum, providing a single route of engagement across the wider community as well as a key route to assist the Council to disseminate consistent key messages and information updates across communities through trusted Parent Council communication channels. This engagement approach will inform how non statutory and informal engagement in relation to potential school estate changes and long-term strategic learning estate work may be taken forward in the future by the Council.</p> <p>Additionally, high levels of positive engagement are being secured as part of the space planning process for the new extension, supporting active parental and carer participation and influence in the design process of the new extension and wider changes to the school that are planned to be delivered. This is increasingly building a positive community commitment and level of direct participation in the delivery of the school extension and improvement project.</p> |
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| | | <p>Director of Children's Services</p> | <p>The review of the Council's engagement strategy as referred to above will include a qualitative assessment of the effectiveness of the Park Mains Liaison Group.</p> <p>Lastly, work is being progressed by officers to research how other councils have approached school extension projects, where a statutory consultation process is not required. The objective of this work is to inform the design of a framework to inform any future approach to early informal engagement that can be adopted by the Council in relation to school estate considerations or changes.</p> <p>Desk top work completed to date has identified a mixed picture with several councils having adopted a similar approach to that employed by the Council for the PMHS extension. However, there are some examples of the use of published options appraisals as part of Council reports and identified examples of planned informal engagement strategies deployed as part of long-term strategic school estate planning which provide some good practice approaches for reference.</p> <p>These individual elements of good practice that are evident across other councils can be collectively brought together and used to inform and guide the development of a proposed framework for use by the Council in its future strategic school estate planning programme (where appropriate this will pay due regard to the Scottish Government guidance on informal engagement that may occur prior to a statutory consultation process).</p> <p>In completing this work consideration will be given to sharing the output across the local authority sector given what appears</p> |
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APPENDIX 1

Action Plan Response Monitoring (Open Items) – May 2024

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| | | | <p>to be a level of mixed and inconsistent approaches deployed across the country.</p> |
| <p>We note that the new primary school is subject to a full public consultation.</p> <p>We expect the council to engage meaningfully with the community on this issue, and other decisions on the school estate.</p> <p>Again, we ask that the Controller monitors this situation, and reports to us in June 2024 on progress and earlier if necessary.</p> | <p>Consultation process has commenced and will fully complete with a report to the Education and Children's Services Policy Board in May 2024</p> | <p>Director of Children's Services</p> | <p>The Education and Children's Services Policy board approved the planned consultation programme in January with a report on the outcome of the consultation planned to be brought back to Policy Board in May.</p> <p>A full programme of planned consultation and engagement activity has been developed with input from the Institute of Consultation to bring to the design process experience of recognised best practice deployed across the UK.</p> <p>Full details of the planned consultation process and activity will be provided to the external auditors as well as the opportunity to observe any of the planned information events and or formal consultation meetings.</p> <p>The consultation has now been completed with 817 respondents to the online questionnaire and a further 150 attending the events which were held:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6 informal drop in sessions 4 Information exchanges 2 public meetings Meetings with Parent Councils of both primary schools Meetings with staff and children from both primary schools. <p>Education Scotland also engaged with the community and produced their report of their findings.</p> <p>A final consultation report will be finalised and presented to the Policy Board, as scheduled in May.</p> |

| Learning Lessons and Building Capacity | | | |
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| <p>While the council’s initial response to the Bowles report was high level, we are assured by the Controller that its action plan in response is now sufficiently detailed and includes SMART objectives</p> <p>It will be important that this action plan is well-managed by senior officers and closely scrutinised by elected members of the council.</p> | <p>Complete</p> | <p>Director of Finance and Resources</p> | <p>This action plan and subsequent action plan relating to the s102 report are closely monitored and reported to each cycle of the ARSB.</p> |
| <p>However, there are still significant uncertainties relating to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the capacity needed in the long term, and • to the completion of the two building projects – the new primary school and the secondary school extension. <p>We therefore request that these matters are closely monitored in the annual audit work, and the Controller uses her powers to report any slippage or other issues to us if necessary.</p> | <p>March 2024</p> | <p>Director of Children’s Services</p> | <p>Managing the Risk of Future Capacity Uncertainty</p> <p>The inherent uncertainty in relation to long term (15 year) pupil growth projections has been widely reported by the Council over the past year as an ongoing risk through both formal board reports, as well as engagement and communications with communities and in sharing data and reports with the external auditors. This is particularly recognised by the Council in the context of Dargavel Village having approximately 10 years of development still to deliver before achieving completion. It has also been trailed that the Council’s projection work to date with Edge Analytics has identified an expectation of a peak in demand to be reached which will then fall to a stabilised long-term level of demand – a similar pattern of demand growth has been evidenced across other similar long term community growth areas in the UK.</p> <p>The Council will regularly monitor actual pupil numbers and update long term projections on a regular basis over coming years as a key response to being able to pro-actively manage this risk moving forward.</p> |

APPENDIX 1

Action Plan Response Monitoring (Open Items) – May 2024

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| | | <p>This monitoring process will be key to assess the extent to which actual demand and revised projections is or is not tracking against the current projections that have informed the planned capacity levels that will be delivered by the current learning estate interventions and provide early indication of any risk of material deviation. The planned annual monitoring and updating approach that will be deployed over coming years will be shared with the External Auditors.</p> <p>Long term projection work completed to date has already modelled a range of potential demand scenarios for the primary sector and identified an expected peak of demand in 2033/34. Options that can be considered for deployment in future years to manage upper demand scenarios that would be exceed the planned capacity being delivered for primary sector education within Dargavel village, have already been identified and reported through the Education and Children’s Services Policy Board in November and shared with community representatives.</p> <p>Should the monitoring arrangements over the coming years highlight projection of sustained demand trending towards the upper demand scenarios, an appraisal will be required to assess which of the options is most appropriate for consideration to be deployed to meet the scale and nature of the additional future demand. This process will include early community engagement with school communities and will require timely assessment and associated decision making to allow planned delivery of any additional intervention well ahead of the developing need.</p> <p>In relation to the secondary sector, the impact of higher demand scenarios will take longer to emerge (mid to late 2030s) and similarly it has been well trailed in Council reports and with</p> |
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| | | <p>the community that long term monitoring and projection modelling may identify the need to consider options at an appropriate future point in time in respect to any further intervention and or decisions in relation to secondary sector provision across West Renfrewshire.</p> <p>Similarly, the long-term monitoring arrangements will facilitate early identification of such risks and will support early engagement with the appropriate primary and secondary schools that may be impacted by any future school estate changes.</p> <p>Delivery of New School Facilities</p> <p>It has been recognised by the Council that as a result of the very late identification of the significant under-capacity problems within both the primary and secondary sectors serving Dargavel, the Council has since late 2023 been operating within a highly compressed non-typical timeline to undertake all the associated capacity planning, land assembly, community engagement, statutory consultation, space planning, procurement arrangements before moving into project delivery in order to achieve operational delivery of the new facilities by August 2027.</p> <p>In broad terms, the Council is seeking to achieve all that is associated with the long-term strategic planning, engagement, consultation and operational delivery of a new school and major extension of a secondary school in a 4 ½ year period, when such an end-to-end process would normally run over a much longer period – a timeline of around 6-8 year would not be an untypical</p> |
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APPENDIX 1

Action Plan Response Monitoring (Open Items) – May 2024

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| | | | <p>period of timeframe. Consequently, the Council is parallel running several activities that would in most circumstances be delivered in a broadly consecutive manner.</p> <p>The Council has established governance, programming, and resource arrangements in place to support the delivery of the new primary school and secondary school extension over the remaining 3 ½ year period through to the operational target date of August 2007.</p> <p>To date the external auditors have not undertaken any detailed scrutiny of the delivery programme or the arrangements in place. To provide assurance officers will provide a full overview of the current arrangements for the external auditors for their review and will support whatever audit work is required to allow them to assess the Council’s current approach.</p> |
| <p>Impact on Service Provision</p> | | | |
| <p>We note that the council has assessed that currently there has been no detriment to either teaching delivery or pupil education in the Dargavel and Bishopton areas from the interim measures introduced.</p> <p>We consider it critical that the council reports the results of these assessments publicly, regularly and in an accessible way, to maintain and rebuild community confidence.</p> | <p>Ongoing as part of the Service’s Quality Assurance Framework</p> <p>Ongoing and will be incorporated into parent and school</p> | <p>Director of Children’s Services</p> <p>Head of Marketing and Communications</p> | <p>Renfrewshire Council has a robust Quality Assurance framework involving regular meetings with Education Managers and school staff and planned school visits which focus in on the national quality assurance indicators (reviews).</p> <p>DPS had a visit in January as part of this process where key strengths under the national Quality Assurance indicators from How Good is Our School were evaluated, self-improvement and self-evaluation and Learning, Teaching and Assessment and a report was produced. In addition, Bishopton primary School and Park Mains High School were both recently inspected by HMI, receiving very positive reports.</p> |

APPENDIX 1

Action Plan Response Monitoring (Open Items) – May 2024

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| | <p>newsletters at appropriate points.</p> | | <p>Further, every school submits a school improvement plan and a school improvement report (published on website) and their evaluations under the 4 key Quality Indicators (QIs) of their performance, based on data gathered through self-evaluation, HMI visits, internal visits and stakeholder input is submitted to Children’s Services in April.</p> <p>These are shared with the parent councils and will also be published on the school website as part of the self-evaluation process. This is in line with Education Scotland guidelines, the National Improvement Framework and statutory requirements.</p> <p>This communication with parents will be an ongoing process.</p> |
| <p>The Commission is also concerned at the possible wider impacts of the council’s failings regarding the estimation of pupil numbers and whether this has had any impact on services provided by the council in the Dargavel area.</p> <p>We request that the Controller seeks further information on these issues so that we can understand the work that the council has done to understand these impacts.</p> | <p>In line with requests emerging from defined audit programme to be set by Azets</p> | <p>Chief Executive</p> | <p>Full details of all the additional areas of potential service impact considered by the Council have been shared and discussed in detail with the External Auditor to support the Controller of Audit’s follow-up report to the Accounts Commission in June.</p> <p>Support to Schools Early Learning & Childcare Provision Children’s social Care support NHS Service Provision & facilities Community Leisure & Recreation within wider Masterplan Transport & Active Travel Infrastructure Provision Public Bus Transport Provision</p> |
| <p>Financial Management and Consequences</p> | | | |

APPENDIX 1

Action Plan Response Monitoring (Open Items) – May 2024

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| <p>The financial impact of these failings on the council is significant. The council capped the risk and contributions from BAE Systems under the Section 75 agreement, and as a direct result faces estimated net additional capital costs of £60 million, to be met by borrowing. This is a substantial sum of public money. The council needs to clarify the opportunity costs of this in terms of its overall capital programme. The council projects that it will have a revenue budget deficit of up to £50 million by 2026/27 and will need to make difficult decisions on prioritising its spending, compounded by the financial consequences of this issue</p> <p>The council has recently negotiated a transfer of land from BAE for the construction of a new primary school. The Controller’s report indicates that this was in exchange for amendments to the extent and composition of the housing units for which planning permission has been granted.</p> <p>Given the reported determination of BAE to fully protect their commercial interests in the development, and the absence of alternative solutions for the council, it will be important to ensure and demonstrate that this exchange represents Best Value for the public purse.</p> | <p>Ongoing</p> <p>March 2024</p> | <p>Director of Finance and Resources</p> <p>Head of Economy and Development</p> | <p>The Council will be required to manage the financial impact of the unplanned delivery of a new primary school and larger extension at PMHS through the delivery of its wider financial strategy and any opportunity costs articulated as part of developing and delivering that strategy. Regular reports with regards the Council’s financial position and outlook are provided to Council, which include the financial consequences of the Dargavel failings.</p> <p>The financial and wider factors considered by officers as part of the negotiation process with BAE systems to secure the associated land agreement and adjustments to the S.75 agreement will be set out in detail and shared with the External Auditors and will be reported through updates to the Audit Risk and Scrutiny Board and subsequently. Council now provided this to External Auditors</p> |
| <p>Council Leadership, Governance, and Culture</p> | | | |
| <p>The council’s action plan will be hugely important in further embedding improvements in this area. In particular, the following elements must be progressed urgently and transparently:</p> | <p>February 2024 and ongoing in relation to the outcomes</p> | <p>Director of Finance and Resources</p> | <p>This report and combined action plan provides the Audit, Risk & Scrutiny Board with an overarching view of all progress associated with the Dargavel issue, subsequent investigations, reviews and agreed actions.</p> |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the council’s review of its scrutiny arrangements against CIPFA good practice guidelines • the council’s review of its approach to risk management • the council’s leadership development programme for officers. <p>To be satisfied of progress in these areas, the Commission requires the Controller to request further information from the council on the scope and timing of these actions, and report back to the Commission in the update requested for June 2024, or earlier if she thinks necessary.</p> <p>We also expect these issues to be covered in the accelerated Best Value report.</p> | <p>associated with each action.</p> | | |
| <p>The Commission is also concerned about the culture of the council and whether it has truly learned the lessons it needs to.</p> <p>We expect organisational culture to be an area of focus in the accelerated Best Value report.</p> <p>In particular, we request an update on whether the</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • culture of the organisation is appropriately open and transparent, • encourages continuous improvement, | <p>Subject to confirmation of the planned best value audit programme and approach</p> | <p>Chief Executive</p> | <p>The council’s auditors concluded that the council has appropriate governance arrangements in place with improvements over the years in member and officer relationships and effective leadership overall and were satisfied through their detailed audit work that the Council had demonstrated that the governance failings identified by the Bowles report were limited to the historic handling of Dargavel.</p> <p>The auditors did not highlight any concerns over the wider organisational culture in the Council or in its approach to managing major capital programmes but did identify that the role of the Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Board in ensuring effective scrutiny is not sufficiently clear and the Council has recognised this and is already significantly progressed with a review of the Audit Risk and Scrutiny Board and the outcome of this review will be shared with the local audit team.</p> |

APPENDIX 1

Action Plan Response Monitoring (Open Items) – May 2024

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • effective joint working between officers and members, effective scrutiny and challenge (especially by elected members), and • engagement and discussion with stakeholders. <p>In addition, we request an assessment of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • whether it has the right skills in the right places to deliver on its responsibilities, and • whether issues are escalated to the right level. | | | <p>Despite the finding of the Council’s auditors, the Commission has expressed concern in relation to the Council’s culture and have sought further assurances in relation to a wide range of organisational issues.</p> <p>It has been confirmed that consideration and assessment of such issues will form part of the planned Best Value Audit process and subject to confirmation of the planned detailed best value audit programme.</p> <p>Council officers will provide all the necessary support, assistance, and information to allow the audit team to appropriately assess all key areas of interest and are actively progressing an internal self-assessment and evidence process to support this element of the audit engagement in due course over the anticipated 2024 audit programme.</p> |
| <p>Finally, the Commission notes that the auditor has concluded that the council has obtained appropriate external legal advice and determined there is no potential for any form of action against former senior employees involved in the Dargavel School decision-making.</p> <p>In addition, no disciplinary action has been taken against any senior officer involved in decision-making relevant to the Section 75 approval process for the Dargavel Village development.</p> <p>The Commission accepts that these are management issues.</p> | <p>March 2024</p> | <p>Head of Corporate Governance</p> | <p>No senior officers involved in the Dargavel S.75 decision making process and identified in the Bowles Report remain employed by the Council or remained employed at the time of the Bowles report publication. In this context no senior officer could be subject to any form of internal Council disciplinary investigation or action.</p> <p>Full details of the process of consideration and legal advice that was sought regard to any other form of external legal action will be shared with the local external audit team as requested by the Commission.</p> |

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| <p>However, we request that the Controller asks the council for further information on the process followed and factors taken into account by the council in considering disciplinary action against staff involved.</p> <p>In addition, and looking forward, the Commission asks for information on</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the council’s approach to performance management and • its current policy on disciplinary action, <p>so we can be assured that appropriate arrangements are in place to ensure that staff have the necessary skills and that senior officers are properly accountable for their areas of responsibility.</p> | <p>March 2024</p> | <p>Head of Policy and Partnerships and Head of HR & OD</p> | <p>A full package of information in relation to current HR policies and procedures as been provided to Azets.</p> |
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| CROSS PARTY WORKING GROUP ACTIONS | | | |
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| <p>Refresher training for management teams across all of the Council’s directorates on the operation of delegated authority should be implemented.</p> <p>Refresher training for management teams across all of the Council’s directorates on the operation of the Protocol for Relationships between Political Groups, Elected Members and Officers should be implemented.</p> | April 2024 | Head of Corporate Governance and Chief Auditor | Training was delivered to all directorates by the Head of Corporate Governance and the Council’s Chief Auditor in January 2024 to Chief Officers and tier 3 managers. A further “catch up” session was held on 23 April 2024. |
| <p>That the Bulletin be issued with the minutes of each Council and board meeting for the meetings of Full Council.</p> | May 2024 | Head of Corporate Governance | The Bulletin is now issued with the minutes pack at each Full Council Meeting commencing with the meeting of 9 May 2024. |
| <p>All major projects and programmes will report to the appropriate board at least twice a year.</p> <p>Any such reports will include a note of all project groups involved.</p> | May 2024 | Chief Executive | Update reports on City Deal Projects and cultural Infrastructure programmes have gone to boards in December and February respectively as part of twice yearly reporting cycles. Housing investment programme update provided as part of update report at each cycle with an additional full update provided in august of each year. |
| <p>The outcome of the management training programme will be reported to the Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Board</p> | December 2024 | Director of Finance and Resources and Head of HR & OD | The first cohort of the programme has concluded the programme, with feedback from this first round being used to inform the delivery of the programme to the next cohorts of senior staff. Delivery of the programme will continue over the course of 2024. |
| <p>That a Chief Planning Officer report brought to the Planning and Climate Change Policy Board at least twice a</p> | May 2024 | Head of Economy and | Arrangements have been put in place by officers for this bi-annual reporting |

APPENDIX 1

Action Plan Response Monitoring (Open Items) – May 2024

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| year advising on the position in respect of s75 Agreements. Planning applications, or where officers cannot not reach agreement on substantive matters in a specific s75 Agreement negotiation will also be brought back to the Board for further consideration | | Development Services | |
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| Action | Target Completion | Responsible Officer | Update |
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| <p>Bowles Report Recommendation 1 Build a more robust model of primary school need for Dargavel - the Council should continue to refine its pupil forecast model for Dargavel.</p> | | | |
| <p>Response Objectives</p> <p>Deliver robust projection modelling for Dargavel and PMHS which: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • considers live information arising from NHS, pupil & ELC registrations, the pace of development to date, certainty over development size and likely pace of future build out rate, • utilises external data analytics and projection expertise to augment and enhance the Council’s in-house forecasting approach to ensure modelling is robust, underpinned by external challenge and specialist input reflecting the complexity and significant portion of Dargavel that has yet to be developed out over a circa 10 year period, • provides modelling output which considers potential future upper scenarios reflecting the high yield factors reflected in the 2023/24 P1 intake to inform immediate decisions on scale of capacity to be delivered as well as planning for potential additional interventions at a future time, • delivers modelling output which provides a long-term view beyond the anticipated completion timeline for Dargavel to ensure the long term impact of Dargavel is modelled and understood, • provides modelling output over the long term which indicates both the scale, timing and shape of an anticipated peak in demand that will accompany a development of this scale and nature. This will provide visibility of the anticipated short-lived peak in demand and long term settled demand to ensure this is appropriately reflected in estate/capacity decisions and in particular to mitigate against delivery of excessive long term / permanent increase in capacity that would result in excess unused surplus capacity over the long term. • Provides modelling that can be tested and revised as necessary as new key data becomes available such as P1 and S1 registrations, actual scale and pace of the development and any new developments, which will continue to inform decisions on any future estate interventions if required. | | | |

APPENDIX 2

Action Plan Response Monitoring (Completed Items) – May 2024

| Action | Target Completion | Responsible Officer | Update |
|--|-------------------|---------------------------------|---|
| Complete Council modelling through to the anticipated end date for the housing development (2033/34) based on assumed 4,300 units and available live data. | October 2022 | Director of Children's Services | Completed October 2022 |
| Engage and appoint Edge Analytics to deliver enhanced modelling approach for both Dargavel primary requirements as well as PMHS out to 2033/34 and updated live datasets. | February 2023 | Director of Children's Services | Completed February 2023 including additional upper forecast scenarios for Dargavel non-denominational requirements to support management of risk associated with long term yield remaining at similar level to 2023/24. Informed reports to Education and Children's Services Board in March and May 2023 |
| Extend Edge engagement to deliver an enhanced model projecting out to 2038 to provide longer term forecast to assess the full impact on the secondary sector and allow identification of likely timing and scale of peak demand encapsulating any relevant updates to live datasets. | September 2023 | Director of Children's Services | Modelling completed which has identified an anticipated peak period in both primary and secondary sectors and will be reported to Education and Children's Services Board in November 2023. |
| Provide update to November Education & Children's Service Policy Board. | November 2023 | Director of Children's Services | Two update reports were taken to the November ECSPB: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Learning Estate 2. Dargavel Housing Development – Impact on Denominational Education Provision Link |
| <p>Bowles Report Recommendation 2</p> <p>Use of Bishopton Primary - in its future plans the Council should reconsider how surplus capacity at Bishopton can be used effectively.</p> | | | |
| <p>Response Objectives</p> | | | |

APPENDIX 2

Action Plan Response Monitoring (Completed Items) – May 2024

| Action | Target Completion | Responsible Officer | Update |
|--|---------------------|--|---|
| <p>Consider and assess how existing capacity within Bishopton Primary School may be best utilised to support the Dargavel catchment over the immediate term and potentially over the longer term, taking into consideration the uncertainty and risk over the long-term demand levels that will ultimately emerge for primary education from Dargavel as well as the expectation of a temporary peak period of demand.</p> <p>Provide a report to Education and Children’s Services Board setting out a clear overview as to how Bishopton PS capacity will be utilised to support temporarily over the short term period and how it may be considered amongst other options for use to support Dargavel in the longer term (noting that any such longer term use will be subject to detailed consideration and decision at an appropriate point in future years).</p> | | | |
| <p>Complete assessment of anticipated P1 intake from Dargavel catchment and assess against revised DPS capacity availability, establish planned P1 intake capacity cap and anticipated P1 intake requiring accommodation at Bishopton Primary School.</p> | <p>August 2023</p> | <p>Director of Children’s Services</p> | <p>Planned use of Bishopton Primary School along with planned capped entry levels to Dargavel Primary School reported an approved at Education and Children’s Services Policy Board in August 2023. There will be a requirement to annually monitor anticipated and actual P1 intakes carefully to assess adequacy of short term capacity provision across both Dargavel and Bishopton Primary Schools to meet demand pending the second primary school in Dargavel coming on stream.</p> |
| <p>Complete an exercise to assess the timing, scale and range of potential demand level scenarios, in particular understanding the scale and timing of the peak demand and likely settled long term demand. This information will be used to inform the assessment of how Bishopton Primary School could, if required, be potentially be utilised as an option in the longer term.</p> | <p>January 2024</p> | <p>Director of Children’s Services</p> | <p>Completion of the updated work with Edge Analytics has provided a view of the likely timing and length of the peak demand period – with peak primary demand being forecast in 2033/34 which will fall over the second half of the 2030s to a more settled level. Further work is being progressed to update this information for the recently released 2023 census information and November registration data to inform an overall assessment.</p> |
| <p>Complete financial analysis to understand the potential financial context of utilising Bishopton Primary School Capacity</p> | <p>May 2023</p> | <p>Director of Finance and Resources</p> | <p>Bishopton PS is a predominantly 1960s construction and is more than 60 years old. This building will, along with the whole school estate, undergo an updated condition survey over coming months. Notwithstanding, given the underlying age of the building it will inevitably have a limited remaining lifespan before being considered for replacement.</p> |

APPENDIX 2

Action Plan Response Monitoring (Completed Items) – May 2024

| Action | Target Completion | Responsible Officer | Update |
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| | | | <p>Existing surplus capacity if used permanently to reduce the required size of a second Dargavel primary school, will require to be replaced as part of a renewal programme. The determination of the timing of that will be subject to work progressed as part of the strategic learning estate programme.</p> <p>Consequently, it has been assessed that any financial advantage from utilising Bishopton PS will be restricted to a temporary time value of money benefit and consequently will be relatively limited.</p> <p>In addition, there is also a risk that utilising Bishopton PS permanently removes its availability to provide supporting capacity to manage both a temporary peak that may arise from upper end educational demand scenarios and longer term upper end demand. There could be the risk that in such circumstances if Bishopton capacity was no longer available this would lead to higher overall costs over the longer term for the Council.</p> <p>The financial considerations and risks will be incorporated into the overall assessment scheduled to be reported as part of the Education & Children’s Services Board report in January.</p> |
| Set out overview in a report to the Education and Children’s Services Policy Board in respect to the potential long-term utilisation of Bishopton Primary School which will be subject to detailed consideration at an appropriate point in future | January 2024 | Director of Children’s Services | Work to allow appropriate recommendation to be made is progressing in line with plans and scheduled to be reported to Board in January 2024. A paper was presented to Board in January 2024 |

| Action | Target Completion | Responsible Officer | Update |
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| years as actual long term demand trends increasingly emerge. | | | |
| <p>Bowles Report Recommendation 3</p> <p>As the Council progresses its plans to issue supplementary guidance on developer contributions for education it should seek to learn from other Councils in Scotland.</p> <p>A development the size of Dargavel is exceptional and would need its own modelling techniques. However, for smaller developments the Council should create an evidence base to calculate specific yield factors derived from recent developments in Renfrewshire. Such robust data will ease future negotiations.</p> | | | |
| Undertake a desk top review of other local authorities across Scotland and identify key best practice councils to engage. | June 2023 | Head of Economy and Development | Completed |
| Complete detailed engagement with identified best practice councils arising from desk top research | Summer 2023 | Head of Economy and Development | Detailed engagement completed with Fife, Falkirk and West Lothian councils. |
| <p>Complete data analysis exercise of a range of datasets of mixed historic sites across Renfrewshire to provide empirical evidence to support actual pupil yields to inform establishment of appropriate yield factors to be used in future contribution policy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refresh % capacity of all schools (vs school rolls) • Sample research of Pupil Product Ratio (PPR) for developed housing sites (< 10 units) [min 10 site sample] • Sample research of PPR for developed housing sites (> 100 units)[min 10 site sample] • Sample research of PPR for established / mature housing development to provide longer term perspective (eg. 15 years old) (> 100 units)[min 4 site sample] • Identify individual schools where pupil capacity is above notional threshold (85%) | October 2023 | Head of Economy and Development | Work on this is now complete, agreed new draft planning guidance presented to March 2024 PCC Board. |

| Action | Target Completion | Responsible Officer | Update |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify all known undeveloped housing sites in individual school catchments [Subset of 5] identify all housing sites with current "live" planning application Identify schools where it is anticipated intervention would be required to increase capacity based on potential future housing to be delivered over next 10 years to inform likely future developer discussions. | | | |
| <p>Incorporate into the development of the draft contributions policy targeted to be presented to the Planning and Climate Change Policy Board in January 2024.</p> | <p>March 2024</p> | <p>Head of Economy and Development</p> | <p>Work on this is now complete, new draft planning guidance presented to March 2024 PCC Board.</p> |
| <p>Bowles Report Recommendation 4</p> <p>Council needs to work co-operatively with BAE. Unless the Council and BAE can work together to resolve the current problems, BAE may face accusations, whether founded or not and regardless of Council incompetence, that it has increased its profits at the expense of Council taxpayers.</p> | | | |
| <p>Response Objectives</p> <p>Secure legal ownership of suitable land to facilitate delivery of a second school within Dargavel Village as well as additional land next to existing school site to provide increased flexibility to meet potential future extension of the school and or establishment of greater outdoor space.</p> <p>Secure legal commitment from BAE to provide land remediation and associated infrastructure requirements as part of legal agreement at nil cost to the Council.</p> <p>Secure as part of the legal agreement certainty on consented planning numbers and any associated adjustments to s.75 agreement to reflect revised agreement.</p> | | | |
| <p>Secure with BAE agreement on Heads of Terms for allow for mutual governance approval from each organisation to inform detailed legal agreement drafting and final sign off</p> | <p>As soon as possible</p> | <p>Chief Executive</p> | <p>This was completed and approved by ILE Board end of August 2023</p> |

| Action | Target Completion | Responsible Officer | Update |
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| | was targeted. | | |
| Secure completed and signed legal missives to deliver in full the objectives outlined above to provide certainty and timing of availability of remediated and infrastructure proofed land to support wider school delivery planning and consultation arrangements that will be progressed by the Council team. | August 2023 | Chief Executive | Legal missives concluded mid-September 2023 |
| Proposed revisions to S.75 negotiated with BAE Systems were approved by ILE. Revised S.75 signed off by both the Council and BAE Systems to legally conclude matters. | August 2023 | Head of Economy & Development | Approved by Planning and Climate Change Board August 2023 |
| <p>Bowles Report Recommendation 5</p> <p>Corporate working and organisational culture - although I understand that the Council has sought to improve and strengthen corporate working in recent years, the evidence would suggest there is a long way to go; simply establishing corporate working groups is insufficient if staff are in a mindset of ‘not my problem’.</p> <p>The failure of management oversight, if symptomatic of the Council as a whole, would be deeply disturbing. The Council needs to consider a significant change programme, not just on the of issue of corporate working and personal responsibility, but also its organisational culture and values. It needs plans to build a stronger organisation where constructive challenge is welcomed and there is a clarity of what is expected of all of those in a leadership role.</p> | | | |
| <p>Response Objectives</p> <p>Provide assurance that established programme governance framework and operations of governance for other major capital investment programmes and specifically that the Bowles findings on the historic failings on the handling of Dargavel by officers are not representative of the Council’s current culture and approach to the management and delivery of major programmes.</p> | | | |

| Action | Target Completion | Responsible Officer | Update |
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| <p>The Council is committed to living its values as a learning and collaborative organisation and post COVID was already in the process of re-establishing an Leadership Development programme for senior leadership teams and managers across the Council in recognition that this required to be reinvigorated post COVID and that there has been significant turnover in management and senior positions over the past three years and this would support growing and maturing the current culture and collaborative connections across the organisation.</p> <p>In response to the Bowles recommendations, the objective is to ensure the new Leadership Development programme is appropriately cognisant and reflective of the key learning points from the Bowles report and takes the opportunity to ensure its coverage seeks to re-enforce the development of skills related to governance, risk management, commercial risk, corporate working and culture etc and effectively utilises failures referenced in the Bowles report as key examples for learning throughout the programme. Collective reflection and learning of such significant failures – albeit historical – is recognised as an important element of building an effective future culture and ways of working across the organisation.</p> | | | |
| <p>Undertake a health check assessment on major capital programmes to provide reassurance in respect to all aspects of governance, control, reporting and management of programmes.</p> | <p>October 2023</p> | <p>Chief Executive supported by CMT</p> | <p>City Deal and Infrastructure Health Check report was submitted to CMT on 21 November 2023.</p> |
| <p>Put in place arrangements to deliver a comprehensive Leadership Development Programme (circa 12 months + programme) for chief officers and senior managers which amongst other things will cover and key areas referenced in the Bowles report in respect to governance, accountability, risk management, collaborative working, member officer relations etc.</p> | <p>Commence programme by September 2023</p> | <p>Director of Finance & Resources and Head of HR & OD</p> | <p>Contract engagement in place and resources secured from SOLACE Enterprises to support co-designed and co-delivered programme.</p> <p>Initial Chief Officer programme launch event occurred on 3rd October with focusing on personal resilience.</p> <p>The programme has delivered sessions focussed on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective Communications and Elected Member Relations • Programme Management, Leading and Navigating Strategic Change • Risk Management and Governance • Transformational Leadership • Delivering Corporate/Team Values and Vision |

APPENDIX 2

Action Plan Response Monitoring (Completed Items) – May 2024

| Action | Target Completion | Responsible Officer | Update |
|--|-------------------|--------------------------|---|
| | | | <p>This first leadership development programme has now been concluded with an evaluation process underway. Attendance was good throughout the programme and for any officers that were unable to attend parts of the programme, they will attend these specific modules during the next cohort grouping to ensure completion of the full programme.</p> <p>The next 2 Cohorts will be run from April to around September and with up to 60 places available for our next tier of management. There will be some revisions to content and emphasis based on feedback from the initial sessions, however the key themes of the programme will remain unchanged.</p> |
| <p>Design and undertake an evaluation process of the Leadership Development Programme for Chief Officer cohort to inform required changes / adjustments to programme delivery for next management cohort.</p> | <p>March 2024</p> | <p>Head of HR and OD</p> | <p>Initial feedback was requested as part of the final workshop of this first programme. An evaluation request, designed in partnership with SOLACE, will be sent out to each of the participants asking if their knowledge has increased, if they feel more confident and informed and what changes, if any, would participants suggest for the next cohort. The formal evaluation will be sent out w/c 20/02/24 and will have a 2-week completion window. There will a further evaluation on what changes have been made as a result of the programme will also be carried out 6 months each cohort completion.</p> |
| <p>Bowles Report Recommendation 6</p> <p>Risk management</p> <p>From documents I have seen the Council was unaware of the scale of risk it was taking in the calculation of pupil numbers. The identified risk in Council documents related to providing the school on time, not that the size of the school may prove to be inadequate. The failure to identify that risk has had two consequences; first the Council has been slow to react to the increase in pupil numbers and second the Council did not negotiate with BAE with that risk in mind.</p> | | | |

| Action | Target Completion | Responsible Officer | Update |
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| The Council needs to review how it both identifies risk and manages it. | | | |
| Response Objectives | | | |
| Progress actions to provide reassurance in relation to the Council's current risk management approach, in particular how this is approached, deployed and managed as part of major projects as well as considering and assessing the seniority / appropriateness of officer involvement and related skills across officers involved in the process. | | | |
| A review of risk profiles across all service departments to ensure visibility of all risks and confirmation of where certain risks are being monitored if outwith the standard Risk Reports to the Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Board (i.e., Health and Safety Planning Groups, Service Improvement Plans etc) | October 2023 | Director of Finance and Resources | Risk report submitted to Audit, Risk & Scrutiny Board as planned on 6 November 2023. |
| A review of the 'service risk representative' roles in each service department to ensure the representatives who sit on the Corporate Risk Management Group are sufficiently involved in risk matters within the service, to feed this into the Corporate Risk Management Group and that they also have authority within the service to provide challenge as a 'critical friend.' | October 2023 | Director of Finance and Resources | Action completed. CMT agreed (10 October 2023), that each Director will nominate a Head of Service and one other colleague to support the Head of Service in the role going forward. |
| Delivery of a project risk management workshop specific to the planned new primary school in Dargavel (complete) | August 2023 | Director of Finance and Resources | Workshop delivered covering nature of project risks, risk changes over lifecycle of the project; reminder of Council PM framework and PMU support; key issues re good governance. |
| Delivery of project risk management training with all PMU colleagues (in a train the trainer format) so colleagues are delivering this as part of project kick-offs to support a more risk focussed culture in the organisation. | September 2023 | Director of Finance and Resources | This was completed on 12/10/2023. PMU staff received a 'train the trainer' session to enable them to cover running risk awareness sessions at project kick-offs to support a more risk focussed culture in the organisation. |

APPENDIX 2

Action Plan Response Monitoring (Completed Items) – May 2024

| Action | Target Completion | Responsible Officer | Update |
|---|-------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| Undertaking a 'health check' of project management arrangements across the council to ensure governance, management, reporting and risk management is appropriate to the scale of the project. | November 2023 | Director of Finance and Resources | Compliance review of all PMU supported projects complete. All projects demonstrated a satisfactory level of risk governance and management. |
| An update to the risk management course on iLearn and consideration of whether it should be a mandatory course. | December 2023 | Director of Finance and Resources | The course is now developed and ready to be launched to relevant staff on iLearn. In addition, face to face training of a new "Who's risk is it anyway" half day course is also being delivered in February and May. |
| Embed and deliver risk management training into the new leadership development programme that is currently under development, particularly in relation to commercial risk | December 2023 | Director of Finance and Resources | Session delivered 12 December 2023 |
| Reviewing governance documents to ensure delegations in relation to liability caps are clear and unambiguous. | December 2023 | Director of Finance and Resources | Consultation with Head of Corporate Governance concluded that governance documents do not require amendment, but rather, more training would be required on what was expected within existing delegations. The training was delivered to CMT on 28 November 2023. Governance refresher training sessions have been delivered to every department senior management team in January. |
| Deliver a targeted risk management development day for Chief Officers:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project risk management (and risk simulation exercise) • Risk horizon scanning and sustainability (the Global Risk Report) | December 2023 | Director of Finance and Resources | The training session has been prepared and was delivered to CMT on 28 November 2023. |

| Action | Target Completion | Responsible Officer | Update |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liability caps and their implications | | | |
| <p>It is recognised that Dargavel Village has a significant amount of housing development yet to be delivered (circa 2000 housing units over a 10 year period) and therefore many of the associated risk that existed at the beginning of the development continue to exist today albeit there is live data to inform future projections from the first circa 2,300 units that have been delivered. Manage ongoing education demand risk relating to Dargavel through: The Council therefore continues to face risk and uncertainty in relation to accurately projecting the scale and timing of future education demand which will continue to have inherent uncertainty and risk. In recognition of this the Council will continue to progress the following actions to manage and mitigate this risk:-</p> <p>Securing robust long term demand projections which provide both a core projection, potential upper scenario and a long term view of the potential scale and timing of short term peak demand to inform decisions on capacity provision.</p> <p>Identify now a range of flexible options that are and will remain available to in future years to deliver, if required additional capacity (both temporary capacity and permanent long term capacity) to ensure the Council can be reassured of being able to respond appropriately to the potential for upper end demand scenarios and or temporary demand peaks to emerge.</p> | <p>September 2023</p> <p>January 2024</p> | <p>Director of Children’s Services</p> | <p>Further updates will be completed in this respect for updated datasets available from November registration data and recently released NRS Census data</p> <p>Based on data and a range of scenarios, flexible additional capacity options have been outlined and shared with relevant boards.</p> |

| Action | Target Completion | Responsible Officer | Update |
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| <p>Establish process and arrangements to support and provide detailed monitoring and updates to projections for updates to actual data sets to facilitate a continual re-assessment of longer term trend and likely requirements / decision point required in relation to deployment of potential additional interventions.</p> | <p>January 2024</p> | | <p>A schedule is in place with timelines for detailed monitoring and updates to projections and actual data. This will ensure continual re-assessment of long term trends and likely requirements / decision points required.</p> |
| <p>Bowles Report Recommendation 7</p> <p>Whilst protecting the integrity of the planning process, the Council needs to ensure the appropriate involvement of members in such developments.</p> <p>Additional Council Motion Council agrees that in light of the Independent External Review of Dargavel that there is a requirement to convene a cross party body to discuss and review existing governance arrangements of Renfrewshire Council.</p> | | | |
| <p>Response Objectives</p> <p>Assess the extent to which major investment projects have provided sufficient engagement with elected members through both formal governance routes as well as through briefing sessions, engagement sessions, group presentations, site tours etc. Identify any adjustments or improvements required moving forward.</p> <p>Provide officer support to a cross party group to of elected members to agree the remit and progress a discussion and review of the Council’s formal governance arrangements in line with the motion approved.</p> <p>Carry out an assessment of the Audit Risk and Scrutiny Board against CIPFA’s published good practice guide for audit committees.</p> | | | |

| Action | Target Completion | Responsible Officer | Update |
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| Undertake a health check assessment on major capital programmes to provide reassurance in respect to extent to which elected member involvement has been appropriately secured through formal governance reporting as well as via other appropriate informal engagement routes | October 2023 | Chief Executive supported by CMT | City Deal and Infrastructure Health Check report was submitted to CMT on 21 November 2023. Other programmes to be reported to CMT through regular scheduled portfolio update sessions. |
| Support Council Leader and other nominated elected members to determine a review remit, progress the review and develop suitable recommendations. | March 2024 | Head of Corporate Governance | The Cross Party Working Group has been established and met five times. A report was submitted to the Council Meeting on 29 February 2024 setting out the findings of the review. |
| <p>Bowles Report Recommendation 8</p> <p>Public confidence</p> <p>These recent events and the matters described in this report will dent public confidence in the Council. The Council should work in an open and transparent manner in the resolution of these issues and particularly with the residents of Dargavel, who have legitimate concerns about the implications for their children during both their primary and secondary education.</p> | | | |
| <p>Response Objectives</p> <p>The key aim has been to provide straightforward messaging and up to date sitreps to ensure publics (and council representatives) have the most up-to-date position and the complexity of the issue is explained in a simple and honest way and that parental/carer concerns in respect to the school and educational environment are able to be appropriately discussed through structured engagement arrangements with the parent councils with appropriate agreed actions taken forward.</p> <p>The strategy has been designed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improve the flow and regularity of information to parents and carers and the wider Dargavel community, so they are first to hear about decisions impacting their community. - Ensure parents and carers have access to all projection data available to the council. | | | |

| Action | Target Completion | Responsible Officer | Update |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduce direct communication channels with Dargavel residents, enabling all sections of the community to engage on matters that are important to them and making sure the latest information is accessible and easy to find. - Provide residents with a feedback loop to enable them to ask questions of the council in relation to the development and have questions answered quickly. - Include the community in formal planning and design of a new primary school and high school extension. <p>It is recognised that effective communication and engagement is important to building a new relationship between the Council and the Dargavel community, but ultimately it will take the delivery of the solution and investment in long term engagement to reduce local anxiety and fully rebuild trust and confidence in the Council.</p> | | | |
| <p>Develop communication plan to drive tactical engagement, ensuring the Dargavel community and specifically parents and carers kept updated on progress and the decisions being made by Council Boards.</p> | <p>November 2022</p> | <p>Head of Marketing and Comms</p> | <p>The strategy has directed media and stakeholder engagement in relation to council decisions pertaining to Dargavel, the initial announcement and short-term mitigation arrangements, and the publication of the Independent external review by David Bowles. The specific activities delivered include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arranging and hosting two parent and carer meetings, attended by council officers and more than 220 parents or carers. • Attending several parent council meetings with all primary schools and PMHS to support direct engagement, discussion on key activities, immediate estate decisions in respect to deployment of modular classrooms and post occupancy adjustments at Dargavel Primary, sharing and discussion of revised projection data and modelling, key council decision points, independent review outcomes. • Attending several community meetings from community council, Community Liaison Group as well as supporting coordination and delivery of wider community representative |

APPENDIX 2

Action Plan Response Monitoring (Completed Items) – May 2024

| Action | Target Completion | Responsible Officer | Update |
|--|--------------------|------------------------------------|---|
| | | | <p>round table session to maintain ongoing engagement, sharing of information and data sharing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updating parents and carers at Dargavel Primary on progress and all reports to Council Boards and decision making in relation to immediate solutions to address capacity issues at Dargavel/ • Updating Bishopton Community Council on progress above. • Responding to media enquiries, requests for interview and ensuring the media were proactively updated on progress. • Ensuring the wider area stakeholders were kept up to date on progress – this includes community representatives, wider Parent Council groups and local and national politicians. • Maintaining updated information on the council website • Delivered a creative partnership with Glasgow School of Art and Dargavel Primary School to support pupils design the interiors of the new modular classroom block. |
| <p>Deliver a revised comms and engagement strategy to coincide with the return to school period along with timing of key milestone points in relation to post independent review and moving towards confirmation of progress with BAE systems and moving more significantly into a delivery phase. This will ensure long term engagement process continues to build pro-active and positive engagement to continue to re-establish trust and confidence across the Dargavel community.</p> | <p>August 2023</p> | <p>Head of Marketing and Comms</p> | <p>The Dargavel communication and engagement strategy was reviewed following the publication of the Bowles Report. The strategy covers the development of long-term solutions to increase primary and secondary capacity. The key aim has been to provide straightforward messaging and up to date sitreps to ensure publics (and council representatives) have the most up-to-date position and the complexity of the issue is explained in a simple and honest way. We committed from the outset to ensure those members of the community directly impacted (and their representatives) are first to hear about the steps being taken to deliver a solution and the decision-making process involved. The strategy has been designed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the flow and regularity of information to parents and carers and the wider Dargavel community, so they are |

APPENDIX 2

Action Plan Response Monitoring (Completed Items) – May 2024

| Action | Target Completion | Responsible Officer | Update |
|--------|-------------------|---------------------|---|
| | | | <p>first to hear about decisions impacting their community. Ensure parents and carers have access to all projection data available to the council.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce direct communication channels with Dargavel residents, enabling all sections of the community to engage on matters that are important to them and making sure the latest information is accessible and easy to find. • Provide residents with a feedback loop to enable them to ask questions of the council in relation to the development and have questions answered quickly. • Include the community in formal planning and design of a new primary school and high school extension. <p>Activity delivered from October 2022 to present includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planned and hosted 2 public meetings • Monthly updates to the council website • 13 update letters issued to parents and carers at Dargavel Primary School and shared with community stakeholders. • 3 proactive media updates and the handing of almost 50 media enquiries to ensure the council’s right of reply - including arrangements for broadcast interviews. • Ongoing Elected Member briefings and MP/MSP briefings to ensure all political representatives are kept up to date on matters relating to the Dargavel Community. • Following publication of the Review, individual meetings took place with four local community representatives who were interviewed for the Review to include next steps. Ongoing engagement continues with two |

APPENDIX 2

Action Plan Response Monitoring (Completed Items) – May 2024

| Action | Target Completion | Responsible Officer | Update |
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| | | | <p>representatives to provide a sounding board for communication and engagement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • August 4, the council’s senior team attended a Round Table Meeting with Bishopton Community to discuss education provision and leisure and recreation provision. • From August, introduced a new opt-in community newsletter, promoted locally to encourage resident sign up. • Established the Park Mains Liaison Group, attended by the Parent Council Chairs of all Park Mains catchment primary schools, to ensure we can collectively plan the high school extension and effectively engage with the wider school. • Space Planning Activity for Dargavel Primary School • Preparation of communications plan to encourage community engagement (those directly impacted and those affected) with the forthcoming statutory consultation, to be launched in January. |
| <p>Establish a new parent council liaison group to provide a single PC forum (at the request of PC chairs) to provide a streamlined opportunity for consistent engagement and communication with the whole PC community for all schools associated with Dargavel / Bishopton and PMHS and all feeder primaries.</p> | <p>August 2023</p> | <p>Head of Education</p> | <p>Group has been established and has met following school summer break with positive feedback from Parent Council Chairs with engagement to date.</p> |
| <p>Establish regular opt-in digital community newsletter to facilitate regular communication updates direct to interested members of the community.</p> | <p>August 2023</p> | <p>Head of Marketing and Comms</p> | <p>Take up of opt-in digital channel newsletter is currently sitting at over 500 and it is expected that this will continue to grow in the coming months.</p> |

| CROSS PARTY WORKING GROUP AGREED ACTIONS | | | |
|--|---------------|------------------------------|--|
| The content of the Protocol for Relationships between Political Groups, Elected Members and Officers be refreshed. | February 2024 | Head of Corporate Governance | The Revised Protocol was approved at the Council Meeting of 29 February 2024 |
| A health check of all major projects will be completed and reported through the Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Board | March 2024 | Chief Executive | This has separately been reported to the ARS Board as part of the independent review action plan |
| A structure chart for all Council directorates should be prepared and circulated to all Elected Members. This should be regularly updated and recirculated as necessary. | March 2024 | Chief Executive | The structure chart was circulated to all Elected Members, and the first updated version was issued in March |