

**To:** Infrastructure, Land and Environment Policy Board

**On:** 31 August 2022

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**Report by:** Director of Environment & Infrastructure and

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**Heading:** Operational Performance Report

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## **1. Summary**

- 1.1 This report provides an overview of key service activities since the last Policy Board report on 15 June 2022 and an operational performance update on the services and key projects delivered during this period.
  - 1.2 Operational Services have continued on a 'business as usual' basis while working within Covid-19 restrictions. All required safety measures are in place and are now well established.
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## **2. Recommendations**

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

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

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

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

### **4. Fleet, Roads and Transportation**

#### **4.1 Fleet Services**

Fleet Services have taken delivery of three new vehicles; two for StreetScene and new one for the roads service. Compared to the previous vehicles, these use modern technology to provide greater fuel efficiency, reduced carbon impact and will cost less to maintain, also they're design reduces working at height and other Health & Safety risks for operatives that use them.

#### **4.2 Paisley Town Centre Car Parking**

In line with the Scottish Government's guidance on living with Covid in the months ahead and rebuilding for a better future, in order to assist businesses, retail and communities transition, there will be no change to the pilot parking arrangements in Paisley Town Centre with 3 hours free parking within 8 car parks continuing to remain in place until the end of March 2023 to allow a further review of where Renfrewshire is with the pandemic over the winter months.

#### **4.3 #YouDecide**

- 4.3.1 The engagement with the communities has been a positive experience with communities and individuals contributing 2,843 ideas. This initial list has been shortlisted to approximately 100 ideas. A similar engagement exercise to that carried out in Phase 1 will take place to encourage communities across Renfrewshire to vote for projects in their local area.

- 4.3.2 Officers are finalising the voting process with a view to the shortlisted ideas going to a public vote in September 2022.

#### **4.4 Active Travel Update**

- 4.4.1 The Paisley to Renfrew riverside cycle and pedestrian route started the build phase in late January 2022. The section from Abercorn Street towards Wright Street is nearing completion and the connection southwards to the Paisley Central Retail Park off Renfrew Road is underway. The next phase heads on-road to Renfrew and some contractor design elements will be the subject of public notification in due course. The project will provide an important active travel link from Paisley Gilmour Street Station all the way to the River Clyde.

#### **4.4.2 Smarter Choices, Smart Places**

Environment & Infrastructure Services have been working with schools and communities to implement new Active Travel projects as part of the Smarter Choices, Smarter Places funding programme:

### **Beat the Street**

Following the success of the Beat the Street Villages Game, which ran from August to October 2021 in a number of our villages. Around 7,000 participants, schools and community groups benefitted from being encouraged to travel actively by feeling fitter and being given vouchers for local businesses as rewards, Beat the Street has been launched again in Paisley and runs until mid-October. The project aims to increase people's activity levels, improve health and promote behavioural change. "Beat the Street" is focused around a 6-week game, scheduled to take place across Paisley. We are working in partnership with OneRen to promote the project in schools and local communities.

### **Not far? Leave the Car**

The Beat the Street Project is linked to the Not Far? Leave the Car campaign which similarly rewards participants for making behavioural changes through a downloadable app and leaving the car at home in favour of getting more active. The Council's communications team has worked closely with the organiser Better Points and a specialist consultant to engage with businesses to make lasting connections. This work is in the hope that the long-term profitability of businesses in Renfrewshire is aided after the effects of the pandemic. Similarly, Council staff have also been targeted and encouraged to use the app for their own health and wellbeing and to reduce their dependence on the car. A further update will be provided to a future Board.

- 4.4.3 Council and SPT funds have provided a significant investment in Pedestrian Crossing installations, the most recently completed at Houston Road and Penilee Road. Officers continue to work with Scottish Power to energise a crossing at Barrhead Road. All these crossings are part of a programme to address concerns over crossing safety and speeding at locations around schools, nurseries and key junctions in towns and villages.

## **5. Parks Investment**

- 5.1 Maxwellton Park play area contract was awarded late December 2021 but was subject to equipment manufacturing delays. The play area upgrade was completed in July.
- 5.2 Five contracts awarded early March 2022 for play area renewal have now all been successfully completed at
- Morar Drive, Paisley;
  - Durrockstock Park, Paisley;
  - Ellerslie Street, Johnstone;
  - Tinto Square, Renfrew; and
  - Ben Lawers Drive (Hawkhead Park), Paisley.
- 5.2.1 In addition construction works at East End Park, Paisley have been undertaken. The park will open to the public following final stages of the works and post installation inspections.

5.2.2 A seventh contract awarded for Lochwinnoch Park is scheduled to start late August 2022.

5.3 Following a second successful tender exercise in June 2022, a further six play area renewal contracts have been awarded for;

- Campbell Street, Renfrew
- Crags Park, Paisley
- Elm Drive & Sycamore Avenue, Johnstone
- Ardgryffe Park, Houston
- Churchill Drive, Bishopton
- Dunvegan Avenue, Elderslie

It is anticipated that installation of these new play areas will start from October 2022 and be complete by the end of the calendar year.

5.4 Work has begun on specifying works for play areas identified for refurbishment outlined in the August 2021 report to this board. Initial work will look at refurbishment of Howwood Park Toddler / Junior, Houston Public Park, Moss Road Park and Inchinnan Playing Field play areas.

5.5 Work at Barshaw Pond has been complete. The pond has been allowed to fill naturally to protect the fish. Water levels are safe but remain low at present. A treatment plan for algae and pond weed growth has been established.

5.6 Friends of Barshaw Park have received planning consent and a licence to occupy the walled garden and adjacent area. The work for the community garden commenced on 14 July and is expected to take 6 weeks to complete.

5.7 The service continues to engage with the Friends of Robertson Park. The request for a licence to occupy has been submitted to Estates.

5.8 Lawn Tennis Association announced a fund in October 2021 to support the refurbishment of park tennis courts throughout the UK. The Council submitted an expression of interest in December 2021 and commenced work to produce a bid request to the fund with the LTA in May 2022. This was following the formal opening of the fund and the appointment of a Park Investment Delivery Officer for Scotland. This required detailed survey work to be completed in two sites namely Robertson Park, Renfrew and Brodie Park, Paisley. The surveys have now been completed and a bid has been submitted in principle to the fund, subject to appropriate Council approvals. The LTA are also looking at the potential of the courts in Johnstone to see if they would be feasible to refurbish.

There will be a requirement to complete a joint business case in Partnership with One Ren who will be required to manage and maintain the courts following refurbishment. A future joint board report will be prepared to ensure appropriate approvals have been sought in advance of accepting any funding from LTA.

## **6. Climate Change**

### **6.1 Electric Vehicle Charge Points**

Ground works have been completed on the EV Charging Hub at Stow Brae Car Park. The connection by Scottish Power will provide the first element of the regeneration works planned for Causeyside Street and provide the local community with twelve electric vehicle charging bays.

EV charge points at Johnstone Sports Hub have had their final commissioning by our contractor Swarco and are now live. The EV charge points at Bridge Street car park have been connected to the Scottish Power supply.

### **6.2 Biodiversity**

Wildflower corridors/areas at the following areas have bloomed and are providing both a range of colour and increased pollinator species.

- Paisley - Linwood Road
- Paisley, St James's - Greenock Road
- Erskine - A726
- Paisley - Glenburn Road
- Johnstone - Spateston

A number of the seeds in the wildflower mix require a frost as part of their germination process so there will be a further increase in both the splash of colour and the pollination in coming years.

Spateston ELC were fully involved in the sowing of the wildflower area adjacent to the nurseway and worked alongside the Biodiversity Officer. The collaboration has been a huge success.

## **7 Team Up to Clean Up**

- 7.1 The new Environmental Taskforce, another collaboration between Communities & Housing and Environment & Infrastructure is set to support and increase the effectiveness of the Team Up to Clean Up Campaign. Dedicated staff from both StreetScene and the Community Safety Partnership will ensure presented bags and flytipping are promptly removed and instances of flytipping are fully investigated. A suite of new cameras are being installed at identified hotspot locations across Renfrewshire to detect offenders. The Environmental Taskforce will work under the Team Up to Clean Up banner and aim to reduce flytipping across the authority.

The Campaign is still steadily growing with over 4,000 community members and volunteers engaging, celebrating their work and arranging to meet up to tackle larger, more complicated spaces. The StreetScene Operatives are also communicating and enjoying dialogue with volunteers, the volunteers are appreciating the support of the people behind the work.

- 7.2 Since June there have been community 607 clean ups reported, 2,618 bags of litter removed from communities with 658 volunteers participating. The Provost,

Councillor Cameron, has kindly issued “Thank you” notes to volunteers acknowledging their efforts in cleaning some large scale, heavily littered and flytipped areas.

## **8. Waste and Recycling Services**

- 8.1 Following a second application, £346,107 of funding has been secured from the Scottish Government’s Recycling Investment Fund. This will be utilised to improve the infrastructure within our HWRC sites to facilitate better separation of materials by site users and improve our recycling rates.
- 8.2 An additional 16,000 households across Renfrewshire are moving to the co-mingled garden and food waste collection service. These households have previously been on a food waste only collection service. The required bins will be rolled out in September, with ward members updated in advance on details within their ward, along with householders. The Council will benefit from a reduction in kilometres travelled, subsequently reducing the carbon footprint of the waste collection service.
- 8.3 In early 2022, Waste Services together with support from Soft FM and Children’s Services undertook a review of existing school recycling infrastructure. An analysis of waste arisings from schools showed that low levels of recycling were being achieved. The Waste Service made recommendations on the actions required to facilitate improvements. New internal and external infrastructure is being rolled out to all establishments during the Autumn to enable staff and pupils to maximise recycling. This will be supported by new user guides and a presence within schools by waste advisers and will improve the councils overall recycling. This project will benefit the community by reducing the carbon footprint of waste as there will be an increased quantity and better quality of material collected for recycling.
- 8.4 **Circular Economy**  
The Scottish Government is currently consulting on their proposals for a Route Map to deliver a circular economy in Scotland and on proposals for legislation in a Circular Economy Bill. The Route Map sets out how the Government intends to deliver their system-wide, comprehensive vision. It also outlines tangible actions that can be taken to accelerate progress and the tools that will be put into place to enable everyone to play their part. The legislative proposals will provide powers to achieve these goals. Renfrewshire Council has submitted a response to these complimentary consultations and copies of the response can be obtained from the service.

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### **Implications of the Report**

1. **Financial** – There are ongoing challenges with the impact of COVID and cost of living pressures, these are captured in the financial outturn report presented in a separate paper to this policy board.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** – None

### 3. Community & Council Planning

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

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

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

### 4. Legal – None

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

### 6. Information Technology – None

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

### 8. Health & Safety – None

### 9. Procurement – None

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

### 11. Privacy Impact – None

### 12. CoSLA Policy Position – None

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

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**List of Background Papers: none**

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