

## Notice of Meeting and Agenda Council

Date	Time	Venue
Thursday, 24 September 2020	09:30	Teams meeting,

KENNETH GRAHAM  
Head of Corporate Governance

### Membership

Councillor Jennifer Marion Adam-McGregor: Councillor Tom Begg: Councillor Derek Bibby: Councillor Bill Binks: Councillor Bill Brown: Councillor Stephen Burns: Councillor Jacqueline Cameron: Councillor Michelle Campbell: Councillor Carolann Davidson: Councillor Eddie Devine: Councillor Andy Doig: Councillor Audrey Doig: Councillor Natalie Don: Councillor Alison Jean Dowling: Councillor Edward Grady: Councillor Neill Graham: Councillor Jim Harte: Councillor John Hood: Councillor Lisa-Marie Hughes: Councillor Karen Kennedy: Councillor Scott Kerr: Councillor Paul Mack: Councillor Alistair Mackay: Councillor James MacLaren: Councillor Kenny MacLaren: Councillor Mags MacLaren: Councillor Eileen McCartin: Councillor Colin McCulloch: Councillor Marie McGurk: Councillor John McIntyre: Councillor John McNaughtan: Councillor Kevin Montgomery: Councillor Will Mylet: Councillor Emma Rodden: Councillor Jim Sharkey: Councillor John Shaw: Councillor James Sheridan: Councillor Andy Steel: Councillor Jane Strang: Provost Lorraine Cameron (Convener): Councillor Cathy McEwan (Depute Convener): Councillor Iain Nicolson (Leader): Councillor Jim Paterson (Depute Leader)

### Apologies

Apologies from members.

### Declarations of Interest

Members are asked to declare an interest in any item(s) on the agenda and to provide a brief explanation of the nature of the interest.

### Recording of Meeting

This meeting will be recorded for subsequent broadcast via the Council's internet site. If you have any queries regarding this please contact Committee Services on 07534 058160. To find the recording please follow the link which will be attached to this agenda once the meeting has concluded. Please note that only meetings of the Emergencies Board from 17 April 2020 onward have been recorded for broadcast.

**Recording of meeting of Renfrewshire Council Part 1 of 4 - 24 September 2020**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-rC5gSWnpRg>

**Recording of meeting of Renfrewshire Council Part 2 of 4 - 24 September 2020**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uAG6dELgEBM&t=9s>

**Recording of meeting of Renfrewshire Council Part 3 of 4 - 24 September 2020**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dWJewRT4SuM>

**Recording of meeting of Renfrewshire Council Part 4 of 4 - 24 September 2020**

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fTCa\\_NYKlv4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fTCa_NYKlv4)

## Items of business

### 1 Minutes of Meetings of Council, Boards and Panels

**(attached separately)**

Emergencies Board, 19 June 2020, pages 1-4

Council, 25 June 2020, pages 5-14

Placing Requests and Exclusions Appeals Panel, 29 June 2020, pages 15-18

Placing Requests and Exclusions Appeals Panel, 1 July, 2020, pages 19-22

Placing Requests and Exclusions Appeals Panel, 3 July 2020, pages 23-26

Emergencies Board, 3 July 2020, pages 27-32

Placing Requests and Exclusions Appeals Panel, 6 July 2020, pages 33-34

Emergencies Board, 17 July 2020, pages 35-40

Communities, Housing and Planning Policy Board, 18 August 2020, pages 41-56

Regulatory Functions Board, 19 August 2020, pages 57-62

Education and Children's Services Policy Board, 20 August 2020, pages 63-70

Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Board, 24 August 2020, pages 71-76

Infrastructure, Land and Environment Policy Board, 26 August 2020, pages 77-86

Personnel Appeals and Applied Conditions of Service Appeals Panel, 27 August 2020, pages 87-88

Regulatory Functions Board, 27 August 2020, pages 89-92

Placing Requests and Exclusions Appeals Panel, 1 September 2020, pages 93-94

Finance, Resources and Customer Services Policy Board, 2 September 2020, pages 95-106

Regulatory Functions Board, 3 September 2020, pages 107-110

Emergencies Board, 4 September 2020, pages 111-114

Local Review Body, 8 September 2020, pages 115-116

Leadership Board, 16 September 2020 (to follow)

Regulatory Functions Board, 17 September 2020 (to follow)

Emergencies Board, 18 September 2020 (to follow)

Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Board, 21 September 2020 (to follow)

### 2 Financial Outlook 2021-2023 9 - 28

Report by Director of Finance & Resources

### 3 Impact of COVID-19 on Renfrewshire's Communities 29 - 42

Report by Chief Executive

### 4 Renfrewshire Economic Update – September 2020 43 - 58

Report by Chief Executive

### 5 Update on Audited Annual Accounts 2019/20 59 - 62

Report by Director of Finance & Resources

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| <b>6</b>  | <b>Governance Arrangements until 17 December 2020</b><br>Report by Director of Finance & Resources  | <b>63 - 68</b>   |
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| <b>8</b>  | <b>Annual Report of Chief Social Work Officer</b><br>Report by Chief Social Work Officer  | <b>75 - 96</b>   |
| <b>9</b>  | <b>Annual Report of Community Protection Chief Officers' Group</b><br>Report by Chief Executive   | <b>97 - 130</b>  |
| <b>10</b> | <b>Audit, Risk &amp; Scrutiny Board review of The Effectiveness of Fair Trade (Lead Officer Craig Doogan) in Renfrewshire</b><br>Report by Lead Officer on behalf of the Audit, Risk & Scrutiny Board   | <b>131 - 150</b> |
| <b>11</b> | <b>Notice of Motion 1 by Councillors Devine and Sharkey</b><br>"Webcasting of Policy Board Meetings<br><br>Council in recognising that it should meet the needs of communities into the future agrees to extend the current arrangements for webcasting Council meetings to the following Boards and their successors, from the next cycle of Boards:<br><br>Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Board<br>Cross Party Sounding Board<br>Finance, Resources and Customer Services Policy Board<br>Petitions Board<br>Community, Housing and Planning Policy Board<br>Education and Children's Service Board<br>Infrastructure, Land and Environment Board<br>Leadership Board<br>Police and Fire & Rescue Scrutiny Sub-committee"   |                  |
| <b>12</b> | <b>Notice of Motion 2 by Councillors Binks and J MacLaren</b><br>"In view of the suggestion that Howwood might lose the two school crossing patrollers, has yet again highlighted the very dangers that the children and residents of Howwood encounter every day in trying to cross the B787 that runs straight through the village and the B776 Bowfield Road.<br><br>Council should give strong consideration to erecting a pedestrian controlled crossing close to the junction of these two roads within the Village. Argument has been put forward before with regard to this possibility but rebuffed as being not feasible because of the site lines. This problem surely can be mitigated by the installation of highly visible warning signs at both entrances to the village stating that there is a pedestrian controlled crossing ahead. |                  |

I would ask the Council, as a matter of priority and the safety of our children, to arrange a public meeting in the village to discuss this issue."

**13 Notice of Motion 3 by Councillors Binks and J MacLaren**

"A number of schools including Howwood PS and Bridge of Weir PS are missing or recently have had the threat of losing their school crossing patroller. Council notes the concerns of parents about potentially losing their school's crossing patroller and believes that the allocation of school crossing patrollers should be based primarily on child safety. Council has, for a number of years, been short of these crossing patrollers. Council must do more to recruit and retain patrollers and have additional staff trained to step in when one becomes unavailable. Council must bring a report to the next Education Policy Board on the steps being taken to fill missing positions or suggest alternative measures such as installing pedestrian crossings."

**14 Notice of Motion 4 by Councillors Burns and K MacLaren**

"Council contacts the UK Government to request they work with the BBC to offer free TV licence to all over 75 during Covid and moving forward."

**15 Notice of Motion 5 by Councillors Andy Doig and Hood**

"Commemorative Plaque for Mr John Fraser, Founder of the Co-Operative Society in Johnstone

This Council recognizes, in this the 200th anniversary of the 1820 Radical Uprising, the legacy of peaceful reform and belief in social justice, which the Radicals left to the people of Renfrewshire.

In particular, Council wishes to honour the memory of 1820 Radical, and Johnstone Schoolmaster, Mr John Fraser, who became Editor of the Scottish Chartist newspaper, *the True Scotsman*, and founded the Johnstone Co-Operative Society in 1866.

Council, accordingly, agrees to erect a plaque to his memory in Johnstone town hall".

**16 Notice of Motion 6 by Councillors Andy Doig and Hood**

"Road Crossing and Upgrade of Lochwinnoch Railway Station

"Council reiterates its demand for Network Rail/Scotrail to review the parking provisions and lack of access, for both able bodied and disabled users, at Lochwinnoch Train Station.

Council calls on Renfrewshire's MP's to lobby the Westminster Government to deliver UK infrastructure investment, and calls on Renfrewshire's MSP's to lobby the Transport Secretary in Holyrood to nominate Lochwinnoch for improved access and car parking space.

Council resolves to honour its previous pledge to upgrade both the footpath at the bridge on the A761 to the Train Station, and provide a suitable crossing to the Train Station to ensure it is fully accessible, within the next two financial years".

**17 Notice of Motion 7 by Councillors Andy Doig and Hood**

"Upgrade and Dualling of the A737

"This Council notes the long-standing campaign by residents of Howwood, Kilbarchan, and Lochwinnoch, to get the A737 upgraded and dualled between the Roadhead Roundabout, outside Lochwinnoch, and Kilbarchan. Council further recognizes the compelling case from a health and safety and economic development perspective for this to happen.

Council accordingly calls for the Scottish Government to agree to the upgrade and dualling of the A737 as intimated above, and to give a timescale and budget for his completion".

**18 Notice of Motion 8 by Councillors Campbell and Paterson**

"This council calls on the Chief Executive and the Director of Children's Services to work with the Scottish Government, Education Scotland, COSLA and teaching unions to produce and implement anti-racist teaching resources into the school syllabus. Further, to include education on Britain's use of its people from across the British Colonies in the great wars, to recognise the longstanding effects of colonialism around the world and to teach the facts in their entirety on the regrettable and significant part Britain played in the slave trade economy.

Council also calls upon the Director of Children's Services to provide training and guidance to educators to discuss sensitive topics around racism, the role of Britain and its imperialist influence and equipping them with the confidence and support needed to teach this necessary education."

**19 Notice of Motion 9 by Councillors Andy Doig and  
McCartin**

"City Deal Cabinet Reform

This Council:

- Recognises that clarity and transparency are crucial in the delivery of the City Deal projects for Renfrewshire.
- Notes the concerns of The Accounts Commission's report Scotland's City Region and Growth Deals on City Deal governance.
- Believes that the Convenership of the Glasgow Region City Deal Cabinet should rotate on an equal basis between the Glasgow City Deal Local Authorities.
- Believes that the Chief Executive Officers of the Glasgow City Deal Local Authorities should convene the Chief Executives Group on a rotational basis, in conjunction with the rotation of the City Deal Cabinet Convenership.
- Calls for reform of the City Deal Cabinet's Protocols to ensure that

agreed City Deal projects can be changed with the approval of the relevant local authority."

**20 Notice of Motion 10 by Councillors Andy Doig and McCartin**

"Reform of Hate Crime Bill

This Council agrees with the sentiment behind the proposed Hate Crime Bill, which the SNP Government is currently promoting through Holyrood, but calls for radical amendment of the Bill to ensure it does not undermine free speech.

In particular, Council demands that the intention to commit hate crime should be enshrined in the Bill as a core principle, as should a clause which defends satire under Scots law as protected speech in order to defend the rights of artists, comedians, and writers".

**21 Notice of Motion 11 by Councillors McCartin and Andy Doig**

"Realistic Wage for Social Care Workers

Council declares its deep felt appreciation and gratitude to social care workers in Renfrewshire who, since the beginning of the Covid 19 crisis, are supporting the most vulnerable in society.

Council believes it is vital that social care workers are given a realistic wage commensurate to their responsibilities, and rising to that comparable with junior nurses. Council calls on both private and public sector providers of social care to work collectively to deliver that aim as soon as possible".

Council welcomes the decision by the Scottish Government to review adult social care in Scotland with a view to establishing a National Care Service."

**22 Notice of Motion 12 by Councillors Paterson and J Cameron**

"Independent Care Review

Council welcomes the publication of the final report of the Independent Care Review and acknowledges the findings; Commits to engaging with all relevant stakeholders and most importantly Care Experience young people, including the Renfrewshire Children's Champions Board to discuss necessary changes to ensure that 'The Promise' is kept and that our children and young people grow up to be loved, safe and respected and that they realise their full potential; Agrees that following engagement a delivery plan be brought to a future Education and Children's Service Policy Board for the consideration of elected members."

**23 Notice of Motion 13 by Councillors Don and McEwan**

"Council notes the support and engagement of our local communities in the continued success of the Team Up to Clean Up campaign.

Council thanks the many local volunteers who have continued to litter pick throughout the period of lockdown. These dedicated and committed litter picking heroes while adhering to social distancing guidelines have played their part in not only raising the profile of community volunteering but in sending a clear message that everyone has a role and a responsibility in keeping Renfrewshire's environment clean."

**24 Notice of Motion 14 by Councillors Kennedy and Sharkey**

"Pedestrian Barriers - Well Street / Wellmeadow Street / Glasgow Road, Paisley

Council regrets the disruption to the Community and, in particular, a the business owners who have been inconvenienced by the pedestrian barriers placed in Well Street, Wellmeadow Street and Glasgow Road. Council agrees that reasonable compensation should be paid to those businesses affected. "





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**To:** Council

**On:** 24 September 2020

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**Report by:** Director of Finance and Resources

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**Heading:** Financial Outlook 2021 - 2023

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## **1. Overview and Key Messages**

- 1.1 As previously reported to both the Council and more regularly to the Emergencies Board prior to the summer period, the Council faces significant financial disruption as a consequence of the COVID19 pandemic and associated emergency response. It was previously reported to members that the financial impact of COVID19 on the Council was extremely fluid and subject to rapid change in line with decisions being taken by national governments in response to the developing management of the emergency response across the UK.
- 1.2 Prior to the summer period, and based on the potential full year cost exposure to the Council and the funding announcements made to date by the Scottish Government, it was recognised that given the possible scale of the net financial impact the Council may be required to manage, that the full deployment of the existing £6.5 million of unallocated reserves maintained by the Council for emergency events may not be sufficient to address even the immediate financial challenge in 2020/21.
- 1.3 It was also recognised that assessing the financial impact of COVID19 on the Council would be a fast moving and complex process, with limited clarity and significant uncertainty linked to both future costs and funding over the course of 2020/21. In this context it was recognised there was an urgent need for the Council to pro-actively review its financial strategy to reflect this material change in the Council's strategic and operational context.
- 1.4 It was also acknowledged that although the initial focus of this work was securing immediate financial and service stability in 2020/21, there was also an urgent requirement to adjust the financial strategy to provide increased flexibility and manoeuvrability to support the Council manage the ongoing

impact that COVID19 may have beyond this initial emergency period. The underlying objective in this regard is to ensure the Council's financial strategy is more appropriately positioned to respond to an increasing number of significant risks, uncertainties and indeed new demands arising from COVID19. These include the risk of a second wave, the potential risk of having to live with COVID19 and associated restrictions for longer than anticipated, and supporting the major challenge of recovery across Renfrewshire's communities and businesses.

1.5 In addition, it is further recognised that COVID19 has significantly disrupted the Council's strategic management of the medium term financial challenge that was already forecast prior to the emergence of COVID19: -

- Members will recall that the Council's medium term financial strategy had established a central planning scenario of being required to secure £25 million of transformational savings from the Right for Renfrewshire (R4R) programme over the period 2020-23. The 2020/21 budget incorporated the planned delivery of savings arising from the first tranche of R4R changes which were forecast to deliver only circa £6 million of recurring savings over the period 2020 - 22. The R4R programme was formally paused as the Council was fully focused on managing the COVID19 response. Consequent delivery and implementation of these initial R4R transformation changes have been disrupted and delayed; as has work to bring forward and develop the second tranche of R4R transformation changes intended to support the delivery of the much more significant balance of savings of £19 million over the remaining period 2021/22-2022/23. The pace at which the Council is able to step back up and deliver this strategic transformation programme over the period is subject to uncertainty and will require to be balanced with the ongoing demands placed on the Council from the COVID19 emergency as well as the increased demands to support Renfrewshire to recovery.
- As outlined in more detail in the main body of the report, the economic and public sector expenditure context at a national level is now subject to significantly greater uncertainty than that which existed pre-COVID19. The measures taken by national governments to respond to COVID19 has extended the impact from not just being a public health crisis but also to one of being an economic crisis of unprecedented proportions in many respects. The impact this will ultimately have on national economic prospects over the medium term and public expenditure plans across both the UK and Scotland, is at this stage unknown, will take time to emerge and will be influenced by important decisions yet to be taken by both UK and Scottish government. However, the risk of the Council's financial outlook being more negative than the previous central scenario forecast, has increased materially.

In response to the material change in both these key areas of strategic influence over the Council's medium term outlook through to 2023, the financial strategy requires to be repositioned to ensure the Council is better placed to manage the increased downside risk that now exist. Further, it is anticipated that over the course of 2020/21, the Council will be required to fully deploy its unallocated reserves. It is critical that the Council plans to replenish these reserves over the short term in order to restore immediate financial resilience and therefore this will add to the medium term financial pressures the Council will require to address.

- 1.6 This report therefore provides an update to the Financial Outlook previously outlined to the Council in September 2019, and the updated financial position as presented to Council on 9th March 2020, taking into account specifically the updated impact of the COVID19 emergency during 2020/21 and critically the recommended key responses in regard to adjusting the Council's medium term financial strategy arrangements.

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## 2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that for the General Fund revenue account that the Council:

- Note the update regarding the Council's current financial position and update in respect to the assessment of the net impact of the COVID19 emergency and further funding announcements made by the Scottish Government over the course of 2020/21.
- Note the updated financial outlook over the medium term and the significantly heightened risk outlook for the Council over this period, and the ongoing expectation of the Council being required to continue to plan for further significant budget gaps in the period through to 2023.
- Note that the Right for Renfrewshire transformation programme is being remobilised and will continue to progress the existing plan of supporting the delivery of £25 million in savings over the period through to 2023, although it is acknowledged this timing is subject to greater risk as a consequence of the COVID19 disruption to date and moving forward.
- Agree to the adjustments to the current financial strategy as outlined in section 3.15 of the report and the planned approach for utilising funding flexibilities that are agreed nationally through ongoing negotiations with the Scottish Government.
- Agree to the replenishment of unallocated reserves moving into 2021/22 as outlined in the report and that further application of financial flexibilities moving forward will be outlined for members in future financial updates, recognising the significant uncertainty and risk the Council's general fund may experience over the period through to 2023.

- 2.2 It is recommended that for the General Fund capital investment programme the Council:

- Notes the updated assessment and the ongoing work being progressed by officers to pro-actively engage with the Council's full suite of contractors in regard to the ongoing impact of COVID19.
- Note that it is anticipated that it will take towards the end of the year before a clearer assessment of the financial impact may be more clearly understood.

- Agree to the recommendation outlined in section 4 that in the interim, a review is undertaken by officers of the existing capital programme and associated recommendations are brought forward for member's consideration as part of future financial updates.

2.3 It is recommended that for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) the Council: -

- Notes the updated assessment of the impact of COVID19 on the HRA and the proposed use of balances in 2020/21 to absorb this negative financial impact.
- Notes the assessment that moving forward the reduced level of unallocated balances for the HRA are assessed as sufficient in the context of the revised risk profile.
- Note that the HRA long term 30 year business case will continue to be reassessed and updated over the course of this year as matters in relation to COVID19 in particular progress.
- Note that the latest update confirms that significant additional capital investment capacity over the medium to longer term continues to be expected to emerge and that proposals on the deployment of this investment to existing stock and new build projects will be brought back to the December Council meeting.

### **3. General Fund Revenue Account**

3.1 Officers have continued to support the national COVID19 costing exercise being coordinated through COSLA which is informing ongoing engagement with the Scottish Government as to the full cost across local government of responding to the COVID19 emergency.

3.2 As previously reported the anticipated costs emerging from the exercise to forecast the full year impact have been substantial and are subject to material uncertainty and change as the immediate position and outlook over the summer months in particular have been subject to ongoing situation adjustments at pace in response to COVID19 developments.

3.3 The most significant illustration of this was the movement on re-opening of schools in August, with the detailed planning for a blended learning approach which had been operationally progressed and costed over a number of weeks, being stepped down to contingency status with a major shift to the full return of pupils to schools in conjunction with a wide range of very specific operation adjustments occurring in August.

3.4 As a consequence, this full year estimated costing exercise has continued over the summer period to be subject to regular revision to keep it aligned as closely as is possible to the developing and forecast impact on Council services and local communities over the course of 2020/21.

3.5 In addition, work has also progressed with Directors to identify areas within the existing 2020/21 budget provision where existing resources could be made available and be re-purposed to assist in funding additional costs incurred throughout the COVID19 response period.

3.6 In addition, a range of further funding announcements have been made by the Scottish Government, predominantly in response to Barnett consequential adjustments flowing to Scotland following UK Government funding announcements for local government in England.

3.7 Taken together, the changes that have occurred over the course of the summer have materially changed the current 2020/21 COVID19 impact in comparison to the position outlined prior to the summer period.

3.8 Services Excluding Education, Early Learning and Childcare

Excluding Education, early learning and childcare hubs which are dealt with below, it is currently estimated that the net additional costs in 2020/21 are expected to be in the region of £20 million - £22 million. This represents a reduction from the £27 million - £28 million reported prior to the summer. The improved position reflects a reduction on anticipated loss of council tax income which is still forecast to be significant at circa £4 million - £5 million, a higher level of planned savings to be achieved over the course of 2020/21 than previously anticipated and lower planned spend on food provision reflecting a full time return to schools where entitled children will receive free school meal provision in school.

3.9 Outwith Education, Early Learning and Childcare, several further funding announcements have been made by the Scottish Government over the course of the summer increasing the overall quantum of funding made available to the Council. Some of these funding streams have confirmed distributions to individual council level, whilst others remain subject to ongoing discussion and confirmation. To date, the Council will receive approximately £10 million from confirmed funding distributions with further available subject to confirmation of the overall quantum at an all Scotland level and the basis of distribution across Scotland, but potentially in the region of £4 million - £6 million.

3.10 This would provide potentially between an estimated £14 million to £16 million of additional Scottish Government funding to meet the forecast net cost of £20 million - £22 million referred to in paragraph 3.8. As summarised in Appendix 1, this would leave an estimated net cost to be funded by the Council of approximately £4 million – £8 million. It should be noted that this cost projection in particular remains at this stage an estimate and could be subject to significant and rapid change as a result of a range of potential risks including for example, a localised lockdown across all or part of Renfrewshire and or a general national second wave that impacts more widely. Nevertheless, at this stage the level of net funding requirement that is currently forecast to emerge is now at a scale that may be sufficiently addressed through the application of the Council's unallocated reserves of £6.6 million during 2020/21. However, as outlined earlier in the report, full deployment of the Council's unallocated reserves exposes the Council to significantly greater risk.

3.11 Education, Early Learning and Childcare

As outlined above, the Scottish Government decision taken over the course of the summer period to support a 100% return of pupils to school at the beginning of the 2020/21 term, has significantly altered and reduced the forecast of additional costs that are expected to be incurred in delivering schools, early learning and childcare arrangements.

In addition, several funding announcements have been made by the Scottish Government to support the return to Education. Nationally this amounts to £155 million of additional funding to support additional teaching staff (£80 million), logistics to support the return to schools (£50 million cleaning, hygiene, social distancing measures etc), and provision of digital devices and digital connectivity (£25 million). Not all of this funding has confirmed distributions to council level and will be subject to ongoing engagement with the Scottish Government. Additionally an element of the teaching funding relates to the next financial and academic year.

- 3.12 Nevertheless, taking account of both the 100% return to schools which has materially reduced projected additional operating costs along with the enhanced funding package and confirmed flexibility available to use specific grant funding associated with Pupil Equity Funding and Early Learning and Childcare expansion, it is now anticipated working in conjunction with the Director of Children's Services that within Education, Early Learning and Childcare, additional expenditure to be incurred as part of delivering Education, early learning and childcare over the course of the financial year will be fully fundable within the full range of resources and flexibilities now made available to the service with no net residual balance to be funded by the Council's wider financial strategy.

3.13 Renfrewshire Health and Social Care

Within adult services managed by Renfrewshire HSCP, the service has been required to take unprecedented measures in response to the coronavirus pandemic, including substantial levels of support to external care providers in order to ensure their ongoing financial sustainability. The most recent forecast estimates that over the course of 2020/21 the service will incur additional costs specifically in relation to COVID-19 in the region £14 million. This is a significant reduction from earlier forecasts, reflecting a lower level of supplier sustainability payments emerging from that previously expected. As previously reported to members, the Scottish Government did in March provide in principle confirmation that all reasonable additional costs associated with the crisis will be fully funded. The HSCP continues to fully support the monthly reporting arrangement with the Scottish Government in this regard and recently the IJB has sought more specific formal follow up confirmation from the Scottish Government on this funding commitment. On this basis, at present additional cost relating to the COVID response for the HSCP is expected to be fully funded by the Scottish Government and will not therefore require any call for additional funding from its partner organisations. Should the Scottish Government not fund all the additional costs incurred there would in the first instance be a requirement for the IJB to consider in-year financial recovery action and proactive measures in this regard are being progressed by the Chief Officer on a precautionary basis.

3.14 Medium Term Outlook

3.14.1 Economic and Fiscal Outlook Pre-Covid19

It has been previously reported to members that the economic outlook for the UK was one of relatively weak growth by historical standards with that of Scotland in general lagging that of the UK as a whole. In addition, the budget effects of the devolved Scottish tax policy, which raises over £500 million more in revenues than if UK tax policy were implemented, has been all but wiped out

by weaker earnings growth in Scotland relative to the UK, and at the beginning of 2020 there was nothing in the economic forecasts to suggest any degree of recovery in this position in the next few years.

In addition, 2020/21 represents the first year of fiscal reconciliation adjustments under the fiscal framework, where over estimations in tax receipts in previous years require to be repaid by Scotland to the UK treasury. The Scottish Government elected to maximise spending in 2020/21 by using its resource borrowing powers to mitigate the impact of approximately £200 million of negative fiscal reconciliation adjustments in 2020/21. This borrowing will however be required to be repaid in future years and further, the expected fiscal reconciliation for 2021/22 at around £550 million, is a very large future risk which along with the deferred £200 million adds significant net budget pressure that will need to be managed by the Scottish Government in future years.

However overall, the 2020/21 budget in Scotland experienced a higher level of growth by recent standards at circa 3.6% in real terms compared to budget 2019/20, excluding new responsibilities on primarily social security. This uplift was nearly all due to positive Barnett consequential adjustments flowing from spending increases by the UK Government and is the largest increase in the block grant since pre-austerity days. In contrast, the local government revenue budget experienced a cash standstill (real terms cut) on a like for like basis after adjusting for new responsibilities and duties. This position reflected the Scottish government's stated policy priorities over the course of the current parliamentary period of real terms growth and real terms protection of spending in other major areas of its budget, most notably the NHS and Police.

In this context, the prospects for the Council's grant settlement over the medium term remain subject to ongoing uncertainty.

Given some of the additional resources announced by the Scottish Government after the stage 1 debate were funded through the use of in-year flexibility, there remains uncertainty over whether all of this additional funding will be baselined moving beyond 2020/21. There was therefore only limited positive change emerging in the 2020/21 settlement, suggesting no need to make any material adjustment to the Council's central planning assumption over the next two years of a forecast 1.25% per annum reduction in government grant funding. This is particularly the case in the context of the ongoing commitments made by the Scottish Government to the other priority areas of their budget coupled with the financial risk exposure that accompanies growing fiscal devolution for the Scottish Government. In the short term this is manifesting itself in significant challenges as a result of the growing fiscal reconciliation adjustments, estimated at approximately £1 billion, to be addressed over coming years coupled with relatively weak underlying economic and earnings growth which now play a significant and direct role in the future prospects for the Scottish Budget.

### 3.14.2 Impact of COVID19 on the Economy

The UK and Scottish economies are experiencing the most significant period of contraction in history. However, it is recognised this is by no means a normal economic event. The Public Health response to the COVID19 pandemic emergency required large part of the economy to be closed down as part of the lockdown arrangements operating across the UK and indeed almost all major economic regions globally.

This action to in effect place the economy into an “induced economic coma” to support the wider Public Health response has resulted in the most significant quarterly contraction in economic activity ever experienced with recovery gradually beginning to emerge as National Government’s ease lockdown restrictions. However, even with the gradual easing, many restrictions continue to apply and consequently the return to normal economic activity levels is not immediately possible. Latest HM Treasury analysis of economic forecasters suggests an average projection for 2020 of a 10% contraction in overall economic activity, a much deeper recession than that of the 2008 financial crisis where a 6% loss in GDP was experienced between Q1 2008 and Q2 2009.

The major ongoing question is how the economic recovery to pre-COVID19 levels will emerge. It appears that the initial prospects of a very quick economic bounce back in 2021 – or V-shaped recovery – has somewhat dissipated as a likely prospect, with a much less certain outlook emerging, and recovery very much linked to the prospects of a vaccine or effective treatment that would allow a return to normal social and economic activity. Additionally, there is an increased acknowledgement of the growing risk of more permanent economic damage or “scarring”, as areas of business fail to survive the crisis, or shrink substantially, and specific sectors are significantly damaged and potentially take much longer to recover than the wider economy - aviation being an obvious example.

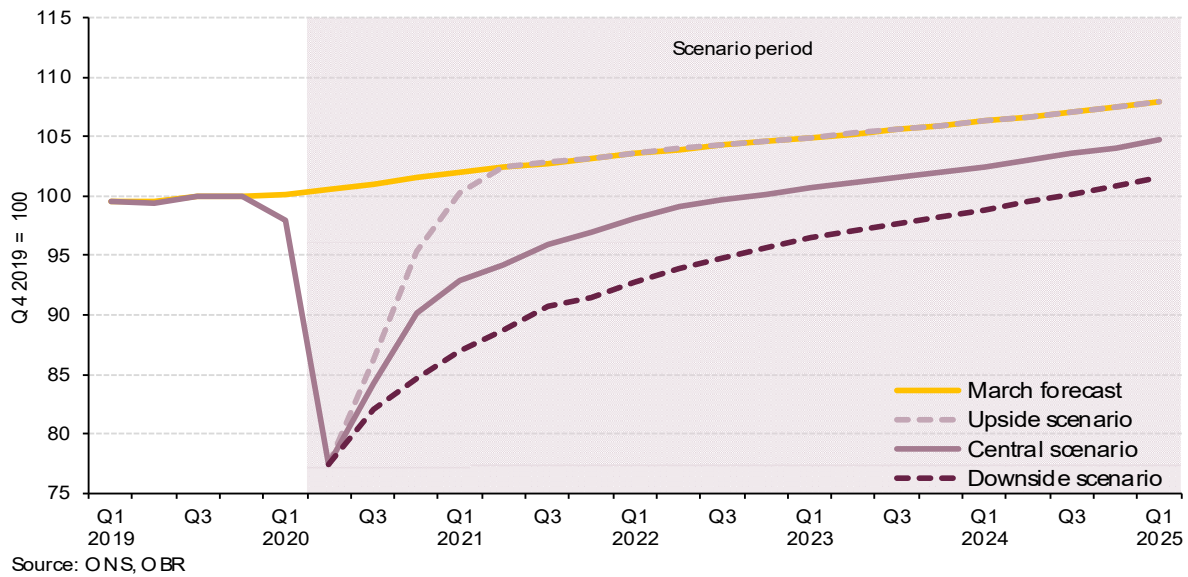
The Office of Budget Responsibility (OBR) published its annual Fiscal Sustainability Report (FSR) in mid July. The 2020 edition incorporated, as usual, long term - to 2060 - estimates of the UK’s likely fiscal position. It also updated the shorter term forecasts on which such long term forecasts are based. This unusual step was necessary due to the unprecedented change in circumstances brought about by the pandemic. However, rather than publish a revised - central - forecast, the OBR published 3 new scenarios reflecting the level of uncertainty that currently exist based on differing assumptions over the timing and effectiveness of a vaccine being found and distributed: -

- upside scenario - rapid return to pre crisis path with no long term scarring;
- central scenario - slower recovery, with permanent scarring equivalent to 3% of GDP; and
- pessimistic scenario - even slower recovery, with permanent scarring equivalent to 6% of GDP.

Note that the OBR comment that “the upside scenario is probably about as good as one could hope for - but the downside is by no means a worst case”.



Figure 1: Real GDP scenarios compared to March forecast



Economic growth prospects are heavily dependent on the speed of bounce back from the recession in 2020. As outlined above this is subject to significant uncertainty and is extremely difficult to judge. However, what appears more certain is that the medium term prospects based on any of the OBR’s scenarios present a deteriorated outlook in comparison to the already historically weaker growth forecast back in March. Additionally, the risk outlook also appears to be very much focused on the downside, including:

- the impact of the ongoing unwinding of furlough support to less generous forms of employment support and whether unemployment accelerates on the back of this change;
- the prudent pace at which lockdown restrictions have been eased and in some instances reversed particularly in some specific sectors such as hospitality, conferences, the arts and tourism and the risk of a second wave over this winter period in particular and or a substantial growth in localised lockdowns across the UK;
- the on-going caution emerging from consumers in returning to retail, accommodation and hospitality venues;
- inconclusive progress achieved to date on Brexit negotiations which increase the risk of a “no deal” exit at the end of this calendar year;
- geopolitical risks including the worsening relations with China which could adversely affect sectors like Higher Education.

The OBR’s assumption of a return to an expected medium to long term growth rate of 1.5% (in real terms, i.e. excluding inflation) suggests that the post financial crisis slowdown in economic growth is set to continue. Indeed, if Brexit negotiations go badly, or geopolitical relations deteriorate further, then even this low forecast growth rate may be revised down further.

### 3.14.3 National Government Response to the Economic Crisis

It is clear that the COVID19 Public Health emergency has quickly developed into an unprecedented economic crisis. The response of the UK Government to deploy fiscal interventions to support business and the economy through the COVID19 emergency has been unprecedented in its reach across all sectors of business and in its financial scale. Unprecedented levels of borrowing (outwith the major war periods) have been undertaken by the UK Government to fund measures such as the furlough scheme, support for the self employed, business rates relief, specific targeted business grant support, business loans and guarantee schemes etc. All these measures have been designed to support businesses across the economy survive this enforced lockdown and emerge in a condition where they can resume economic activity contributing quickly to the economic restart and ultimately mitigate job losses..

As recently reported by HM Treasury, total UK Government debt has now surpassed £2 trillion and exceeds the total annual output of the UK economy for the first time since the early sixties when World War debts still weighed heavily on the public sector balance sheet. For context, prior to the financial crash of 2008, UK government debt was below 40% of GDP, and therefore now is in relative terms to the overall size of the economy, approximately two and a half times that size.

Inevitably, higher levels of debt will result in additional interest and repayment costs moving forward. However, in the current context, a positive counter balance is the historically low rates of borrowing the UK Government is currently able to access. The impact of this is that although debt levels are growing significantly, the overall cost annual debt servicing costs remain relatively stable.

### 3.14.4 Potential Impact on Public Expenditure

At a UK level the Government has borrowed significantly more over the course of 2020/21 than they had planned, and it remains to be seen what impact this has moving forward on spending plans. The policy responses to this will be critical and the UK Government will have to balance how to achieve securing a rebalanced outlook for public finances without damaging or risking the economic recovery. In broad terms the policy options available involve one of three areas which can be utilised in any combination: -

- Tax increases to raise additional revenues. There are risks to be balanced in raising taxes which could potentially reduce consumer spending power and disincentivise inward investment etc, both of which will be key drivers in economic recovery.
- Reduce public spending through a further wave of austerity cuts. Just prior to the COVID crisis the UK government announced an end to austerity with the spending growth included in the 2020/21 budget. In this context the appetite for a further period of sustained austerity may be low, in particular in view of the critical role public services will play in supporting social and economic recovery; and
- Increasing borrowing further over at least the short term to support public spending, investment and spending power in the economy.

The broad policy approach that the UK Government adopts will have a key influence on the prospects for public spending levels which ultimately set critical overall context for the Scottish Government budget and local authority financial settlements in Scotland. For example, should the UK government adopt a predominantly growth focused strategy which concentrates on stimulating as quickly as possible sustained and healthy economic growth to reduce the relative impact of the debt, they may choose to take the opportunity to borrow even more whilst historically low rates exist and in doing so seek to protect public sector spending plans, protect or indeed grow public sector infrastructure investment to stimulate growth and jobs and chose not to materially vary or change taxes - particularly in the short term to protect consumer spending and private sector investment.

At present it is suggested that the UK Government still intends to outline a new medium term Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) in the Autumn at which point their intended direction of travel in this regard should become clearer, including implications for the Scottish Government's block grant settlement over the medium term. Should a multi-year CSR be announced the Scottish Government have previously committed to provide local government in Scotland with multi year finance settlement which if forthcoming would go some way to provide greater certainty moving forward for local government in Scotland.

#### 3.14.5 The Council's Medium Term Grant Prospects

Prior to the COVID19 pandemic, the Council's financial strategy was based on a central financial planning scenario of the Council likely to experience further reduction in government revenue grant of circa 1.25% per annum over the period through 2023. This reflected the wider challenges likely to be faced by the Scottish Government in terms of their own budget over this period coupled with their stated commitment to grow the other major areas of their budget outwith local government. In this now radically changed context, the Council's potential medium term prospects in relation to future government grant settlements has become significantly more uncertain and subject to potentially greater downside risk. This is likely to remain the case at least until the UK Government CSR is announced at which point a greater degree of certainty may emerge including whether the outlook for public spending across the UK has changed materially, either negatively or positively from previous plans. At present it is proposed that this central scenario continues to be adopted for financial planning purposes, but that the financial strategy includes sufficient flexibility to plan for the possibility that this may deteriorate should the UK Government CSR commit to a more negative outlook for public spending across the UK.

#### 3.14.6 Heightened Risk of Increased Cost Pressures

As previously outlined in the existing financial strategy it was already anticipated that the Council will continue to experience significant cost and service demand pressures moving forward. Broadly, these were expected to be in the region of £28 million of additional net recurring costs over the two-year period through to 2023.

In addition to the increased uncertainty linked to future grant prospects, the potential cost and service pressures the Council may experience over the medium term has increased in risk.

There is significant uncertainty as to how the COVID19 public health emergency will continue to unfold over the next 12 – 24 months. It appears clear that despite the apparent progress being made to secure a vaccine and or effective treatment options across the global scientific community, the Chief Medical and Scientific officers across national governments have indicated that we are likely to be living with the virus for some time to come.

This raises ongoing exposure to significantly increased risks of further unplanned and significant cost pressures that the Council may be exposed to throughout the medium term period of the financial strategy, and for these to be driven potentially by very short term and rapid developments that will not have been budgeted for - similar to the experience unfolding during 2020/21.

In this context the Council has already fully deployed unallocated balances in 2020/21 and therefore given this scale of ongoing risk exposure it is critical that the financial strategy seeks to re-establish an appropriate level of unallocated reserves as we move into 2021/22 – without clearly available unallocated reserves the Council's immediate financial resilience is significantly weakened. Based on the significantly increased risk exposure the Council is now facing it is proposed that the revised financial strategy seeks to re-establish unallocated reserves at £10 million.

In addition, in the current context now facing the Council, the financial strategy is also required to provide enhanced scope to respond and manage increased risk that further recurring cost and demand pressures, over and above the existing central planning assumption of £28 million that is included in the existing strategy through to 2023, could emerge unexpectedly over a short time horizon. The timing of such an event may provide the Council with limited time and or opportunity to address such issues if these occur close to the statutory timescales to set balanced annual budget.

### 3.14.7 Supporting Social and Economic Recovery

It is recognised there will be a lasting impact across Renfrewshire from COVID19 specifically in relation to the economic and social impacts that will take time to recover from irrespective of how quickly or otherwise the public health aspect of the emergency is progressed. This will undoubtedly place additional demands on the Council to play a key leadership role, working in partnership with a range of public sector partners, the private and 3<sup>rd</sup> sector partners as well as the communities across Renfrewshire. Re-focusing and re-purposing of existing resources and programmes towards the most important priorities that emerge from this partnership recovery work will be critical as well protecting the Council's ability to deliver existing plans covering for example major capital investment programmes recognising the important role these will play to support and stimulate economic recovery and provide direct benefits to our local communities. It is also recognised that as the recovery agenda develops, new priorities that will be critical to the overall recovery process may emerge that will require support and resources. The potential for additional high priority requirements and demands of this nature require to be factored into the need for financial flexibility over the short to medium term.

### 3.14.8 Impact of Delay to Right for Renfrewshire (R4R)

The existing financial strategy was underpinned by a requirement for the R4R transformation programme to support the delivery of £25 million of recurring revenue savings over the medium term period to 2023. An initial phasing assumption of savings of £7 million, £13 million and £5 million was made for each financial year through to 2023. In setting the 2020/21 budget the first tranche of R4R savings were budgeted with £3.6 million of recurring savings planned to be released in 2020/21 with a further £2.4 million of linked full year effect savings in 2021/22. To remain in broadly in line with the existing financial strategy, a further £14 million of transformation savings would require to be secured as part of the 2021/22 budget and a further £5 million in 2022/23.

Members will however be aware, that at the onset of the pandemic, a decision was taken to formally pause the R4R programme, recognising the capacity of the Council was required to be diverted to fully support the emergency response. The Council very much remains on an emergency footing and working to significant ongoing restrictions similar to all large-scale organisations.

The corporate management team is at present remobilising the R4R programme with the initial focus on stepping back up implementation of the tranche 1 service designs that were paused. As a consequence, the delivery of this initial tranche of transformation changes and associated savings has been disrupted and will now take longer to fully deliver, pushing more of the delivery into 2021/22. In addition, no meaningful work has been progressed in relation to commencing the further tranches of transformational change. Although the CMT will be focusing on stepping the transformation programme back up, the reality is that the transformation programme has suffered significant delay in the context of the three year financial strategy planning horizon. Additionally, there remains a significant risk that even once remobilised and restarted, the pace at which this work can progress will be hampered by the capacity of the organisation continuing to support the ongoing emergency response as well as the social and economic recovery priorities across Renfrewshire.

There is therefore a substantial risk that the targeted R4R savings of £25 million over the three year period to 2023 will now take longer to deliver. In addition, given the current timeline of being already midway through 2020/21 coupled with the fact the country remains firmly in the middle of the pandemic, there is a heightened risk that achieving delivery of £14 million of savings in 2021/22 is under material threat.

Consequently, this increased risk drives a further and potentially more significant immediate term requirement for the financial strategy to be adapted to provide increased flexibility to manage the impact of an unplanned delay to the release of savings emerging from the Council's transformation programme.

### 3.15 Key Strategy Response Measures

3.15.1 Fundamentally, the medium term financial strategy position remains valid in terms of the requirement to secure significant recurring savings over the medium term period. At present, there is now greater downside risk that the actual scale of savings that the Council will be required to deliver will exceed the £25 million target.

This is likely to be informed to some degree by the outcome of the UK Government's CSR in the autumn and the following Scottish Government Budget, scheduled for December and potentially three year financial settlement for local government. If a more negative outlook emerges from this critical period of national announcements there will be a requirement for the Council to fundamentally adjust the saving target moving forward and carefully consider what this may mean for the scale of required transformation.

- 3.15.2 However, in the context of all that is outlined above, the risk of additional financial and demand pressure emerging at short notice during this period is significant. Equally, the capacity of the Council to progress the required transformational change at pace may be subject to unavoidable constraint. In addition, the requirement to refresh the Council's unallocated balances in order to re-establish immediate financial resilience will exacerbate the short term pressure over this period.
- 3.15.3 In this context it is critical that the Council remains focused on delivering the R4R transformation programme and seeking to secure the targeted £25 million of savings. However, it is also acknowledged that the financial strategy requires some degree of adjustment, recognising the increased risk, uncertainty and potential for significant short term volatility in the Council's financial position, caused by factors the Council may have little or no influence over.
- 3.15.4 Given these current circumstances, now more than ever, it will be critically important the Council seeks to mitigate the major risk of financial volatility. In this context, the financial strategy is required to place greater focus on protecting the immediate stability of the Council during this period, both financially and from a service perspective, whilst critically continuing to facilitate a managed advancement of the transformation programme recognising this remains the Council's principle vehicle to achieve both financial sustainability and to redesign services that are better aligned to meet the current and future needs of communities and business. It will be critical that over the near term future, the Council is capable of operating in a stable manner, is able confidently to be reassured in its capability and capacity to provide ongoing support to the Renfrewshire community as COVID19 continues to develop and at the same time progress support to the social and economic recovery across Renfrewshire.
- 3.15.5 In this context a number of key changes will be made to the financial planning arrangements. The changes are focused on providing levers that provide an enhanced degree of financial resilience and manoeuvrability to protect the Council from being heavily buffeted and disrupted by negative financial impacts that may emerge over the short to medium term. It is important to recognise that any application of such measures do not come without financial cost and each will create medium to longer term financial consequences for the Council which will add to the financial pressures over the medium to longer term.
- 3.15.6 It is therefore proposed to make a number of corporate financing changes to long term capital funding arrangements linked to the Council's existing capital programme, enhancing planned borrowing in order to release previous revenue contributions to capital along with adjustments to the long term PPP funding strategy as part of the Council's wider debt smoothing arrangements. These changes will provide the opportunity to replenish unallocated reserves moving into 2021/22 in line with the recommendations outlined above as well as enhancing short term revenue flexibility should the Council face further unexpected financial volatility and or disruption to the delivery of R4R benefits.

This adjustment will be accommodated through work progressed over the course of this year by the Council's Finance Team to identify final opportunities from the existing debt smoothing strategy. The consequence of this however is that such opportunities are no longer available to provide a final tranche of savings to the 2021/22 budget.

- 3.15.7 In addition to the corporate financing adjustments above, negotiations have been progressed by COSLA, professional associations across local government and the Scottish Government to identify national financial flexibilities to assist in managing the impact of COVID19 across local government. Full agreement has yet to be secured in relation to the areas where regulation changes and or funding adjustments may be made to provide enhanced flexibility to Councils, how and when such flexibilities may be utilised and lastly whether such flexibilities are only available for 2020/21 to meet immediate COVID19 costs or whether they will extend beyond this period recognising the legacy impact of COVID19 and disruption to transformation programmes that has occurred. Subject to the final detail emerging, it would be proposed that where flexibilities are made available by the Scottish Government, full use should be exercised by the Council of each in order to provide the maximum level of flexibility moving forward. Details in regard to the finalised flexibilities and the associated utilisation will be reported to members at an appropriate future cycle as part of financial updates.

#### **4. Capital Investment Programme**

- 4.1 The Council agreed in March capital investment plans for housing and general services for the period 2020/21 to 2023/24 which included investment totalling £368 million. In the current financial year, it was planned that spend of £130 million would take place.
- 4.2 As previously reported to members, the short-term cessation of construction sites and subsequent social distancing and other requirements as sites have re-opened has and is impacting on the Council's capital plan over 2020/21 and potentially over the medium term.
- 4.3 The full impact on the capital programme continues to be subject to considerable uncertainty in relation to both live projects and projects yet to be procured as contractors manage the process to close down and subsequently re-mobilise construction sites and manage the subsequent social distancing and other restrictions.
- 4.4 As previously reported to members, a significant pro-active exercise was commenced early by officers, with all active contractors to seek early engagement to achieve mutually agreeable adjustments to contract arrangements and avoid potentially expensive, disruptive and protracted legal disputes. This process is significant in terms of both scale and complexity and subject to ongoing management with contractors. It is anticipated it will take towards the end of the calendar year before a clear view is established of the potential financial consequence of this impact on live projects. It is also recognised that voluntary agreements may not be achieved with all contractors and the risk of contractual disputes on individual projects remains a distinct possibility. These issues by their nature may take a considerable period to resolve.

- 4.5 In addition, the economic impact on the construction sector and supporting supply chains is at this stage unclear and how this may impact on future Council projects as they are procured. Early market engagement suggests that at present contractors are becoming more comfortable with operating arrangements under the new Government guidelines and moving closer to normal productivity levels on site as working arrangements have been adapted. For large tier 1 contractors, in particular, this has been informed through experience gained in England where sites have been operating for longer. The immediate risk of higher construction cost inflation may not at this stage emerge, particularly should public sector projects become more attractive in the short term as commercial investment projects risk being paused and or reconsidered by investors in the light of the COVID19 experience with major city centre office developments being an obvious example. Nevertheless, the outcome in this regard is uncertain and will again take time to emerge and the heightened risk of contractor failures as firms manage through financial sustainably risks remains a potential issue which could risk the dilution of competition and market capacity.
- 4.6 Although matters at this stage appear potentially less negative than pre-summer, there remains considerable risk that the capital programme as currently constituted will not be deliverable within the previously budgeted financial envelope. In light of this and recognising that it is likely to take a considerable period of time to gain a more complete understanding and indeed the situation may be subject to further change and volatility, it would be recommended that officers progress work over the second half of 2020 to undertake a full review of the existing programme.
- 4.7 It would be intended that this review identifies options to reschedule existing projects and or identify projects that may be held in reserve status pending greater comfort being attained on the financial impact of COVID19 and the financial deliverability of the existing programme. This structured review would seek to ensure that programme alignment to the Council's most important priorities is maximised whilst ensuring the Council is in a position to mitigate in a managed fashion the risk of cost increases on existing and as yet to be procured projects. It would be proposed that an update in this regard would be included in the financial update report that would be brought to the December Council meeting for member's consideration.

## **5. Housing Revenue Account (HRA)**

- 5.1 The Covid19 pandemic and the consequential lockdown has resulted in additional costs and a loss of income to the HRA during 2020/21. These additional costs/loss of income are a consequence of the wider implications of Covid19 and reflect the Council's compliance with the various phases and requirements of the Scottish Governments route map out of lockdown, whilst continuing to provide a range of housing services such as emergency repairs to houses, operation of Sheltered Housing/Concierge facilities and support to tenants.
- 5.2 Officers have completed a detailed review of the HRA taking into account the implications of Covid19 and have estimated that additional expenditure and loss of income will amount to approximately £2.5 million 2020/21. This relates to additional staff costs linked to additional support provided to tenants, additional costs for PPE and other supplies as well as the impact of non-productive time for building services and anticipated loss of rental income.



- 5.3 Members will be aware that the HRA is a ringfenced account and the Council's financial strategy is to ensure that service delivery can be maintained within the available resources. Equally the financial strategy has also maintained a level of HRA reserves at £6.8m to provide adequate protection to the HRA against the short to medium term impact of the materialisation of any financial risks.
- 5.4 Whilst officers have sought to mitigate the impact of additional costs during 2020/21 through effective budget management it is likely that the HRA will overspend in 2020/21 due to the net additional costs linked to the COVID19 emergency. This impact will be managed in year through a draw on unallocated balances providing stability for the HRA account on the closure of the 2020/21 financial year.
- 5.5 Based on current projections it is anticipated that the HRA will carry forward unallocated reserves of approximately £4.3 million into 2021/22. It is anticipated at this stage and subject to ongoing assessment, that this level of reserves would remain appropriate moving forward for the HRA. The higher level of reserves of £6.8 million, that has been carried over recent years reflected a greater risk outlook associated with predominantly the roll out of universal credit. Much of this risk has now dissipated in the intervening period and as such a reduced unallocated reserve position as currently forecast would be assessed as being appropriate. There is therefore no requirement for any replenishment in contrast to that of the general fund, where much more substantial risks are anticipated.
- 5.7 Housing Capital Programme and future Investment Capacity
- 5.7.1 In relation to the approved capital expenditure plan for 2020/21 officers have undertaken a review of the planned programme and updated this plan to reflect delays or slippage in capital projects due to the Covid19 disruption. The net financial effect of this is to reprofile a total of £11.234m of expenditure from 2020/21 to 2021/22 and this was reported to the Communities, Housing and Planning Services Policy Board on 18 August 2020. Similar to the General Fund capital programme, ongoing engagement continues with all contractors in relation to the impact the COVID19 disruption and revised working arrangements required by Government guidance. Any implications in this regard and any required re-scheduling of planned investment activities will be fully reported through the normal board arrangements.
- 5.7.2 As detailed in the March 2020 paper to Council, as part of the full review of the 30 year HRA business plan model it was reported that emerging financial capacity has been identified to support the growth in the long term housing investment programme, as a result of improving financial drivers such as future bad debt levels due to the diminishing risk around universal credit.
- 5.7.3 Over the summer period officers have revisited this review particularly in the context of the developing impact of COVID19 on the HRA. Appropriate adjustment have been made to the business plan model including the planned use of balances in 2020/21, potential increase in rent arrears, and potential workforce productivity impact and associated increased maintenance and contractual costs as a result of the general economic situation. Appropriate adjustments will be factored into the ongoing financial sustainability planning for the HRA and will be kept under close review over coming months.

#### 5.7.4

Notwithstanding the negative in year position as a result of the immediate impact of COVID, there continues to be capacity for a significant enhancement to the long term housing investment programme. Officers are developing proposals for a targeted programme of investment with the aims of improving the condition, suitability and longer term sustainability of groups of low demand properties, together with investment in new council housing supply in strategic locations to meet current and future housing needs. These proposals will be brought forward to a future reporting cycle by the end of the calendar year. This proposed enhancement to housing investment moving forward has an opportunity to not just deliver an improvement in the HRA housing stock but the opportunity to play a key role in providing a major boost to the local economy in terms of investment activity as well as aligning effectively with the wider regeneration and social objectives being pursued by the Council.

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## Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – the report highlights the heightened financial risks facing the Council as a result of the COVID19 emergency. Over the medium term, the requirement to continue to make significant financial savings in order to remain financial sustainable remains, however significantly increased short term risks have now emerged and as outlined in the report this consequently requires in direct response a number of adjustments to the financial strategy improve the Council’s financial resilience, flexibility and manoeuvrability.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – the medium term financial position and associated plans require to align with workforce and service plans to ensure the size and composition of the Council workforce remains appropriate and affordable.
3. **Community/Council Planning** – the Council requires to remain financially sustainable in order to deliver on its priorities as outlined in the Council and Community Plans.
4. **Legal** - none
5. **Property/Assets** - none
6. **Information Technology** - none
7. **Equality & Human Rights** – n/a at this stage and any implications will be assessed as part of associated proposals taken forward as part of the financial strategy and wider Right for Renfrewshire programme.
8. **Health & Safety** - none
9. **Procurement** – none
10. **Risk** – a range of financial risks are outlined within the report, along with mitigation measures as far as they are possible.
11. **Privacy Impact** - none
12. **Cosla Policy Position** – none
13. **Climate Risk** - none

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**Author:** *Alan Russell, Director of Finance & Resources*

## Appendix 1

### General Revenue (excluding Education /ELC/Childcare Hubs)

	£ms
Building Services Loss	0.300
Unachieved savings	1.200
Council Tax Loss/CTR increase	5.000
Provision for RL losses	4.300
Provision for SPT loss exposure	0.500
Free school meals	1.500
Children's social care	0.700
Shielding support	1.700
Other staff costs/overtime	0.900
Supplies/PPE/ICT/supplier support	1.500
Other income loss (parking, waste, school meals etc)	3.500

<b>Total (indicative range £20m - £22m)</b>	<b>21.100</b>
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### Scottish Government Funding (excluding Education etc)

	National £ms	Renfrewshire £ms
Hardship Fund	50.000	1.632
UK Govt consequentials (1)	155.000	5.060
Test and Protect	0.520	0.016
Free school meals	15.000	0.532
Food fund	15.000	0.531
SWF top-up	22.000	0.782
DHP Top up	5.000	0.115
Death registration	0.600	0.020
FSM/food fund summer extension	27.600	0.945
UK Govt consequentials (2) ***	49.000	tbc
Council Tax Reduction top-up ***	50.000	tbc
Income Scheme ***	90.000	tbc
SWF top-up 2 ***	23.000	tbc

<b>Total (indicative range £14m - £16m after tbc distributions clarified)</b>	<b>479.720</b>	<b>9.633</b>
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<b>Balance to be Funded by Council (indicative range £4m - £8m after tbc distributions clarified)</b>	<b>11.467</b>
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\*\*\* these funding announcements - totalling £212m - remain subject to confirmation as do Council level distributions. The actual distribution figures may vary materially from the Council's normal distribution share.



**To: Council**

**On: 24 September 2020**

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**Report by: Chief Executive**

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**Heading: Impact of COVID-19 on Renfrewshire's Communities.**

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## **1. Summary**

- 1.1 On 25 June 2020, Council considered a report which outlined how the organisation would move forward from the initial phase of responding to the COVID-19 crisis and develop more detailed plans to support economic and social recovery across Renfrewshire's communities. The report recognised that communities would have to find new ways of living with COVID-19 over the medium term, and that as a result there was an ongoing requirement for the organisation to remain flexible and ready to respond to the changing needs and behaviours of local people, and to potential further waves or outbreaks of the virus at a local or national level.
- 1.2 In terms of recovery and renewal across communities, services have been working with partners to better understand the impact that the virus has had to date. Some of the initial data in terms of unemployment and poverty is stark, and there is ongoing concern that levels will increase as businesses make further redundancies or as the furlough scheme winds down.
- 1.3 In Renfrewshire, the impact of COVID-19 is likely to have exacerbated existing inequalities in terms of for example, educational attainment, health, poverty, and mental health. For some people, these inequalities have made them much less resilient and able to cope with social isolation or loss of income; whereas for many others the pandemic has impacted their income,

employment, housing or health and wellbeing in a new way or for the first time.

- 1.4 Prior to the pandemic, the Council demonstrated commitment and ambition in terms of working with partners to tackle these inequalities and to focus on improving the wellbeing of local people and communities. Significant progress had for example been achieved in terms of targeting unemployment, addressing the poverty related attainment gap and promoting health and wellbeing and community empowerment. An ambitious programme of economic and cultural regeneration has also been progressed, attracting huge levels of external investment and infrastructure developments such as AMIDS.
- 1.5 The strength of this partnership working was a crucial part of the pandemic response in Renfrewshire. Groups and organisation across all sectors worked with great commitment to support people through the lockdown phase of the pandemic, delivering food and prescriptions, reaching out to people who were struggling and at the most simplest level - looking out for their friends and neighbours.
- 1.6 In terms of moving forward, partners will need to work with local people and communities to develop a deeper understanding of the impact of the pandemic, and to consider how the activities and services that are delivered need to change in response. There will be a significant focus on ensuring that people receive the economic and wellbeing support that is needed, with a real opportunity to work in a different way, and to tackle some of the existing inequalities across communities as we do this.
- 1.7 To develop this deeper understanding, partners have agreed to undertake a Community Impact Assessment. Put most simply this means:
  - Talking to local people and communities about the impact of COVID-19
  - Undertaking more detailed research to consider the impact on certain groups in society who may have felt the impact of the pandemic more than others;
  - Building a picture of need in terms of the services and supports local people are accessing; and
  - Working with local partners to identify local priorities and maximise the value of resources available to support local people and communities.
- 1.8 In recognition that the impact of the pandemic will change and develop over time, partners anticipate that the Community Impact Assessment will continue for at least a period of 12 months. It is anticipated that the first phase will be complete by December 2020, and that the information gathered can be used to produce an outline Social Renewal Plan for Renfrewshire. This plan will set

out how partners will use the learning from the pandemic, to tackle inequality and wellbeing issues, through a more equal relationship between partners and communities.

- 1.9 Although it is important to build this intelligence through the assessment, it is recognised that local people and communities need support to manage the impact of COVID-19 now. Partners have identified a range of immediate priorities that they are taking forward currently: - some of these priorities build on programmes of work already in place such as the Tackling Poverty Programme, whilst others such as the bereavement service are new partnership initiatives. Section 5 of the report provides an overview of some of the current activities being progressed by partners now.
- 1.10 Regular updates on this programme of work will continue to be provided to elected members, and information in relation to local community engagement and listening events will be shared as this becomes available.

## **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 It is recommended that members note:
- the approach being undertaken by the Council and partners to support local people and communities impacted by the ongoing pandemic; and
  - the initial priority areas and associated actions which have been identified and are being progressed now.

## **3. Background**

- 3.1 The coronavirus pandemic is now recognised as being the most significant challenge to have faced the international community in modern times. Since the crisis unfolded in early 2020, many local people and businesses have been impacted by the crisis, through for example bereavement, loss of income and isolation and loneliness.
- 3.2 The Council has worked intensively with partners, communities, businesses and residents to ensure that essential services continue to be provided across Renfrewshire and that vulnerable people receive the support and protection that they need. Many groups and organisations across all sectors, have worked tirelessly in local communities to support many thousands of people impacted by the pandemic, helping them to access support with food or to offer befriending or social activities. The collective efforts of all partners has been absolutely vital to the initial response to the pandemic in Renfrewshire.
- 3.3 On 25 June 2020, Council considered a report which outlined how the organisation would move forward from the initial phase of responding to the crisis. It was recognised within this report that:
- Society will have to continue to live with COVID-19 for some time in advance of appropriate vaccinations and treatments being developed.

- Services will need to continue to be alert and be able to respond flexibly to local changes in the transmission of the virus, as we have seen in Renfrewshire and across Scotland through a variety of different outbreaks and local lockdown measures being put into place by the Scottish Government.
- The resources that the Council has available to provide services have been fundamentally impacted by the pandemic, with significant financial pressures likely to be experienced going forward.
- The needs and behaviours of citizens, communities and businesses have changed as a result of the pandemic and the way that society has had to adjust to a position of living with the virus. The council will need to continue to adapt to these changing needs and behaviours.

3.4 Within this paper to Council, it was recognised there would be three phases to the Council's recovery process:

- **Restart** - incrementally restarting service provision in line with national guidance.
- **Recover** - rebuilding levels of service capacity, confidence and resilience and supporting reconnection with communities and residents.
- **Renew** - reimagining / building better and resetting Renfrewshire's ambition and vision for the future.

3.5 In line with the Scottish Government's own Routemap for recovery, many services have now been allowed to restart and are adapting to new ways of operating in line with Scottish Government guidance. As this work progresses, consideration is being given to the next phase of recovery, which is often referred to as **renewal, or a process of building back what you do in a better way**. One of the most important elements of this next phase of recovery and renewal, is more fully understanding the impact that the pandemic has had on local people and communities.

#### 4. Impact of COVID-19

4.1 Renfrewshire's Community Plan recognises the significant inequalities that exist across Renfrewshire's communities, with partners working together to connect communities and to ensure local people are able to benefit from opportunities arising from the area's ambitious regeneration plans. These inequalities will undoubtedly have contributed to the impact of COVID-19 in local communities, however it is clear that the services and supports partners have developed over time have also been critical to supporting local people through this initial period of the pandemic.

4.2 From the initial data available to the Council, it is clear that the pandemic has fundamentally impacted local people, businesses and communities, but in many different ways. For some people, COVID-19 has exacerbated these existing inequalities or wellbeing issues, whilst for others it may be the first time that certain issues such as unemployment or ill health have been experienced.

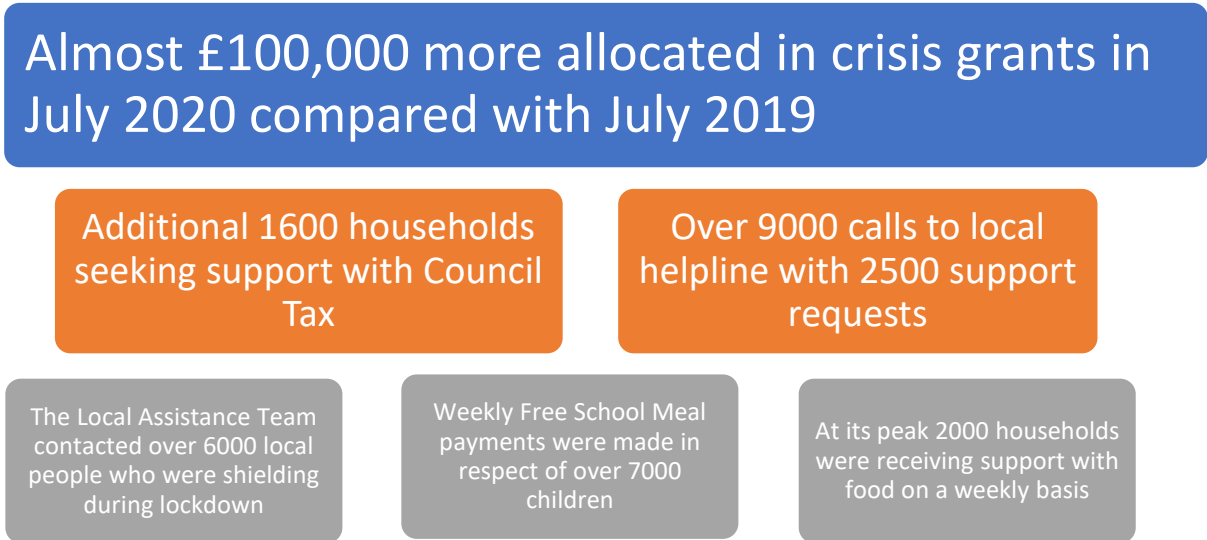
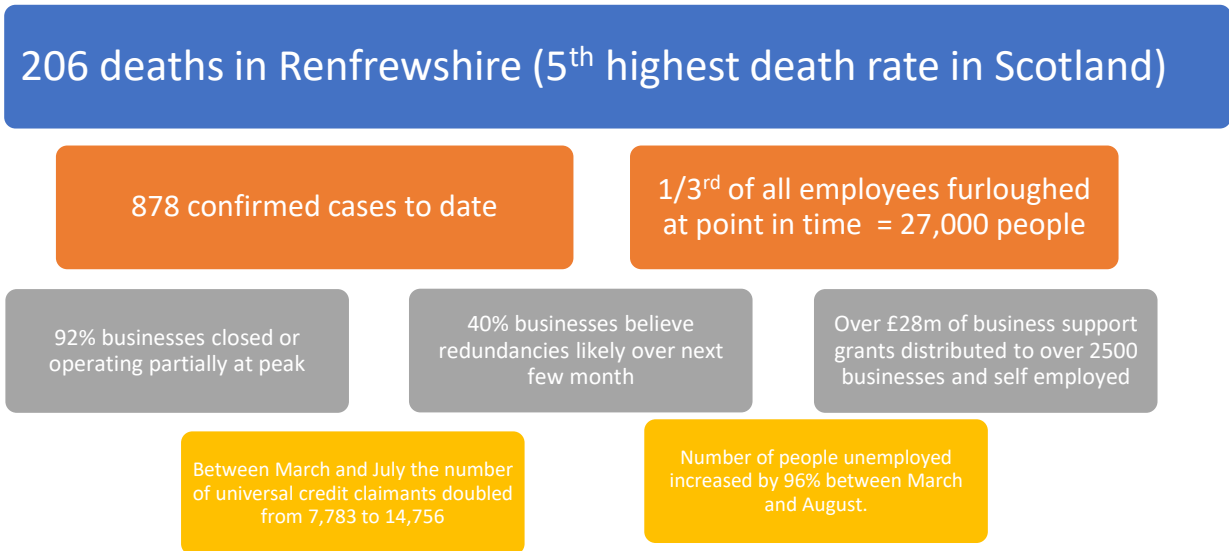


- 4.3 For example, local people have been affected by bereavement and illness, mental and physical wellbeing has been impacted by lockdown measures, the learning experience of children and young people has been significantly impacted and many people have been affected by redundancy or furlough. Many businesses have had to close for an extended period of time, and are having to adhere to new guidance and legislation whilst trying to ensure the financial sustainability of their business going forward.
- 4.4 It is anticipated that the true impact of the pandemic on individual wellbeing will take time to fully emerge, particularly around issues such as physical and mental health, domestic violence, alcohol and drug misuse and wider risk of harm. Some groups of people will have been more disproportionately impacted than others, with potentially more significant impacts on women, young people, people with a disability and within the local BAME population. Much will depend on the starting point of each individual, with potentially more significant impacts on those people already experiencing wellbeing issues. A summary of some of the key impacts are highlighted in the table below:

### The Impact of COVID-19 on Renfrewshire's Communities

<p><b>Social Impacts</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The impact of lockdown and school closure on families and young people in terms of learning, achievement and life chances.</li> <li>• Evidence is emerging that some groups have been more impacted than others eg people with a disability, BAME, young people and women</li> <li>• The impact of lockdown in terms of social isolation and loneliness and the loss of connection, particularly for people living alone and for those shielding.</li> <li>• The impact of bereavement for families, who have lost close relatives, with people living in deprived areas 2.1 times more likely to die from COVID 19.</li> <li>• Potential hidden impact in terms of family relationships, domestic violence and alcohol and drug use</li> <li>• Many behaviours have changed with people accessing services online, using their care less, and utilising outdoor space much more.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Economic</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many people have been furloughed or made redundant that have never experienced unemployment – the number of people experiencing unemployment is anticipated to rise shortly in the next few months</li> <li>• It is estimated 60% of people in employment are living in poverty – low income and insecure employment will have made people much less able to manage financially</li> <li>• People on low incomes and impacted by poverty have required increased support to access food and crisis grants</li> <li>• Mortgage payment and credit card “holidays” have been put into place, with the impact of loss of income on levels of debt and housing yet to be assessed.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Health</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• With health services focusing on the crisis response, there is concern that many people will not have sought help for medical conditions</li> <li>• Many people have not been able to attend existing appointments or their treatment for a condition has been impacted.</li> <li>• Many of the models of care and support that are in place to support vulnerable people have been under significant stress and opportunities to change these are being considered?</li> <li>• It is anticipated that the hidden impact of COVID19 on individual circumstance may significantly increase the numbers of people requiring support for mental health issues such as depression and anxiety, or for issues relating to alcohol and drugs</li> </ul>

4.5 Services have been working to consider the data that is currently available from local and national sources on the impact of the pandemic. Key points to highlight from this data are:



4.6 In addition to the range of more negative impacts highlighted above, it is also important to recognise that the pandemic has had a positive impact on some aspects of life including:

- Community – local people and communities rallied round to provide support local people during this first phase of the pandemic. Very positive relationships were built between all partners, with collaboration around community food provision and in developing the new neighbourhood hubs model. Local groups and organisation successfully accessed nearly £0.7m in external funding to support their local initiatives.
- Volunteering – significant numbers of local people signed up to volunteer through the Scotland Cares Campaign. At a local level, around 800 volunteers were active at any one time supporting some of the Council’s community partner organisations. In partnership with Engage, a local

Volunteer Reserve Bank was also established with 250 volunteers signed up to this.

- Climate change – during the lockdown there was a significant fall in the use of all modes of travel. Due to ongoing restrictions, significant numbers of people are working from home and are not using cars or public transport, with more people also utilising public space outdoor, including cycling and walking routes. These positive changes in travel behaviours and use of public space should they continue, could support local work to reduce carbon emissions in Renfrewshire.
- Digital – Local partners in Renfrewshire have been working to address digital inclusion in recent years. Through lockdown and the ongoing restrictions, partners have developed new and innovative ways to support people to stay connected, to receive support or to access services. The Connecting Scotland programme has enabled partners to distribute nearly 300 devices and connectivity to those most vulnerable, with national plans to extend this further.

### **Renfrewshire's Community Impact Assessment**

- 4.7 Whilst the data summarised at Section 4.5 is helpful in supporting the Council and its partners to identify the key actions that need to be taken immediately to support local people, much more work is required to develop a deeper understanding of the impact of COVID-19 in Renfrewshire. It is important that the Council and partners listen to the experiences of local people, in order to find out how their lives have changed and what needs to happen to support them. There is growing consensus at a local and national level that the impact of COVID-19 has changed lives in such a fundamental way, that it may be possible to fundamentally change the way in which we work together to tackle inequality and improve wellbeing in the future.
- 4.8 In order to respond to this new and pressing challenge, partners in Renfrewshire have agreed to take forward a Community Impact Assessment. The purpose of this is to:
- Ensure that partners continue to work together on the immediate pandemic response, and have the information they need to adapt services to the needs of local people as they change over time;
  - Involve local people in this process, and ask them to help us to develop new solutions to the issues that are being experienced across communities and;
  - Allow partners over the longer term to adapt what they do and to target or even redirect resources to where they are most needed.
- 4.9 **This learning and listening approach**, aligns very closely to the work being undertaken by the Scottish Government as part of the COVID-19 response, with a Social Renewal Advisory Board established in Summer 2020 to tackle poverty and inequality in Scotland in the wake of the pandemic.
- 4.10 In taking forward the community impact assessment it will be important to gain the support of all partners, local people and elected members, in order to

ensure that this assessment fully reflects the needs and experiences of local people across Renfrewshire. Specifically the assessment will involve:

- Analysing all of the information that partners have on the use of key services and how this is changing over time
- Using local and national research to consider the impact of COVID-19 on specific groups within local communities
- A community voices campaign - Engaging with local people and community groups and organisations to understand their experiences of COVID-19, and to strengthen the Council's relationships with these groups.

4.11 The Community Voices campaign is the most significant part of the impact assessment. Partners are working on proposals for the campaign, with key elements likely to include:

- A programme of listening events intended to engage with people from across Renfrewshire, with a strong focus on engaging with people who may have been more disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. A particular focus agreed by partners will be on the impact on young people.
- Using our next Public Service Panel survey to ask local people about the changes in their lives and what they might need to access in their local community to support them.
- Working with the 7 Local Partnerships to identify the issues being experienced by local communities;
- Maintaining an ongoing dialogue with third sector and community groups so that partners can learn from the experience and knowledge that is being gained every week in local communities.

4.12 Engage Renfrewshire recently hosted Renfrewshire's first listening event in partnership with the Council, which was held in support of the Social Renewal Advisory Group. 12 groups and organisations involved in the pandemic response in Renfrewshire contributed to the session, and it was a fantastic opportunity to hear about the experiences of these organisations.

## **5. Recovery and renewal - responding to the pandemic and its impact**

5.1 Prior to the pandemic, the Council had been progressing its Right for Renfrewshire programme, which with partners, would allow the Council to deliver on its ambitions for Renfrewshire, as set out in the Council and Community plans.

5.2 Recognising the significant inequalities that exist across local communities, community planning partners agreed collectively to ensure Renfrewshire was a place where people felt connected and were able to access opportunities to improve their quality of life and wellbeing. It was recognised that these ambitions were challenging, with a need to address long term challenges around poverty, alcohol and drug misuse, and mental and physical health and wellbeing.



- 5.3 With partners, the organisation has responded to these challenges by prioritising work to reduce the poverty related attainment gap, by tackling poverty and supporting financial inclusion, providing targeted support to access training and employment, and working with communities in different ways to encourage participation and engagement. A nationally recognised programme of economic and cultural regeneration has been progressed, to maximise the opportunities from City Deal investments and with developments such as AMIDS ensuring that Renfrewshire was viewed as an exciting location for external investment.
- 5.4 **Whilst the starting point for this work has changed for everyone – individuals, communities, businesses and partners – it is possible to use this opportunity to tackle many of the complex issues faced in Renfrewshire such as poverty and inequality in a different way, as we move forward in the pandemic response.** Many leading organisations such as Carnegie Trust, refer to this approach as social renewal.
- 5.5. A key element of our local approach will be to absolutely align what partners do to support both economic and social wellbeing in response to the pandemic. An Economic Recovery Plan is being developed in Renfrewshire, as reported in a separate report on economic impact, to this full Council meeting. The report recognises the need to develop an inclusive growth approach at a local level, so that all local people can access opportunities for fair work. In a recent report by Carnegie Trust, the importance of fair work to social and economic recovery from COVID-19 is recognised:

- Work enables people to provide for themselves and their families
- It allows people to buy goods and services that they need
- It helps to build connections in communities and
- It fosters a sense of individual and collective identity.

5.6 Whilst the longer term social recovery and renewal plan is being developed, it remains absolutely critical for partners to focus on what can be done to support local people and communities now.

**What do we need to focus on now?**

5.7 From the data available to the Council and its partners currently, there are several issues which have been identified as an immediate priority as highlighted in the diagram below:



5.8 A number of the key actions being progressed with partners are highlighted in the table below. As this work is ongoing, new opportunities are being identified and progressed on an ongoing basis.

Issue	Local Response planned or underway
Income and Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with partners to support community food provision to ensure this is resilient over the winter months;</li> <li>• Working with local advice partners to launch a campaign to encourage people to seek support on income and debt issues;</li> <li>• Supporting employees to access help and advice on financial issues;</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working with the Poverty Alliance as part of the Get Heard campaign to listen to the experiences of local partners;</li> <li>• Review current programmes supported through the Tackling Poverty Programme and make recommendations on future allocation with a key focus on child poverty;</li> <li>• Work has commenced through the Local Employability Partnership to look at options for the youth guarantee scheme recently announced;</li> <li>• Preparing a bid for the new Kickstart Scheme - a £2 billion fund to create hundreds of thousands of 6-month work placements aimed at those aged 16 to 24 who are on Universal Credit and are deemed to be at risk of long term unemployment.</li> <li>• The Council will deliver the Parental Employability Support Fund (PESF) which is a government funded (£0.2m) two-year pilot programme aimed at tackling in-work poverty in Renfrewshire.</li> </ul>
Social isolation and loneliness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A range of alternative culture and leisure opportunities are being offered by Renfrewshire Leisure, including the Libraries Direct service. These will continue to be developed alongside core provision.</li> <li>• Neighbourhood hubs are now in place and are building strong resilient networks with local groups and organisations and handling referrals from local people.</li> <li>• Strategic Planning Group (sub group of IJB) will lead programme of partnership working on connection, with Cllr Jacqueline Cameron identified as champion for social isolation and loneliness.</li> </ul>
Think local	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Services are identifying opportunities to ensure more local suppliers are able to access contracts advertised by the Council and partners</li> <li>• Local Community Benefits Forum adapting its approach to maximise opportunities for local people and communities.</li> <li>• Spend Local campaign supported by Council and partners</li> </ul>
Mental health and wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HSCP recently launched a new bereavement support network in partnership with local hospices and partners</li> <li>• Mental health support helpline piloted by RAMH – Hear for You.</li> <li>• Support for Families helpline operated by Education Psychology Services</li> <li>• Final report and recommendations of the Alcohol and Drugs Commission due to be finalised by December 2020.</li> </ul>
Family support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work is ongoing to assess the impact of COVID-19 on local families. Services such as Families First, Homelink and Community Learning and Development work proactively with schools and early learning establishments to identify and support families experiencing difficulties.</li> </ul>

Digital inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Digital Strategy approved by Leadership Board on 17 September with digital inclusion as key focus.</li> <li>• The Council worked in partnership with local community and third sector orgs to distribute 270 devices locally to vulnerable people. The next phase of this work has now commenced.</li> <li>• Devices were provided to children and young people to support home learning and further devices will be distributed to children in Renfrewshire, supported by national funding.</li> </ul>
Participation and Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Celebrating Renfrewshire fund for young people now open which will us participatory budgeting to allocate funds to local groups</li> <li>• First community listening event in the Community Voice programme held on 4 September 2020.</li> <li>• Learning from volunteering experience during COVID-19 is being reviewed in partnership with Engage Renfrewshire. This will ensure Renfrewshire is well prepared to support people to volunteer, particularly as a route to access employment in the future.</li> </ul>
Young People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A range of partners, including Youth Services, have adapted their approach to working with young people during the pandemic. Digital solutions have been progressed and some face to face activities have started to resume in the community.</li> <li>• Youth Services also worked with Renfrewshire Youth Voice to set up the ‘Unheard Voices Campaign’ – to find out how lockdown and the COVID-19 virus has affected young people and those who support young people</li> </ul>

## 6. Next steps

- 6.1 In taking forward the community impact assessment and the subsequent social renewal plan, officers will engage with all partners, residents and communities in a way that reflects the Council’s values:

We are **fair**: we treat each other and everyone we deal with respectfully and work hard to build trust in Renfrewshire Council

We are **helpful**: we care about getting things right and are always approachable.

We are great **collaborators**: we work as one team and with people who care about this place.

We value **learning**: to help us innovate, improve and deliver better services.

- 6.2 It is recognised that a significant proportion of the Council’s employees live in Renfrewshire, and have also been impacted by COVID-19 in many ways. The



HR and OD team have recently conducted a review of the support that the organisation provides to the Council's workforce, with a particular focus on health and wellbeing in light of COVID-19. The impact on employees will continue to be subject to regular review.

- 6.3 In terms of further updates to Council, it is proposed that services work with partners and submit a draft renewal plan to Council in December 2020. In developing the plan, services will aim to involve as wide a range of local people and groups, and provide information on local events to elected members as part of this process.

### Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – the pandemic has had and will continue to have a significant impact on the resources available to the Council. Given the anticipated longer term financial challenges facing the Council, the requirement for targeting of resources in priority areas will be essential.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** - the commitment of the Council's workforce since the pandemic emerged has been fundamental to the ability of services to continue to support local people, businesses and communities. A significant proportion of the Council's workforce live locally in Renfrewshire, and many of the social impacts outlined in the report are also being experienced by our employees. Targeted support is being offered to employees in order to address issues such as financial insecurity and mental health and wellbeing.
3. **Community/Council Planning** – There has been a strong partnership response to the COVID-19 pandemic in Renfrewshire with community and third sector organisations working closely together to maximise the resources available at a local level to meet the needs of local people and communities. This will be a critical focus going forward as partners work collectively to mitigate the impact on those most negatively impacted in our communities.
4. **Legal** - New legislative requirements have been put into place by the Scottish Government to support the country's response to COVID-19. There may be further changes to these requirements or further legislation as the lockdown measures ease, which the Council will require to respond to.
5. **Property/Assets** - none
6. **Information Technology** – none
7. **Equality and 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 because 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 and Safety** - none
9. **Procurement** – none
10. **Risk** – none
11. **Privacy Impact** - none
12. **COSLA Policy Position** - none
13. **Climate Risk** – none

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### List of Background Papers

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**Author:** *Laura McIntyre, Head of Policy and Commissioning*



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**To: Council**

**On: 24 September 2020**

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**Report by: Chief Executive**

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**Heading: Renfrewshire Economic Update – September 2020**

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## **1. Summary**

- 1.1 This report presents an Economic Update for Renfrewshire. It covers the period since March 2020 and the lockdown restrictions which created enormous challenges for the local economy. The report summarises the recently published Scottish Programme for Government (PfG) and what this could mean for Renfrewshire. It also outlines the proposed direction of travel towards an Economic Recovery Plan for Renfrewshire which we hope to bring to Council in December 2020.
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## **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 It is recommended that Council:
- (i) notes the content of the Economic Update;
  - (ii) agrees to the continued commitment to the actions and interventions listed in section 3 of this report;
  - (iii) agrees that officers work alongside Renfrewshire's Economic Leadership Panel to develop and agree a two-year Economic Recovery Plan which will be brought back to a future Council meeting for approval; and
  - (iv) agrees that such a Recovery Plan can provide the basis for commencing dialogue with Scottish Government on a specific case for supporting a Renfrewshire economic recovery.
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### **3. Immediate Priorities for Renfrewshire**

- 3.1 The lockdown restrictions in place since March 2020 as a result of the COVID-19 health pandemic have had a dramatic impact on the national and local economy and will have implications for the Renfrewshire economy especially in the short to medium term. The Claimant Count in Renfrewshire has risen by 96.3% (from 4,015 in March to 7,885 in August), a number of high-profile companies have announced job losses and it is expected that once the UK Government's Job Retention Scheme (furlough) begins to taper off towards its planned conclusion in October 2020, further redundancies will most likely follow. When the potential implications of BREXIT are also considered, the impacts of these concurrent challenges on the Renfrewshire economy in the short to medium term could be severe with many more businesses and jobs lost.
- 3.2 However, there are significant interventions that Renfrewshire Council and its partners are making, and can continue to commit to, that can result in a positive contribution towards a resilient economic recovery locally. Some of these are outlined below. Above everything the priority must be on putting in place the stimuli that will lead to increased economic activity that will in turn result in the creation of or the retention of existing jobs. We know from experience how important employment and economic opportunity is to the physical and mental health and well-being of individuals and households. Economic impacts have long-term consequences for individuals, families, communities, and places

#### ***Supporting local businesses***

- 3.3 Between April and July 2020, Renfrewshire Council administered and distributed around £28 million of a Scottish Government business support in grants to over 2,600 local businesses and self-employed. These payments ranging from £2,000 to £25,000 for each eligible business have offered a lifeline to many companies whose cashflow was detrimentally affected by the dramatic reduction in customers and sales from March onwards.
- 3.4 In July, as a rapid response, Renfrewshire Council agreed to make available a further £1.3m by repurposing existing economic development funding. These are designed to offer a series of grants and support measures for local businesses to assist in recovery from the economic impact of lockdown. Grants range from those to assist businesses with implementing social distancing at their premises (up to £2,500); repayable grants of up to £5,000 for Renfrewshire businesses to assist cashflow in the short term to get them over the current reduction in sales; as well as grants up to a maximum of £10,000 for those businesses looking to secure the longer-term growth and the potential to add jobs over time.
- 3.5 These supports went "live" on 17 August 2020 and there has been significant interest to date from local companies.

- 3.6 West College Scotland in partnership with the Council were successful in 2019 in accessing funds from the Advanced Manufacturing Challenge Fund. This project termed “**Critical Engineer**” (£700,000 budget) commenced in summer 2020 and aims to reach out to more than 30 manufacturing SMEs in Renfrewshire to increase capacity for upskilling employees. This will be particularly important with the advent of NMIS and increasing the opportunity for local companies to take full advantage of this new facility and programmes to achieve their growth ambitions.
- 3.7 Launching **Start Up Street** by October 2020 in George Street Paisley (a £250,000 investment of support for new businesses) will offer opportunities for new business ideas from local people to gain advice and expertise to see their businesses develop. It is proposed to also develop a similar concept for Renfrew Town Centre.

### ***Helping people into employment***

- 3.8 As the Renfrewshire unemployment and claimant count numbers increased significantly over the April to August 2020 period so the employability services across Renfrewshire required to react. Many services moved to offering online delivery and contactless support with staff continuing to offer a keyworker led service to those looking for employment.
- 3.9 The Scottish Government recently announced a **Youth Guarantee** that will ensure everyone aged between 16 and 24 has the opportunity of work, education or training. £60 million for the current year has been made available, broken down as follows:
- £30m through local authorities to help local partnerships to deliver employability support for young people;
  - £10m to create additional opportunities in colleges;
  - £10m additional funding for Developing the Young Workforce, the Scottish Government’s internationally recognised Youth Employment Strategy;
  - £10 million to support pathways to apprenticeships;
- 3.10 It is estimated that around £930,000 will be available to Renfrewshire Council for local employability support. Work has commenced through the Local Employability Partnership to look at options for the youth guarantee and these will be presented to a future board. The Government commissioned report on the Youth Guarantee scheme includes recommendations for the following actions:
- early work to identify youth employment opportunities with employers in some of the least-impacted sectors, including financial services, utilities and life sciences
  - working to introduce an incentive model where government pays 50% of wages for young people who need the most help
  - a call for the public sector to create more opportunities for young people;

- a call for businesses who would not normally have taken an apprentice full-time to consider sharing an apprentice with other employers;
  - providing support to encourage SMEs to take on a young person if they can do so;
- 3.11 The UK government has introduced a new **Kickstart Scheme** with a £2 billion fund to create hundreds of thousands of 6-month work placements aimed at those aged 16 to 24 who are on Universal Credit and are deemed to be at risk of long-term unemployment. Although the fund won't be distributed on a share basis the approximate numbers for Renfrewshire's share is estimated to be around 700 places. Kickstart will provide funding to employers to create job placements. Funding available for each job will cover 100% of the relevant national minimum wage for 25 hours a week, plus the associated employer NI contributions and employer minimum automatic enrolment contributions.
- 3.12 A bidding process to deliver the scheme has already opened. Employers, or umbrella organisations involved in employment, are invited to bid for a minimum of 30 jobs/places. Renfrewshire Council will be bidding, and the level of bid is being looked at by officers at time of writing. Members will recall the success of the last similar programme delivered by Invest in Renfrewshire which saw 1000 jobs being created in 1000 days with wage subsidies developed by the Council and available to local employers, and the public and third sectors, across Renfrewshire. The Kickstart programme will run until the summer of 2022 and is expected to commence around November 2020.
- 3.13 Renfrewshire Council and SDS were successful in 2019 in gaining support to commence a pilot **Foundation Apprenticeship in Digital Manufacturing** in Renfrewshire. This was aligned to the NMIS / AMIDS investment to offer the opportunity of developing a career in one of the local economies strongest sectors. Marketing of the programme has commenced under the theme "the future starts now" and several local companies are signed up or have expressed interest. The first tranche of apprentices will commence their training in autumn 2020.
- 3.14 The Council will continue to deliver the **Parental Employability Support Fund** (PESF) which is a government funded (£0.2m) two-year pilot programme aimed at tackling in-work poverty in Renfrewshire.
- 3.15 The authority's employability service have continued their strong working relationship with Skills Development Scotland (SDS) and their expanded **PACE support** for employees affected by company redundancies. This has already been actively involved in recent months with Rolls Royce employees at Inchinnan affected by the company's downsizing decisions. The Programme for Government (PfG) in September 2020 has confirmed an additional £5m funding support for PACE nationally.

### **Capital investment**

- 3.16 Evidence demonstrates that capital investment creates jobs. We know from calculations completed for the Renfrewshire Economic Strategy in 2019 that the known planned investment at that time of £1.4 billion across Renfrewshire in the next 10 years could generate 8,400 construction jobs and almost 5,500 permanent jobs (both net).
- 3.17 Renfrewshire Council and its partners are committed to delivering its City Deal infrastructure works at AMIDS (£39m) and is in the process of tendering the Clyde Waterfront / Renfrew Riverside regeneration project (£90m).
- 3.18 Autumn 2020 will see commencement of construction of both **NMIS and MMIC** at AMIDS. An investment totalling about £120m will create hundreds of new jobs as the first stage of the Innovation District. The NMIS leadership team is now in place under a recently appointed CEO. The Council have made initial contact and intend to work closely with the NMIS management team in the coming months to explore the potential of their expertise to assist in developing an education and skills programme for Renfrewshire's manufacturing sector.
- 3.19 Work commenced in summer 2020 on the roll-out of Renfrewshire's **full-fibre high speed broadband network**. This will result in an investment of c.£45m (public and private funding) and will deliver a first-class digital infrastructure for the benefit of businesses, education and homes by the end of 2023 and build network resilience against the impacts of future economic shocks.
- 3.20 The Council's **Cultural Infrastructure Programme** is well underway. The new Paisley Learning and Cultural Hub at 22 High Street is under construction (£7m) with the contracts for the refurbishment of Paisley Town Hall (£26m) and these projects are the flagships for the Programme and will demonstrate economic investment and commitment by the Council and its partners to the regeneration of Paisley Town Centre and the creation of new jobs and economic opportunities for the people and businesses of Renfrewshire. As with all Council tenders those for the Cultural Infrastructure Programme will endeavour to maximise potential benefits for the Renfrewshire community.
- 3.21 In the PfG a new commitment has been earmarked for **town centre and community-led regeneration**. This will see £275 million of funding over 5 years. This is likely to see a longer term commitment to the annual Regeneration Capital Grant Fund (RCGF) which Renfrewshire has been successful in applying to for a number of projects, including the new Paisley Learning and Cultural Hub, the refurbishment of the Russell Institute and the Mossedge community facilities in Linwood. The government have also announced that the RCGF for this financial year will be supplemented by a further £12m directed to current or previous applications to the fund to ensure it is committed by March 2021. Renfrewshire projects have been successful in being awarded further funding, Active Communities, Johnstone have received £730,000 for their redevelopment of the former Johnstone police station and Linwood Community Development Trust £400,000 for fit out of the Mossedge Centre. Together with the announcement contained in PfG this will effectively see this source of regeneration funding doubled by the Scottish Government over the next 5 years.

- 3.22 The government agreed a £50m **Town Centre Fund** for capital expenditure in 2019. Renfrewshire's share of this funding was approximately £1.4m. This funding has been used to support 12 different projects across Johnstone, Renfrew and Paisley town centres. The government have announced an additional £18m to this fund, to be redistributed on the same pro rata basis as used in 2019. This will result in Renfrewshire Council receiving £527,000 to be spent by 31 March 2021.

#### **4. Renfrewshire's Economic Recovery Plan**

- 4.1 In the period before the pandemic the Renfrewshire economy was performing well and the platform factors for growth were strong. Since the financial crisis of 2008 many job opportunities had been created and youth unemployment reduced to historically low levels. Investments at many of its key business locations had seen growth in an already large and very productive manufacturing base and the transport and construction sectors and international exports continuing to show positive trends.
- 4.2 The assets that were the foundation of this growth still exist. The infrastructure investments from the Glasgow City Region City Deal are still in place along with the Scottish Government's and the private sector's additional investments that will bring to Renfrewshire Scotland's only advanced manufacturing centre of excellence (NMIS) at the centre point of Scotland's Advanced Manufacturing Innovation District (AMIDS), which is also the location for the Medicines Manufacturing Innovation Centre (MMIC). Fundamentally Renfrewshire continues to be an attractive place to invest, work and live. Section 3 of this report highlights a portion of the extensive list of existing commitments taking place in Renfrewshire and the benefits they can already bring.
- 4.3 In September 2019 Renfrewshire published its first Economic Strategy which reinforced this level of positivity about the future direction for the local economy. The long-term mission expressed in the strategy has not been diminished:

*Our mission is to strengthen and grow the Renfrewshire economy in ways which people, businesses and places can contribute to and benefit from that growth.*

- 4.4 Nevertheless, the economic downturn now being faced is exceptional and we face an uncertain economic future. How we deal with the immediate effects and the economic crisis and the new circumstances within which economic activity must be undertaken requires a recalibration of the actions and programmes that were framed in our Economic Strategy. It needs the introduction of new thinking, new ideas and new approaches to strengthen and grow our economy so that it is both inclusive and sustainable and positively contributing to securing the well-being of Renfrewshire and the people that live here. Our initial focus must be on sustaining jobs, supporting business to be more competitive and productive, and ensuring that our citizens, particularly young people are prepared and have the skills to access future employment opportunities.



- 4.5 The overarching theme of the Economic Recovery Plan in Renfrewshire will be to *improve lives and securing well-being through a stronger and more inclusive and sustainable economy*. We will reach across all our existing economic priorities and do more to improve outcomes and life chances and help people access, sustain and progress into economic opportunities. Employment related progression promotes greater independence, and a reduction in the need for the support of other public services. We know that even in a recovery phase from an economic downturn new jobs will be available, but historically many excluded people have not accessed these. In Renfrewshire we need to ensure that we can do all we can to improve the life chances of our most disadvantaged citizens.
- 4.6 We aim to create an Economic Recovery Plan with several overarching objectives in response to the COVID-19 economic impacts and the potential impacts of Brexit on the Renfrewshire economy. These are listed below:
- Maximising the number of jobs that can be created or retained locally
  - Supporting improvements in business productivity and competitiveness, including the upskilling of their existing workforce, increasing innovation and R&D and building management and leadership capacity
  - Improving the employability of those currently unemployed or who potentially face unemployment through reskilling and retraining
  - Tackling inequalities; employment, income, education and health including measures to mitigate the risks of increasing multiple disadvantages and any widening of the gap between the most and least deprived as a result of the economic crisis
  - The need to adopt actions that support a 'green' recovery building on Green New Deal principles
- 4.7 The Recovery Plan will identify 6 Areas of Focus which were discussed and agreed at a meeting of the Renfrewshire Economic Panel in August 2020, alongside the objectives listed above. On current thinking these become the overarching themes which will frame all the actions we hope to deliver to assist with Renfrewshire's economic recovery. The 6 Areas are:
- Supporting businesses to recover, strengthen and grow
  - Maximising the benefits of capital investment
  - Employability, entrepreneurship and skills investment
  - Community wealth building
  - Town centres regeneration
  - A green recovery and a 'net zero' carbon economy
- 4.8 The Economic Recovery Plan still needs some more analysis and engagement with partners to confirm its content. We are keeping the evidence base as up to date as possible and gaining new information from our local businesses on a continuous basis as they face up to the stark challenges in front of them.

- 4.9 We need to arrange more detailed conversations with Scottish Enterprise, SDS, West College and UWS, amongst others, to understand how they can commit to leading the development and implementation of key actions.
- 4.10 We want to have further engagement across the Council body and with Renfrewshire Leisure. The pandemic and the economic crisis will continue to influence each other over the next 2 years. Integration of service delivery in response to these combined crises will be crucial.
- 4.11 We will fully examine the implications of the Scottish Government and its agencies' funding programmes to ensure maximum benefit for Renfrewshire's recovery. For example,
- are we maximising the opportunities that these funding streams may present?
  - are the key institutions in Renfrewshire aligned in terms of taking advantage of the Government's plans for a Place Based Investment Programme?
  - a significant focus in the PfG is placed upon green recovery, active travel and climate change / decarbonisation – are we in a position to benefit from these funds locally?
  - can we align the above funding opportunities to our local programmes of employability and inclusive growth to allow residents to benefit significantly from this investment?
- 4.12 The intention is to spend the next 2 months engaging and analysing the above aspects and to bring a draft Economic Recovery Plan to the next Council meeting in December 2020.

## **5. Review of national and local economic impacts**

### ***UK position***

- 5.1 The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the UK economy has been significant, with the country officially now in a recession (August 2020). UK gross domestic product (GDP) is estimated to have fallen by a record 20.4% in Quarter 2 (April to June) 2020. This is the largest quarterly contraction in the UK economy since Office for National Statistics (ONS) quarterly records began in 1955. However, following the easing of social distancing and some lockdown measures, GDP figures for June did show an increase of 8.7%. Despite this, the economy is still significantly behind where it was in February 2020. GDP recovery may be slow as the pandemic continues, and uncertainty remains over Brexit.

- 5.2 The crisis has impacted the labour market, between April and June the number of people in work fell by 220,000. Figures released in September 2020 highlight that the UK unemployment rate has risen to its highest level for two years, 4.1%, with young people's (aged 16-24) unemployment up to 13.4%.
- 5.3 Since March 2020 the Claimant Count has increased by 120.7%, or 1.49 million. It is expected that the claimant Count will increase further over the coming months as the UK Government's furlough scheme begins to taper off. As of 21 August approximately 9.6 million jobs, from 1.2 million different employers, were furloughed in the UK. The UK government is estimated to have spent £35.4 billion on the scheme, with that figure expected to rise to £80 billion by its conclusion in October 2020. By 31 July 2.60 million (77%) of the potentially eligible population had claimed a Self-Employed Income Support Scheme (SEISS) grant with the value of these claims totalling £7.6 billion. This is a similar proportion to those applying in Scotland.
- 5.4 Several key sectors in the UK economy have been severely impacted. April 2020 saw record falls in output from the three main indicators: services, manufacturing, and construction. Despite growth in May and June 2020, all three remained significantly lower than in February 2020. The easing of restrictions in June increased demand and allowed many more businesses to increase output or resume some level of trading. However, some services sectors continue to be severely affected as many remain closed or curtailed, such as tourism and hospitality.

#### ***Scotland position***

- 5.5 The lockdown restrictions have had a significant impact on output in Scotland, in April alone GDP fell by 19.2%. However, there was a 2.3% increase in growth recorded in May, which has been attributed to a pickup in the construction and manufacturing sectors. Nevertheless, growth was more marginal in the services sector, reflecting that large parts of the sector remained closed during the month. In June, Scotland's GDP is provisionally estimated to have increased by 5.7% compared to May, with output increasing in all the main industry sectors, and in most sub-sectors within these. Despite the increases in May and June, GDP remains 17.6% below the level in February, prior to the lockdown measures which were introduced in March. Overall, the industries with the largest falls in output during the lockdown have been those more consumer facing sectors or where working from home is not possible.
- 5.6 Business activity across Scotland fell for the fifth consecutive month in July. However, the activity has strengthened every month since April, as the gradual easing of lockdown has enabled many businesses to plan for and restart business activity across manufacturing, construction and large parts of the services sector. Latest data show that 94% of businesses in Scotland are now trading.

- 5.7 Losses in cashflow is a significant challenge for several businesses, as they reopen and adjust to new operating and demand conditions. ONS data for Scottish firms in the second half of July, reported that 57% of businesses currently trading reported a decrease in turnover compared to what is expected for this time of year. Of Scottish businesses that had not permanently stopped trading in the second half of July, 38% of businesses reported having cash reserves to last between zero to six months.
- 5.8 In the Scottish labour market, between May and July Scotland's unemployment rate was 4.6%, the highest rate among all the UK nations. Overall, since the start of the year the number of individuals in employment decreased by approximately 19,000. Scotland's Claimant Count in August was 228,005, an increase of 6,230 (3%) over the month.
- 5.9 Up to the end of July 2020, 779,500 jobs had been furloughed in Scotland, approximately 32% of all employees. As with the rest of the UK, it is expected that the unwinding of COVID-19 labour market schemes will result in a significant increase in job losses.
- 5.10 Overall whilst the Scottish economy has continued to reopen with business activity starting to stabilise and recover some growth, underlying demand remains subdued. Businesses may need to reduce staffing levels to contain costs and adapt to lower levels of demand. Scenario analysis published in June, suggests Scottish GDP could fall by 14% in 2020 and unemployment could rise above 10% and not return to pre-crisis levels until 2023-24.

*Scotland's Programme for Government (Sept 2020)*

- 5.11 Scottish Government published their Programme for Government (PfG) on 2 September 2020. It highlights a significant amount of commitments which can help to frame and support the Economic Recovery Plan for Renfrewshire. Further engagement on the Programme is planned with Scottish Government to fully understand the implications for Renfrewshire. These commitments include:
- £100m towards a **Green Jobs Fund** over next 5 years which will offer opportunities for reskilling and retraining in high growth sectors;
  - **Youth Guarantee Scheme** for 16-24 year olds (£60m investment);
  - new **National Transition Training Programme** (£25m) to support older workers at risk of redundancy by providing re-training opportunities;
  - create a national network of **Tech Start-Up Hubs** to support between 300 and 500 start-up businesses across this sector over 5 years;
  - Create 10,000 high value jobs per year over the next decade through an **Inward Investment Plan**
  - **Flexible Workforce Development Fund (£20m)** - enabling employers to access up to £15,000 each to address skills gaps in their workforce;
  - £2 billion **Low Carbon Fund** helping to secure investment in making buildings more efficient in terms of energy use;

- Capitalise the **Scottish National Investment Bank** with £2 billion over ten years, with a primary mission to support the country's transition to net zero emissions;
- £500m towards investment across Scotland in transformational **active travel infrastructure** aimed at changing travel behaviours into more sustainable formats;
- £275 million to support **community-led regeneration and town-centre revitalisation**;
- Complete the delivery of **50,000 affordable homes**;
- A **digital inclusion** programme that will see 50,000 more people connected to Scotland's digital ecosystem;

### ***Renfrewshire position***

- 5.12 Renfrewshire's Claimant Count in August 2020 was 7,885 representing a 96.3% increase since March and accounts for 6.9% of the working age population. There have already been several high-profile job losses announced in Renfrewshire including the loss of 700 jobs at Rolls Royce in Inchinnan. Further Renfrewshire jobs will be at risk in the future as the furlough scheme is phased out.
- 5.13 At the beginning of August 2020, Renfrewshire businesses had 28,300 employees on furlough, around 33% of all eligible employees – 1 percentage point higher than the Scottish average. Some sectors of the Renfrewshire economy were impacted by the lockdown more than others. Accommodation and food service activities, other service activities, construction and transportation and storage were sectors where firms reported high shares of their workforce being put on furlough. Take-up of the SEISS scheme in Renfrewshire as of 31<sup>st</sup> July was 79%, with 4,300 claims made for a total value of £12.2m.

### ***Renfrewshire Business Survey (2020)***

- 5.14 To better understand the impact of the lockdown restrictions and what is needed to overcome the economic challenges that lie ahead, Renfrewshire Council and Renfrewshire Chamber of Commerce joined forces in June 2020 to proactively engage with over 500 local businesses, around 10% of all Renfrewshire companies. In summary the findings are:
- 92% of Renfrewshire business have been closed or operating at only partial capacity during the lockdown, 44% have been completely closed
    - Those businesses operating in sectors which rely on 'social spending' such as services, accommodation, and arts, entertainment and recreation were most affected
  - The most significant effects of lockdown included reduced cashflow, lower sales income and lost / cancelled orders
    - Wholesale and retail along with manufacturing, form very significant parts of the Renfrewshire economy and supply chain disruptions are likely to have significant effects on their economic output
  - 82% of those surveyed have accessed Government financial support;

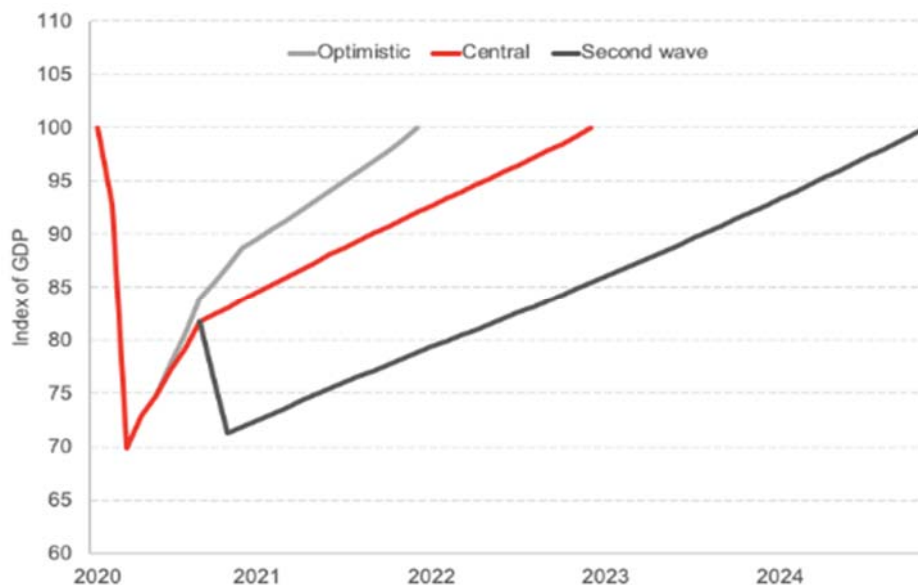
- Almost three quarters of all business made use of the Job Retention Scheme (furlough)
  - About half of all businesses had most of their workforce on furlough at one point
- 40% believe that redundancies may be likely over next 3 months (when asked in June)
- Reasons for potential redundancies included uncertainty on whether customers / orders / supply chain would return and at what level
- Over half of the businesses surveyed have cancelled/postponed investment
- Businesses state they are looking for support with:
  - Altering premises to conform with social distancing
  - Regular updates on latest regulations
  - Advice on how to access additional funding
  - Training webinars on specific issue
  - Employability advice for employees

*Fraser of Allander Institute – Renfrewshire research*

5.15 In June 2020 the Fraser of Allander Institute (FAI) were commissioned by the Council to undertake a bespoke economic impact analysis of the COVID 19 lockdown on the Renfrewshire economy specifically.

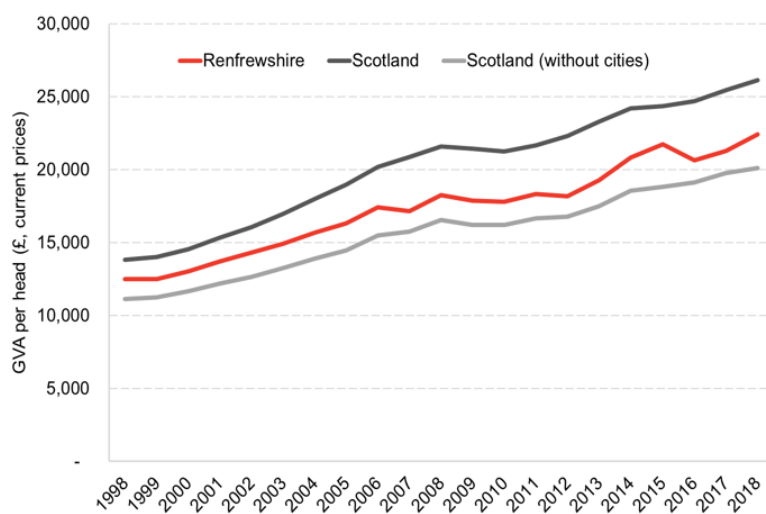
5.16 Their modelling indicates that Renfrewshire’s GDP could fall as much as 30% as a result of the crisis. This is because some of the sectors on which Renfrewshire is so heavily reliant (retail, aviation, transport and manufacturing) may be the hardest hit and slowest to recover from the recent decline in economic activity, potentially taking to the end of 2022 to bounce back, assuming no further significant lock downs due to subsequent waves of infection. The 3 scenarios they modelled are shown in **Figure 1**.

**Figure 1: Renfrewshire economic recovery - post-covid**



- 5.17 The best-case scenario (optimistic) shows a recovery to pre-COVID economic levels by the end of 2021. The worst-case scenario (assuming a second wave and localised lockdown restrictions) would see the Renfrewshire economy take almost 4 years to recover to pre-COVID levels.
- 5.18 Another part of the FAI analysis was to compare Renfrewshire’s economy to other local authority areas in Scotland. This did this across all 32 authorities and they also undertook this but taking the 4 largest city authorities out of the analysis. **Figure 2** shows that Renfrewshire compares favourably to the other 27 local authorities across Scotland in terms of the size and strength of its economy over the last 20 years.
- 5.19 Moreover, there remains significant uncertainty about future trade agreements as a result of Brexit and the sectors anticipated to see the greatest impact include construction, transportation and aspects of manufacturing. Due to its concentration of workforce in these sectors, Renfrewshire again could potentially be one of the most affected areas in Scotland. In a recent paper (July 2020), Scottish Enterprise identified Renfrewshire as one of the local authorities most ‘at risk’ due to its above average unemployment and higher furlough and SEISS rates. Therefore, while policies such as the recently announced Job Retention Bonus and “Kick Start” Job Guarantee Scheme are welcome, the FAI has highlighted that national policies must acknowledge the unique demands of the Renfrewshire economy in terms of future Government support.

**Figure 2: Renfrewshire’s economy comparison to rest of Scotland (GVA per head)**



Source: ONS

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## Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – None beyond existing approved budgets.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – None

### 3. **Community/Council Planning –**

- *Our Renfrewshire is thriving – the development of an Economic Recovery Plan will be critical in supporting the recovery of local business, production and employment from the consequences of the COVID-19 shut down measures.*
- *Our Renfrewshire is well – promoting economic activity among all citizens and communities will support the resilience of individuals, families and neighbourhoods*
- *Our Renfrewshire is fair – economic recovery will prioritise the delivery of inclusive growth*
- *Reshaping our place, our economy and our future – the COVID-19 shut down is having and will have long lasting implications for Renfrewshire’s places and its economic future. Rebuilding our economy offers chances to reset ambitions and to introduce innovative thinking about the future of our places.*
- *Building strong, safe and resilient communities – promoting economic activity among all citizens and communities will support the resilience of individuals, families and neighbourhoods*
- *Tackling inequality, ensuring opportunities for all – economic recovery will prioritise the delivery of inclusive growth*
- *Creating a sustainable Renfrewshire for all to enjoy – an economic recovery that is a green recovery and contributes to Scotland’s net-zero carbon target will be prioritised in future planning*

### 4. **Legal – None**

### 5. **Property/Assets – None**

### 6. **Information Technology - None**

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

### 8. **Health & Safety - None**

### 9. **Procurement - None**

### 10. **Risk - None**

### 11. **Privacy Impact - None**

12. **COSLA Policy Position** – supports the COSLA Priority to develop Local Economies and support Inclusive Growth



- .13. **Climate Risk** – an economic recovery that is a green recovery and contributes to Scotland’s net-zero carbon target will be prioritised in future planning
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### **List of Background Papers**

- (i) *Update on Covid-19; Renfrewshire Council Emergencies Board; 17 July 2020*

The foregoing background papers will be retained within Chief Executives Services for inspection by the public for the prescribed period of four years from the date of the meeting. The contact officer within the service is Alasdair Morrison; Head of Regeneration; Tel 0141 618 4664; Alasdair.morrison@renfrewshire.gov.uk)

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**Author:** *Alasdair Morrison; Head of Regeneration; Tel 0141 6184664;  
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**To:** Council

**On:** 24 September 2020

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**Report by:** Director of Finance & Resources

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**Heading:** Update on Audited Annual Accounts 2019/20

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## 1. Summary

- 1.1 The Council's unaudited Annual Accounts for 2019/20 were presented to the Council on 25 June 2020 and submitted for audit by the statutory deadline of 30 June 2020.
  - 1.2 Owing to the ongoing Coronavirus pandemic, flexibility in terms of the timescales for approval of the audited annual accounts has been provided under the Coronavirus (Scotland) Act 2020 and this was highlighted in the June report to Council.
  - 1.3 Scottish Ministers have indicated their expectation that audited annual accounts are published by 30 November 2020 and it is currently anticipated by the appointed auditors, Audit Scotland, that this will be achieved.
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## 2. Recommendations

- 2.1 The Council is asked to:
  - (a) note the revised deadline for the Council to approve and publish its audited accounts, and agree the arrangements being put in place to meet that deadline;
  - (b) agree that the meeting of the Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Committee scheduled for 2 November 2020 be rescheduled to 23 November 2020; and

(c) note that a special meeting of the Council will be called on or before 30 November 2020 to approve the audited accounts; or in the event the audited accounts are not available, note that the audited accounts will be presented to the 17 December 2020 Council meeting.

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### **3. Background**

- 3.1 On 21 May 2020, the Scottish Government released Finance Circular 10/2020, outlining the impact of the Coronavirus (Scotland) Act 2020 on existing statutory regulations for the approval and publication of the annual accounts.
- 3.2 Under this guidance, the Council was entitled to postpone the completion and approval of the unaudited accounts beyond 30 June, but did not require to do so; consequently, the unaudited accounts of the Council and its Group were submitted for audit by 30 June 2020.
- 3.3 The guidance also allows for the approval and publication of the audited annual accounts to extend beyond the usual statutory deadline of 30 September and provides discretion to authorities and their auditors to agree this locally. It is stated, however, that Scottish Ministers consider it reasonable that this date is “no later than 30 November 2020”.
- 3.4 The Council’s appointed auditor, Audit Scotland, have indicated their intention to work towards the 30 November for completion of their audit activity; allowing the audited accounts of the Council and its Group and the associated Annual Audit Report to be authorised and published by 30 November 2020.
- 3.5 This timescale also applies to the Common Good Funds and Coats Observatory Trust audited accounts and report.
- 3.6 Under the Council’s scheme of delegation, the audited accounts are normally presented to the Audit, Risk & Scrutiny Board prior to being presented to Council. In order to allow the Council to comply with the revised dates permissible under Finance Circular 10/2020, it is proposed that the meeting of the Audit, Risk & Scrutiny Board scheduled on 2 November 2020 is rescheduled to 23 November 2020 in order to allow sufficient time for completion of the audit process. Thereafter, it is proposed that a special meeting of the Council is called on an appropriate date, but no later than 30 November 2020, for the purpose of approving the audited accounts.

- 3.7 In the event the audit process is not complete within the timescales outlined above, it is proposed that the audited accounts would be presented for approval to the Council meeting scheduled on 17 December 2020.

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### Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – approval of the audited accounts is a key step in evidencing good financial governance and allows the Council to comply with national financial regulations.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – none arising from this report.
3. **Community/Council Planning** – none arising from this report.
4. **Legal** – the recommendations in the report will allow the Council to comply with the relevant regulations governing the annual accounts approval process.
5. **Property/Assets** – none arising from this report.
6. **Information Technology** – none arising from this report.
7. **Equality & Human Rights** – none arising from this report.
8. **Health & Safety** – none arising from this report.
9. **Procurement** – none arising from this report.
10. **Risk** – none arising from this report.
11. **Privacy Impact** – none arising from this report.
12. **Cosla Policy Position** – none arising from this report.
13. **Climate Risk** – none arising from this report.

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**Author:** Alan Russell, Director of Finance & Resource





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**To:** Council

**On:** 24 September 2020

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**Report by:** Director of Finance and Resources

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**Heading:** Governance Arrangements until 17 December 2020

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## **1. Summary**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the arrangements for the next cycle of Board meetings up to and including the next full Council meeting on 17 December 2020.
- 1.2 At the meeting on 25 June 2020 the Council approved governance arrangements over the summer recess and to cover the cycle of Board meetings up to and including today's Council meeting. The purpose of those arrangements was to provide a decision-making framework for the Council as it continued to respond to the Covid-19 pandemic and the phased removal of lockdown restrictions.
- 1.3 The arrangements set out in the report aim to allow the next cycle of Board meetings to take place as efficiently as possible in the current circumstances as well as enabling the Council to continue to respond to any urgent issues arising from the continuing Covid-19 pandemic and to address any changes in guidance or legislation relating to the Covid-19 emergency.
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## **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 Council is asked to:
- a) approve the arrangements for the next cycle of Council and Board meetings set out in section 4 of this report;

- b) note that the arrangements for subsequent Board cycles will be the subject of a report to Council on 17 December 2020;
  - c) continue the temporary changes to the membership and remit of the Emergencies Board approved by Council on 25 June 2020.
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### **3. Background**

- 3.1 The Council has put in place emergency governance arrangements to enable oversight of the Council's functions and services during the Covid-19 emergency, in circumstances where it was not possible for meetings of the Council's Boards to take place safely in Renfrewshire House.
  - 3.2 These emergency arrangements which have been in place since 20 March 2020, initially involved weekly meetings of the Emergencies Board, held remotely by Skype, extended emergency delegations to the chief executive and the cancellation of all Council and Board meetings up to the Council meeting on 25 June 2020.
  - 3.3 Following the Council meeting on 25 June 2020, a full cycle of Board meetings has taken place with remote access for members and the Emergencies Board continued to meet regularly. The chief executive's emergency delegated powers also continued until the first Board meeting on 18 August 2020.
  - 3.4 During that period the platform used for remote meetings moved from Skype to Microsoft Teams. Teams was used for all of the Policy Board meetings during August and September 2020.
  - 3.5 Although there has been a gradual easing of lockdown restrictions, there are still restrictions in place, including the requirement for 2 metre distancing and restrictions on public gatherings which prevent a return to the pre Covid-19 arrangements for Council and Board meetings. Officers continue to investigate ways of enabling socially distanced meetings to take place safely in the Council Chamber.
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### **4. Arrangements for the October/December Cycle of Meetings**

- 4.1 The dates for meetings of the Council and Boards from October 2020 to June 2021 were approved by Council on 26 September 2019. Those dates, including those for the meetings during the October to December 2020 Board cycle, have remained in place as scheduled and are listed in the appendix to this report.
- 4.2 The Council therefore needs to consider what format those meetings should take, in light of government guidance and legislation to tackle the Covid-19 pandemic currently in force.



- 4.3 It is proposed that the planned meetings in the October to December 2020 Board cycle continue to take place remotely using video or audio links. The reason for the meetings taking place in this way is that although there is no specific guidance relating to formal meetings of bodies such as local authorities, there is a range of government guidance relating to work places, social distancing and restrictions on public gatherings which means that until the position is clarified, it is not possible at this time to arrange meetings in the Council Chamber or any of the committee rooms in Renfrewshire House or any other indoor venue in a way that is in accordance with government guidance.
- 4.4 It is recognised that since the use of remote meetings was approved all councillors have had the opportunity to participate in such meetings and have had the necessary equipment made available to them to enable them to participate.
- 4.5 It continues to be the case that the public are excluded from the meetings and cannot watch proceedings as they occur. To partly address this issue, it is proposed that the meetings will continue to be recorded and broadcast as soon as possible after the meeting has finished. Members of the press are also invited to attend the meetings.
- 4.6 Officers will also continue to investigate ways of enabling public attendance at meetings held by video/audio link and at the potential for streaming each meeting as it happens.
- 4.7 A system that would allow a meeting to take place with a limited number of members and officers to be present in the Chamber while also enabling others to participate remotely has been identified and is currently being tested. The system also allows for the meetings to be streamed live. At this time, it isn't possible to give a firm date when the system could be used for a formal meeting of one of the Council's Boards. However, it is proposed to give each Convener the discretion in consultation with the chief executive and the representatives of the other political groups on the Board agree to use that system for a Board meeting once the system has been successfully tested
- 4.8 Although the Policy Boards have begun to meet again from August, the governance of the Council still needs to be sufficiently flexible to respond to the rapidly changing situation during the pandemic. Accordingly, it is proposed that the revised remit and extended membership for the Emergencies Board will continue although no meetings will be programmed at this time. Should any matters relating to Covid-19 require urgent decisions to be taken that can't wait until the next meeting of the relevant Board or Council the Emergencies Board can be reconvened quickly.
- 4.9 Although it is not possible to predict how long the current emergency will last, it is hoped that guidance may change as the relaxation of lockdown restrictions continues through the phases of the route-map issued by the Scottish Government.

Therefore, the arrangements for future Council and Board meetings will continue to be reviewed and will be the subject of a further report to Council on 17 December 2020.

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### **Implications of the Report**

1. **Financial** – None
2. **HR & Organisational Development** - None.
3. **Community/Council Planning** – None
4. **Legal** – As detailed in the report.
5. **Property/Assets** – None
6. **Information Technology** – None
7. **Equality & Human Rights** - The recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report because 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** – The proposals in the report recognise that it is not currently possible for formal council and board meetings to take place safely in Renfrewshire House.
9. **Risk - None**
10. **Privacy Impact** – None
11. **Cosla Policy Position** - None
12. **Climate Risk** - None

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### **List of Background Papers –**

- 1) Minute of the meeting of the Emergencies Board on 20 March 2020.
  - 2) Report to the Emergencies Board on 29 May 2020 headed "Arrangements for the Council meeting on 25 June 2020.
  - 3) Minute of the Council meeting on 25 June 2020.
- 

**Author:** Ken Graham, Head of Corporate Governance.

October 2020						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
4	5 recess	6 recess	7 recess	8 recess	9 recess	10
11	12 recess	13 recess	14 recess	15 recess	16 recess	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25 - 1/2	26	27- 1pm: Communities, Housing & Planning 3pm: - Police and Fire & Rescue Scrutiny	28 - 10am: Regulatory Functions	29 - 1pm: Education & Children's Services	30	31
November 2020						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 - 2/2	2 - 10am: Audit Risk & Scrutiny	3	4 - 1pm: Infrastructure, Land & Environment	5 - 9.30am: Appeals	6	7
8 - 3/2	9 - 2pm: Petitions	10 - 2pm: JNC	11 - 2pm: Finance, Resources & Customer Services	12 - 10am: Regulatory Functions	13	14
15 - 4/2	16	17 - 2pm: Local Review Body	18 - 11am: Investment Review Board	19	20	21
22 - 5/2	23	24	25	26	27	28
29 - 6/2	30					
December 2020						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2 - 1pm: Leadership	3	4	5
6 - 7/2	7	8	9		11	12
13 - 8/2	14	15	16	17 - 9.30am Council	18	19
20	21 recess	22 recess	23 recess	24 recess	25 public holiday	26
27	28 public holiday	29 recess	30 recess	31 recess		





**To:** Council

**On:** 24 September 2020

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**Report by:** Director of Finance and Resources

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**Heading:** **Timetable of Meetings**

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**1. Summary**

1.1 The Council at its meeting held on 26 September 2019 agreed its timetable of meetings to June 2021. The purpose of this report is to agree the timetable to April 2022, to agree the date of the statutory meeting following the local government elections in May 2022 and to consider the date of the Council meeting in May 2021.

1.2 To assist members' diaries, a proposed timetable, as appended to this report, for meetings of the Council and its Boards, has been drawn up from August 2021 until the local government elections in May 2022, on the basis of the current governance arrangements.

1.3 The following recess periods have been incorporated:

Summer – 7 weeks to accommodate the Paisley Fair

October – 2 weeks

Christmas/New Year – 2 weeks

Spring – 2 weeks

1.4 As previously, meetings of the Appeals Board and Local Review Body have been timetabled. However, it may be that these meetings are not required and will be cancelled.

- 1.5 The meeting of the Council scheduled to be held on 6 May 2021 is on the same day as the Scottish Parliamentary Election. It is proposed that this meeting be rescheduled to 9.30 am on Thursday 13 May 2021.
- 1.6 The statutory meeting of the Council will require to be held on Thursday 26 May 2022 at the latest. However, it would be prudent to schedule this particular meeting prior to this deadline and in line with established practice it is proposed that the statutory meeting be held on Thursday, 19 May 2022.
- 

## **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 That the Council determines the timetable of meetings of the Council and its Boards to May 2022, including the dates during which there are to be recesses, as detailed in the appendix to this report;
- 2.2 That it be agreed that meetings of the Appeals and Local Review Body, although timetabled, be cancelled if there is no substantive business;
- 2.3 That the Council meeting scheduled to be held on 6 May 2021 be rescheduled to 9.30 am on Thursday 13 May 2021; and
- 2.4 That it be agreed that the statutory meeting of the Council be held on Thursday 19 May 2022.
- 

## **Implications of the Report**

1. Financial – none
2. HR & Organisational Development – none
3. Community Planning – none
4. Legal – In terms of Schedule 7 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 a council shall hold in every year such meetings as they think necessary and in an election year shall hold a meeting within 21 days from the date of the election.
5. Property/Assets – none
6. Information Technology – none

7. Equality & Human Rights

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

8. Health & Safety – none

9. Procurement – none

10. Risk – none

11. Privacy Impact – none

12. Cosla Policy Position – not applicable

13. Climate Risk - none

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**Background papers:** none

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July 2021 recess						
August 2021						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2 public holiday	3 recess	4 recess	5 recess	6 recess	7
8	9 recess	10 recess	11 recess	12 recess	13 recess	14
15 - 1/1	16	17 – 1pm: Communities, Housing, & Planning 3pm – Police, Fire & Rescue Scrutiny	18 – 10am: Regulatory Functions	19 – 1pm: Education & Children’s Services	20	21
22 - 2/1	23 – 10am: Audit, Risk & Scrutiny	24	25 – 1pm: Infrastructure, Land & Environment	26 – 9.30am: Appeals	27	28
29 – 3/1	30 – 2pm: Petitions	31 – 2pm: Joint Negotiating Committee for Teaching Staff				
September 2021						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 – 2pm: Finance, Resources & Customer Services	2 – 10am: Regulatory Functions	3	4
5 – 4/1	6	7 – 2pm: Local Review Body	8	9	10	11
12 – 5/1	13	14	15 – 1pm: Leadership	16	17	18
19 – 6/1	20	21	22	23	24 Public Holiday	25
26 – 7/1	27 Public Holiday	28 – 10am: Audit, Risk & Scrutiny	29	30 – 9.30am: Council		
October 2021						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3	4 recess	5 recess	6 recess	7 recess	8 recess	9
10	11 recess	12 recess	13 recess	14 recess	15 recess	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24 – 1/2	25	26 – 1pm: Communities, Housing & Planning 3pm: Police and Fire & Rescue Scrutiny	27 – 10am: Regulatory Functions	28 – 1pm: Education & Children’s Services	29	30
31 – 2/2						
November 2021						
	1 – 10am: Audit, Risk & Scrutiny	2	3 – 1pm: Infrastructure, Land & Environment	4 – 9.30am: Appeals	5	6
7 – 3/2	8 – 2pm: Petitions	9 – 2pm: Joint Negotiating Committee for Teaching Staff	10 – 2pm: Finance, Resources & Customer Services	11 – 10am: Regulatory Functions	12	13
14 – 4/2	15	16 – 2pm: Local Review Body	17 – 11am: Investment Review Board	18	19	20
21 – 5/2	22	23	24	25	26	27
28 – 6/2	29	30				



December 2021						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 – 1pm: Leadership	2	3	4
5 – 7/2	6	7	8	9	10	11
12 – 8/2	13	14	15	16 – 9.30am: Council	17	18
19	20 recess	21 recess	22 recess	23 recess	24 recess	25
26	27 public holiday	28 public holiday	29 recess	30 recess	31 recess	
January 2022						
						1
2	3 public holiday	4 public holiday	5 public holiday	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16 – 1/3	17	18 – 1pm: Communities, Housing & Planning 3pm: Police, Fire & Rescue Scrutiny	19 10am: Regulatory Functions	20 – 1pm: Education & Children's Services	21	22
23 – 2/3	24 – 10am: Audit, Risk & Scrutiny	25	26 – Infrastructure, Land & Environment	27 – 9.30am: Appeals	28	29
30 – 3/3	31 – 2pm: Petitions					
February 2022						
		1 – 2pm: Local Review Body	2 – 2pm: Finance, Resources & Customer Services	3 – 10am: Regulatory Functions	4	5
6 – 4/3	7	8 – 2pm: Joint Negotiating Committee for Teaching Staff	9	10	11	12
13 – 5/3	14	15	16	17	18	19
20 – 6/3	21	22	23 – 1pm: Leadership	24	25	26
27 – 7/3	28					
March 2022						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3 – 9.30am: Council	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13 – 1/4	14	15 – 1pm: Communities, Housing & Planning 3pm: Police and Fire & Rescue Scrutiny	16 – 10am: Regulatory Functions	17 – 1pm: Education & Children's Services	18	19
20 – 2/4	21 – Audit, Risk & Scrutiny	22 – 2pm: Joint Negotiating Committee for Teaching Staff	23 – 1pm: Infrastructure, Land & Environment	24 – 9.30am: Appeals	25	26
27 – 3/4	28 – 2pm: Petitions	29 – 2pm: Local Review Body	30 – Finance, Resources & Customer Services	31 – 10am: Regulatory Functions		
April 2022						
					1	2
3	4 recess	5 recess	6 recess	7 recess	8 recess	9

10	11 recess	12 recess	13 recess	14 recess	15 public holiday	16
17 – 4/4	18 public holiday	19 – 2pm: Joint Negotiating Committee for Teaching Staff	20 – 1pm: Leadership	21	22	23
24 – 5/4	25	26 – 2pm: Local Review Body	27	28 9.30am: Council	29	30
May 2022						
1	2	3	4	5 local government elections	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19 - 9.30am: Statutory meeting of Council	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				



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**To:** Council

**On:** 24 September 2020

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**Report by:** Chief Social Work Officer

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**Heading:** Annual Report of the Chief Social Work Officer 2019/20

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## 1. Summary

- 1.1. All local authorities in Scotland are required under Section 3 of the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968 to appoint a professionally qualified Chief Social Work Officer (CSWO). The CSWO is one of a number of statutory positions which local authorities must ensure is in place. In Renfrewshire Council the role of the CSWO is held by the Head of Child Care and Criminal Justice. The CSWO is a member of the Council's Corporate Management Team.
- 1.2. The CSWO provides an annual update report to Council in Autumn each year on the social work activities across adult, children and criminal justice social work. The CSWO's report is then submitted to the Office of the Chief Social Work Advisor at the Scottish Government in order that a national overview report can be produced.
- 1.3. The CSWO report attached at appendix 1 provides a summary of activity relating to the role of the Chief Social Work Officer during 2019/20.

## 2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that Council notes:
  - the key activities outlined in the CSWO Annual Report; and
  - that the CSWO Annual Report will be submitted to the Office of the Chief Social Work Advisor at the Scottish Government

### **3. The Chief Social Work Officer**

- 3.1 The principal role and purpose of the Social Work service is contained within the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968, which gave local authorities the responsibility of “promoting social welfare”. The Social Work Service has a statutory duty to provide care and protection to the most vulnerable people across Renfrewshire, often meaning that many of our service users do not engage with us on a voluntary basis. The role of the Chief Social Work Officer (CSWO) is critical in terms of achieving this purpose.
- 3.2 The CSWO is a ‘proper officer’ in relation to the social work function: an officer given particular responsibility on behalf of a local authority, where the law requires the function to be discharged by a specified post holder. The qualifications of the CSWO are set down in regulations and stipulate that the postholder must be a qualified social worker registered with the Scottish Social Services Council. The CSWO must be able to demonstrate extensive experience of operational and strategic management at a senior level within social work and social care services.
- 3.3 The CSWO provides professional advice on the provision of social work and social care services to elected members and other officers within the local authority to assist authorities in understanding and discharging their responsibilities to ensure there are adequate social work services in the area. The CSWO provides support to elected members, the Corporate Management Team and partner organisation in understanding the key role that social work plays in contributing to the achievement of national and local outcomes, to improving local performance and in terms of the management of corporate risk.
- 3.4 The scope of the CSWO role covers all social work and social care services, whether provided directly by the local authority, or in partnership with others, including the health and social care partnership. Where these services are purchased or commissioned from external providers, the CSWO has responsibility to advise on the specification, quality and standards of services commissioned. The environment in which social work services operate is much more complex than when the Act established the role, and current guidance reflects the increased strategic nature of the role, and the particular functions in relation to Integration Joint Boards and Health and Social Care Partnerships.
- 3.5 The CSWO has a range of responsibilities relating to the promotion of values, standards, and leadership across the full range of social work and care services. Social work services have a statutory duty to provide care and protection to the most vulnerable people across their local authority area. A significant proportion of those requiring social work services do not engage on a voluntary basis and a range of statutory powers are available to ensure the provision of support to them. Access to the majority of services is assessed on the basis of need, and social work staff work in partnership with individuals, carers, families and communities to meet this need within the resources available to the service and partner agencies.

#### 4. Local Governance Arrangements

4.1 Within Renfrewshire Council the Head of Child Care and Criminal Justice is the designated CSWO. As well as the responsibilities associated with the Children's Services directorate the CSWO retains professional leadership for adult social work and social care services delivered by the HSCP.

4.2 The CSWO has a number of general and specific duties, including:

- (i) providing an annual report to elected members on the key activities and role of the CSWO;
- (ii) being the leading for social work services on the RHSCP Executive Governance Group and the Integration Joint Board;
- (iii) reporting directly to the Education and Children's Services Policy Board and Renfrewshire Council on children and justice social work;
- (iv) being a member of the Council's Corporate Management Team and reporting directly to the Chief Executive and senior elected members on all social work matters;
- (v) representing services and the council more widely, at a local, regional and national level on social work matter;
- (vi) chairing twice-yearly meetings of all senior social work managers from Children's Services and Renfrewshire HSCP;
- (vii) providing advice on social work issues to the Public Protection Chief Officers' Group;
- (viii) being the Agency Decision maker for the Adoption and Fostering decisions and for secure care applications in relation to those under the age of 18; and
- (ix) is the holder of all Mental Health and Adults with Incapacity Orders, and Guardianship cases in the area.

4.3 The CSWO has direct access to the Chief Executive and the Leader of the Council in relation to all statutory social work functions. The CSWO is a member of the Council's Corporate Management Team and provides advice to the Chief Officers' Group which manages public protection risks on a partnership basis and is a non-voting member of the Renfrewshire Integrated Joint Board. Individual Heads of Service have responsibility for the management of risk within their respective service areas and have regular access to the CSWO for advice, guidance and support.

## **5. Activities of the Chief Social Work Officer 2019/20**

- 5.1 The report attached as Appendix 1 summarises the key activities of the CSWO for Renfrewshire during 2019/20. It does not provide an exhaustive description of the full range of duties and responsibilities undertaken but seeks to provide a broad overview of the CSWO role and social work activity delivered by the local authority and the health and social care partnership. The report will be submitted to the Office of the Chief Social Work Advisor to inform a national overview report.
- 5.2 The next report on the activities of the CSWO will be submitted to the Council in Autumn 2021.

## **6. Overview of activities within social work services**

- 6.1 Services continue to experience high demand in a number of areas, which are being managed in a financially prudent manner both within the Council and Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership. The management of significant levels of risk to vulnerable children and adults continues to be a priority for the adult, children and justice services and for partner agencies. Many of those pressures continue to be related to deprivation and to alcohol and drug misuse in Renfrewshire. Social work, as part of the local multi-agency partnership coordinate the provision of services which aim to protect vulnerable people locally and continues to deliver high-quality services to vulnerable people in Renfrewshire and to innovate and improve through a programme of continuous development and improvement.
- 6.2 The CSWO has a range of statutory duties which are detailed in Appendix 1 to this report; that appendix also includes more detail of demand and provision in those areas.
- 6.3 Statutory functions in respect of children encompass looked after and accommodated children, child protection, work with the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration and work with young people who offend and are subject to secure orders. In recent years, the service, in partnership with others, has developed a strong focus on early intervention and prevention, on the use of evidence-based programmes to support families, on the use of intensive support in complex cases, and on focusing on permanence including looked after and accommodated children who are not able to return to the care of their parent(s). The council has also invested in an additional children's house which can provide intensive support to a small group of young people. A specialist team supports children and young people who are unaccompanied refugees or asylum seekers.
- 6.4 Day to day management of adult social work services is delegated to Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership. The CSWO retains a professional advisory role in relation to these services and continues to have statutory duties within adult social work. The Renfrewshire Adult Protection Committee is responsible for developing, implementing and monitoring the strategic approach to the management of the protection of vulnerable adults in

Renfrewshire in terms of the Adult Support & Protection (Scotland) Act 2007. There continues to be increasing demand for work related to the Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000. More detail is included in Appendix 1.

- 6.5 The Criminal Justice Service supervises a range of community-based requirements on offenders, provides reports to Courts and the Parole Board, manages a service for sexual offenders, and operates a range of statutory and voluntary services to support female offenders. A number of services which previously operated on a shared basis with neighbouring authorities have now been brought in-house. Multi-agency arrangements are in place to manage high-risk offenders, violent and sexual offenders and to tackle domestic abuse. The service is also working closely with community planning partners to deliver on community justice responsibilities.

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## Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – None
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – None
3. **Community Planning** – The report details the progress made by the service to protect vulnerable children and adults, reduce offending behaviour, increase community safety, and promote early intervention, independent living and wider health improvement. It highlights partnership working, details the measures which ensure the workforce is skilled and effective and highlights achievements in relation to support to communities, customer service and consultation.
4. **Legal** - None
5. **Property/Assets** – None
6. **Information Technology** – None
7. **Equality & Human Rights** –
  - (a) 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 because 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** – None
9. **Procurement** –None
10. **Risk** - Risks related to the management and delivery of social work services are closely monitored and are included within both the Children's Services Risk Register and, where appropriate, the Corporate Risk Register.
11. **Privacy Impact** – None
12. **COSLA Policy Position** - None

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### List of Background Papers

"The Role of the Chief Social Work Officer – Guidance Issued by Scottish Ministers"  
Paper to Education and Children Policy Board, 18 August 2016

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# Annual Report of the Chief Social Work Officer

2019/20

“Social work is a practice-based profession and an academic discipline that promotes social change and development, social cohesion, and the empowerment and liberation of people. Principles of social justice, human rights, collective responsibility and respect for diversities are central to social work. Underpinned by theories of social work, social sciences, humanities and indigenous knowledge, social work engages people and structures to address life challenges and enhance wellbeing. The above definition may be amplified at national and/or regional levels.”

Definition of social work agreed by the International Federation of Social Workers, 2014

## Chief Social Work Officer – Renfrewshire

### Introduction

I'm pleased to present the annual Chief Social Work Officer report for Renfrewshire.

My operational post is the Head of Child Care and Criminal Justice in Children's Services and I have the day to day management responsibility for children and justice social work. As Chief Social Work Officer I have additional professional leadership responsibility for the wider social work and social care services within Renfrewshire Health and Social Care.

The role of the Chief Social Work Officer was established to ensure the provision of appropriate strategic and professional advice to the local authority in relation to how it discharges its statutory social work functions. There are also some functions conferred by legislation directly on the Chief Social Work Officer by name

The Scottish Office explicitly recognised that the need for the Chief Social Work Officer role due to "*the particular responsibilities which fall on social work services in that they affect personal lives, individual rights and liberties to an extent that other local authority services do not.*" (Circular: SWSG2/1995 May 1995).

As Chief Social Work Officer, I am a member of the Council's Corporate Management Team, ensuring that the Chief Executive and Directors have the professional social work advice when considering issues and making decisions for our residents. In addition, I have regular and unfettered access to the Chief Executive.

I have regular access to the Leader of the Council and other senior elected members, again to provide professional advice and leadership on matters affecting the citizens of Renfrewshire.

Adult social work and care services are delegated to the Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership. I have regular and unfettered access to the Chief Officer and Heads of Service within Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership.

In addition to those detailed above I'm supported to discharge the Chief Social Work Officer role by my service Director and the Social Work Children's Services Manager and the Criminal Justice Services Manager.

This report doesn't detail all of the work of social work within Renfrewshire and rather serves to provide an overview of services.

John Trainer  
Chief Social Work Officer

## Summary of performance in 2019/20

Over the past year social work services across Scotland have continued to face the challenges of increasing levels of demand for services coupled with tight financial constraints. Services in Renfrewshire are no different to those elsewhere in the country. Our area continues to have areas with significant multiple deprivation and relative poverty, high levels of alcohol and drug misuse and high demands for services in adult, children and justice social work services. Our area has had historically high rates of looked after children, compared to the national average and whilst the rates remain higher than we would wish for they are reducing. Children's social work continues to work on an approach where early intervention and preventative interventions are critical to improving outcomes for children and families whilst at the same time reducing the number of children who require statutory intervention. In the past twelve months the service has continued to develop approaches which are critical to sustainable service delivery and still promoting innovation and continuous improvement.

Last year I highlighted that adult protection and the management of financial and welfare guardianships were an area of work within adult social work which had seen increased demand. This pattern has continued in the current year. As Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership promotes independent and supported living for adults with learning disabilities, physical disabilities and mental health challenges there have been further developments of the self-directed support scheme which continues to grow in popularity. The increase in self-directed support, whilst welcome as it gives more control to the individual is presenting challenges for the more traditional services such as day care which are facing a reduction in the number of people choosing to use them. As the number of older adults in our population has increased there is a further demand being placed on community-based services, principally care at home.

Within criminal justice services there continues to be increases in the number of people being placed on community payback orders and in the number of new unpaid work orders. The pressure on the criminal justice service continues to be significant however the teams are managing the demand and continue to meet the overall standard of services.

## Partnership Working

The role of Chief Social Work Officer (CSWO) was established in legislation to ensure that professional advice on social work services was available to elected members and council officers. The CSWO assists local authorities in understanding and delivering the complexities inherent in social work and social care services. As the number of strategic partnerships across the public sector increased, whether legislated for or developed through good local joint working, has added a level of complexity to the role of Chief Social Work Officer.

In Renfrewshire Council, social work services for children and families and criminal justice social work services are delivered by Children's Services whilst social care and social work services for adults are delegated to Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership (RHSCP). As such, the CSWO fulfils the role for both the Council and RHSCP. Regular meetings take place with Heads of Service from Children's Services and RHSCP to ensure that areas such as transition for young people moving to adult services and the role of parents with mental health issues are jointly addressed.

The Chief Social Work Officer is accountable to elected members via the Education and Children's Services Policy Board (for Children & Families Social Work) and the Communities, Housing and Planning Policy Board (for Criminal Justice Social Work). The CSWO is a non-voting member of the Renfrewshire Integration Joint Board (for Adult Social Work). Elected members hold the CSWO to account for public protection issues through a Public Protection Member Officer Group.

Public protection arrangements are managed through three partnership committees comprised of senior officers from Renfrewshire Council and other public and third sector agencies. The Renfrewshire Public Protection Chief Officers Group (COG) is chaired by the Chief Executive and is responsible for the overall strategic and delivery of public protection services and the CSWO attends to provide professional advice. The other two public protection committees are the Renfrewshire Adult Protection Committee (RAPC) and the Renfrewshire Child Protection Committee (RCPC). RAPC and RCPC are chaired by an Independent Chair and the CSWO is a member of both committees.

The local authority has responsibility for ensuring that there are multi-agency plans in place for the strategic direction of services for children across the parentship area. Within our locality the multi-agency planning group is the Renfrewshire Children's Services Partnership (RCSP). RCSP ensures that Renfrewshire's corporate parents agree joint plans for services ranging from those delivering universal services to those delivering targeted services for those children with high needs. The CSWO plays a significant leadership role in RCSP.

The CSWO continues to co-chair the Renfrewshire's Gender-Based Violence Strategy Group.

The CSWO is required to ensure that the voice of those who use services inform the planning and delivery of services. The CSWO supports service users to make their views known in a number of ways including through regular meetings with the Renfrewshire Children's Champions Board, the use of Viewpoint, and through advocacy services provided by Barnardo's and Who Cares Scotland.

In adult services RHSCP's Strategic Planning Group (SPG) brings together key stakeholders such as service user and carer representatives, partners in council and health services, third sector organisations, and care providers. The SPG is an opportunity for adult service users and carers to make their views known, and service users and carers are also represented on the Renfrewshire Integration Joint Board. The HSCP also has strong links with various service user and carer groups across Renfrewshire. The embedding of self-directed support is contributing to the delivery of more individualised care packages and a consequent shift to service users having greater control over their care is beginning to emerge. The CSWO is a member of the Strategic Planning Group.

## Social Services Delivery Landscape

Renfrewshire has a population of 177,790 in mainly urban settlements, but with a sizeable minority living in smaller towns and villages. There are areas of severe multiple deprivation across Renfrewshire, with higher than average levels of drug and alcohol hospital admissions and rates of looked after children. The proportion of adults with a disability or long-term condition is 31.1%, according to the last census. Several large-scale new housing development and growth in specialist manufacturing are expected to generate population growth.

Renfrewshire Council retains a significant proportion of the local market in social care and social work provision, with 21 registered services including 3 care homes and 5 day centres for older adults, 4 children's houses, 4 centres providing day opportunities and 1 residential respite centre for adults with learning disabilities, 1 day centre for adults with physical disabilities, and a Care at Home service. At their most recent inspections, 14 of these services were graded Very Good or Excellent for Quality of Care and Support or the equivalent in the new inspection model. The newest children's house has yet to be inspected and the remaining services were graded as Good.

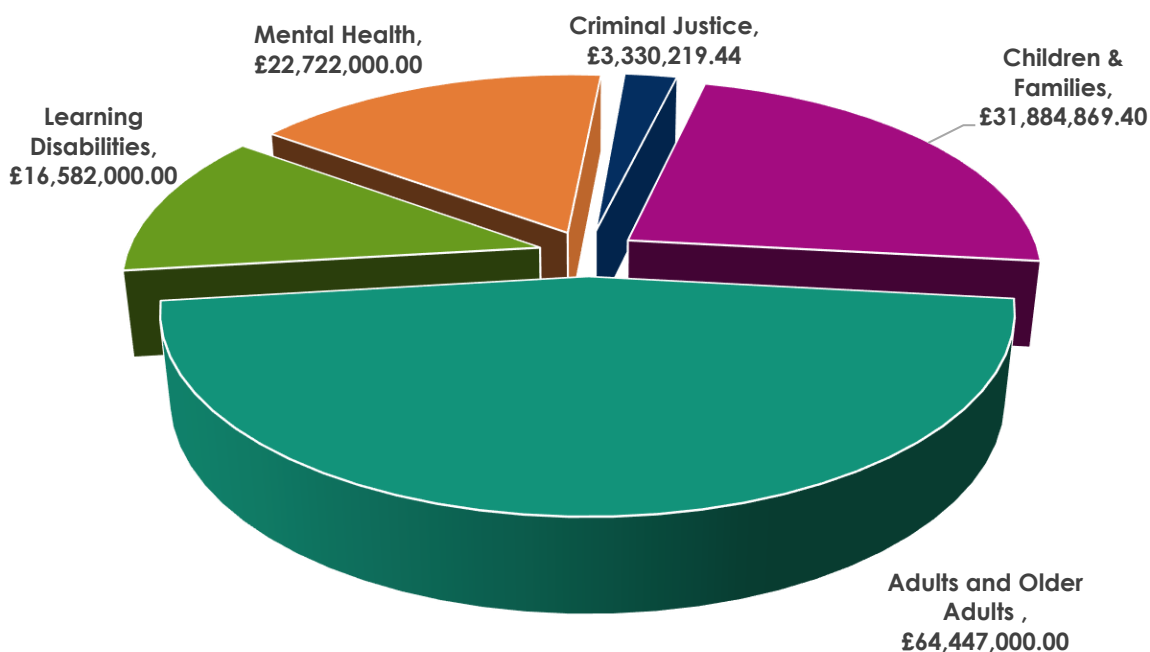
The Renfrewshire local authority area also has a well-developed independent and third sector social care market. This includes 22 nursing and residential care homes for older people, specialist daycare provision run by Alzheimer's Scotland, national resources including the Erskine Home and the Royal Blind care home and day centre, ROAR Connections for Life, a range of supported accommodation, two secure units, and independent educational provision for those whose needs do not fit with mainstream education. The CSWO has a role in providing support and guidance to independent providers.

The development of the self-directed support agenda has increased the number of smaller providers meeting tailored local needs, and the local authority also continues to work with larger framework care at home providers. As part of the strategic commissioning process required as part of the legislation on integrated health and social care, RHSCP has developed a market facilitation statement.

## Resources

Renfrewshire Council's expenditure on social work in 2019/20 was almost £138 million. Services for adults and older people make up the largest share at 46% and services for children and families account for a further 23%. The chart below shows expenditure by service area in 2019/20. Criminal Justice Social Work services are directly funded by Scottish Government grant with the local authority making an additional contribution to address pressures in this area if service delivery. In common with other Scottish local authorities, Renfrewshire Council is trying to meet growing demand at a time of financial austerity. In its risk management plan, the Council considers financial challenges to be the greatest risk to the ongoing delivery of local services. Whilst the current budget for social work services is being managed it is under significant pressure from increased demand is an area of risk for the local authority and RHSCP in future years.

### Expenditure on social work services, 2019/20



The continued demand for social work services across the care groups remains a significant pressure and continues to generate financial challenges for both the local authority and RHSCP. The historical high numbers of children who were accommodated by the local authority (related to levels of deprivation, parental neglect, gender based violence and drug and alcohol misuse) will be a pressure for some years as the right to continuing care has extended the period of support to be provided to these young people. The number of children being accommodated is reducing as more are supported within their own family or in kinship care but there are still financial pressures on providing this support. Courts continue to make increasing use of community sentences as an alternative to short prison sentences is the most significant pressure in justice services. As our older people



live longer with a greater proportion of the population being aged 65 and over demands on adult services particularly care at home is significant. The council continues to meet the needs of the increasing diversity of our communities and the need to provide specialised support to, for example, refugees and unaccompanied asylum-seeking children remains an area of pressure. Throughcare (that is, the support offered to care experienced young people) is an area where we will continue to see rising demand due to the ongoing implementation of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 over the next three years before there is a stabilisation and potential reduction in this area.

Whilst the number of looked after children in Renfrewshire remains high, Children's Services is working to ensure that the principles of minimum necessary intervention is taken forward. This has meant the number of looked after children is reducing and social work will continue to make further reductions in this area when it is safe to do so. It has been identified that children in Renfrewshire remain on compulsory measure of care longer than in other areas and this is an area being explored by the CSWO and the Scottish Children's Reporters Administration.

As reported in the CSWO report for 2018/19 there are significant pressures in criminal justice social work arising from increasing demand and the issues associated with the new national funding formula agreed by COSLA and the Scottish Government. The change in funding model over the past few years has led to Renfrewshire now delivering services on a single authority basis where they were previously provided on a shared basis with neighbouring authorities. This new model has added some pressure to the overall justice service however is being managed appropriately. The extension of Presumption Against Short Sentences is now resulting in more community payback orders and remains likely to have further impact on resources and the performance of the justice services in future years.

To address pressures in the service both Children's Services and HSCP continue to develop early intervention and preventative work to support improved outcomes for the people of Renfrewshire but also to support a sustainable financial position. Children's Services continues to work with a range of partners to embed the early permanency planning for looked after children, the three-year Early Action System Change programme and the Just Learning programme for people with convictions, which addresses some of the barriers to employment and contributes to a reduction in reoffending.

## Statutory Service Provision

### Adult Services

The delivery of adult social work and social care services has been delegated to RHSCP. The CSWO provides professional leadership and advice to senior officers in RHSCP and to the wider social work and social care staff in adult services.

Adult social work operates a locality model for access to social work and social care services. The locality model reflects the model used in health with two localities in the area. The demand on locality services remains high.

Adult protection continues to be an area of high demand within Adult Services. During 2019/20, social work received 1898 adult welfare concerns and 1209 adult protection concerns. A total of 97 adult protection investigations were carried out in the year resulting in 43 initial case conferences. There were also 78 review case conferences for adults were held in the year.

As was the case in recent years there was a further rise in the number of applications for Compulsory Treatment Orders made by the MHO team. In 2019/20 there were 64 applications. Other duties falling under the Mental Health (Care & Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003 included MHO consent for 34 emergency detentions (72-hour detention for assessment), 150 short-term detentions (28 days for assessment and treatment) and 184 Mental Health Tribunals. In total, the service dealt with 710 individual pieces of work falling within that legislation during 2019/20. The service also manages 'Restricted Patients' who come under the control of Scottish Ministers.

As of 31 March 2020, the CSWO had responsibility for 117 welfare guardianships (including 22 new orders granted during the year). The welfare guardianships are managed on a day-to-day by a nominated officer within the MHO team on behalf of the CSWO. The MHO team also supervises 485 private welfare guardianships in line with statutory requirements and can apply for Intervention Orders where they consider a financial guardian should be appointed. The local authority applied for 28 Intervention Orders in 2019/20. The team manager is authorised to act as an Intervener for matters relating to signing for or terminating tenancies. The number of time-limited orders now being granted has created an additional pressure on MHO services due to the requirement for reports in respect of order renewals.

Renfrewshire continues to experience higher than average levels of substance use which is reflected in service usage. Renfrewshire Drugs Service had 743 open cases at the end of 2019/20 and the Integrated Alcohol Team had 128 open cases. Last year the Renfrewshire Community Planning Partnership established an Alcohol and Drugs Commission to provide in-depth consideration of the challenges facing Renfrewshire in relation to alcohol and drugs, and the ways in which these challenges might be addressed. The Commission is made up of senior officers from across health and social care, housing, criminal and community justice, and the third sector, as well as academic experts in the field and is expected to publish its findings in the near future. The CSWO contributed to the work of the Commission.

## Statutory Service Provision

### Children and Families Social Work

Children's social work services in Renfrewshire are provided from 4 locality teams, specialist teams and registered care services. The specialist teams include the Fostering and Adoption Team, the Kinship Care Team, the Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children Team, the Children with Disabilities Team and the Whole Systems Team. Children's Services has 6 children's houses and the throughcare housing support service registered with the Care Inspectorate.

Renfrewshire continues to have high numbers of looked after children but has had considerable success over the last decade in reducing both the total number of looked after children and the number placed in residential settings. The reduction in the latter was achieved as part of a planned decommissioning of in-house residential places and investment to grow the number of foster placements available.

Renfrewshire Council had 639 looked after children at 31 March 2020; 413 looked after at home and 227 looked after and accommodated. This represents a slight increase on the previous year but still reflects a long-term reduction in overall numbers and a continuing reduction in the number of accommodated children. Over the last decade, the service has shifted the balance of provision substantially and most foster placements are now with local authority carers rather than independent providers. This is a positive development and remains an area of continued focus. Placing children with our own carers allows them to retain many of their family and community links and therefore supports better outcomes. The foster placements in the independent sector are meeting the needs of the children placed with them and are a positive resource for these children.

The Fostering and Adoption team continues to focus on permanency where appropriate and during 2019/20, 13 adoptions were completed.

Secure orders are used only when necessary, with community-based support packages considered a better approach with complex cases. During 2019/20, 9 young people spent time in a secure placement.

During 2019/20, 17 children were the subject of a Child Protection Order under Section 57 of the Children (Scotland) Act 1995. This compares to 20 in the previous year and 15 in 2017/18.

The number of children on the Child Protection Register at any one time varies depending on the circumstances and nature of risk attending to the children and families that are being supported. As at 31 March 2020, there were 82 children on the Child Protection Register. As a snapshot, the number is subject to considerable variation. The main areas which result in children being placed on the child protection register are neglect, parental substance misuse and parental mental health.

## Statutory Service Provision

### Criminal Justice Social Work

The Criminal Justice Service comprises of a locality team which operates across the Renfrewshire area, the Unpaid Work Service, the Women's Service, Drug Treatment and Testing Service, Pathways Project and the Court Service.

There were 557 new Community Payback Orders assigned to justice social work staff in 2019/20. Of these, 356 included an unpaid work element totalling over 59,000 hours, and 305 include a supervision element. The increase in hours reflects to an extent the change to the presumption against short sentences, with higher tariff community orders being used in lieu of prison sentences of up to 12 months.

At the end of March 2020, Criminal Justice Social Work was supervising 80 licences in the community, including 3 new life licences and 5 new Section 15 orders. A further 173 Throughcare cases were in custody at that date; 38 of these will have life licences on release and 4 will have an Order for Lifelong Restriction.

There were 20 individuals subject to new Drug Treatment and Testing Orders in 2019/20, and 8 subject to new Fiscal Work Orders. From 127 referrals, 43 people were successfully diverted from prosecution.

Criminal Justice Social Work continues to be a key partner in Community Justice Renfrewshire, which is taking forward initiatives on employment, education and housing, key factors which can reduce reoffending.

## Workforce

Within Renfrewshire Council, each service produces a workforce plan which details actions to be taken to tackle the council's workforce challenges. Within Children's Services, current priorities including tackling retention and succession planning within the children's residential workforce and identifying ways to increase opportunities for staff to undertake reflective practice. Positive progress is being achieved in each of the priority areas with staff turnover at a low level. There are no areas of pressure in relation to staffing within Children's Social Work. The level of vacancies remains low and when there are vacancies to be filled there are usually a good range of candidates to choose from.

In RHSCP, the development of new roles within the council's Care at Home service creates opportunities for career progression through the creation of the role of Senior Home Support Worker and the implementation of a revised management structure. There are some future challenges in terms of the adult service workforce particularly in the care at home service and in the locality teams where there is an aging workforce. Work on addressing this challenge will be taken forward to ensure no interruption of service delivery.

Social work services staff continue to have access to a broad range of training and development opportunities provided by the Social Work Professional Training Team. The team also delivers multi-agency training in child and adult protection. A dedicated post provides training and support for foster carers, and Renfrewshire Council offers foster carers a wide range of training on issues such as child protection, attachment and trauma, Theraplay, internet safety, the impact of parental substance misuse, and managing transitions.

The Social Work Training Team continues to support Care at Home staff to meet the deadline for registration with SSSC.

## COVID-19

As the reporting year for 2019/20 was ending the country was placed in lockdown due to the threat from COVID-19. This meant that most offices closed and whilst the general population was expected to remain at home and only leave for a short period of exercise each day, social work and social care services required to continue.

Renfrewshire's residential homes for older adults and our children's houses continued to operate and provide care to the residents and young people we are charged with looking after. In older adult residential care there were challenges as a number of members of staff were required to shield due to pre-existing health conditions and staff were transferred from other areas of service such as day care to ensure that care for our older adults continued. There were periods of pressure in the residential homes however staffing levels were always maintained. The commitment of staff to ensuring that residents in our internal older adults' residential homes continued to receive safe care is commendable.

Care at home staff continued to deliver services to the most vulnerable living at home. Like the residential services for older adults, care at home experienced significant numbers of staff were required to shield or were unable to work as a result of pre-existing health conditions. The workforce who were able to continue working did so in a flexible manner to ensure the continued delivery of service to the most vulnerable in our community. As in periods of extreme weather the care at home staff have demonstrated a high degree of commitment to those they work with and again this should be recognised.

As a result of lockdown day care services in both adult and older adult services required to close. The staff from those services operated in an outreach basis or supported other areas including residential care to continue to meet the needs of services. The flexibility of staff in these services is noted.

In criminal justice most of the services closed on a temporary basis as a result of COVID-19. Most staff from the justice service operated from home maintaining the supervision of those on community orders who were deemed to be highest risk or highest level of vulnerability. Some staff from the unpaid work scheme were deployed to assist the council's humanitarian response as they were unable to work from home.

In children's services most staff worked from home and staff absence levels were low. Whilst staff worked from home, they continued to undertake planned and unplanned visits to children on the child protection register and those identified as at high risk. New technology was also used to maintain contact with other children known to social work and where visits weren't possible. In most cases the visits weren't possible because the family were showing symptoms of COVID-19.

The most significant decision in children's services was that to temporarily suspend the face to face contact between children in care and their parents. This decision was made based on protecting public health and was reviewed regularly during lockdown. The service provided parents with smartphones to ensure that they were able to have video calls with their child during the initial period of lockdown.

As most social work services continued during lockdown as the country relaxed the restrictions on the community the service stepped up the range and delivery of services.

The priority was to open a range of social work offices to allow staff to be based in the area, to allow increased contact with those who use our services and to allow the face to face contact between children in care and their families to be restarted.

The support of staff from other services in the council to ensure that social work accommodation and services could continue to operate, and recover is acknowledged. It wouldn't have been possible to open our offices without that support. This cross-service working demonstrates the commitment of staff from all areas of the council and RHSCP to providing services and protecting the most vulnerable in our communities.

In closing this report I would want to thank all social work and social care staff and staff from elsewhere in the council and RHSCP for their response to the COVID-19 crisis and their commitment to the most vulnerable people in Renfrewshire. As CSWO, I'm extremely proud of the efforts of staff and I need to state that I'm not surprised. Their commitment to social justice and their positive response has been evident over many years and previous crisis the community has faced.

*“It was heard all right; that was not the argument.*

*Day or night it echoed from wall to wall,*

*A voice, never incomprehensible,*

*But a question many found intolerable:*

*'Am I my brother's keeper?' Some with scorn,*

*Some with anger, some with quick dismissal,*

*Some with the half-uneasy consciousness*

*Of being put on the spot, some blustering,*

*Some brazen, some bound to macho boasts,*

*Kicking the can of pity out of play,*

*'Each to his own, let them get on with it!'*

From *Brothers and Keepers* by Edwin Morgan





**To:** Council

**On:** 24 September 2020

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**Report by:** Chief Executive

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**Heading:** **Annual Report of the Community Protection Chief Officers Group (2019/20)**

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## **1. Summary**

- 1.1 This is the fifth annual report of the Community Protection Chief Officers Group which is intended to provide an overview of the main elements of work of those involved in public protection over the course of 2019/20, and in doing so highlights the key benefits of excellent partnership working.
- 1.2 The report focuses on activity over the 12 months to March 2020, and therefore covers the period immediately prior to the emergence of the COVID19 pandemic. As elected members will be aware, the impact of COVID19 on local people and communities in Renfrewshire has been significant, particularly for those people already experiencing inequalities or who need support to ensure they remain safe and protected. The longer term impacts of the pandemic are also not yet quantified, and it will be more important than ever that partners continue to work together and focus on the right priorities collectively going forward.
- 1.3 The Chief Officers Group has increased the frequency of meetings since the emergence of the pandemic, to ensure regular oversight and scrutiny of key issues. The annual report reflects the key priorities identified by the Chief Officers Group for 2020/21 in light of the information available, but also recognises the need for flexibility to ensure that partners work together to adapt to the changing needs of local people and communities as they continue to live with the presence of COVID19.

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## **2. Recommendations**

2.1 It is recommended that members note:

- the key activities progressed during 2019/20 by the Community Protection Chief Officers Group and;
- the identified priorities to be taken forward in partnership during 2019/20, with a specific focus on responding to the impact of COVID19 in Renfrewshire.

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## **3. Background**

3.1 Renfrewshire Community Protection Chief Officers Group is responsible for leadership and strategic oversight of performance in relation to multi agency public protection practice in Renfrewshire. The Chief Officers Group has a critical role in ensuring links are made across community and public protection activity at operational, tactical and strategic levels.

3.2 The six strategic partnerships covering the areas of public protection work, report into the Chief Officers' Group which oversees performance and ensures the provision of quality services in relation to child protection, adult protection, wider protection, offender management, alcohol and drugs, and gender based violence. These are:

- Renfrewshire Child Protection Committee
- Renfrewshire Adult Protection Committee
- Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements Strategic Oversight Group
- Renfrewshire Alcohol and Drug Partnership
- Renfrewshire Gender Based Violence Strategy Group
- Community Protection Steering Group

3.3 The purpose of the Member Officer Group is to provide senior elected members with the opportunity to formally and regularly discharge their strategic independent scrutiny and assurance role in relation to key activity and significant developments which have implications for public protection matters in Renfrewshire. The Member Officer Group is chaired by Councillor Jacqueline Cameron.

## 4 Overview of Annual Report

- 4.1 This is the fifth annual report of the Chief Officers Group. It provides an overview of the main elements of work of those involved in public protection over the course of 2019/20, and in doing so highlights the key benefits of excellent partnership working.
- 4.2 Local people and communities have been significantly impacted by the COVID19 pandemic and subsequent lockdown. The way services are provided has had to alter significantly. As a consequence, the annual report for 2019/20 and strategic priorities for 2020/21 reflect this much altered landscape. Renfrewshire also continues to face challenges in addressing a range of local protection issues, however the Chief Officers Group and the local multi-agency partnerships continue to recognise, alongside scrutiny and reflection, the value of a proactive focus on awareness raising and preventative approaches to protect people in the community. This has been evident in the work of agencies and partnerships involved in public protection.
- 4.3 The annual report attached as Appendix 1, highlights the significant range of activities that have been undertaken during 2019/20 including:
- Prioritisation of work on alcohol and drugs use across Renfrewshire and supporting the Alcohol and Drugs Commission to develop its recommendations around reduce the impact on individuals, families and communities;
  - Improving practice through training, learning, interagency working and consideration of case reviews;
  - Supporting positive mental health and wellbeing with a focus on suicide prevention and people presenting to agencies in distress;
  - Protecting individuals and communities, combatting terrorism and serious organised crime;
  - Supporting the implementation of Renfrewshire's Community Justice Outcomes Improvement Plan 2018-2021; and
  - Exploring the potential for Renfrewshire Community Planning Partnership to become trauma informed and responsive.
- 4.4 In terms of priorities for 2020/21, the Chief Officers Group have analysed and discussed some of the initial information that is available in terms of the impact of COVID19 on local people and communities and agreed the following high level priorities:
- Collectively monitor impact of COVID19 on most vulnerable citizens, in terms of impact on child and adult protection and wider community protection;

- Monitor and address the impact of gender based violence across Renfrewshire in light of COVID19;
- Focus on new and emerging adult protection concerns including financial harm through bogus callers, rogue traders and scams;
- Provide scrutiny, support and oversight of activity in relation to care homes in light of COVID-19, with a particular focus on the wellbeing of residents and staff;
- Implement the recommendations from the independent review of COG;
- Prioritise work on alcohol and drugs use across Renfrewshire and refresh the recommendations of the Alcohol and Drugs Commission in light of COVID19 to ensure that we reduce the impact on individuals, families and communities;
- Support positive mental health and wellbeing with a focus on suicide prevention and people presenting to agencies in distress;
- Monitor the potential impact of the UK leaving the European Union undertaking activities on a partnership basis where this is required;
- Implement the recommendations from the Joint Inspection of Adult Support and Protection;
- Oversee Renfrewshire's Community Justice response to the planned presumption against short sentences which will be extended to 12 months;
- Consider the findings of the National Care Review and implement as appropriate; and
- Monitor community tension and support community cohesion across Renfrewshire with regards to protests, demonstrations and activities in relation to current community issues e.g. COVID19, Black Lives Matter etc.

4.5 The Chief Officers Group will continue to seek to ensure that performance and practice are scrutinised at a strategic level, to identify what works well, to highlight any areas for improvement, and to consider where further opportunities for early intervention and prevention activity would achieve improved outcomes for local people.

4.6 In addition the ongoing impact of the COVID19 pandemic and lockdown on individuals, families and communities will continue to be monitored by the group – particularly in relation to those most vulnerable.

## **Implications of the Report**

- 1. Financial – none**
- 2. HR & Organisational Development – none**

3. **Community Planning** – the Community Protection Chief Officers is embedded within the wider approach to community planning in Renfrewshire.
4. **Legal** - none
5. **Property/Assets** –none
6. **Information Technology** – none
7. **Equality & Human Rights** – none.
  - (a) 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 because 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** – none.
9. **Procurement** – none.
10. **Risk** -*as per the content of report.*
11. **Privacy Impact** – none.
12. **COSLA** - none
13. **Climate Risk** - none

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# Renfrewshire Community Protection Chief Officers Group

Annual Report 2019/20

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Renfrewshire Community Protection Chief Officers Group (COG) is responsible for leadership, strategic oversight and scrutiny in relation to multi-agency public protection activity and practice in Renfrewshire. The group oversees the work of six strategic partnerships which examine performance and ensure the provision of quality services in relation to child protection, adult protection, wider public protection, offender management, community justice, alcohol and drugs, and gender-based violence.
- 1.2 As elsewhere in the country, Renfrewshire continues to face challenges in addressing a range of local protection issues, however the Chief Officers Group and the local multi-agency partnerships, continue to recognise, alongside scrutiny and reflection, the value of a proactive focus on awareness raising and preventative approaches to protect people in the community. This has been evident in the work of those groups, agencies and partnerships involved in public protection.
- 1.3 This is the fifth annual report of the Chief Officers Group. It provides an overview of the main elements of work of those involved in public protection over the course of 2019/20, and in doing so highlights the key benefits of excellent partnership working.
- 1.4 The report is provided against the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdown which has had a significant impact on individuals, families and communities, and on the way services are delivered. Therefore, the annual report for 2019/20 and strategic priorities for 2020/21 reflect this much altered landscape.
- 1.5 During these unprecedented times public services are under exceptional pressure and it is widely acknowledged that many vulnerable individuals will be impacted significantly and for a considerable time by the pandemic and the unintended consequences of actions taken to control it. While the most vulnerable have been disproportionately affected, new vulnerabilities have been created amongst individuals and families as a result of a range of factors such as, loss of employment or income and shielding.
- 1.6 During COVID-19, the COG together with the wider public sector, has focused on ensuring that essential services and support are provided across Renfrewshire. There is an ongoing need to respond to the crisis and to deliver on new requirements at pace and scale, whilst looking to the future as we restart, recover and renew our approach at a local level.
- 1.7 As set out in both Renfrewshire's Community Plan and the Renfrewshire Council Plan, we want to work together to create a thriving and connected Renfrewshire, where there are opportunities for all. These outcomes remain the focus of partners, however the context in which the COG is working has changed significantly due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 1.8 Local recovery planning arrangements are progressing across Renfrewshire, and are being taken forward jointly with residents, communities, partners and businesses. This will focus on:
  - incrementally restarting service provision in line with national guidance;
  - rebuilding levels of service capacity, confidence and resilience and supporting reconnection with communities and residents; and
  - reimagining/building better and resetting Renfrewshire's ambition and vision for the future.
- 1.9 These plans will be developed on an interim basis, recognising that the impact of the pandemic is likely to be deeply felt over the medium to long term, and there will be a requirement for services to continue to operate flexibly to meet the changing needs and behaviours of local communities, potentially providing new services or adapting others to reflect emerging Scottish Government guidance and considering the resources available at each stage. Partners will need to remain resilient and be able to respond to a potential cycle of lifting and easing of lockdown measures in order to support the suppression of the virus.

## **2. Renfrewshire Profile**

- 2.1 Renfrewshire is a place of outstanding natural beauty, home to Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park and a vast range of parks, woodlands and green space. Covering an area of some 270 square kilometres, the Renfrewshire area hosts major towns such as Paisley, Renfrew and Johnstone, and a number of attractive villages and settlements.
- 2.2 In terms of population, Renfrewshire is the 10th biggest local authority area in Scotland with a population of around 179,000. Over the 15-year period to 2010 the population did decline but has in recent years increased and is projected to increase steadily over the next 10 years. This brings challenges with a projected decline in the population under 16 in the region of 6% over the next 20 years, coupled with a 25% increase in the number of people aged 65+ over the same period.
- 2.3 Renfrewshire has lots to offer and many strengths and assets to build on. One of the most critical challenges for partners is addressing the gap that has emerged between different communities in Renfrewshire, with the life chances of some being negatively impacted by poverty, poor health, and unemployment. More than 1 in 5 children in Renfrewshire are growing up in poverty. According to the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation, 12 areas (or datazones) are within the 5% most deprived in Scotland.
- 2.4 Alcohol and drug misuse are major elements of ill health in Renfrewshire, contributing to the fourth highest rate of drug related deaths in Scotland and the seventh highest rate in Scotland of hospital stays related to alcohol use. Parental neglect and addiction have a significant impact on Renfrewshire's children. Over 600 children in Renfrewshire are looked after by the authority - the fourth highest rate in Scotland.
- 2.5 Renfrewshire is a thriving area for business and economic activity, with Glasgow Airport within its boundaries and excellent transport links across the West of Scotland, nationally and internationally. Employment levels in Renfrewshire had returned to levels experienced before the crash of 2008, with key sectors of employment being in the health and care sectors, transportation and manufacturing. Renfrewshire, as with all areas across the country, now faces the economic impact of the coronavirus pandemic and is putting in place strategies to address the effect on jobs and investment.
- 2.6 The area itself is an attractive place for people to move to, with property prices on average being lower than the national average. Levels of crime have also been falling, with a 9% reduction in recorded crimes over the past 5 years. Renfrewshire has a proud cultural heritage, with Paisley having the second highest concentration of listed buildings in Scotland. From historic museums, civic buildings, mills and observatories, the area has a rich history and thriving local cultural scene which is driving local regeneration plans and supporting the development of the area as a prospective tourism destination.

## **3. Analysis of current trends**

### **3.1 Child Protection**

There were 83 children on the Child Protection Register at 31 July 2019. This figure is subject to considerable fluctuation as it reflects risks and need. At the same point in time, Renfrewshire had 629 looked after children, which is 1.9% of the 0-17 population. This was the fourth highest rate in Scotland. Over the last decade, Renfrewshire has been proactive in developing services and support to reduce the looked after population and prioritise family placements wherever appropriate.

### **3.2 Adult Support and Protection**

Between April 2019 and March 2020, 3,106 adult welfare concern and adult protection referrals were received by Renfrewshire. This is compared to 2,719, 2,829, and 2,578 for the same time periods in 2018/19, 2017/18, and 2016/17 respectively. Of these, 1,208 were adult protection concerns and 1,898 were adult welfare concerns. Following initial inquiries, 96 adult protection investigations were conducted, a slight fall from 102 the previous year. 41 of these investigations resulted in an Initial Adult Protection Case Conference.

The total referral number for 2019/2020 reflects a 14% increase in the referral rate as compared to the previous financial year and the figure is higher than in previous years.

Across the year Police Scotland made 61% of all referrals. This reflects the long-term trend of a decrease in the ratio of referrals received by Police. They were responsible for 66% of all referrals in 2018/19; 79% in 2015/16; 77% in 2016/17; and 70% in 2017/18.

### 3.3 Adults with Incapacity (AWI)

Demand for AWI reports, which require to be completed by a qualified mental health officer (MHO), had risen steadily over recent years (mirroring increases across Scotland), but this year saw a reduction in such requests locally. However, the complexity of cases has increased; the demand of such reports subsequently has an impact on the service. For example, cases referred following financial harm risks identified through adult support a protection processes. The local authority may become involved to pursue the removal of a financial proxy and to pursue alternative financial arrangements to safeguard an adult at risk of harm.

In 2019-2020 Renfrewshire received 131 requests for AWI mental health officer reports. In the previous year there were 196 such requests (and 208 in the 2017/2018 year). It is worth noting that 65% of all new orders granted are time-limited, which brings additional work pressure in respect of renewal reports required. Often such requests arrive with less than 4 weeks until the expiry of the existing order, putting pressure on the service.

At the end of the 2019/20 financial year, pandemic response measures included court closures and AWI work within courts paused for a period. This will likely have an impact on MHO service pressures as courts resume AWI work.

### 3.4 Welfare Guardianships

Orders where the Chief Social Work Officer (CSWO) is appointed as Welfare Guardian rose in recent years, from 79 in March 2015 to 114 in 2019; on 31 March 2020 there were 116 such orders existent in Renfrewshire. Each order requires a qualified social worker to act as the "nominated officer" on behalf of the CSWO for day to day management of the case. In addition, there are in excess of approximately 435 private welfare guardianship orders running throughout Renfrewshire. These require a minimum of one statutory visit by a guardianship supervisor after being granted.

### 3.5 Serious Organised Crime

A total of 141 persons linked to serious and organised crime were arrested during 2019/20.

£147,818 was seized under Proceeds of Crime Act legislation across Renfrewshire, this sum being accumulated as a result of:

- 11 Cash Seizures totalling £73,942;
- 2 Listed Assets totalling £3,950
- 2 Restraint Reports totalling £61,566,
- 2 Cash Only Restraint Reports totalling £3,440; and
- 1 Forfeiture Report to CRU totalling £4,920

### 3.6 Drug Crime

In 2019/20 there were 134 drug supply offences detected across Renfrewshire, which was an increase of 13.5% on the previous year. As in the previous year cannabis, cocaine and heroin featured most predominantly in drug supply offences, being involved in 43%, 27% and 19% of offences respectively.

### 3.7 Gender Based Violence

2,147 domestic abuse incidents were reported to Police Scotland between April 2018 and March 2019. 1,233 crimes and offences relating to gender-based violence were raised as a result of reported incidents, representing a decrease of 2% on the previous year.

### 3.8 Sexual Crime

Recorded sexual crime has decreased over the period, with 65 fewer crime reports in 2019/20 when compared to the previous year. During the current year 36.2% of sexual offences related to non-recent offences.

The detection rate for sexual crime in 2019/20 was 56.9% compared to the 65.0% recorded the year before. The 4.8% decrease in non-recent sexual reports is the main contributory factor in the overall reduction in sexual crimes such as rape, indecent assaults and lewd and libidinous practices. Renfrewshire's 2019/20 detection rate for rape and sexual offences was above that for the Force during the same period.

### 3.9 Cyber Crime

During the 2019/20 period a total of 317 crimes were designated as "cyber-crimes" via the application of the relevant cyber-crime marker. Reported offences included general communications (threats and sexual), fraud (specifically internet orders/credit and debit cards) and communicating indecently.

### 3.10 Employability

Employability has been identified as a key element in reducing re-offending. Up to 1 in 3 males and 1 in 10 females in Scotland are likely to have a criminal record which may act as a barrier to employment.

### 3.11 Homelessness

For the period 2018/19, Renfrewshire had 97 Prisoners presenting directly from prison as homeless from a caseload of 848, this equates to 11.4% of caseload, the National average being 5%. This number of homeless people leaving prison has increased from 85 in 2017/18. The figures are higher than the national average, due to the fact that Council officers go directly into the prisons prior to prisoner release dates, and when people leaving prison are housed, the records will show them as "leaving institution – prison". This approach has identified individuals earlier than normal due to the pro-active approach being adopted by Renfrewshire Council.

### 3.12 Anti-Social Behaviour

The number of incidents of anti-social behaviour reported to Renfrewshire Council Community Safety Service in 2019/20 was 1,667 which represents a reduction from last year (1,711). It is worth noting that the reduction in recorded anti-social behaviour has now decreased for the last two years.

### 3.13 Alcohol and Drugs Partnership

National Records of Scotland (NRS) has delayed publishing its statistics of the causes of the deaths that were registered in 2019, including the numbers of deaths due to (for example) drugs, alcohol and suicide. They were originally scheduled for publication in June and July (like the corresponding statistics for the previous few years). However, by the end of April 2020, NRS had not received some of the information that it relies on to categorise many

deaths as being due to drugs, alcohol and suicide. Consequently, NRS has had to delay their publication.

Therefore, the most recent available data is as follows:

- In 2017/18 there were 50 alcohol related deaths in Renfrewshire. Renfrewshire had the 7<sup>th</sup> highest rate of alcohol related deaths in Scotland in 2018. Renfrewshire has the 7<sup>th</sup> highest rate of alcohol specific deaths in Scotland.
- 50 drug-related deaths were registered in Renfrewshire in 2018. This was the largest number recorded in the past decade. However, the number of deaths has reduced at various points over the past decade. Between 2008 and 2010 there was a 30% decrease in the number of deaths (from 27 to 19). In 2013 the number of deaths was half that of the previous year. More recently, there has been a sharp increase in the number of drug-related deaths, with the number rising by 57% from 13 in 2013 to 30 in 2014. After reducing to 19 in 2015, the number rose by 55% to a high of 42 in 2016.

The population mortality rate of Renfrewshire is above the national average but is below the board average and below that of Glasgow City and Inverclyde ADP. Comparison of the mortality rate per prevalence of drug uses indicates that Renfrewshire has a slightly lower rate than the national average and that of NHS GG&C too.

However, as at March 2020, the alcohol related hospital stays reduced to a rate of 8.4 per 1,000 population aged 16+ (target 8.9) - a reduction on the rate of 8.8 as at March 2019. In addition, alcohol and drug waiting times for referral to treatment within 3 weeks have also improved from 74.4% at March 2019 to 95.9% at March 2020 against a target of 91.5%.

#### **4. Chief Officers Group**

Renfrewshire Community Protection Chief Officers Group is responsible for leadership and strategic oversight of performance in relation to multi agency public protection practice in Renfrewshire. The Chief Officers Group has a critical role in ensuring links are made across community and public protection activity at operational, tactical and strategic levels.

The seven strategic partnerships covering the areas of public protection work, report into the Chief Officers' Group which oversee the performance and ensure the provision of quality services in relation to child protection, adult protection, wider protection, offender management, alcohol and drugs, and gender based violence. These are:

- Renfrewshire Child Protection Committee
- Renfrewshire Adult Protection Committee
- Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements Strategic Oversight Group
- Renfrewshire Alcohol and Drug Partnership
- Renfrewshire Gender Based Violence Strategy Group
- Community Protection Steering Group
- Renfrewshire Community Justice Steering Group

It is recognised that these areas of protection are very often inter-linked and can impact on each other. A key aim of the Chief Officers Group is to provide strategic leadership and oversight to ensure developments within specific areas of practice support cross cutting activity and have a positive impact on outcomes for local people.

#### **Remit, roles and membership**

The core membership of the Renfrewshire Chief Officers Group (COG) is chaired by the Chief Executive of Renfrewshire Council and comprises representation at Chief Executive level, or senior nominee, from the three statutory agencies - Renfrewshire Council, Police Scotland, and

Greater Glasgow and Clyde Health Board. They are supported by the attendance of the following or their senior nominee:

- Chief Social Work Officer, Renfrewshire Council or appropriate senior nominee;
- Chief Officer of the Integration Joint Board or appropriate senior nominee;
- Independent chair of Renfrewshire Child and Adult Protection Committees;
- Child Protection Committee lead officer
- Adult Protection Committee lead officer
- Senior officer representing Renfrewshire on the Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements Strategic Oversight Group (NSCJA MAPPA SOG) or appropriate senior nominee
- Head of Communities and Public Protection or Director of Communities, Housing and Planning
- Scottish Fire Service senior officer representation
- Chair of the Gender Based Violence Strategy Group or appropriate senior nominee
- Chair of the Alcohol and Drugs Partnership or appropriate senior nominee

The remit of the group is:

- to provide strategic leadership and scrutiny of the work of the protection business areas on behalf of their respective agencies;
- to identify successes and areas for improvement and in doing so learn from experience, monitor trends and examine local and national comparisons; and
- take appropriate action where necessary in response to performance where improvement is needed. This includes the consideration of local and national critical incident reports to inform learning where this is appropriate.

The Chief Officers Group reviews performance management information to ensure that this is being collected in a robust and regular manner, that any areas for development are identified and addressed promptly and that consideration is given to identifying further opportunities for early intervention and prevention.

## **5. Member Officer Group**

The purpose of the Member Officer Group is to provide senior elected members with the opportunity to formally and regularly discharge their strategic independent scrutiny and assurance role in relation to key activity and significant developments which have implications for public protection matters in Renfrewshire as they relate to:

- Adult and Child Protection;
- MAPPA (Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements); and
- Wider Community Safety and Public Protection matters including the Alcohol and Drug Partnership and Gender Based Violence Strategy Group.

The group is comprised of elected members on a cross party basis and key officers of the council as follows:

- Three senior members of the administration
- Two members of the main opposition group
- One other opposition member
- Director of Children's Services
- Chief Officer Social Work Officer
- Director of Communities, Housing and Planning
- Chief Officer, Integration Joint Board
- Health and Social Care Partnership (operational head of service)

- Head of Child Care and Criminal Justice
- Head of Communities and Public Protection
- Child Protection Lead Officer
- Adult Support and Protection Officer
- Head of Policy and Commissioning, Chief Executive's Service
- Service Planning and Policy Development Manager, Chief Executive's Service

Also in attendance will be:

- Independent Chair of the Child Protection and Adult Protection Committees
- Divisional Commander, Police Scotland or appropriate senior nominee

The group will also invite the participation of other key individuals or agencies involved in the areas of concern of the Member Officer Group as required.

## 6. Strategic Partnership Activities

### 6.1 Child Protection

#### **Renfrewshire Child Protection Committee (RCPC) Self Evaluation: Member Survey**

As part of ongoing self-evaluation activity, RCPC members were invited to take part in an online members' survey covering topics including, the RCPC vision and the effective participation of agencies at meetings - including the appropriate level of representation, the effectiveness of meetings, the structure of meetings and leadership. Respondents highlighted that meetings should be more participatory and inclusive, noting that some agencies do not contribute as much as others. Consequently, the format of RCPC meetings was reviewed with papers now being for discussion rather than for just noting. In addition, RCPC revised and agreed the new vision that 'Children in Renfrewshire are safe and protected from harm' which was approved by the Chief Officers Group in June 2019.

#### **National Minimum Dataset**

Chief Officers had been advised of the development of a National Minimum Dataset. It was agreed that the existing RCPC Scorecard will initially continue to be produced in tandem with the National Minimum Dataset, pending an evaluation taking place in autumn 2020.

#### **Initial Case Review Process**

The process used to progress Initial Case Reviews (ICRs) was refined during 2019/20. All meetings will now be based around the following considerations:

- Were there strategies and actions to minimise harm?
- Was there evidence of Information sharing?
- Was there recognition and assessment of risk?
- Was timely and effective action taken?
- Was there evidence of planning and review?
- How good was the record keeping?
- Were legal measures used appropriately?

The meeting will also consider the practice issues arising from the ICR. Areas of good practice identified will be highlighted whenever possible, together with any recommendations for further action. The meeting will conclude with a recommendation to RCPC/COG as follows:

- Undertake an SCR as there is either potential for significant corporate learning or it is in the best interests of the child/ young person and their family and in the public interest.
- No SCR is needed but follow-up action by one or more agencies is required.

- Where the CPC is satisfied there are no concerns and there is no scope for significant corporate/multi-agency learning or it is clear that appropriate action has already been taken they may decide to take no further action.

### **Eyes Open Campaign 2019**

Following the success of the national and local media “Eyes Open” campaign run in 2018, an amended version was rolled out in conjunction with CPC Scotland in the week leading up to the end of the school term in summer 2019. It focused on the need for the public to ‘do their bit’ to protect potentially vulnerable children during the school holidays. The campaign stressed that if anyone is concerned about a child’s welfare, or has concerns that something is not quite right, then it is better to do something rather than nothing at all. The campaign was rolled out via a national press release and was picked up by local social media for 5 consecutive days in the run up to school closure.

### **Learning at Work Week 2019**

The Inter-Agency Training Officer and Lead Officer RCPC facilitated a drop-in information session for staff on Friday 14 June 2019 in the Atrium, Renfrewshire House as part of Learning at Work Week. This gave the opportunity to promote the work of RCPC, including the RCPC Training Calendar, with partner agencies also providing publicity and/or training materials. It provided the opportunity to reinforce the message to the wider workforce that child protection is still “everyone’s job”.

### **HMP YOI Polmont**

A report relating to the mental health services provision at Polmont was instigated in November 2018 following the deaths of two young people in custody in 2018. The completed report was published in May 2019. Chief Officers were advised of the report at the meeting held on 5 September 2019 and of the intention to scrutinise the report locally.

This report had particular significance given that two of Renfrewshire’s previously accommodated young people also died by suicide in Polmont in 2017. A review of their circumstances has already been undertaken by Children’s Services and a report and recommendations provided to the Independent Chair of RCPC. It is important however that we consider the learning points of the Expert Review to understand if any further changes to practice are required.

A short life working group was tasked with reviewing the report that considered the mental health services available to young people entering and in custody at HMP YOI Polmont. The findings from the working group were presented to RCPC on 18 December 2020.

### **RCPC Conference 2020**

The biennial RCPC conference was held on 5 March 2020 in Johnstone Town Hall. The theme – ‘Recognising Neglect, Achieving Better Outcomes’ – was identified in recognition of the ongoing national agenda and the repeated necessary lessons to be learned from significant case reviews. The event included keynote speakers from the Care Inspectorate, Napier University and the Independent Care Review, as well as a series of workshops. In recognition of the theme of the event and the evident links to poverty, all delegates were asked to make a contribution to Renfrewshire Foodbank. Delegates evaluated the conference as being of relevance to their practice, suggesting that the issue of neglect is still a significant area of concern in practice and worthy of sustained focus.

### **Care Inspectorate Update**

At the RCPC meeting held on 18 December 2019, the Care Inspectorate provided an overview of the new inspection methodology and shared some of the themes arising from the inspections undertaken to date. The revised inspection framework was introduced in autumn 2018 as part of the Scottish Government Child Protection Improvement Programme announced in 2017.



There remains some similarity with the previous framework in that it will continue to follow the previous model of self-evaluation, case file reading, fieldwork and analysis, culminating in a written report. It will continue to evaluate good partnership working and be a joint inspection with scrutiny partners and be on a legislative basis.

However, the focus for the revised inspection model is narrower than had been the case previously and will specifically scrutinise child protection and corporate parenting with an enhanced focus on hearing from children and young people themselves. The Continuous Improvement Subgroup of RCPC have developing an action plan to address the actions identified during the recent self-evaluation activity.

## **6.2 Trauma informed and Responsive Renfrewshire**

There has been a growing awareness of the impact of adverse childhood experiences (ACES) and of trauma on individuals, families and communities. The Chief Officers Group recognises the negative impact of childhood adversity and trauma and is committed to working to prevent and reduce this impact. Growing up with adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) such as abuse, neglect, community violence, homelessness, or growing up in a household where adults are experiencing mental health issues or harmful alcohol or drug use, can have a long-lasting effect on people's lives.

Preventing and responding early to adversity and trauma is a key focus across the Chief Officers Group and the Community Planning Partnership. As part of the Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) approach, there is an emphasis on prevention and early intervention to ensure that all children have the best start in life. This is the responsibility of a range of services and organisations – in particular, children's services and child protection. Examples of work undertaken include:

- Family Nurse Partnership
- Pre and post birth Social Work support
- Renfrewshire Child Poverty Action Plan
- Functional Family Therapy

The GIRFEC approach ensures that children and young people who have been affected by adverse experiences get the help they need when they need it. Examples of the support provided during 2019/20 include:

- The continuing emphasis on the 'Philosophy of Care' model within Renfrewshire's children's houses. This trauma-informed approach is reflected in policy and in the practice of our residential staff.
- The Renfrewshire Nurturing Relationships Approach (RNRA) being undertaken by Educational Psychology service in response both to the poverty related attainment gap and to the increasing levels of social and emotional needs being highlighted by schools.
- Initial exploration of a strengths-based approach in child protection

The importance of ensuring the workforce is trauma informed remains a priority across the partnership. On 9 May 2020, senior officers from across the partnership attended a development session with Dr Karen Treisman, a specialist clinical psychologist with expertise in trauma and in supporting organisations to become trauma informed. Dr Treisman has been working with Barnardo's to support their entire workforce to become trauma informed and the session was arranged as part of Barnardos strategic partnership with Renfrewshire Council which is focusing on addressing the issue of young people's mental health from pre-birth until 25 years. Following this session, a development group was established to develop a plan to make Renfrewshire 'trauma informed and trauma responsive'. This work is ongoing and due to the pandemic will continue to into 2020/21.

In addition to this, work is being undertaken by Children's Services – led by the Educational Psychology Service – to roll out Renfrewshire's Nurturing Relationships Approach (RNRA). As part of this work, the documentary 'Resilience; the biology of stress and the science of hope' has been shown to 35 groups of teachers, education professionals and support staff. It is supporting improved understanding about how nurturing relationships can help to mitigate the impact of ACEs and trauma.

An Accreditation Awards Toolkit is also being developed which sets out standards and criteria for planning, measuring, reviewing and reporting on RNRA outcomes and impact. This will be launched in the near future and Establishments will be able to apply for RNRA Accreditation.

More than 100 senior leaders (headteachers, depute headteachers) and other key staff have received leadership training that equips them to lead RNRA in their own schools, nursery or learning base.

Renfrewshire Educational Psychology Service is working with 43 primary schools, 10 secondary schools, 1 specialist provision and those establishments that are flexing learning continuum focused. In addition, they are supporting 21 Early Learning and Childcare Centres and Classes (ELCC) as well as four partner nurseries that are developing RNRA in their establishment. ELC classes are developing their approach along with their schools.

The development of an area-based trauma informed approach will be developed further in the next twelve months and remains a strategic objective. This approach is considered as essential to the recovery of the population from their experiences during the COVID-19 crisis.

### **6.3 Adult Protection (ASP)**

#### **Large Scale Investigation**

A Large-Scale Investigation (LSI) was undertaken during 2019 and was concluded in December 2019. The LSI involved an independent sector care home for older people that was also subject to an LSI between September 2017 and April 2018. A revised version of Renfrewshire's LSI guidance and procedures was utilised during the most recent investigation and was subsequently evaluated positively and is soon due for publication; this follows a further period of consultation.

#### **Joint Engagement and Communications Strategy**

*A Joint Engagement and Communications Strategy* was developed between the Renfrewshire Adult and Child Protection Committees, building on similar work done in other partnership areas. Areas of overlap for key messages and campaigns will be identified and progressed. Where one of the committees has communication needs distinct from those of the other, these will be progressed with input from all relevant group members. It has been noted that there is diversity in communications needs between the two committees, but the overarching strategy and some key representatives will be shared.

#### **Financial Harm Strategy**

The Financial Harm Subgroup is receiving support from Renfrewshire Council's Chief Executive's Service, Policy and Commissioning Team, to progress with an ambitious and meaningful financial harm strategy, with a SMART action plan stemming from the strategy. Following further engagement with the Community Safety Partnership and finalised review by RAPC, launch of the strategy and action plan is expected in early 2021.

#### **Review of RAPC**

A review of RAPC membership and that of its subcommittees was undertaken to: promote full participation of members and identify any gaps in current membership; to improve collaboration; to improve multiagency ability to achieve RAPC goals, including to improve

outcomes for adults at risk of harm in Renfrewshire; and to better understand the challenges faced by RAPC members.

The review also considered RAPC's fulfilment of statutory responsibilities. The review identified that the establishment of a new subcommittee was warranted to ensure fulfilment of RAPC's functions relating to quality assurance and self-evaluation activity; the Continuous Improvement Subcommittee was created. A quality assurance framework has been developed and the subcommittee will oversee single and inter-agency evaluation of adult protection activity in Renfrewshire. This subcommittee will also oversee a biennial programme of larger-scale, multi-agency self-evaluation activity. The subcommittee will seek to expand the use of service user and carer engagement in ASP continuous improvement activity.

### **Training Needs Analysis**

A training needs analysis e-survey was issued across the adult protection partnership in September 2019. The purpose of the questionnaire was to establish the extent of knowledge, experience and training that has taken place in relation to adult protection and the requirement for further learning in Renfrewshire. The information will be taken forward in clear actions as part of the training strategy and to develop the 2020 inter- and single-agency ASP training calendars. This will supplement information received from a similar electronic survey conducted as part of the RAPC self-evaluation 2018. All respondents confirmed awareness of adult protection, with 80% stating that they had good or excellent understanding.

### **Adult Protection National Significant Case Review (SCR) Framework**

The Scottish Government formally launched the Adult Protection National Significant Case Review (SCR) Framework on 5<sup>th</sup> November 2019. The purpose of the framework is to provide a consistent approach to conducting Adult Protection Significant Case Reviews and to improve the dissemination and application of learning both locally and nationally. Renfrewshire's own SCR Guidance and Procedures will be updated in 2020, building on the national framework. Local guidance includes recognition of governance arrangements for significant case reviews within Renfrewshire, including the role of Chief Officers.

### **Collaboration with Scottish Fire & Rescue Service**

The development of a new Renfrewshire Local Fire and Rescue Plan presents the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) with new opportunities to deploy its Prevention & Protection (P&P) assets across Renfrewshire in support of the Chief Officer's Public Protection Priorities.

Strong collaboration links continue to be enhanced with all partners across Renfrewshire and SFRS' engagement teams will have a strong focus on evidence-based initiatives, working closer and in a more collegiate way with all stakeholders across Renfrewshire. This approach will allow our P&P resources to develop stronger relationships and ensure that the most vulnerable across our communities receive the right level of support and care to reduce risk and improve wellbeing, with a clear focus on positive, measurable outcomes.

The information sharing protocol (ISP) between Renfrewshire Council, the Renfrewshire, HSCP and NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde has also been reviewed and enhanced.

### **Adults at risk of going missing**

The Herbert Protocol is a simple risk reduction tool to be used if an adult with care and support needs goes missing. The protocol has been extensively and successfully rolled out across most Police forces and partnerships across England, with positive feedback about its use when evaluated. Use of the protocol in other areas has focused specifically on people with dementia.

Police Scotland K-Division, with the support of its partners, including RAPC, has extended use of the protocol to any adults at risk of going missing in the community. This will not be restricted to adults with dementia. The 'K' Division protocol now includes adults at risk of going missing for any reason, including learning disability, dementia, acquired brain injury, or mental health problem. It will not be restricted to use with care homes or people living in their own

homes but will extend to use for anyone at risk of going missing in any community care setting, including the home of relatives.

Renfrewshire submitted a successful application to participate in the National Missing Persons Framework Implementation Project, which will enable us to receive support from Missing People, tailored to current processes and specific local needs, to develop good practice relating to people at risk of going missing. The submission involved collaboration of several partners, including the Renfrewshire HSCP; Renfrewshire Communities, Housing and Planning (Public Protection); Renfrewshire Children's Services; the Community Safety Partnership; and K-Division of Police Scotland.

The project will involve:

- Reviewing the response to missing through mapping and understanding current policies, guidance and practice relating to missing persons.
- Consulting on and developing policies and protocols around Return Discussions and information sharing.
- Delivering free, tailored training sessions to local professionals working in this field.
- Sharing best practice and learning related to the implementation of The National Missing Persons Framework for Scotland.
- Building awareness of support services available from Missing People which can allow our partners to focus resources on the operational response to missing persons.
- The launch of a Good Practice Toolkit for professionals to use day-to-day.

### **Joint Inspection of Adult Support and Protection**

On 07 January 2020, the Care Inspectorate, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary in Scotland (HMICS) and Healthcare Improvement Scotland (HIS) formally notified Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) and Renfrewshire Council that they would be undertaking a joint inspection of adult support and protection arrangements in the Renfrewshire partnership area commencing on 16 March 2020.

The onsite phase began as scheduled but due to the Covid-19 emergency not all activities were completed. From the 50 file samples of adults at risk of harm only 23 social work, police and health records were read. None of the 40 recordings of initial inquiry episodes for which no further adult protection-related action was required were reviewed. However, the inspectors were able to undertake an analysis of the staff survey (562 responses); review the supporting evidence; and consider the position statement. The inspectors also considered the findings of the self-evaluation of ASP activity undertaken in Renfrewshire in 2018, which focused on initial inquiry episodes; these findings contributed to their conclusions from the current inspection activity.

As a result of COVID, no formal report will be produced however the Care Inspectorate has agreed to provide some reflections which will be presented to the Integration Joint Board.

## **6.4 Gender Based Violence**

Renfrewshire's Gender Based Violence Strategy 'Equally Safe in Renfrewshire' has adopted and embraced the national priorities on gender based violence which were set out by the Scottish Government in Equally Safe. These priorities are seen as appropriate long-term goals and guide all work in Renfrewshire.

The impact of the strategy is monitored annually in line with the established evaluation framework. In line with the Scottish Government's reporting schedule an annual return will be submitted online identifying Renfrewshire's current position and progress made against the Equally Safe Performance Framework and Quality Standards. The annual progress report was approved by the Chief Officers' Group in September 2019.

Our vision is that “Renfrewshire is a place where Gender based Violence is not tolerated and where victims, perpetrators and communities are supported to address its causes and consequences”. The strategy focusses on four key priorities:

1. Ensure strong partnership working within Renfrewshire’s GBV Strategy Group.
2. Provide high quality local services which meet the needs of victims and address the behaviour of perpetrators.
3. Improve the knowledge, skills and behaviour of local workers around GBV through training.
4. Improve the knowledge, skills and behaviour of the wider community around GBV training and awareness raising activity.

The performance of the Renfrewshire GBV Strategy Group was assessed against the Equally Safe Quality Standards and Performance Framework and a report submitted to Scottish Government in July 2019. Of the 38 measures Renfrewshire fully met 23 and partly met 11 – areas for action were included in the group’s action plan.

Key achievements for 2019/20 include:

- MARAC Chair arrangements were reviewed following the introduction of the new domestic abuse legislation.
- Police Officers in ‘K’ Division have attended SafeLives training on identifying and responding to coercive control.
- 11 GBV training courses have been delivered to 68 staff across Renfrewshire since April 2019.
- The sensitive routine enquiry audit of Community Mental Health and Health Visiting services found that 97% and 90% of service users had been asked about their experience of abuse.
- A multi-agency approach to the Early Protective Messages (EPM) programme is underway. 398 staff have received training on the approach (137 HSCP Children’s Services and Specialist Children’s Services staff, 49 Social Work staff, 212 Early Years Education and Childcare Practitioners). The programme has been implemented in 25 Partnership and 12 Local Authority Early Years Establishments. All 74 Early Years Establishments will be trained to implement the programme by May 2020.

The focus for the 2019 16 days of Action Campaign was around raising awareness about the Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018 and increasing workforce skills. A range of activities were undertaken over 2019/20 in support of this:

- Annual Reclaim the Night March - The theme for the 2019 march was “Coercive and Controlling Behaviour – This is what it looks like”. Our local young people were encouraged to get involved and they provided a fabulous range of display materials and presentations.
- Practitioners Seminar - This attracted over 60 local workers from a range of services and departments. The seminar continued with the theme “This is what it Looks Like” and focused on coercive and controlling behaviour and its impact on victims
- The SafeLives research into survivor’s experience of support service in Renfrewshire and provided a range of one day training events looking at issues such as child sexual exploitation, rape and sexual assault.

On 13 November 2019, Renfrewshire Council established an employee policy for domestic abuse. The policy was implemented during the 16 days of action against domestic abuse and aims to:

- Demonstrate the Council’s commitment to supporting employees who have been impacted by domestic abuse;
- Encourage a supportive culture where employee’s feel confident to seek support and assistance in a confidential setting;
- Raise awareness of support provisions available through the Council and its partners.

- Provide managers and employees with advice and guidance to ensure the confidential handling of situations arising from domestic abuse;
- Meet all legislative requirements;
- Set out the Council's position in relation to addressing the behaviour of employees who are perpetrators of domestic abuse.

Employees who experience domestic abuse can request up to 10 days paid Safe Leave per leave year under the Council's Special Leave Policy to seek help and support for themselves and their families. The leave allows employees to:

- Attend medical appointments and counselling;
- Attend legal proceedings;
- Seek safe housing;
- Visit legal advisors or support agencies, for re-housing or re organising childcare, or for other relevant appointments;
- Liaise with the Police and other support organisations.

By preparing and implementing this policy, Renfrewshire Council is "taking a stand" by assisting and supporting employees who suffer from domestic abuse, tackling employees who are perpetrators of domestic abuse and assisting managers in identifying the signs of domestic abuse.

## **6.5 Community Safety and Public Protection**

### **Serious Organised Crime / Counter Terrorism**

Community Protection operates within the prevent space – best understood in relation to Counter Terrorism but also applicable to organised crime and relates to understanding and tackling issues of vulnerability and community dynamics which can lead to exploitation such as human trafficking, cyber-crime, drugs, missing persons, anti-social behaviour, violence. The aim of community protection is to work on a multi-agency basis to seek to avoid, delay or reduce the need to engage expensive long term and resource intensive support packages that would otherwise be implemented by social services and health.

Resilience and the effectiveness of individual services can be increased if related areas of activity are brought together and managed in joint teams / services. Community protection and prevention requires us to better understand and mitigate vulnerabilities that could lead to criminal or harmful activities, and support individuals and communities to better outcomes. Increasingly this requirement is being driven by a statutory agenda and expectations set out in national guidance – Counter Terrorism (Prevent), Domestic Abuse, Missing Persons and Human Trafficking all being examples where the statutory expectation and national guidance around mitigation and prevention have increased since 2015, and the impact of which are being considered as the review progresses.

Success requires co-ordinated multi-agency working and interventions and the development of appropriately targeted diversionary and intervention activities. Community Protection services in Renfrewshire have made good use of data, evidence and intelligence to target resources to best effect and to monitor and evaluate impact. Much of this has been collected from across partners through information sharing approaches and protocols. This is a key area of strength for the work currently undertaken within Renfrewshire. Confidence amongst partners in proportionate sharing and use of intelligence and data (in particular through the community safety partnership hub) has strengthened working relationships across partners and led to significant joint successes in targeted operations and interventions that require confident and resilient multi agency approaches. This has particularly benefited town centre management of anti-social behaviour and violence; human trafficking; counter terrorism (prevent); domestic abuse and missing persons. Opportunities exist to build on these foundations and extend the targeted use of intelligence and evidence to further harden and strengthen the community

against organised crime groups and to pre-emptively target particularly vulnerable individuals and communities and support them to improved outcomes. Some of these have been highlighted through the Collaborative Leadership training programme undertaken during 2019 in relation to frauds and scams and some have been identified in relation to national programmes around organised crime and counter terrorism. National approaches have a particular focus on improved use of data and intelligence in relation to Trading Standards and licensing activities in order to combat organised crime groups and will be facilitated by closer working and management relationships that include licensing alongside other community protection regulatory services.

## **National Prevent Agenda**

### **Prevent Professional Concerns Duty Guidance Update**

During 2019 / 2020 Renfrewshire Council continued to assist with the work being led by the Home Office to update the PREVENT Professional Concerns Duty Guidance and process following the latest legislative changes set out in the Counter Terrorism and Security Act and CONTEST Guidance 2018. This included ongoing work with the Scottish Government to assist them in developing the most recent Scottish specific Prevent guidance.

Over the summer of 2019, events were held across 11 locations in England, Scotland and Wales engaging with 144 participants, and along with sector-based engagement, capturing over 700 responses. The Council and Police Scotland were represented at events held in Glasgow. Several key themes emerged from this engagement which the Home Office are now proposing to incorporate into the new guidance which they are intending should better meet the needs of PPC Chairs and panel members. The Guidance was delayed due to the COVID-19 lockdown period and it is anticipated that it will now be issued during late summer 2020.

Submissions made during the consultation process so far reflect broad support for the direction of travel which indicates the continued delivery of the PPC process very much as it currently stands in Renfrewshire. While clear governance arrangements are required and should be evidenced by Council's the guidance should not be overly prescriptive and allow for flexibility around local CPP arrangements reflecting the needs and organisational structures in each community.

Similarly the need has been expressed not to be prescriptive in the arrangements for how frequently PPC's meet and conduct business - the important thing being to ensure that arrangements are in place to get all the relevant parties round the table in response to cases quickly - for local arrangements to address how best to achieve this and to meet the needs of case being discussed. In Renfrewshire so far, representation has varied from case to case to reflect the particular circumstances of each case and a standing meeting would not have been the best way to achieve this kind of focus or speed of response

In terms of determining the responsibility for hosting PPC's the Renfrewshire response indicated that it is important that the principles of residence are retained as this facilitates the development of effective relationships between professionals within an area and key establishments that may take in residents from other areas. - ie residential and secure care establishments. The current process where the PPC is held by the authority where the person is currently resident works well and makes sense – any other approach is likely to lead to inconsistency in how various establishments are expected to support and respond to Prevent referrals when their current residents might be under the Social Work care system in a number of different authorities.

Prevent Professional Concerns Case Conferences (PPCs) in Renfrewshire continue to be chaired by the Council SPOC as part of the wider Public Protection arrangements and governance. The process has worked well with 8 PPCs being held to date and has led to the right level of representation from other services and agencies at meetings as required and this continued during the lockdown period in 2020 with PPC's being held using digital platforms.

Renfrewshire is viewed as having established a good working model for PPCs in Scotland by both the Home Office and Scottish Government including Police Scotland.

### **Information Sharing Protocol**

An updated Information Sharing Protocol for community protection has now been agreed and signed by the relevant parties – Renfrewshire Council, Inverclyde Council and Police Scotland. Community Partners have also signed up. This is a significant step as it covers the whole of Police K Division with a wide-reaching information sharing protocol that supports the proportionate and relevant sharing of information between a range of public and third sector partners for a range of public protection purposes. It gives clarity and confidence in the appropriate sharing of information that will protect individuals and communities from coming to harm and supports a range of interventions including daily tasking, MARAC, Counter Terrorism and Serious Organised Crime. So far it is believed to be the first of its kind in Scotland.

### **Training and awareness**

The latest iteration of counter terrorism awareness training - ACT (Action Counters Terrorism) has been rolled out throughout the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service in Renfrewshire and the Community Protection (Prevent) Steering Group has agreed that Police Scotland will support delivery of a similar programme of training for key Council and Partner services. This training effectively replaces and updates the previous WRAP training which has been rolled out since 2015. At the same meeting it was also agreed that a programme of bespoke training would be developed for residents at Kibble and The Good Shepherd and if successful this could be tailored and rolled out for mainstream school pupils.

### **Prevent Training Event**

The Community Protection (Prevent) Steering Group agreed to develop a bespoke training event. This will be supported by the Scottish National Prevent Delivery Unit as well as the Divisional Counter Terrorism officers and will include a Prevent PPC Table Top Exercise which has already been successfully rolled out in some other areas. The event will be aimed at partners and services that might need to participate in a PPC process at some time and will focus on the types of issue and concern that may lead to a referral - the importance of the Notice – Check - Share approach and the types of outcome or processes that are involved in responding to a Prevent referral including some of the interventions that might be used. A Home Office expert has been secured to lead some of the key sessions. The event was originally scheduled to be held during April 2020 but has been tentatively rescheduled to be held during October 2020.

### **COSLA Guidance for Local Authorities on Human Trafficking and Child Exploitation**

During 2019/2020 CoSLA released guidance intended to support Local Authorities to develop good practice to identify, refer and support victims of human trafficking and exploitation, and disrupt and deter criminal activities. Human Trafficking is a significant and growing concern – highlighted by media coverage during 2019 of the tragic deaths of Vietnamese nationals in Essex. There have been a number of instances of Vietnamese people having been identified as potential victims of trafficking in Renfrewshire. There are also ongoing and successful joint operations with Border Force and Police Scotland to target the trafficking of individuals through Glasgow Airport from Eastern Europe for use in the sex trade.

The COSLA guidance has 8 parts and the Community Protection (PREVENT) Steering Group will lead on this agenda for Renfrewshire embedding relevant actions within its action plan:

- **Part 1** - Provides the definition of the crime of human trafficking and exploitation in Scotland, and the legislative and strategic context which underpins our work in this field.
- **Parts 2, 3 and 4** – Provide an overview of the ways in which local authority staff may come across victims of human trafficking and exploitation, the instances in which local authority staff may identify victims, and the means by which local authorities are required to refer and support victims and deter and disrupt criminal activities. They



outline approaches in partnership working and include a checklist of some of the common potential signs of trafficking and an overview of the purpose and the benefits of the National Referral Mechanism (NRM), and the referral process.

- **Part 5** - Considers local authorities' duties to safeguarding and supporting adult and child victims. There is a flowchart of the referral and support process, and a fact sheet outlining key considerations which provide support
- **Part 6** - Outlines local authorities' specific powers to disrupt and deter criminal activity via regulatory and licensing duties, community safety partnerships, and responsible procurement practices to seek to remove human trafficking and exploitation from supply chains
- **Parts 7 and 8** - provide a directory of useful websites and resources, including a list of training providers and a suite of tools that can be used for awareness raising and training.

### **Collaborative Leadership Programme**

A group of 17 staff from key partners working in Renfrewshire completed the inaugural partnership Collaborative Leadership Programme by undertaking an analysis and review of the work undertaken by the Community Safety Hub and presenting their findings to the Community Protection Chief Officer Group in June 2019. Each group highlighted potential areas for improvement that would build on the success of the current model. Participants came from partners including Renfrewshire Council, Police Scotland, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, Scottish Ambulance Service, the Star Project, Bridgewater Housing Association and the NHS.

Following the formal classroom training, Officers from the cohorts presented to the Management Team within Communities and Public Protection on some issues noted including:

- Frauds and Scams / Financial Harm
- Visibility of the hub and its work
- Participation and involvement of key partners
- Terms of reference
- Evidence of success / performance
- Infrastructure improvements

From the meetings, actions were taken to implement some of the findings and these have been incorporated into the Communities, Housing and Planning Services Service Improvement Plan 2020 – 2021.

### **Public Space CCTV – strategic review of camera locations**

Renfrewshire Council currently has 57 public space CCTV cameras covering Paisley, Johnstone and Renfrew Town Centres. These cameras and the 24 hr coverage of the images has been critical in investigating and preventing some of the most significant and violent incidents that have taken place in recent years, that might otherwise have been unsolved or have escalated and resulted in the death or severe injury of innocent people.

Using up to date data from both Police Scotland (Storm) database and Renfrewshire Council (Civica) database, a strategic review of CCTV cameras was undertaken in January 2020. Data was also used on the number of times cameras have been used for incidents by CCTV Operators and anecdotal information/experience from the CCTV Operators about which cameras need to be used and why.

From this strategic review, Communities and Public Protection have confidence that cameras remain in the correct location and have identified gaps that exist within Town Centres whilst developing a potential wish-list for the expansion of public space CCTV wider across Renfrewshire. This information will be essential to support any capital funding bids as well as options to secure the on-going revenue costs associated with the work – especially if this were from 3rd party sources.

In addition to public space CCTV, investment has also been put into mobile CCTV including upgrades to the mobile CCTV vehicles and infrastructure as well as portable cameras used for anti-social behaviour investigations and fly tipping. To protect key assets in Renfrewshire, discussions were undertaken to ensure that the Paisley Town Hall and Museum were protected whilst being renovated.

An additional 8 CCTV cameras have been installed and fed back to the CCTV Control Room within the Renfrewshire Community Safety Hub. This will allow the cameras to be monitored on a 24-hour basis and enable them to be used wider to deter and detect crime in Paisley Town Centre.

As a “proof of concept” for Renfrewshire, the Council worked with Boston Networks to trial the use of “point to point” cameras using Wi-Fi technology. This is in line with recommendations made by one of the Collaborative Learning Groups and has been implemented in other local authorities, however, it is essential that the cameras work continuously (don’t drop the signal) and there is no lag in transmission to the CCTV Control Room. This technology is being piloted and used for both sites.

Within Renfrewshire Community Safety Hub, work was completed to link a monitor from the CCTV Control Room into the Conference Room within the Hub. This will allow partners to see first-hand what the CCTV Operator is seeing on their computer screen within the Conference Room when it is being used as a Joint Agency Control Centre (JACC) for major events e.g. Halloween Parade. This will free up the CCTV Control Room to allow the Operator to focus on their work without interruption and will enhance the information available to the JACC.

### **Responding to COVID-19 - Shielding and Vulnerability, Local Assistance Team Support**

During the lockdown period over 1,800 Group 1 Shielding and Group 2 vulnerable residents within Renfrewshire have required emergency food provisions, through the Local Assistance Team, and, a further 829 vulnerable people have been supported with food provision from internal referrals. A total of 756 customers have been supported through a prescription delivery service. The Scottish Government has been to pause the requirement for shielding on 31 July and at that time support for those requiring it moved to mainstream services or community neighbourhood hubs if the suppression of the virus continues at the current rate then it is likely that this will remain the position.

From the continuous weekly welfare calls, most customers indicated that they no longer required the emergency food provision support well in advance of the date for pausing shielding. During the welfare calls the needs of customers were explored to ensure that, where appropriate, customers are linked into relevant support from mainstream services, partners and the volunteers and third sector agencies working with the neighbourhood hubs. This includes support with getting access to food and medicine, where appropriate.

The Local Assistance Team has also sought to make contact with people on the local shielding list. There are 6253 customers are on the shielding list and over 99% of these customers have been contacted. Where contact has not been made directly by the team, it has been checked through the HSCP with GP’s and by the Renfrewshire Wardens who conducted domiciliary visits to check on the customer’s welfare.

Contingency planning has been undertaken to ensure that there are robust plans in place in the event of a future wave of the virus, a local lockdown or a spike in Test and Protect cases.

### **Test and Protect Model**

The Test and Protect Model went live across Scotland on Thursday 28 May 2020. A national team took over “routine” cases from 13 July 2020, whilst “complex” cases will still be passed to local health boards to undertake tracing of close contacts with support from local authorities.

The Health Protection (Coronavirus) (International Travel) (Scotland) Regulations 2020 came into force on 8 June 2020 requiring all passengers entering the UK to complete a Public Health Passenger Locator Form. Discussions remain on-going with Public Health Scotland and the Greater Glasgow and Clyde Health Board around arrangements for quarantine for travellers who do not have a suitable address to reside at but have entered Scotland via Glasgow Airport. Due to low numbers of travellers to date, this has not been an issue, however, as numbers increase so does the potential requirement for quarantining.

### **Environmental Health and Trading Standards**

Under the Health Protection (Coronavirus) (Restrictions) (Scotland) Regulations 2020, extensive work was undertaken to support businesses both during the lockdown period and as more normal service delivery options were beginning to fully open across Renfrewshire. This has involved practically every member of staff being involved in one way or another.

A targeted, partnership approach was undertaken between Renfrewshire Council (EH&TS and Licensing) and Police Scotland to target licensed premises at the point they began to reopen and while some problems were noted, these were rectified promptly without the need for formal enforcement action.

Complaints and enquiries continue to be received on a daily basis from both the public and businesses due to the ever changing legislation and guidance, which is proving extremely challenging to resource – however in the main both businesses and the public have responded well to the challenges imposed by the lockdown period and to the changes in the way that services need to be provided when living with COVID-19.

### **Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements and Community Justice**

The strategic arrangements in relation to Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) continue to be overseen by the MAPPA Strategic Oversight Group, which exists across the six local authorities, previously under North Strathclyde Community Justice Authority. Information in relation to the workings of MAPPA, statistics, annual aims and objectives and work undertaken are included in the MAPPA Annual report. The most recent report covers 2018/19 and can be found on the Renfrewshire criminal justice website.

## **6.6 Community Justice**

### **Improving community understanding and participation in community justice**

Community Justice Renfrewshire held a partnership event – Time for Change – at Johnstone Town Hall in March 2020. This event brought together a wide range of stakeholders with local and national speakers, to reinforce the importance of understanding community justice issues and promote partnership working. This event was a positive step in the reinvigoration of the partnership. The event was well attended, and feedback from the workshop sessions showed that delegates had gained a better understanding of community justice issues and the aspirations of Community Justice Renfrewshire.

Feedback highlighted that the event had provided the opportunity for people to better understand how their role aligned with the aims and goals of the partnership. Delegates indicated that they were keen to be involved in future work and would welcome the opportunity to be involved in the partnership at different levels – for example, being involved in working groups, strategic groups and focus groups etc. It was intended that this event be followed up with further actions – including the development of subgroups and workshops - however due to the Covid-19 pandemic this work has been postponed at this time and will be followed up as soon as reasonably practicable.

### **Improving the employability pipeline for people with convictions and those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness**

The 'Just Learning – Skills for Employment Project' was rooted in the concept of a cross cutting partnership approach that recognises multiple benefits can and must be delivered to help those engaged move their lives onto a more productive and sustainable path. The project was funded through a successful joint bid to the Scottish Government's Employability Innovation and Integration Fund. It was delivered and managed by a multi-agency steering group.

The successes of this project were noted at its conclusion through external evaluation. It was noted at the conclusion of the project that it had only just scratched the surface, and that more needed to be done. Invest in Renfrewshire subsequently agreed to mainstream the project until 2022. The steering group has now evolved into the Employability, Homelessness and Justice Group which now feeds into The Local Employability Partnership and Renfrewshire's No One Left Behind Strategy. Work is underway to identify new initiatives which will benefit this client group through this multi-agency partnership approach.

### **Tackling homelessness for prison leavers**

Renfrewshire Council, in partnership with Turning Point Scotland, have been delivering a Housing First pilot. The pilot is targeted at people with a history of issues such as, repeat homelessness, non-engagement with support services, substance misuse, offending etc.

The key objectives of Housing First are to:

- provide a person-centred service and be creative and flexible when supporting service users;
- respect and listen to service users and involve and encourage them to make decisions about the service they want;
- help to address housing support and addiction issues to enable a service user to make positive changes in their life;
- encourage service users to lead full and active lives, achieve their aspirations and become involved in meaningful activities; and
- provide an equal and non-judgmental service.

The pilot was initially funded to support 10 service users. Due to Turning Point Scotland securing funding from Big Lottery, the service was able to be delivered to up to 20 service users. The Big Lottery funding came to an end in March 2020.

The following Community Justice practitioners work together within Low Moss Prison on a weekly basis:

- Homeless Services New Start officer
- Housing Addictions Liaison Officer
- EIIF Just Learning project Coordinator (employability services)

This has allowed for improved sharing of information between the partners and ease of access to a range of services for prisoners prior to their release.

### **Raising awareness of services and pathways available in Renfrewshire which support people to improve mental health and wellbeing.**

Community Justice Renfrewshire continues to support Active Communities in developing and promoting their new Renfrewshire Women's Centre. 'KAIROS' is based in Johnstone and is funded through the Robertson Trust. It seeks to be a safe, welcoming and respectful service offering a variety of opportunities and activities for women generally, including those with convictions, providing good connections to other local services.

Strong links have been made with criminal justice social work. Women undertaking community payback orders, including supervision and unpaid work, are provided with placements which have been a positive step in their rehabilitation.

Joint working between Community Justice Renfrewshire and Renfrewshire Alcohol and Drug Partnership have enabled a successful funding proposal through the Scottish Government's Change Fund. The 'Just Recover' project aims to improve the clinical pathways into addiction services for People with convictions in Renfrewshire. A Community Justice Development Worker – Addictions has been recruited and will be based and line managed within Renfrewshire Addictions Service. Work is currently underway to report on the progress of year two of the plan (2019/20) to Community Justice Scotland which will be published in September 2020.

## **6.7 Renfrewshire Alcohol and Drug Partnership (ADP)**

### **COVID-19**

The impact of Covid-19 at the end of the reporting period has resulted in the need for services to continually adapt to meet the needs of individuals affected by alcohol and drugs. This has also had an impact on work in the partnership's strategic priority areas. This has meant that, in some cases, they have been delayed or postponed but these will remain a priority as we move forward.

### **Alcohol and Drug Related Deaths**

The ADP Drug Deaths Action Plan continues to be a working document with key areas for action identified, including the continued distribution of naloxone to ensure maximum coverage in conjunction with key partners including the Alcohol and Drug Recovery Service, Housing and Homeless, pharmacies and families.

Renfrewshire ADP has updated the local Drug Deaths Action Plan which outlines key priorities for preventing deaths. This includes investigating all drug related deaths and trends, the continued distribution of naloxone and reviewing areas for intervention. In 2018, there were 50 drug related deaths in Renfrewshire compared to 38 the previous year representing an increase of 31.6%, but is a 28.6% increase on the 5 year average of 36. It is envisaged that this rising trend has continued into 2019 but official data has been delayed by National Records for Scotland.

The provision of the Festive Overdose Awareness Campaign has also continued. This includes targeted distribution of naloxone along with advice and support around overdose. Collaborative working continues with the creation of the Drug Action Partnership Group led by Police Scotland with the key aim of preventing and reducing the number of drug related deaths in Renfrewshire.

The rate of alcohol related deaths has increased from 32.4 in 2017 (per 100,000) 16+ to 37.8 (per 100,000) 16+ in 2018. There are plans to develop a process similar to drug deaths to ensure information is captured in relation to each alcohol related deaths to identify any potential areas for intervention. This is currently being led by the Scottish Government.

### **Recovery Orientated Systems of Care**

The outcome of the Independent Review of Alcohol and Drug Services has reached the implementation phase. This will inform a change programme to shape a new, fully integrated alcohol and drug service, including the provision of a Specialist GP Shared Care Team. In addition to this, premises have been secured for the development of a Recovery Hub for Renfrewshire – individuals with lived experience will have a key role in developing this resource. The Recovery Hub will be supported by a range of disciplines including Peer Workers. Navigator posts (who are based at the Royal Alexandra Hospital) have been recruited with the key aim of offering support to individuals to connect with local community services.

Youth Connections, a third sector partner, has secured funding for the development and delivery of a Young Person's Recovery Service in Renfrewshire. The service will be delivered applying a three-tiered approach focusing on prevention and education as well as providing one to one recovery sessions.

## **Prevention**

The Alcohol and Drug Partnership has provided funding to recruit a Health Improvement Lead for Licensing to enhance how alcohol licensing applications are responded to. The aim of the post has been to provide clarity for the Licensing Board on the potential adverse impact of alcohol from what is proposed by the applicant at a local level. This has included working with partner agencies to provide local data on other aspects such as antisocial behaviour as well as health data. In addition, and where appropriate, responses have included requests for certain conditions which the premises have to comply with to limit any adverse impacts. The HSCP has received 25 licensing applications for comment.

The delivery of alcohol and brief interventions (ABIs) continue to be a priority for the ADP. Current performance shows that there were 224 ABIs delivered as at March 2020 compared to 306 in the previous year. Funding has been provided for a dedicated resource to work with key partners to improve performance in this area.

## **6.8 Renfrewshire Alcohol and Drugs Commission**

When developing Renfrewshire's Community Plan 2017-2022, Renfrewshire Community Planning Partnership made a commitment to better understand how individuals, families and communities across Renfrewshire are impacted by alcohol and drug misuse. As a result, an independent Alcohol and Drugs Commission has been established.

Since the beginning of 2019, significant work has been undertaken to establish and develop the work programme of the Commission. At the outset, Commission members agreed to consider support those with the highest need who are suffering the most severe disadvantage. In the meetings which have followed, the Commission - which comprises key national experts from across health and social care, housing, justice, third sector and higher education - has discussed how we currently support people affected by alcohol and drug use; our services across prevention and early intervention; recovery; the impact of trauma; and how we engage with children and young people.

One of the most important parts of the work of the Commission continues to be listening to the voices of those with lived experience: talking to service users, people in recovery and their families and carers. To hear these voices, Commission members have visited Renfrewshire services including the Sunshine Recovery Café, the Renfrewshire Men's and Women's Groups, Renfrewshire Family Support Group, and Renfrewshire Adolescent Drug and Alcohol Resource (RADAR). In addition, the members of the Commission have also engaged with frontline staff and Pastoral Care teachers in a series of focus groups. In January 2020, a Recovery Conversation event was held in partnership with the Sunshine Recovery Café. This event provided the opportunity for over 100 individuals from the recovery community (including family members) to meet with Commission members and give their views to the Commission. The Commission has also heard evidence from a range of services and organisations and experts to inform its recommendations.

Due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdown, work is still ongoing to refine the key messages or recommendations that are beginning to flow from the work of the Commission. However, this work is a priority for the Chief Officers Group and will resume during late 2020.

## **6.9 Suicide Prevention**

Representatives from the Chief Officers Group received a presentation from the National Suicide Prevention Leadership Group (NSPLG) during Summer 2019 at a SOLACE Chief Executives meeting. The NSPLG was established to help drive implementation of the Scottish Government's Suicide Prevention Action Plan (2018), which sets out a target to further reduce the rate of suicide by 20% by 2022 (from a 2017 baseline). A key action from the 2018 plan, was to develop appropriate reviews into all deaths by suicide.

Examples of best practice from other areas in Scotland were highlighted during the presentation and discussion, with particular discussion in relation to multi agency case reviews which were being piloted in some local authority/health board areas in Scotland following confirmation of death by suicide. A follow up discussion was held with NSPLG several weeks after the SOLACE meeting, with an offer made to link Renfrewshire officers to appropriate officers across NHS Highland and Ayrshire where the multi agency case review approach was being piloted. These case reviews are being used to identify and consider any learning that can be gained from each of these very tragic deaths with, family members involved also in the process. Following the reviews there is a commitment to taking forward learning and improvements on a multi-agency basis. Work to develop a Renfrewshire response is currently ongoing.

### **Choose Life Renfrewshire**

Renfrewshire's Choose Life Service Co-ordinator has a key role in implementing the Renfrewshire's suicide prevention action plan. The action plan focuses on developing a wide range of services and practical support, raising awareness, undertaking research to improve knowledge about suicide.

During 2019, approximately 180 members of staff have participated in the training sessions including:

- Suicide TALK
- safeTALK (Suicide Alertness for Everyone)
- ASIST (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training)
- SMHFA (Scotland's Mental Health First Aid – adult version)
- What's The Harm ? (Self Harm Awareness)

In addition, a series of twilight sessions took place with Children's Services in relation to understanding suicide and self-harm. The service also supports community initiatives such as "No Substitute for Life and the annual Survivors of Bereavement by Suicide service held each year in January at Renfrewshire House.

Building on the links developed with Children's Services (Education) in 2019, a programme of training was agreed which would have run in its entirety until 30<sup>th</sup> June 2020. A total of 25 teachers, parents and pupils participated in workshops which were well received. Existing links with Erskine Day Hospital were built upon and a bespoke workshop was delivered on Suicide Prevention & Self Harm to 12 staff and veterans who attend the day hospital.

A comprehensive training programme was scheduled for 2020, however due to COVID-19 and restrictions on face to face training the programme was cancelled from 17<sup>th</sup> March. This programme consisted of:

- ASIST (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training) – 5 courses
- SAFETALK (suicide Alertness for Everyone) – 5 courses
- SMHFA (Scotland's Mental Health First Aid – adult version) – 3 courses
- What's The Harm ? (Self Harm Awareness) – 2 courses
- Introduction to Mental Health (bespoke course) – 2 courses

It is hoped that an alternative approach to delivering sessions will be developed to allow delivery of some training safely. It is anticipated that when Scottish Government guidance permits, face to face training will recommence within that guidance. Challenges around this are anticipated to include: access to suitable venues and delivery of training to smaller groups than in previous years. This will present a challenge in achieving similar numbers of people trained as in previous years.

## **6.10 Review of Chief Officers Group**

At its meeting on the 21<sup>st</sup> November 2019, the Chief Officers Group agreed to commission a review of the oversight arrangements for public protection. It was agreed that Duncan Macaulay, independent consultant and previously the Chief Social Work Officer for Edinburgh City and Orkney Islands Councils, be commissioned to undertake the review. Duncan also undertook the previous, comprehensive review in 2015. In addition to his very detailed understanding of the local governance structure, recommissioning Duncan Macaulay would also allow for an informed yet independent position to be reached as to whether current governance arrangements are operating as effectively as anticipated following the 2015 review, with options for further improvements identified for consideration by COG.

The review was undertaken from January 2020 onwards. It was originally intended to be concluded by March 2020, however, the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdown meant that a number of interviews with members scheduled for late March 2020 had to be postponed. The final interviews will be completed in summer 2020 and it is anticipated that the final draft report will be presented to COG in Autumn 2020 for consideration.

The review has involved:

- Consideration of the Terms of Reference for the COG;
- Consideration of the Terms of Reference for the associated sub groups;
- Review of a sample of COG reports;
- Interviews with COG members;
- Interviews with chairs of each of the sub groups;
- Consideration of good practice in other areas.

In terms of the Chief Officers Group specifically, the review considered:

- Role and remit in terms of supporting leadership, strategy and vision;
- Membership;
- Agenda-setting;
- Scrutiny of performance;
- Reporting arrangements;
- Clarity of lines of accountability; and
- Compliance with national guidance.

The review has also developed options for consideration in terms of the strategic structure of the governance arrangements/groups, as well as undertaking a similar process in relation to the Member Officer Group and its operation.

Through the course of the review, some emerging recommendations have allowed for updating of the Terms of Reference for Renfrewshire Adult Protection Committee. The independent consultant worked collaboratively with the independent chair of the committee and with the lead officer on this. The final report and recommendations will inform the future direction and functioning of the Chief Officers Group and, when agreed, will be implemented throughout 2020/21.

## **7. Strategic Focus**

As detailed in Section 3, Renfrewshire Community Protection Chief Officers Group is responsible for leadership, strategic oversight and scrutiny in relation to multi-agency public protection activity and practice in Renfrewshire. The group also regularly scrutinises performance information across all areas of community protection activity, focusing in on areas where there are changes in referrals, incidents or concerns reported, or where



national research or legislation suggests improvements or change to practice or multi agency working.

The Chief Officers Group will continue to seek to ensure that performance and practice are scrutinised at a strategic level, to identify what works well, to highlight any areas for improvement, and to consider where further opportunities for early intervention and prevention activity would achieve improved outcomes for local people.

When identifying the strategic priorities for 2020/21, in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, consideration has also been given to:

- The commitment of staff and partners during lockdown to ensuring vulnerable people are safe and protected;
- the impact on people already vulnerable to isolation, including issues such as mental health wellbeing, adult protection and drug and alcohol use;
- the potential longer-term impact on children and families – for example, the socio-economic impact on those with existing vulnerabilities and on others who now require support as a result of COVID-19;
- the likelihood that the virus will have an impact for an extended period and that services may have to be delivered differently going forward; and
- the capacity and resources available to all partners to allow them to manage existing activity whilst trying to move forward and meet changing needs and demands.

The strategic focus for the Chief Officers Group and the Member Officers Group during 2019/20 will be as follows:

- Collectively monitor impact of COVID 19 on most vulnerable citizens, in terms of impact on child and adult protection and wider community protection;
- Monitor and address the impact of Gender Based Violence across Renfrewshire in light of COVID19;
- Focus on new and emerging adult protection concerns including financial harm through bogus callers, rogue traders and scams;
- Provide scrutiny, support and oversight of activity in relation to care homes in light of COVID-19, with a particular focus on the wellbeing of residents and staff;
- Implement the recommendations from the independent review of COG by Duncan Macaulay;
- Prioritise work on alcohol and drugs use across Renfrewshire and refresh the recommendations of the Alcohol and Drugs Commission in light of covid-19 to ensure that we reduce the impact on individuals, families and communities;
- Support positive mental health and wellbeing with a focus on suicide prevention and people presenting to agencies in distress;
- Monitor the potential impact of the UK leaving the European Union undertaking activities on a partnership basis where this is required;
- Implement the recommendations from the Joint Inspection of Adult Support and Protection;
- Renfrewshire's Community Justice planned presumption against short sentences which will be extended to 12 months;
- Consider the findings of the National Child Protection Improvement Programme as these are developed and implement as appropriate; and
- Monitor community tension and support community cohesion across Renfrewshire with regards to protests, demonstrations and activities in relation to current community issues e.g. Covid-19, Black Lives Matter etc.





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**To: Council**  
**On: 24th September 2020**

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**Report by: Lead Officer, on behalf of the Audit, Risk & Scrutiny Board**

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**Heading: The Effectiveness of Fair Trade within Renfrewshire**

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## **1. Summary**

- 1.1 Over a period of months and as part of the Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Board's annual programme, reports have been presented to the Board by the Lead Officer on the effectiveness of fair trade within Renfrewshire.
- 1.2 In undertaking this review, the Lead Officer liaised with and interviewed various external organisations, steering group members, council officers and elected members. Council officers were presented information and key partners and witnesses attended Board meetings to describe their roles in fair trade and provide further background and relevant information.
- 1.3 This report describes the purpose and scope of the review, it includes summaries of the information reported to each Board meeting and concludes with the key findings and proposed recommendations approved by the Audit, Risk & Scrutiny Board at its meeting held on 16 March 2020.
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## **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 The Council is asked to:
- approve the findings and recommendations of this report.

### 3. Background

3.1 At its meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> August 2018, members of the Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Board agreed an annual programme of activity for the Board for 2018/19. This included a review which would look at the effectiveness of fair trade within Renfrewshire.

3.2 The key purpose of this review was to:

- (1) understand what motivates people to purchase fair trade products.
- (2) ensure that fair trade in Renfrewshire benefits the producer at source.
- (3) understand the processes in place to monitor the effectiveness of fair trade within Renfrewshire
- (4) understand how fair trade is promoted within schools.
- (5) determine if the current processes in place for the purchase and distribution of fair trade goods is the most efficient, both for the end producer and the customer.
- (6) identify if there are other ways to deliver fair trade to ensure best value, whilst ensuring that the correct people are benefiting. This could include investigating if the current process of purchasing from numerous countries and spreading the wealth is the most beneficial, or, focus on a single country.

3.3 The scope of the review focused on liaising and interviewing:

- Fair trade Organisations within and out-with Renfrewshire, including:
  - Rainbow Turtle,
  - Gavin's Mill
  - Just Trading Scotland,
  - Scottish Fair Trade Forum,
  - Fairtrade International
  - Fair Trade Scotland.

The intention of this was to understand the process of purchasing, distributing and selling fair trade products and to understand what motivates people to purchase fair trade.

- Services currently provided by the Chief Executive's service, this is predominantly how Renfrewshire Council engages with schools and community groups and how Renfrewshire Council monitors if fair trade is effective.
- Liaised with Renfrewshire Council Strategic Procurement Manager to gauge the financial implications of purchasing Fair Trade items if and when available.

- Renfrewshire's Fair Trade Steering Group to understand the work being undertaken in the local community.
- Attending the Scottish Fair Trade Forum to understand Fair Trade in Scotland.
- East Dunbartonshire Council, a Local Authority widely regarded as being one of the leading fair trade Authorities in Scotland to highlight potential areas of improvement within Renfrewshire.
- Engaged with Elected Members on the Fair Trade Steering Group to gain their overall views on fair trade within Renfrewshire.
- Undertaking a staff survey to get a better understanding as to what motivates people to purchase fair trade and to provide examples of fair trade products that people are interested in purchasing.

3.4 Progress reports were presented regularly to the Board and paragraphs 3.5 – 3.8 provide a resume of the main points presented on each occasion.

3.5 28<sup>th</sup> May 2019 – Scoping Paper & Fair Trade Summary

#### 3.5.1 What is Fair Trade?

Fair trade aims to provide fair terms of trade for farmers and workers in the developing world, whilst:

- obtaining fairer prices,
- improving working conditions,
- providing local sustainability,

This is undertaken in a variety of ways by requiring companies to pay sustainable prices. That is, prices that never fall below the market price for the produce.

Fair trade aims to stop discrimination against the poorest, weakest producer by addressing conventional trade. This enables farmers, producers and those associated with fair trade in the developing world to improve their conditions and have more control over their lives.

#### 3.5.2 Fair Trade in Renfrewshire

Renfrewshire Council recognises the importance that fair trade has; both within Renfrewshire and the effect it has Globally to the producer.

In 2007, a motion was raised at council Board supporting Renfrewshire's application to become a fairtrade zone, with status being granted shortly thereafter. Within a fairtrade zone, individual towns can also apply to become a fairtrade town. At present, Renfrewshire's fairtrade zone status has lapsed and the council are in the process of renewing it. Within Renfrewshire, only Kilbarchan currently has fairtrade town status, with the other towns requiring renewal, this is undertaken by community groups.

On 28<sup>th</sup> February 2019, Renfrewshire Council became one of the first Local Authorities in the UK to formally adopt the International Fair Trade Charter. Adoption of the Charter is not legally binding, however it signals Renfrewshire Council's intention to commit to the fair trade principles set out in the Charter.

The International Fair Trade Charter is a comprehensive document that lays out the purpose and aims of fair trade, as agreed by the World Fair Trade Organisation and Fairtrade International, two of the biggest global fair trade organisations.

Renfrewshire has a strong fair trade brand with a prominent retail outlet (Rainbow Turtle) situated in Paisley that is dedicated to the selling of fair trade produce. Paisley is also home to a commercial fair trade importer, distributor and educator based in Paisley (Just Trading Scotland).

### 3.6 26<sup>th</sup> August 2019 - Fair Trade out-with Renfrewshire

- 3.6.1 To facilitate a balanced review it was important to understand what other local authorities do in addressing fair trade. To further provide context to this element of the review, a knowledge sharing exercise was held with East Dunbartonshire to help share working practices and to highlight potential areas of improvement within Renfrewshire.

East Dunbartonshire Council support the principles of fair trade and as a consumer, the promotion and purchase of fair trade goods as part of their commitment to sustainable development.

East Dunbartonshire Council have successfully implemented:

- To offer fair trade goods where possible when catering for Council meetings and functions.
- To implement fair trade through procurement processes and those of suppliers wherever possible.
- To appoint a named Council representative to support the work of the East Dunbartonshire Fairtrade Steering Group.

- To promote Fair Trade issues and practices among local business, commercial and other organisations.
- To support the Group's communication plan (Appendix 1).
- To share best practice with regard to Fair Trade and sustainable development with other public bodies, stakeholders and partners.
- To work with the Steering Group to ensure that East Dunbartonshire continues to meet and exceed the requirements necessary to maintain its status as a Fairtrade Zone.

3.6.2 In relation to local fair trade wholesaler, Just Trading Scotland (JTS) are a fair trade importer based in Paisley and a registered Scottish charity, the business manager at Just Trading Scotland attended the August Board and gave an insight into the process from growing crops, to selling it throughout Renfrewshire and the UK. Discussion also took place in relation to the 90kg rice challenge that is undertaken in both schools and the wider community. It also allowed the Board to understand fully the process of fair trade and the associated benefits and challenges faced.

To date JTS have informed over 20,000 school children and 10,000 adults about fair trade and sustainable farming. The Lead Officer interviewed their business manager in relation to the purpose of this review.

The key areas covered were those highlighted in the initial scoping paper as being the key purpose of the review with the main points noted:

- Motivation - Shops selling various products publicise that people are motivated to help the producers, but also that their customers feel that they are doing the right thing.
- Benefits the producer - JTS deal direct with organisations in South Africa and have confidence that the producer at source is benefiting from products purchased in Renfrewshire. JTS are also in the audit stage of obtaining World Fair Trade Organisation (WFTO) membership. WFTO membership ensures that registered organisations are improving their ethical performance.
- Monitoring the effectiveness of fair trade - this is very difficult to undertake as there are no existing benchmarks that can be used year on year and there are various version of what is fair trade.

- Promotion within schools - at present, very little proactive promotion is undertaken by Renfrewshire Council within its schools. It is largely left to individual schools to engage with fair trade organisations. A structured approach to fair trade led by a nominated officer would provide the emphasis and focus to promote fair trade within Renfrewshire schools.

### 3.7 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2019 – the Fair Trade Steering Group & Fair Trade within Schools

3.7.1 In keeping with the scope agreed by the Board, the review moved on to consider the relevant activities carried out by and facilitated by Renfrewshire Council. The main activities include chairing and facilitating the Fair Trade Steering Group and co-ordinating Fair Trade in schools.

3.7.2 The Steering group is there to allow any persons or organisations to come together to discuss fair trade within Renfrewshire

Renfrewshire's Fair Trade Steering Group is chaired by the Leader of Renfrewshire Council. Renfrewshire Council officers are there in the role of facilitators to support the group, to help it expand and to provide support to the work they are doing.

The objectives of the steering group are:

- To promote fair trade within Renfrewshire.
- To encourage the use of fairly traded goods.
- To secure the renewal of Fairtrade Zone status for Renfrewshire.
- To provide support for community groups to develop local fair trade campaigns.
- To support Scotland's aim to become a fair trade nation.
- To provide support for schools to encourage wider understanding about fair trade and to help promote the benefits of becoming a fairtrade school.
- To provide publicity to raise awareness of trade issues with the developing world.
- To take any action incidental to supporting these objectives.

3.7.3 Fair trade or the ethical purchasing of goods does not form part of the school curriculum.

At present it is down to individual schools as to whether they want to get involved in the promotion of fair trade and to introduce it into lessons, with some schools choosing to be more pro-active than others.



At present, the John McDowell award which is given to primary schools and a separate secondary schools award is given each year to schools. There is a basic application form that the Fair Trade Steering Group sends to schools with set criteria.

3.8 4<sup>th</sup> November 2020 - Staff Survey, Discussions with Councillor Nicolson & External Organisations

3.8.1 To facilitate a balanced review it was important to understand what motivated staff to purchase fair trade and to gather views on fair trade overall, as such a staff survey was undertaken by 268 Renfrewshire staff members with the key points highlighted below with the full survey results available in Appendix 2. Discussions also took place with the chair of the fair trade Steering Group and a number of external organisations.

3.8.2 The key points from the staff survey highlighted:

- 69% of staff purchased a variety of fair trade products with the vast majority aware of where to go to purchase products.
- 64% of respondents believe all towns in Renfrewshire should be Fairtrade towns
- 85% of respondents believe that the children of Renfrewshire should be taught about fair trade at school.
- 84% of respondents believe that Renfrewshire Council should purchase Fairtrade products where possible.
- 33% of staff believe Renfrewshire Council does enough to promote fair trade.

3.8.3 The Leader of the Renfrewshire Council, Councillor Nicolson is the chair of the Renfrewshire Fair Trade Steering Group. Discussions took place with Councillor Nicolson and the key points are highlighted:

- Fair trade should be promoted along with ethical procurement of goods.
- Engagement with local communities and voluntary groups should be explored as the steering group exists to support fair trade throughout Renfrewshire.
- New members would help promote fair trade to the wider community.

- Renfrewshire Council should be doing more to promote fair trade. This thought mirrors part of the staff survey with only 33% of staff thinking that the council does enough to promote fair trade.
- Councillor Nicolson discussed that one element could be a more aggressive procurement policy, with the council purchasing fair trade goods unless there is justification not to, whilst ensuring that products are still reasonably priced.
- Councillor Nicolson believes that the promotion of fair trade within schools should be encouraged and is echoed by 85% of all council employees that were surveyed. However, schools may require additional support where they wish to take on fair trade as it does not form part of the school curriculum.

3.8.4 In order to facilitate a balanced review it was important to understand what other organisations do in promoting fair trade. As such, the Directors of Fair Trade Scotland Ltd were invited to a discussion to better understand the process involved in produce becoming certified.

There are a number of certifications for goods that are fair trade, there is the world renown logo of the Fairtrade Mark and there is also the Fair Trade Charter, to mention but a few.

The Fairtrade Mark guarantees giving a set price to the producer. Unfortunately, not all products carrying the Fairtrade logo are 100% fairtrade. The impact of goods must be audited to ensure the producer is benefiting. At present, this is not undertaken in order to get the Fairtrade Mark and the process of accreditation is not fully audited. Large International Organisations have diluted the mark in recent years as they purchase produce from co-operatives. Many of these co-operatives are not monitored and it may be a family with a number of farms that excludes the rest of the surrounding community.

At present, the World Fair Trade Organisation (WFTO) is the only organisation that ensures the producer is key in the chain. It is relatively straight forward for a company to get the Fairtrade Mark. However, many would find it difficult to obtain the WFTO accreditation due to the thoroughness of the accreditation process.

The WFTO have set out 10 principles that must be adhered to in order to obtain their accreditation. This rigorous accreditation takes many years to obtain. Producers must stick to all 10 principles to get the WFTO mark. The 10 principles are:



#### 4 Key Findings

4.1 While findings and recommendations follow, Renfrewshire Council's activity relating to fair trade is an ever-developing area and the council is continually looking at ways to promote and engage with fair trade organisations. Some findings are therefore observations only; not all lead to recommendations.

4.2 The promotion of fair trade within schools should be encouraged and is echoed by 85% of Renfrewshire council employees that were surveyed. However, schools may require additional support where they wish to take on fair trade as it does not form part of the school curriculum

Discussions have been ongoing with the Scottish Fair Trade Forum with a view to developing a Fair Trade culture within schools. The programme would be extended to not only cover fair trade but would also seek to educate children and young adults on issues surrounding poverty alleviation, human rights, gender equity, environmental protection and sustainable economic growth. This would help current and future generations to appreciate and embrace their responsibility as global citizens. This approach would potentially have a greater uptake than Fair Trade on its own in a time when many environmental platforms are vying for the public's attention.

4.3 It has been noted that fair trade could benefit from the council purchasing fair trade goods unless there is justification not to, as agreed by 84% of staff.

Discussions have taken place with the council's Strategic Procurement Manager to investigate the practicalities of introducing such a policy whilst ensuring that products are still reasonably priced. As an example, at present we purchase bananas through a contract at £1.08/kg. If we were to switch to fairtrade bananas through the same contract, that price would increase to £1.90/kg, an increase of 76%. When pro rata'd over a 12 month period the additional cost to introduce fairtrade bananas would be approximately £55,000. Whilst consumers may look for a choice between fair trade and non fair trade, it would be costly for Renfrewshire Council to implement a fair trade only option on certain food-types.

- 4.4 It is noted that the Fairtrade Mark and WFTO accreditation both have their roles to play in the promotion of Fair Trade. It should be down to individual organisations to decide what level of fair trade they wish their products to be and to ensure that consumers are aware of each when making a fair trade purchase.

## **5 Recommendations**

- 5.1
- (1) Elected Members and Council Officers on the Renfrewshire Fair Trade Steering Group should support and encourage other members to set the agendas and initiate common objectives to benefit fair trade throughout Renfrewshire, with officers continuing to minute the meetings.
  - (2) It is recommended that the members of the steering group become more proactive in ensuring their own towns have Fairtrade status.
  - (3) It is recommended that the group introduce a structured communications plan for the year ahead as introduced by East Dunbartonshire Council. This would provide an ongoing focus and enable groups to plan in advance and liaise with other fair trade providers. It would also provide momentum for the group and could be used to harness the energy of each of the towns of Renfrewshire to work collectively towards a common goal.
  - (4) The Fair Trade Steering Group should look to establish a fair trade award in conjunction with the wider public and businesses. This could encompass a Renfrewshire Council fair trade sticker that can be displayed by local businesses with criteria set by the group.
  - (5) It is a recommendation of this report that the option to deliver a programme to educate staff and pupils is progressed with engagement with senior representatives within education. This programme, co-ordinated by The Scottish Fair Trade Forum would cover issues such as fair trade, poverty alleviation, human rights,

gender equity, environmental protection and sustainable economic growth as detailed in section 4.2 of this report. In doing so, the profile and awareness of the fair trade awards within schools would be increased.

- (6) It is recommended that the Fair Trade Steering Group introduce an awareness campaign to the wider community to highlight what fair trade produce is sold locally, as 69% of staff surveyed were aware of the location of the fair trade shop but were unaware as to the products sold. It would also be beneficial to highlight the benefits of purchasing fair trade and help to entice customers through the door. This could also be incorporated into the communications plan, as per recommendation (3).
- (7) Rainbow Turtle, Renfrewshire's flagship fair trade shop does not advertise other than facebook and twitter which is a captive audience for those individuals that already have an interest in fair trade. Smaller organisation like this would benefit from and support that could be offered through the community benefits section of the councils procurement contracts. It is recommended that the Steering Group meet to discuss any benefits with the councils Strategic Procurement Manager.

## Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** - *none*
2. **HR & Organisational Development** - *none*
3. **Community Planning**
4. **Legal** - *none*
5. **Property/Assets** – *none*
6. **Information Technology** - *none*
7. **Equality & Human Rights**

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

8. **Health & Safety** - *none*
  9. **Procurement** - *none*
  10. **Risk** - *none*
  11. **Privacy Impact** - *none*
  12. **Cosla Policy Position** – not applicable.
  13. **Climate Risk** - *none*
- 

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# Appendix 1

## EAST DUNBARTONSHIRE FAIR TRADE STEERING GROUP – COMMUNICATIONS PLAN – 2017-19

### 1. KEY MESSAGES

Fair Trade is about decent working conditions and fair terms of trade for farmers and workers. It encourages sustainable production techniques and protection for the environment. It contributes to the sustainability of supply chains. The Fairtrade Mark gives consumers guarantees about the product so they can make an informed decision about their purchase.

1. The East Dunbartonshire Fair Trade Steering Group supports all fair trade, not just farmers in the Fairtrade system, so it supports a raising of social, economic and environmental standards in all supply chains both locally and globally.
2. East Dunbartonshire was one of the first areas to gain Fairtrade Zone status in 2007 and has held Fairtrade Zone status continually since then - the only area in Scotland to achieve continual zone status for so long.
3. It has pioneered new initiatives, such as the Fairtrade Cotton Schoolwear Campaign, the Nurseries Campaign and Themed Menus in Schools. These have been rolled out nationally.
4. It is well supported by the Council, something the Fairtrade Foundation praised “we were particularly impressed by the excellent and continuing relationship with the Council and their active involvement locally and nationally encouraging fair trade food procurement in schools”.
5. Fair Trade is supported throughout all geographical areas of East Dunbartonshire, being particularly strong in schools and churches. The Coach House at Balmore was established in 1980 and was one of the first supporters of Fair Trade in Scotland.

### 2. KEY PEOPLE INVOLVED

Alongside the members of the East Dunbartonshire Fair Trade Steering Group

- Lenzie Fairtrade Group
- Bearsden and Milngavie Fairtrade Group
- Milton of Campsie Parish Church Justice and Peace Group (Founding Group)
- The Balmore Trust

The Group also operates a Nursery Group and a Schools Group to support Fair Trade in Teaching and Learning. Nursery Group led by Tracy Mitchell, Schools Group led by Angela Oakley

The Group works closely with the Scottish Fair Trade Forum. One member is also on the Board of the Forum and another is the Forum’s Volunteers Schools Advisor. The Forum offers advice and support.

### 3. METHODS OF COMMUNICATION

- Local newspapers (Kirkintilloch Herald, Bishopbriggs Herald, Milngavie and Bearsden Herald)
- Local radio
- Meetings and events
- Email bulletins
- Magazines, newsletters and flyers (e.g. EDC Edit but also of other partners e.g. EDVA quarterly newsletter)
- Websites (EDC plus those of partners)
- Social media (facebook and twitter)

### 4. ACTION PLAN

Date	Milestone / Event / Task	Target Group	Communication Method	Purpose / Key Messages
January 2017	Update Council website with new Fair Trade Motion		Council Website	Awareness of Council commitment to Fair Trade
Ongoing	Continue to update and share posts from other organisations on Facebook		Social Media	Raise awareness of fair trade amongst a wider audience
Ongoing	New school mergers (Auchinairn/Woodhill & St. Agatha's/St. Flannan's) and ongoing consideration of fair trade school uniforms		Emails, meetings, newsletters.	Raise awareness and encourage take up of fair trade school uniforms.
Ongoing	Steering Group to secure another flagship employer		Press Release/Social Media	Raise Awareness and uptake of Fair Trade with business sector
2 February	Fairtrade nursery group meets in Hillhead Primary			
End February 2017	Article about Fair Trade in East Dunbartonshire Council 'You and Your Community' newsletter. Update community grant guidance to refer to sustainable development.	Community groups and General Public	EDC Website and email to community groups.	Raise Awareness and uptake of Fair Trade with community groups. Seek new members of steering group and offer to talk

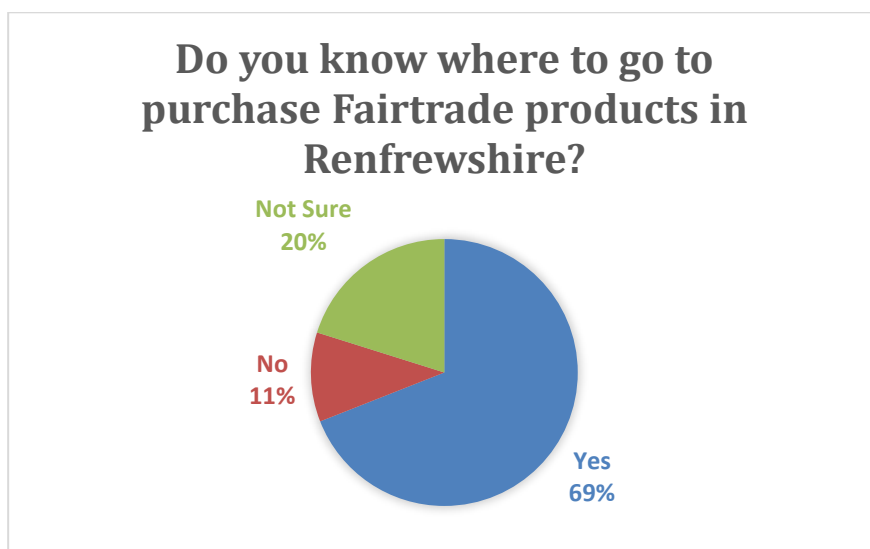
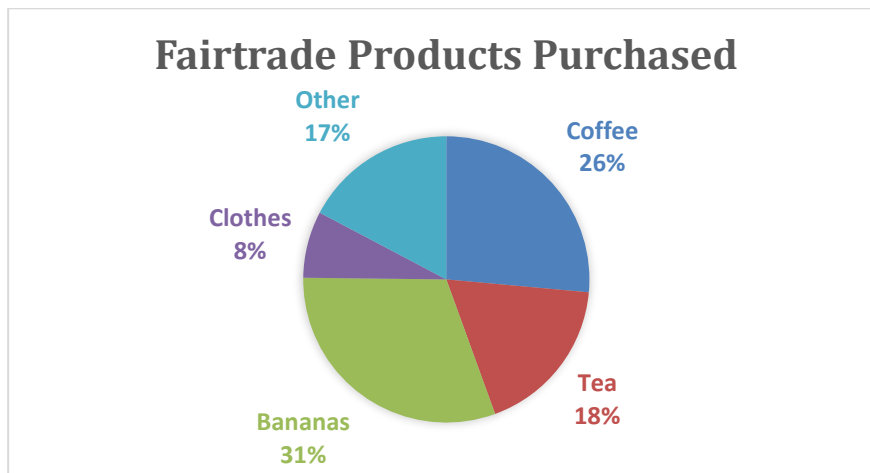
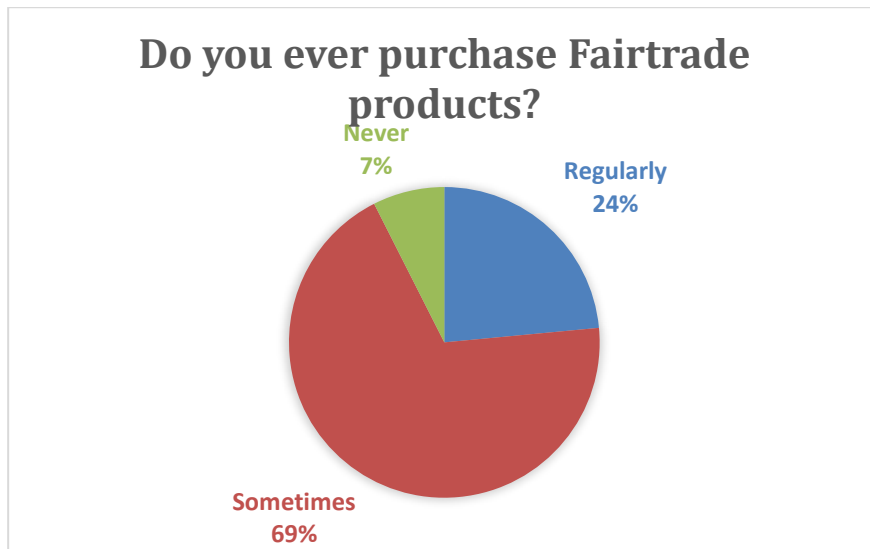


				to community groups about Fair Trade.
27 February – 12 March 2017	<i>Fair Trade Fortnight</i> <i>Activity will be Put Fairtrade in your Break. Don't feed Exploitation</i> <i>Event packs and special resources are available from the Fairtrade Foundation.</i> <a href="http://schools.fairtrade.org.uk/">http://schools.fairtrade.org.uk/</a>		<i>Press Release/Social Media</i>	
Early March 2017	Celebrate Fair trade zone renewal for East Dunbartonshire		Press Release/Social Media	Ten years of fair trade status
1 March	Gavin's Mill opening		Council Facebook and Social Media	
2 March	Photo opportunity in Lairdsland School dining area with P6 pupils in the afternoon at 1:15. Fair Trade stalls in Southbank receptions on March 2nd 12-1 Marina, 1.30-2.30 Southbank House and 2.30-3.30 Campus Building. Brommhill Stall (8 March over lunch in canteen) following week.		Press Release/Social Media  Internal email bulletin for stalls in Southbank.	Put Fairtrade in your Break. Don't feed Exploitation. During Fairtrade Fortnight this year we are being encouraged to choose Fairtrade items for our Breaks. As well as tea and coffee, this may include cakes, biscuits and sweets made with Fairtrade ingredients and we should also think about fairly traded fruit from countries where farmers may struggle to provide life's necessities for their families.
Saturday 11 March	'Time to put Fairtrade in your Break' event by Lenzie Group. Lenzie Fairtrade Group is organising a coffee morning devoted to the theme of putting Fairtrade into our Break which will take place on		Press Release/Social Media	Put Fairtrade in your Break. Don't feed Exploitation

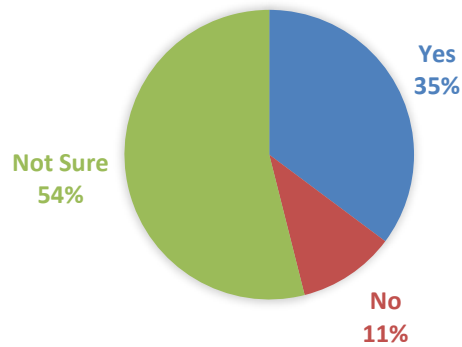
	Saturday 11 March from 10 - 12 in Lenzie Union Parish Church Hall. As well as a range of Fairtrade coffee blends to taste, there will be plenty of home baked "Fairtrade Break" items to try as well as the ever popular "smoothie bike". There will also be lots of activities for children to help them understand the Fairtrade message in a fun and enjoyable way. Admission charge will be £2 per adult and £1 per school age child.			
13 May 2017	World Fair Trade Day		Press Release/Social Media	A worldwide festival of events celebrating Fair Trade as a tangible contribution to the fight against poverty and exploitation, climate change and the economic crises.
TBC in 2017	Closure of the Coach House and ensuring its work continues.		TBC	Celebrate achievements and plans for future.
TBC in 2017	Council to affiliate with Electronics Watch		Press Release / Social Media	First Council in Scotland to affiliate? Highlight progress re fair trade in Council procurement (e.g. laptop rollout)
24-30 April 2017	Fashion Revolution Week			Ethical clothes production
Summer 2017	Fair Trade presence at Kirkintilloch Canal Festival		Press Release/Social Media	5 Key Messages
Summer 2017	Fair Trade presence at town Gala Days		Press Release/Social Media	5 Key Messages
TBC in 2017	Directory of Fair Trade ED retailers	Steering Group members to add retailers to ED asset map: <a href="http://www.east">http://www.east</a>	TBC in 2017 (funding for leaflet)	Directory of Fair Trade ED retailers  Encourage people to buy Fair

		<a href="http://dunassets.org.uk/">dunassets.org.uk</a> /		Trade products from local shops.  Raise awareness in businesses of the ethos of Fair Trade including the Fair Trade premium and the effect on local communities in developing countries.
September 2017	Autumn Event		Press Release/Social Media	5 Key Messages
February 2018	Fairtrade Fortnight		Press Release/Social Media	5 Key Messages
May 2018	World Fair Trade Day		Press Release/Social Media	A worldwide festival of events celebrating Fair Trade as a tangible contribution to the fight against poverty and exploitation, climate change and the economic crises.
Summer 2018	Fair Trade presence at Kirkintilloch Canal Festival		Press Release/Social Media	5 Key Messages
Summer 2018	Fair Trade presence at town Gala Days		Press Release/Social Media	5 Key Messages
September 2018	Autumn event		Press Release/Social Media	5 Key Messages
December 2018	Fair Trade Zone renewal			Celebrate Achievements

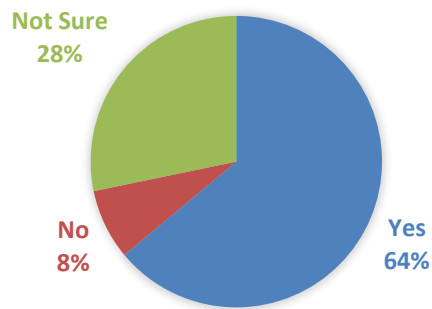
## Appendix 2 - Fair Trade Survey Results



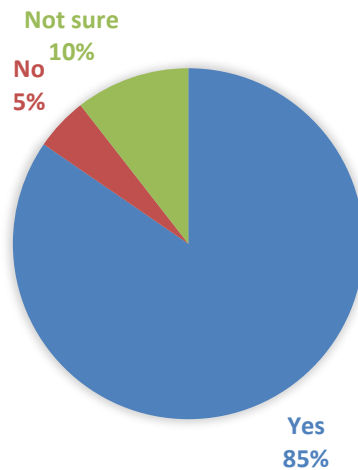
**Do you think there is a good selection of Fairtrade products in Renfrewshire?**



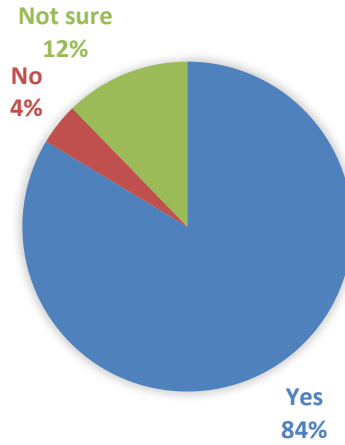
**Do you think towns in Renfrewshire should all be Fairtrade towns?**



**Do you think Fairtrade should be taught in Renfrewshire schools?**



**Do you think Renfrewshire Council should purchase Fairtrade products where possible?**



**Do you think Renfrewshire Council does enough to promote Fairtrade?**

