

To: Infrastructure, Land and Environment Policy Board

On: 26 May 2021

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

Heading: Operational Performance Report

1. Summary

- 1.1 Following on from the Service update report presented to this board on 24 March 2021, this report provides a further operational performance update to the Infrastructure, Land and Environment Policy Board on key areas within the Board's remit. It also outlines the priorities through Summer 2021, highlighting key areas of focus and plans for next steps to support the Council's recovery plans. Whilst developing these plans, the local and national position remains fluid and services will remain flexible and able to respond quickly in relation to changes in restrictions and local outbreaks as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 1.2 Operational Services continue as normal and are working within Covid-19 restrictions. All required safety measures are in place and are well established.
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2. Recommendations

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

- 2.1 Approves the content of this report; and
- 2.2 Approves the suspension of car parking charges in the Council owned Car Parks of Paisley Town Centre until the end of August 2021 as set out in paragraph 4.19 of this report.
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3. Background

- 3.1 In the previous service update reported to Infrastructure, Land and Environment Policy Board on 24 March 2021, the Council's response to the coronavirus pandemic from March 2020 to March 2021 was outlined – our partnership approach, our move to protect and support our employees and communities, particularly vulnerable people across the area. Across services, and with our partners, the Council continues to support our communities and develop our operational and policy response both now and as we continue to move through the recovery route map.
- 3.2 As Scotland and Renfrewshire starts to move through the governments route map, within Renfrewshire being in Level 2 at the time of writing this report, Environment and Infrastructure's key services continue to operate within same additional resource requirements and restrictions that have been in place over the last 14 months to minimise transmission of Covid-19 through social distancing and PPE measures. Employees across the Council continue to show great commitment and resilience during this time delivering essential services, volunteering to support frontline services and helping others to remain safe at home.
- 3.3 Council services continue to operate flexibly in order to respond to whatever challenges the pandemic brings for local communities but there is also a continuing focus on the recovery position and opportunities to improve services.
- 3.4 This report gives a broad overview of the key areas of service delivery, the particular areas of focus now and in the near future, and any specific risks and priorities of relevance to this Policy Board.

4. Updates for Infrastructure Land and Environment Policy Board

Fleet, Roads and Transportation

4.1. Fleet Workshop Improvements

Fleet Services have recently installed new vehicle ramps in the workshop repair area along with a new door installation to the front of the building allowing a fully drive through facility. The final phase of the project, currently at procurement stage, will be the installation of a vehicle inspection pit and four vehicle ramps.

4.2. Fleet Electric Vehicles

The Council took delivery of 9 fully electric vehicles. A combination of cars, light vans and 3.5 tonne vans. A further 18 electric vehicles are due to be delivered by the end of July 2020. Environment & Infrastructure were recently successful in their application to the Scottish Government Air Quality Funding for £27,937 and the installation of additional EV chargers in Underwood Road Depot. This grant funding will support the introduction of the new electric vehicles.

Active Travel

- 4.3. The build phase for the Mission Clyde funded route along the abandoned rail line parallel to Renfrew Road as far as Wright Street, and then onwards to Renfrew riverside is planned to start in Summer 2021. The project will provide an important active travel link from Paisley Gilmour Street Station all the way to the River Clyde. The route passes close to two primary schools, the proposed site for Paisley Grammar School, two public parks and a number of important retail and employment sites.
- 4.4. The first phase of the Bridge of Weir to Gryffe High School cycle lane commenced in early May with the route from Gryffe High School to the entrance of Houston Road Park in Bridge of Weir. Works are due to last six weeks.
- 4.5. Environment & Infrastructure Services are working with schools and communities to implement five new Active Travel projects as part of the Smarter Choices, Smarter Places funding programme:
 - 4.5.1 **Beat the Street** – This project aims to increase people’s activity levels and improve health. It’s a behavioural change initiative that is focused around a game. During the game, residents record their distance walked/cycled by tapping their Beat the Street card on Beat Boxes on lamp posts at various locations. They can view their total distance accumulated online, creating competition whilst rediscovering their local area. It is suitable for all ages. Locations for the game are still to be confirmed but may include, Bridge of Weir, Houston, Linwood, Johnstone and Elderslie. In future years it can be moved around Renfrewshire.
 - 4.5.2 **School Active Travel Promotion** – Up to 20 Primary Schools can engage with a year-long initiative (WOW – Walk to School) that rewards pupils with monthly badges for travelling actively for a set period of days. This is particularly useful to use with schools that report persistent congestion issues. All 49 Primary Schools will receive materials to support a focused Walk to School Week. Living Streets Scotland, charity for everyday walking, will offer support and run additional promotions throughout the year.
 - 4.5.3 **Active Travel Incentive Scheme** - A scheme that rewards members of the public for choosing active journeys. People are rewarded with points that can be redeemed at local shops or donated to charities. Environment & Infrastructure Services commissioned a study into this scheme in 2020 and the next step is to launch the App in 2021/22 in Renfrewshire. Aside from carbon reduction benefits, the scheme offers health benefits through increased physical activity, and air quality benefits through a potential reduction in transport emissions, and participants change to active travel modes rather than personal vehicle use. Environment & Infrastructure were recently successful in their application to the Scottish Government Air Quality Funding for £37,000 to implement this scheme.
 - 4.5.4 **Cycle Counters** - 10 cycle counters have been purchased and installed in established and newly developed cycle routes. The data gathered will provide

baseline figures to help analyse our progress to increase numbers of people cycling.

- 4.5.5 **Scootability** – Younger pupils will have lessons on how to use their scooters safely. The training will run alongside Cycling Scotland's Bikeability training which is offered to older pupils. Training will be co-ordinated by the Bikeability Officer based in Renfrewshire Leisure.
- 4.6. Funding has been awarded from Sustrans to make improvements to the National Cycle Route within Renfrewshire, with a requirement for the funding to be allocated by the 31 May 2021. Our team have identified the following projects which meet the specifications and will support our aim of improving active travel opportunities within Renfrewshire. These are:
- Ben Nevis Road, Paisley - existing barrier will be replaced and relocated at the entrance to the park and will include a 'Welcome to Paisley' sign. This will be carried out following the completion of Scottish Power works at the site.
 - Stow Brae, Paisley - Work will be carried out to link the cycle track to the town centre and improve the local environment, including new artwork to promote the local area.
 - Canal Street, Elderslie – move existing bollards to make it easier for cyclists and improve the link path from the Main Street onto the cycle route.
 - Hunterhill Road, Paisley - Safety improvements will be made, including rumble strips and signage, to ensure cyclist give way before entering the road.
 - Crosslee Road, Bridge of Weir – widen the existing barrier to make it easier for access and improve sightlines which will make it safer for drivers, cyclists and pedestrians.
- 4.7. The Roads Capital investment programme for 2021/22 started in April 2021 and will continue through to the end of October, ensuring that all schemes previously postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic are addressed this year. In addition to the resurfacing programme, a significantly enhanced permanent patching programme will be delivered, with the programme being finalised for roll out over the course of 2021/22.
- 4.8. This year will see a significantly enhanced footways investment programme, which will be coordinated with the roll out of full fibre and where there are interactions the Council will strive to adopt a 'dig once' approach.
- 4.9. In addition to the capital investment programme, there will be a significant investment, as approved at Council Budget Meeting on 4th March 2021, in Pedestrian Crossing installations to address concerns of road safety, speeding and crossing locations at or around schools, nurseries and key junctions in towns and villages.
- 4.10. This year's Council budget has made provision for conducting pilot feasibility traffic reduction studies in village settings within Renfrewshire. The pilot will initially focus on the villages of Howwood, Kilbarchan and Houston which have distinct traffic and speeding related issues. It is proposed that the feasibility studies are carried out to

assess traffic volumes, speeds and travel patterns and then consider a range of potential traffic interventions that could improve road safety in the areas.

- 4.11. The refurbishment works of the White Cart footbridge at Abercorn Street in Paisley commenced in January and steelwork cleaning has been completed. The bridge is scheduled to reopen at the end of June 2021. This will create an important connection to the cycle way between Paisley and Renfrew.
- 4.12. The service has commenced feasibility work to assess the current lighting levels within each of the main public parks in Renfrewshire to determine options for enhancing lighting in open spaces to improve access to these locations as well as continuing to ensure these spaces as safe areas for leisure and recreation. In addition to lighting levels in parks, the service has commenced a review of other off street lighting such as those at underpasses within our communities. An update on the review of off street lighting and main public parks lighting will be provided at a future ILE Policy Board.
- 4.13. As part of the Scottish Government's Town Centre Capital Funding programme, works to install overhead canopy lighting and projection lighting in Shuttle Street Paisley is expected to be completed by end of June.

Bus Partnership Funding

- 4.14. Renfrewshire Council, in partnership with the Glasgow City Region authorities, SPT and bus operators have submitted an application to the Bus Partnership Fund launched by Transport Scotland. Although the bid was made as a City Region partnership, a number of elements included within the bid were specific to Renfrewshire, including:
 - Upgrading traffic signal installations to increase bus priority at key junctions across Renfrewshire,
 - A range of bus priority measures across key locations to improve journey times and increase reliability,
 - Introducing enforcement cameras to address inconsiderate parking behaviours,
 - Developing a feasibility study for the introduction of a transport hub at the AMIDS site, and
 - Improving key junctions within our town centre locations.

A decision on the outcome of the success of the bid is expected in June 2021 and members will be updated on the outcome of the bid and potential impacts and interventions planned for Renfrewshire.

Bus Interchange for Johnstone & Village Services

- 4.15. Environment & Infrastructure Services have been liaising with McGill's Buses who have expressed concerns that delays through Glasgow and Paisley have a knock on effect on the bus user in Johnstone, with services continually not running to time. They are proposing to terminate routes from Glasgow at Houstoun Square, Johnstone and then use the bus stops at the square as an Interchange with local services then taking the bus user on to their final

destination e.g. Kilbarchan, Johnstone Castle etc. The changes as presented outline no reduction in service provision, the new local services are advertised as operating at the same frequency as current service provision. The impact on the bus user is that they would disembark at Houston Square and then catch a connecting service to their final destination. Discussions are ongoing with SPT as to how we can assist with infrastructure improvements that would improve access to public transport for our residents.

Town Centre Car Parking

- 4.16. In March 2020 when Scotland entered into lockdown, Council owned car parking charges were suspended to support key workers to undertake their duties. As the vast majority of Scotland is currently under further lockdown restrictions the Environment and Infrastructure Board of 24 March 2021 approved the suspension of car parking charges in the Council owned Car Parks of Paisley Town Centre until the end of May 2021. Due to the continued restrictions it is proposed to extend this to the end of August 2021. Normal traffic restrictions e.g. double yellow lines continue to apply.
- 4.17. The service has been undertaking a feasibility exercise to assess rolling out a pilot of a Pay by Phone Parking App. This would see the rationalisation and relocation of some older style parking meters with a payment option being provided through a smartphone App. This will be progressed over the summer with more information provided at the next ILE Policy Board.

StreetScene Services and Team Up to Clean Up

- 4.18. StreetScene Services commenced the new approach to grass cutting across Renfrewshire in April. The Service continues with the new programme of works which has worked well operationally for the service, with positive comments received from communities.
- 4.19. Clyde Muirshiel Country Park and Castle Semple operations have transferred to Environment & Infrastructure. Usage of these local outdoor facilities has grown significantly during the COVID pandemic and after restrictions were lifted in April 2021. Plans are being developed to support maintenance activities to the infrastructure within the park.
- 4.20. Team Up to Clean Up has gifted almost 700 litter pickers to volunteers across Renfrewshire since March 2020. This has resulted in increased activity with over 300 litter picks being recorded each month in this last quarter. All volunteers receive a general risk assessment prior to activity and are further reminded to adhere to Covid restrictions and current guidelines.
- 4.21. From January 2021, 1,450 volunteers have carried out 1,117 picks, removing 4,351 bags of litter from our communities. Around 250 posters, declaring "Local volunteers have tidied this area for you", have been issued to Team Up volunteers. There are displayed by litter pickers, in the spots they are maintaining. It is not yet clear of the posters impact however, volunteers are keen to spread the message increasing awareness of their work.

Waste and Recycling Services

- 4.22. The service continues to deliver all essential frontline collection services including collections for residual waste, recycling, special uplifts, food and garden waste and commercial collections.
- 4.23. All frontline collection vehicles have been fitted with in-cab technology and drivers are currently undertaking training on the new route management system for full implementation in Summer 2021. The system and in-cab technology will support the delivery of operational improvements by streamlining the process for reporting issues identified by our crews in real time including missed bins, contaminated bins, access issues etc whilst they navigate their collection route. The in-cab system also has the ability to display route specific hazards, allowing the service to provide our crews with the safety information they need and potentially reduce the risk of incidents and accidents.
- 4.24. There is a pocket of some 350-400 households within the Dykebar area of Paisley which have remained on a sack collection. The reasons for this are due to some of the demographics of the area. After the successful roll out of wheeled bins in the Erskine area in recent years, the Service are engaging with residents to introduce a fully containerised waste and recycling collection service in the Dykebar area. As such, Waste Advisers will consult with local residents in May and June with a view to containerising the area to bring them into line with other households in Renfrewshire.
- 4.25. Bargarran, North Barr and Mains area of Erskine were changed from sack to recycling bins in 2019. At the time of roll out, it was agreed that residual waste collections would retain a fortnightly collection cycle, however this would be reviewed following a period of settling in. This review period was extended due to the COVID19 pandemic, Waste Services are now looking to transition these households to a 3 weekly residual waste collection cycle in line with the rest of Erskine. The properties that still received a sack collection in these communities will remain unchanged at this time. A Project Implementation Plan including communications is currently being developed with an update provided to next ILE Policy Board.
- 4.26. A recent survey carried out by the British Plastics Federation underlines raw material shortages and it has concluded that the UK Plastic sector is currently experiencing shortages of raw material on a scale not seen for some time. The effect of this is that we are currently experiencing longer than normal lead times for delivery of wheeled bins to the Council and in turn delays in fulfilling new bin requests from the public. Where we are unable to provide bins we shall collect sacks until the bins is delivered.

Household Waste Recycling Centres

- 4.27. The Welfare Units at four of the Council's Household Waste Recycling Centres were replaced with upgraded facilities in April and May 2021.

Recycling Improvement Fund

- 4.28. The Scottish Government's Recycling Improvement Fund invites applications from all local authorities in Scotland to submit projects to improve services and treatment infrastructure. The five-year £70 million Recycling Improvement Fund, part of the Programme for Government, aims to accelerate progress towards Scotland's ambitious waste and recycling targets and net zero commitment. It is one of the biggest single investments by the Scottish Government in recycling infrastructure to date. The fund will be transformational in helping communities move to a more circular economy, where materials and products are kept in use for as long as possible, and where new economic opportunities and social benefits flourish, as we move away from short-term, wasteful, throwaway approaches.
- 4.29. £16 million is available in the first year of the five-year fund. This will give local authorities the opportunity to take forward small and large-scale projects that increase both the quality and quantity of recycling, whilst delivering wider environmental benefits. This can include:
- Promoting waste prevention or reuse;
 - Improving the consistency of collections;
 - Collecting problematic materials such as electrical items;
 - Improving sorting and treatment infrastructure; and
 - Introducing new low-carbon technologies that would deliver wider environmental benefits, or encouraging behaviour change.
- 4.30. Officers in Environment & Infrastructure, Waste Services are currently preparing expression of interest documents for projects for Renfrewshire Council for submission to Zero Waste Scotland. An update will be provided to future ILE Policy Boards. These include, but are not limited to:
- Improvements in infrastructure and signage at our five Household Waste Recycling Centres;
 - Development of a business case to design, build and operate a bulking and recycling centre in Renfrewshire; and
 - Options for a reuse facility in conjunction with other partners, i.e. Housing, 3rd sector organisations.

Extended Producer Responsibility for Packaging (EPR)

- 4.31. A report on "Developing Scotland's Circular Economy: Proposals for Legislation Consultation Response" was noted at ILE Board on 22 January 2020. A further consultation was launched on 24 March 2021 with a 10-week consultation period closing on 4 June 2021. Responses will be analysed in July and August 2021 with a final scheme design being prepared for regulation. The UK and Scottish governments are proposing to introduce obligations, possibly in the form of reuse target from 2025, to provide an additional incentive to reduce packaging use. This will place a strong incentive on those producers to seek to prevent littering, and where this is not possible, ensure it is effectively managed through litter bins and street cleansing. An update will be provided to future ILE Policy Boards.

Pest Control

- 4.32. At the Council meeting of 13th May 2021 it was agreed to suspend pest control charges for rodent and mice service requests. The suspension of charges was introduced with immediate effect on the 14th May 2021 and now applies to rodent and mice service requests received by the Council.
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Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – The proposed suspension of car parking charges until the end of August 2021 would result in a loss of income to the Council and this will be captured as part of the ongoing work to identify costs and income losses as part of COVID 19 pandemic through financial management.

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 services 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

Author: Gordon McNeil, Director of Environment & Infrastructure

e-mail: gordon.mcneil@renfrewshire.gov.uk