

## Notice of Meeting and Agenda Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Board

Date	Time	Venue
Monday, 24 January 2022	10:00	Remotely via Microsoft Teams,

KENNETH GRAHAM  
Head of Corporate Governance

### Membership

Councillor Tom Begg: Councillor Stephen Burns: Councillor Michelle Campbell:  
Councillor Jim Harte: Councillor John Hood: Councillor Emma Rodden: Councillor  
Jane Strang:

Councillor Bill Binks (Convener): Councillor Jim Sharkey (Depute Convener):

### Remote Meeting

This meeting will be held remotely with all attendees participating via the Microsoft TEAMS platform. The meeting will be broadcast live via the Council's website. Following the meeting a recording of the meeting will be available to view on the Council's website. If you have any queries regarding this please contact Committee Services on 07734358719.

## **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.

## **AUDIT**

- |          |  |               |
|----------|--|---------------|
| <b>1</b> | <b>Summary of Internal Audit Reports for period 01 October to 31 December 2021</b> | <b>1 - 18</b> |
|----------|--|---------------|

Report by Chief Auditor.

## **MONITORING & REVIEWING SERVICE DELIVERY PERFORMANCE POLICIES AND PRACTICE**

- |          |   |                |
|----------|---|----------------|
| <b>2</b> | <b>Risk Report 2021/22, Jan 2022 Update</b> | <b>19 - 38</b> |
|----------|---|----------------|

Report by Acting Director of Finance & Resources.

- |          |   |                |
|----------|---|----------------|
| <b>3</b> | <b>Absence Statistics - Quarter 2 &amp; Quarter 3 2020/21</b> | <b>39 - 50</b> |
|----------|---|----------------|

Report by Acting Director of Finance & Resources.

- |          |  |                |
|----------|--|----------------|
| <b>4</b> | <b>Commissioner for Ethical Standards in Public Life in Scotland - Annual Report 2020/21</b> | <b>51 - 56</b> |
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Report by Acting Director of Finance & Resources.

## **ANNUAL PROGRAMME**

- |          |  |                |
|----------|--|----------------|
| <b>5</b> | <b>Linking the National Cycle Route 7 with Howwood - Lead Officer Kevin Waters</b> | <b>57 - 62</b> |
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Report by Lead Officer.

## **AUDIT**

### **Exempt Item**

Exempt documents are no longer available in print format. You will require to log in to Audit, Risk & Scrutiny Exempt Items to access documents. Please note that access to exempt documents is now restricted.

### **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**The Board may by resolution exclude the press and public from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business as it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted, that if members of the press and public are present, there could be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in paragraph 1 of Part I of Schedule 7A of the Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1973.**

#### **6      Summary of Internal Audit Investigation Reports for period 1 October to 31 December 2021**

Report by Chief Auditor.





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**To: Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Board**

**On: 24 January 2022**

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**Report by: Chief Auditor**

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**Heading: Summary of Internal Audit Reports for period 01 October to 31 December 2021**

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**1. Summary**

1.1 In line with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards, Internal Audit must communicate the results of each engagement to the Board. To comply with this requirement Internal Audit submits regular reports on the findings and conclusions of audit engagements to the Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Board.

1.2 Appendix 1 provides details those audit engagements completed during the period 01 October to 31 December 2021 with the overall assurance rating and the number of recommendations in each risk category. The committee summary for each report is also attached. For each audit assignment where recommendations have been made, the relevant managers have put action plans in place to address the issues raised.

1.3 In addition to the reports listed in the Appendix, Internal Audit has an ongoing commitment to:

- A range of corporate and service initiatives;
- Progressing of information security matters in partnership with ICT and Legal Services;
- The regular provision of advice to departmental officers;
- The provision of internal audit services to the associated bodies for which Renfrewshire Council is the lead authority and to Renfrewshire Leisure Ltd and Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Integrated Joint Board;

- Co-ordination of the Council's corporate risk management activity;
  - Management of the counter fraud team;
  - Management of the risk management and insurance team.
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## 2. **Recommendations**

- 2.1 Members are invited to consider and note the Summary of Audit Reports finalised during the period from 01 October to 31 December 2021.
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### **Implications of the Report**

1. **Financial** - None
2. **HR & Organisational Development** - None
3. **Community Planning – Safer and Stronger** - effective internal audit is an important element of good corporate governance.
4. **Legal** - None
5. **Property/Assets** - None
6. **Information Technology** - None
7. **Equality & Human Rights** – None
8. **Health & Safety** – None
9. **Procurement** - None
10. **Risk** - The summary reported relates to the delivery of the risk-based internal audit plan.
11. **Privacy Impact** – None
12. **COSLA Implications** – None
13. **Climate Risk** - None

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**Author:** Karen Campbell – 07768354651

## Appendix 1

### Renfrewshire Council

### Internal Audit Service

### Update for Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Board

### Final Audit Reports issued from 01 October – 31 December 2021

Category	Service	Engagement	Assurance Rating	Recommendation Ratings			
				Critical	Important	Good Practice	Service Improvement
<b>Assurance</b>	Communities & Housing	Housing Assurance Statement – Compliance Checks	Substantial	0	0	0	0
	Chief Executives	Business Support Grants	Substantial	0	0	0	0
	Environment & Infrastructure	Memorial Safety	Limited	1	0	4	0
	Finance & Resources	Payroll - Overpayments	Reasonable	0	2	1	0
		Planning & Approval of Capital Expenditure	Reasonable	0	2	0	1
<b>Contingency</b>	Corporate	Billing & Collection of Levies	Reasonable	1	3	3	0

Note 1 – No assurance rating can be given in respect of investigation assignments

Assurance Level	
Substantial Assurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is a sound system of internal control designed to achieve the objectives of the area being reviewed.</li> <li>The control processes tested are being consistently applied.</li> </ul>
Reasonable Assurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The internal control processes are generally satisfactory with some areas of weakness being identified that could</li> </ul>

	put some objectives of the area being reviewed at risk <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is evidence that the level of non-compliance with some of the control processes may put some of the objectives of the area being reviewed at risk.</li> </ul>
Limited Assurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weaknesses in the system of internal controls are such as to put the objectives of the area being reviewed at risk.</li> <li>• The level of non-compliance puts the objectives of the area being reviewed at risk.</li> </ul>
No Assurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Control processes are generally weak with significant risk to the achievement of the objectives of the area being reviewed.</li> <li>• Significant non-compliance with control processes leaves the processes/systems open to error or abuse.</li> </ul>

<b>Recommendation Rating</b>	
Service Improvement	Implementation will improve the efficiency / housekeeping of the area under review.
Good Practice	Implementation will contribute to the general effectiveness of control.
Important	Implementation will raise the level of assurance provided by the control system to acceptable levels.
Critical	Addresses a significant risk, impacting on the objectives of the area under review.



# Internal Audit Report

## Communities & Housing Services

### Housing Assurance Statement – Compliance Checks (A0116/2022/001)

**Date: October 2021**

#### **COMMITTEE SUMMARY**

<b>Audit Objectives</b>
<p>The objectives of the audit were to ensure that: -</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Communities &amp; Housing Services (CHS) are complying with the requirements of the Annual Assurance Statement to the Scottish Housing Regulator.</li> <li>2. There is sufficient evidence held by CHS to demonstrate compliance with the requirements of the Annual Assurance Statement.</li> </ol>
<b>Audit Scope</b>
<p>The following work was carried out:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Considered the Annual Assurance Statement to the Scottish Housing Regulator.</li> <li>2. Through sample testing, ensured that appropriate evidence was held to confirm that CHS are complying with the requirements of the Annual Assurance Statement.</li> <li>3. Ensured that appropriate evidence was available to support a sample of indicators and the management information outlined in the Social Housing Charter submitted to the Scottish Housing Regulator.</li> </ol>
<b>Key Audit Assurances</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Satisfactory evidence was available to demonstrate that CHS are complying with the requirements of the Annual Assurance Statement.</li> <li>2. For the sample of outcomes tested, satisfactory evidence was available to support the actual outturns reported in the Social Housing Charter.</li> </ol>
<b>Key Audit Risks</b>
<p>There were no key risks identified during the audit.</p>
<b>Overall Audit Opinion</b>
<p>Based on a sample check of the evidence used to demonstrate compliance, we would confirm that the Council complies with the requirements of the Housing Assurance Statement.</p>

Internal Audit Report  
Communities & Housing Services  
Housing Assurance Statement – Compliance Checks  
(A0116/2022/001)

Date: October 2021

Management Commentary
N/A as no key risks were identified

**Internal Audit Report**  
**Chief Executives**  
**Business Support Grants (A0040/2022/001)**

**Date: October 2021**

**COMMITTEE SUMMARY**

**Audit Objectives**

The objectives of the audit were to ensure that: -

1. There is a documented process in place for the payment of business support grants relating to Covid 19.
2. Roles and responsibilities are clear in relation to decision making, escalation and dispute resolution.
3. Grants have been paid in line with documented procedures, confirmed as eligible and all relevant documentation has been provided, or explanations recorded.
4. For rejected grant payments, confirm explanations for applications being ineligible.
5. The costs associated with grant payments are being tracked, monitored and reported on as required.

**Audit Scope**

The following work was carried out:

1. Interviewed the appropriate staff and ascertained the processes in place for administering business grants.
2. Prepared and undertook a series of tests to evaluate the operation of procedures in practice.

**Key Audit Assurances**

1. There are documented processes in place for the payment of business grants.
2. Roles and responsibilities are clear in relation to decision making, escalation and dispute resolution.
3. For the sample of grants tested, they were paid in line with documented procedures, confirmed as eligible and all relevant documentation was provided, or explanations recorded.
4. For rejected grant payments tested, explanations for applications being ineligible were recorded.
5. The costs associated with grant payments are being tracked, monitored and reported on to senior management and the Scottish Government.

**Key Audit Risks**

There were no key risks identified during the audit.

Internal Audit Report  
Chief Executives  
Business Support Grants (A0040/2022/001)

Date: October 2021

Overall Audit Opinion
Business grant payments were made in line with documented procedures. Roles and responsibilities for decision making, escalation and dispute resolution were clear. Grant costs were monitored and appropriately reported.

Management Commentary
N/A as no key risks were identified.

# Internal Audit Report

## Environment & Infrastructure

### Memorial Safety (A0020/2021/001)

**Date: October 2021**

#### **COMMITTEE SUMMARY**

Audit Objectives
<p>The objectives of the audit were to ensure that: -</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A council's memorial risk assessments site profile has been prepared, is being kept up to date and the inspection programme is on target.</li> <li>2. There is adequate notification in advance of inspections with all the appropriate parties being notified.</li> <li>3. Staff have been trained to undertake inspections and they have adequate procedures to follow.</li> <li>4. Inspections and any action undertaken are properly and timely recorded and the council's headstone inspection database is kept up to date.</li> <li>5. Unsafe memorials are properly dealt with to prevent accidents to staff working in and visitors to each cemetery for which the council is responsible and reasonable steps are taken to inform lair holders.</li> <li>6. Reasonable steps are taken to inform lair holders of defective memorials on their lairs to afford them the opportunity to repair them.</li> </ol>

Audit Scope
<p>The following work was carried out:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Interviewed the appropriate staff to understand the systems in place to implement the council's Inspection of Memorial Monuments and Headstone policy.</li> <li>2. Through sample testing, evaluated the operation of the procedures in practice.</li> </ol>

Key Audit Assurances
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A council's memorial risk assessments profile has been prepared and is being kept up to date.</li> <li>2. Inspections carried out to date and any action undertaken are properly and timely recorded and the council's inspection database is kept up to date.</li> <li>3. For inspections carried out to date, unsafe memorials are properly dealt with to prevent accidents to staff working in and visitors to each cemetery for which the council is responsible. A procurement exercise to appoint a contractor to inspect larger memorials was underway at the time of the audit.</li> <li>4. For inspections carried out to date, warning and advisory notices are left at the lairs on ground pointer signs to inform lair holders of defective memorials.</li> </ol>

# Internal Audit Report

## Environment & Infrastructure

### Memorial Safety (A0020/2021/001)

**Date: October 2021**

#### Key Audit Risks

1. At the time of the review, less than 4% of memorial inspections which Renfrewshire Council are responsible for, had been inspected, so far, and staff resources have had to be utilised in other areas, as a result of the pandemic. In the absence of a recovery plan for getting this task completed and of additional staff resources being committed there is a risk that memorial inspections will not be undertaken within an acceptable timescale.

#### Overall Audit Opinion

Procedures have been prepared for the inspection of memorials to ensure that unsafe memorials identified are properly dealt with to prevent accidents to staff working in and visitors to Renfrewshire's cemeteries. However, it is a major concern that at the time of the audit review only around 4% of Renfrewshire memorials have been inspected (out of an estimated total of around 30,000 cemetery and churchyard memorials). In addition, there are only 2 members of staff who were currently undertaking these inspections. In January 2020, members were informed that these inspections would be completed by March 2021. Whilst it is acknowledged that memorial inspection work was interrupted by events as a result of the COVID 19 pandemic, it is vital that plans and resources are put in place to complete this exercise as soon as possible given that the safety of staff and visitors in burial grounds is a statutory responsibility of the local authority and that the Scottish Government issued guidance to be followed in June 2019 following on from the findings of a Fatal Accident Enquiry.

#### Management Commentary

We are currently implementing the audit recommendations.

- Additional staff have been recruited and are now fully trained (10) with 5 members of staff on each shift carrying out these inspections.
- Initially the findings were being recorded on a paper system, however, an app-based system, using mobile devices, has been developed to reduce the time to complete records and to give accurate individual location information.
- The app-based system was operational from mid-November with all staff trained on its use.
- The number of inspections carried out to date now stands at 16%. This percentage has accelerated since mid-November and is expected to continue accelerating as staff become more experienced in carrying out the inspections and completing the records digitally. In addition, staff are currently undertaking inspection of the most complex memorials as these present the highest risk. These complex memorials take longer to inspect. Once staff move onto the lower risk areas then inspection rates will increase.

Internal Audit Report  
Environment & Infrastructure  
Memorial Safety (A0020/2021/001)

**Date: October 2021**

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# Internal Audit Report

## Finance & Resources

### Payroll – Overpayments (A0084/2021/001)

Date: November 2021

#### COMMITTEE SUMMARY

Audit Objectives
<p>The objectives of the audit were to ensure that: -</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Arrangements are in place and communicated to service departments to minimise the value of employee overpayments;</li> <li>2. Employees and former employees have been made aware of their responsibilities and action to be taken in relation to overpayments;</li> <li>3. Overpayments, when they occur, are recorded and employees are notified timeously;</li> <li>4. Reasons for overpayments are ascertained and action is taken to communicate learning to services;</li> <li>5. Recovery of overpayments is in line with the Salary Adjustment Policy.</li> </ol>

Audit Scope
<p>The following work was carried out:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Interviewed the appropriate staff to understand the system in place to undertake the payroll processes for recording and recovering overpayments to employees.</li> <li>2. Prepared a series of tests to meet the above objectives.</li> <li>3. Reviewed the effectiveness of the Salary Adjustment Policy launched on November 2020.</li> </ol>

Key Audit Assurances
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Since May 2021, each service has been supplied with a monthly report detailing the overpayments occurring in the previous period. The circumstances surrounding the overpayments are then addressed by the individual service managers with a view to minimising overpayments through service improvements or training.</li> <li>2. In order to raise awareness of employee / former employee responsibilities in relation overpayments, a Salary Adjustment Policy was communicated to all employees in November 2020. In addition, Corporate Briefings have recently been issued to managers outlining their responsibilities in relation to payroll processes. Officers within Finance and Resources are continuing to develop and streamline processes which will be communicated to staff when appropriate.</li> <li>3. A dedicated team has been established to facilitate recovery of overpayments. This team maintains a record of all overpayments and the circumstances leading to the overpayment. Management monitor progress made to recover overpayments on a regular basis.</li> </ol>



# Internal Audit Report

## Finance & Resources

### Payroll – Overpayments (A0084/2021/001)

Date: November 2021

#### Key Audit Risks

1. In accordance with the Salary Adjustment Policy, although recoveries are always instigated, there may be deviations from the policy in terms of repayment periods and discussions with employees who have been overpaid. Reasons for, and approval of any deviations are not documented and retained on file.

#### Overall Audit Opinion

Although there is a Salary Adjustment Policy in place, recovery action does not always strictly comply with the policy and the auditor has made recommendations to strengthen controls in this area. There are satisfactory arrangements in place to ensure that employees and managers are aware of their responsibilities in relation to payroll processing and salary overpayments. The introduction of monthly overpayment reports to services to inform them of employee overpayments has enabled services to address any issues that may lead to further overpayments. A dedicated team has been established to concentrate on overpayment recoveries. These actions combined with the issue of the Salary Adjustment Policy has improved the awareness of the importance of avoiding salary overpayments and the recovery of overpayments, when they have occurred has improved.

#### Management Commentary

The Operational Guidance is being updated to be clear that the repayment schedule stated in the policy is the starting point and to include typical reasons why the schedule may differ to what is suggested. Any variance from the repayment schedule suggested in the policy will require sign off from Management. Evidence will be saved on the rationale behind the recovery period along with the management approval.

## Internal Audit Report Finance & Resources

### Planning & Approval of Capital Expenditure (A0085/2021/001)

Date: November 2021

#### **COMMITTEE SUMMARY**

##### **Audit Objectives**

The objectives of the audit were to ensure that: -

1. Proposed capital projects are supported by robust business cases which include relevant financial and non-financial information.
2. There is evidence to verify that business cases are independently scrutinised at a sufficiently senior level.
3. Contracts are awarded only where there is sufficient capital funding available.
4. The financial implications of the contract award are fully detailed on the Board report.

##### **Audit Scope**

The following work was carried out:

1. Through discussions with appropriate staff, ascertained the systems in place for planning and approval of capital projects.
2. Prepared and carried out a programme of tests covering the areas above on a sample of five Capital Projects.

##### **Key Audit Assurances**

1. For the contracts tested, contracts were awarded only where there was sufficient capital funding available.
2. The financial implications of the contracts awarded were fully detailed on Contract Authorisation Reports to the relevant Board.

##### **Key Audit Risks**

1. Where standardised business case templates are not used, there may be a lack of evidence of a consistent approach to evaluating capital projects.
2. Where Finance Business Partners were not involved in reviewing business plans for capital projects, there may be a lack of evidence of robust challenges by finance professionals.

##### **Overall Audit Opinion**

The audit has identified that contracts were awarded only where there was sufficient capital funding available and the financial implications of the contracts awarded were fully detailed on Board reports. We have recommended that standardised business case templates

## Internal Audit Report Finance & Resources

### Planning & Approval of Capital Expenditure (A0085/2021/001)

**Date: November 2021**

should be used for all capital projects and Finance Business Partners should be more involved in reviewing and challenging assumptions during capital projects.

#### **Management Commentary**

A standardised business case template is being created and will be used for new capital project bids. This will ensure that Business Partners are included in all stages of the process and they will also receive the capital budget meeting minutes which will update them on the financial and completion progress of the capital projects.

# Internal Audit Report

## Corporate

### Billing and Collection of Levies (C0041/2022/004)

**Date: October 2021**

#### **COMMITTEE SUMMARY**

<b>Audit Objectives</b>
<p>The Head of Finance requested Internal Audit to undertake an independent review of the processes in operation over the billing, collection and accounting of levies undertaken by the Council on behalf of a local organisation. The objectives of the audit were to ensure that: -</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Invoices are raised accurately and timeously to all businesses that are due to pay the levy</li> <li>2. Payments made are accurately and timeously recorded against the correct invoice and there are processes in place to follow up unpaid invoices</li> <li>3. Refunds are appropriately controlled and authorised prior to payment</li> <li>4. Transactions are accurately and timeously recorded in the general ledger including those transactions that relate to drawdowns, and that they are appropriately authorised where necessary.</li> <li>5. Reconciliation processes are reasonable and record all expected reconciling items.</li> </ol>
<b>Audit Scope</b>
<p>The following work was carried out:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Interviewed the relevant staff to ascertain the controls in place for billing, collection and accounting for the bid levy, assess those processes for adequacy and identify any weaknesses, making recommendations for improvement where appropriate.</li> <li>2. Sample checked transactions were compliant with the controls identified.</li> <li>3. Reviewed the reconciliation process.</li> </ol>
<b>Key Audit Assurances</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Accurate invoices are raised in good time to businesses due to pay the levy per the information held by the council and payments made by them are coded correctly.</li> <li>2. A follow-up timetable is prepared and agreed with the organisation in respect of unpaid invoices. Any deviances from the timetable are instigated by the organisation.</li> <li>3. Transactions are accurately recorded in the general ledger and authorised where necessary.</li> <li>4. The current reconciliation process appears reasonable and includes all expected items.</li> </ol>

## Internal Audit Report Corporate

### Billing and Collection of Levies (C0041/2022/004)

Date: October 2021

#### Key Audit Risks

Although refunds have been suspended since December 2019, at the request of the organisation, a spreadsheet listing anticipated refunds is maintained by staff within Finance & Resources. Audit testing highlighted that there is a risk that duplicate refunds may be processed.

#### Overall Audit Opinion

The audit has identified that generally satisfactory arrangements are in place for the billing, collection and recording of the levy transactions. We have made recommendations mainly in respect of the refund process. Given that a number of new measures and processes have been put in place or will be imminently, coupled with these recommendations made to strengthen controls, the auditor has provided a reasonable assurance rating in relation to the areas reviewed.

#### Management Commentary

We are in the process of implementing the internal audit recommendations. We have strengthened the refund approval and our financial reconciliation processes. The financial information reports provided to the organisation have been enhanced and officers meet the organisation on a regular basis to resolve any issues they may have.






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**To: Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Board**

**On: 24 January 2022**

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

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**Heading: Risk Report 2021/22, Jan 2022 Update**

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## 1. Summary

- 1.1 The Board approved the strategic, corporate and key service risks for 2021/2022 in November 2020.
- 1.2 This paper provides a report on the latest position in managing the agreed risks, as we enter the final quarter of the year. The appendices attached provide:
- 1: details of longer-term strategic and corporate risks (at 15 December 2021)
  - 2: details of longer-term significant service risks (at 15 December 2021)
  - 3: list of 'business as usual' risks.
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## 2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Board notes and is assured by the progress being made by the Council in managing the risks identified.
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## 3. Background

- 3.1 The key areas of risk **previously** agreed by the Board were as follows:

### Strategic Risks:

Outward in focus and represent threats or opportunities linked to the Community Plan outcomes and our two-year economic and social recovery strategies.

**Economy** **Very High Risk**

**Unemployment** **Very High Risk**

**Reducing inequalities** **Very High Risk**

**Climate, sustainability & adaptability** **High Risk**

**Community safety & public protection** **High Risk**

### Corporate Risks:

Inward in focus and represent threats or opportunities linked to the Council Plan outcomes and our two-year financial recovery strategy.

Financial stability	Very High Risk
Financial sustainability	Very High Risk
Organisation resilience	High Risk
Regulatory services/ statutory activities	High Risk
Asset management	High Risk
Information handling	High Risk
Administration of elections	High Risk
Commercial vehicle & operator's license	High Risk
Protecting internal resources from crime	High Risk
Employee wellbeing	Moderate Risk
Expansion of Early Years provision	Moderate Risk

- 3.2 Risks had been evaluated using the Council's standard risk matrix; this involves multiplying the likelihood of a risk occurring by its potential impact. Risks are then evaluated as either 'low' (green), 'moderate' (yellow), 'high' (amber) or 'very high' (red) The risk profile for the Council was therefore agreed as shown in the table below:

Evaluation:	Low	Moderate	High	Very High	Total
No. of Strategic Risks:	00	00	02	03	05
No. of Corporate Risks:	00	02	07	02	11

- 3.3 The above risk profile meant that the Council was carrying 5 very high risks which ordinarily would be outwith the Council's appetite for risk, nevertheless it was recognised that these risks are largely driven by external factors and so the Council manages and influences these risks as best it can.
- 3.4 It was also noted when the above risks were agreed that service departments had revisited their top 'significant' operational risks (i.e. those evaluated as high or very high) but all reported that any such risks were already captured by a number of strategic and corporate risks. This is still the case.
- 3.5 In the intervening months since the risks were last reported to Board, there have been some changes, and these are described in 3.5.1 to 3.5.4 below and overleaf.

#### 3.5.1 1 corporate risk added/ escalated

During the course of November, following on from a focused review of the **cyber** environment of the council, and taking account, not so much of the council's security arrangements, but rather the combination of ever increasing criminal cyber activity in this arena alongside increasing reliance on electronic systems, it was decided that the cyber-related elements covered within the Organisation Resilience risk would benefit from being



pulled out and shown explicitly in the corporate risk register for a period of time, with the further scrutiny that this affords. Some specific actions will be assigned to the risk and on completion, the risk should revert back to being covered within the Organisation Resilience risk.

### 3.5.2 1 corporate risk removed

The moderate risk relating to the **Expansion of Early Years** provision was removed as the programme is now being fully delivered.

### 3.5.3 1 risk remaining but with scoring reduced

The risk relating to the **Financial Stability** of the council was lowered from 25 (Very High – 5x5 for both likelihood and impact scores), to 15 (High – likelihood reduced to a 3), based on the mitigation measures now working. The Board will note however that the more medium to longer-term financial *sustainability* risk remains at Very High.

### 3.5.4 6 risk areas de-escalated to business as usual (1 strategic/ 5 corporate)

When the Board approved the revised combined risk policy and strategy earlier in the year, the Board agreed that business-as-usual risks could be treated differently from the imminent or longer-term ones and approved the commencement of development work to take the business-as-usual risks through an assurance model rather than the traditional risk management model. The risks recorded at that point that were moved to business as usual were **organisation resilience, asset management, information handling, employee wellbeing, community safety and public protection, and protecting internal resources from crime**. Work is now commencing to take the business-as-usual risks through a new assurance model that will add more value in how these risks are monitored.

3.6 With the changes at paragraph 3.5 in mind, the risk profile is now as follows:

Evaluation:	Low	Moderate	High	Very High	Total
LT or Imm Strategic Risks:	00	00	01	03	04
LT or Imm Corporate Risks:	00	00	05	01	06
(BAU risks)	00	01	05	00	06

#### Strategic Risks:

**Very High-Risk** Economy  
**Very High-Risk** Unemployment  
**Very High-Risk** Reducing inequalities  
**High Risk** Climate, sustainability & adaptability

#### Corporate Risks:

**Very High-Risk** Financial sustainability  
**High-Risk** Cyber attack  
**High-Risk** Financial stability  
**High Risk** Regulatory services/ statutory activities  
**High Risk** Administration of elections  
**High Risk** Commercial vehicle & operator's license

**Business-as-Usual Risks (defined as those that are not generally related to corporate priorities or ambitions but rather are inherent by nature of our type of organisation)**

\*Organisation Resilience

\*Asset Management

\*Information Handling

\*Employee Wellbeing

\*Community Safety & Public Protection

\*Protecting internal resources from Crime

- 3.7 Appendix 1 provides the detail for all 4 longer-term or imminent strategic risks.  
Appendix 2 provides the detail for all 6 longer-term or imminent corporate risks.  
Appendix 3 provides expands on the current business-as-usual risks and our vision for how these and others will be taken forward.
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## Implications of the Report

### 1. Financial

Recurring costs associated with the measures in place for each risk are considered proportionate to the level of risk, and new planned actions are also considered to be cost effective.

The financial requirements to support the risks should be met within the budget of each relevant risk owner, nevertheless, any unplanned and unbudgeted cost pressures that arise in relation to any of the risks identified will be subject to review in consultation with the Director of Finance and Resources.

- 2. **HR & Organisational Development** – not relevant to report recommendations
  - 3. **Community/Council Planning** – effective risk management supports the delivery of all community/ council plan outcomes
  - 4. **Legal** – not relevant to report recommendations
  - 5. **Property/Assets** – not relevant to report recommendations
  - 6. **Information Technology** – not relevant to report recommendations
  - 7. **Equality & Human Rights** – not relevant to report recommendations
  - 8. **Health & Safety** – not relevant to report recommendations
  - 9. **Procurement** – not relevant to report recommendations
  - 10. **Risk** – as per the subject matter of this report
  - 11. **Privacy Impact** – not relevant to report recommendations
  - 12. **Cosla Policy Position** – not relevant to report recommendations
  - 13. **Climate Risk** – not relevant to report recommendations
- 








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# Appendix 1: Strategic Risks, longer-term or imminent



## Reshaping our place, our economy and our future

Context	Risk Statement	Owned by	Current Controls	Likelihood	Impact	Evaluation
<p>SRR.21.01.01 Economy</p> <p>The coronavirus pandemic has resulted in significant challenges for economies across the world. The UK and Scottish Governments have already taken decisions to invest £billions to support businesses during the lockdown period and (through the furlough scheme) to retain staff in employment as far as possible. Renfrewshire's economy has well established strengths in transport (including Glasgow Airport), retail (including Braehead), manufacturing (including significant international exports) and construction. All these sectors and their wider supply chains have been impacted by the lockdown restrictions which have reduced supply and led to subdued demand for products and services. The construction sector is currently experiencing significant volatility in terms of labour, supply chains, prices, and construction inflation. This makes "building our way out of Covid" less attractive, coupled with a connected surge in construction claims and disputes.</p>	<p>Even before the COVID-19 crisis, the Scottish economy was facing several strategic challenges including climate change, Brexit and lower than average productivity. Likewise, Renfrewshire's economy (as illustrated in the Economic Strategy Sept 2019) was facing challenges such as: growing the working age population; more closely aligning the education and skills provision with the needs of local employers; and achieving a strong and inclusive economy.</p>	<p>Head of Economy and Development</p> <p>Head of Finance &amp; Business Services</p>	<p>(1) Economic Recovery Plan</p> <p>(2) Capital investment such as investment in housing and heritage assets; supporting Scotland's prospectus for international investment by identifying and developing opportunities such as AMIDS and supporting local businesses seeking to export to new markets</p> <p>(3) Taking forward measures to counter any education learning loss</p> <p>(4) Developing skills interventions to address the risks of unemployment, in particular for those under 25 and making provision for people to re-skill and upskill.</p>	05	05	25 V.High
Action Codes	Actions			Assigned To	Date	Status
	Collaborating with NMIS and MMIC through the AMIDS Strategic Advisory Group.			Programme Director - City Deal and Infrastructure	31-Dec-2021	
CESDP21 - 01 - 26	<p>Work with partners to deliver the Advanced Manufacturing Innovation District – Scotland (AMIDS).</p> <p>The delivery of AMIDS is now at a critical stage, between infrastructure delivery and securing the investment which will bring employment, skills and economic growth enabled by City Deal infrastructure. This context is recognised within the Renfrewshire Economic Strategy 2020-2030 where AMIDS is noted as a key component.</p>			Programme Director - City Deal and Infrastructure	31-Mar-2022	
CESDP21 - 01 - 27	<p>Monitor benefits of City Deal Projects, including AMIDS, Clyde Waterfront and Renfrew Riverside and City Region wide employment programmes.</p> <p>The monitoring of benefits associated with the City Deal Projects is at an early stage however, development including new residential and commercial developments, in the areas in the vicinity of both the GAIA and CWRR projects has been accelerated as a result of the significant City Deal investment. It is estimated that circa 10% of the projected outputs and outcomes have been realised.</p>			Programme Director - City Deal and Infrastructure	31-Mar-2022	

CESIP20 - 01 - 09	<p>Develop and coordinate the delivery of a Business Case and development opportunities for AMIDS South (Previously Paisley North/GAIA South).</p> <p>An Outline Business Case has been compiled for the AMIDS South project, to demonstrate the benefits that it will deliver to the local communities, the improvements in connectivity from Paisley, including linking to the significant investment in Cultural Infrastructure to AMIDS and the potential to enhance and spread the outcomes at AMIDS and in the Cultural Infrastructure to the wider communities. AMIDS South is now the recipient of Levelling Up Fund (LUF) award of £38.5m in Nov 2021 and is now progressing.</p>	Programme Director - City Deal and Infrastructure	31-Mar-2022	
	<p>Implement the Economic Recovery Plan</p> <p>Renfrewshire Council and its key partners are continuing to monitor the impact of COVID-19 on the local economy and work towards economic recovery. An update was provided to <a href="#">Leadership Board in December 2021</a> on progressing the 14 Priority Action Areas within the Plan.</p>	Head of Economy and Development	31-Mar-2023	
CESDP21 - 01 - 08	<p>Support growth activity in relation to key sectors, including manufacturing and care.</p> <p>A PACE redundancy service at Renfrewshire Council Employability Services has been developed with a single point of contact appointed and supporting people being made redundant from June 2021. A new employability grant programme was recently approved and launched on 1st October to deliver enhanced skills across the area. In order to establish and agree a delivery mechanism for productivity and innovation programme a business survey of local manufacturing companies has been developed to raise awareness of NMIS and Critical Engineer programme.</p>	Head of Economy and Development	31-Mar-2023	
CESIP20 - 01 - 20	<p>Expand our enterprise programmes and business support to increase the number of new local business start-ups</p> <p>Start Up Street Paisley was slightly delayed due to COVID-19 and opened October 2020 and is now nearly at full capacity. Plans for Start Up St in Renfrew and in Johnstone now being progressed. A new work stream around schools enterprise programmes has also commenced.</p>	Economic Development Manager	31-Mar-2022	
CESIP20 - 01 - 21	<p>Increase business sustainability, productivity, competitiveness and growth through a revised package of incentives, business support, training and advice</p> <p>Scottish Government COVID-19 grants commenced to support businesses and self-employed affected by COVID-19 at end March 2020. Renfrewshire Council have launched an augmented grants and loans programme. City Region "regional offer" was prepared Grants of over £55M have been distributed to thousands of local businesses through the team with the focus on sustainability rather than growth.</p>	Economic Development Manager	31-Mar-2022	
CESIP20 - 01 - 22	<p>Promote international trade and connectivity through supporting those businesses looking to export to new markets</p> <p>City Region work identified the role of Scottish Enterprise in this area and work has commenced in terms of further signposting businesses to the supports on offer.</p>	Economic Development Manager	31-Mar-2023	
CESIP20 - 01 - 23	<p>Work with partners to enhance provision, accessibility and take up of business support services and to identify where new services are required</p> <p>The last year has been difficult and progression of this theme has not been as planned. The key focus was on supporting and sustaining businesses through SG grant programmes and advisory support. Close working with partners has taken place however in an attempt to be as accessible as possible to business and a range of services were altered in order to fit with the COVID requirements (e.g. training via TEAMS or ZOOM. Additional council services and grant supports were developed to meet the COVID challenges. The next year will see a need for further changes and development as we support businesses through the restart and sustain phase.</p>	Economic Development Manager	31-Mar-2022	





Context		Risk Statement	Owned by	Current Controls	Likelihood	Impact	Evaluation
SRR.21.01.02 Unemployment		Unemployment is predicted to rise significantly across Scotland and, for vulnerable groups, could be three times higher than the Scottish average. Skills and business support need to change to meet the scale of the anticipated economic challenge, to ensure that people are better placed to realise their potential, better able to find ways into paid work and to reduce inequality.	Head of Regeneration	(1) Job creation programmes and demand led interventions (2) Focus on youth unemployment (3) Community benefit clauses (4) Enhanced and expanded employability services (5) Focused and targeted partnership working to ensure no-one is left behind	05	05	25 V.High
Experience from previous recessions demonstrates that some groups of people: those in lower paid jobs; younger people; the self-employed and those on temporary contracts – tend to be more affected than others. This impact can accentuate economic and social disparities that already exist within economies such as Renfrewshire. When fewer jobs are available generally, this results in those groups listed above being furthest from accessing them. It is currently challenging to establish the impact of Brexit on unemployment due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.							
Actions					Assigned To	Date	Status
CESIP20 - 03 - 07	Develop and implement a new Inclusive Growth framework and action plan 2019 Inclusive Growth conference facilitated over 180 local people inputting to the development of the Inclusive Growth agenda. Inclusive Growth Framework and action plan identifies work programme to Dec 2022.				Economic Development Manager	31-Dec-2022	
CESIP20 - 03 - 08	Deliver bespoke employability services targeted at the needs of inactive and unemployed priority groups (with a key focus around health) to move them closer to work Range of pilot work now embedded into service delivery model and mainstreamed as part of service. New programmes under the NOLB banner being developed relating to disability and also care leavers.				Economic Development Manager	31-Dec-2022	
CESIP20 - 01 - 24	Reduce skills gaps in the area and respond to growth sectors Renfrewshire’s Skills Action Plan was approved by Leadership Board in February 2020. This is a key action within the Economic Strategy - developing Renfrewshire’s workforce to meet the needs of our growing economy and emerging sectors is fundamental to achieving the ambitions set out in the Strategy.				Economic Development Manager	31-Dec-2022	
CESIP20 - 01 - 25	Ensure a strong and active local employability partnerships to support all people to be job ready and to access employment LEP restructure took place during the year with regular meetings taking place. Local Employability Partnership will become a commissioning oversight group for new services particularly relating to No One Left Behind (NOLB).				Economic Development Manager	31-Dec-2022	
CESDP21 - 01 – 02	Deliver the UK Governments Kickstart Scheme and Scottish Governments Young Persons Guarantee to significantly reduce youth unemployment across Renfrewshire Youth employment is a key priority within the Economic Recovery Plan and considerable progress has been made in terms of the action to reduce youth unemployment. The Council and its partners set out ambitious targets to create 700 new and additional jobs for unemployed young people in Renfrewshire by end December 2021 through the resources provided by the UK Government Kickstart Scheme and Scottish Government Young Persons Guarantee. Over 450 Kickstart places had been approved by the DWP for the Renfrewshire Council bid with 120 young people already started in post, and no longer claiming benefits, and 110 currently in the process of being recruited for. In addition to the new jobs being created the Young Persons Guarantee was launched in April 2021 and Renfrewshire was amongst the first to offer a new partnership website (ypguaranteerenfrewshire.com) with an opportunities portal aimed at all young people in Renfrewshire, joining up the local offer from all partner organisations.				Economic Development Manager	31-Dec-2022	
CESDP21 - 01 - 08	Redundancy Support: Design and deliver new services to those being made redundant and to support and advise businesses forced to reduce staff during this time A PACE redundancy service at Renfrewshire Council Employability Services has been developed with a single point of contact appointed and supporting people being made redundant from June 2021. A new employability grant programme was recently approved and launched on 1st October to deliver enhanced skills across the area.				Economic Development Manager	31-Dec-2021	



## Tackling inequality, ensuring opportunities for all

Context	Risk Statement	Owned by	Current Controls	Likelihood	Impact	Evaluation
SRR.21.03.03 <b>Reducing inequalities in Renfrewshire</b>	If we don't have a coordinated approach to tackling inequalities across Renfrewshire (including for example, the causes and consequences of poverty), this could jeopardise the effort in reducing both the short-term impacts on households but also have wider long-term consequences on attainment and health for people living on low incomes.	Head of Policy & Commissioning	(1) Tackling Poverty Programme (2) Attainment Challenge (3) Strong partnership working (e.g. Community Planning Partnership (CPP). Advice Partnership, Empowering Communities Forum, Improving Life Chances, CPP Board (4) CPP have identified priorities e.g. Alcohol and Drugs, Social isolation etc. (5) Social Renewal Plan has been developed through a programme of analysis, research, and engagement. (6) Neighbourhood hub model in place to support local needs on a partnership basis in response to COVID	05	05	25 <b>V.High</b>
The Council plays a key role in tackling inequalities and providing the best possible services to our communities, particularly those who are experiencing the poorest outcomes. As well as our focus on health and wellbeing, we are also committed to support vulnerable individuals, groups or communities through early intervention and prevention, responding to poverty, supporting routes to employment as well as dealing with welfare reforms. The impact of COVID-19 is likely to have exacerbated existing inequalities in terms of for example educational attainment, health, poverty and mental health. 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. In the short term, significant focus is on supporting food insecurity and supporting people on low incomes to maximise income and seek advice with income and debt management.						
Action Codes	Actions			Assigned To	Date	Status
CESIP20 - 02 - 01	Work with communities to develop local action plans to tackle the issues people care about most  Work with Local Partnerships was delayed during 2020, with the primary focus on the distribution of grants in September and October 2020. In early 2021, in order to support the continued development of their Local Priorities, Local Partnerships were briefed on the progress of the Community Impact Assessment, particularly the findings of the Public Services Panel by Local Partnership area. The development of the Local Priorities into local Action Plans will resume later in 2022.			Strategic Partnerships and Inequalities Manager	31-Mar-2022	
CESDP21 - 03 - 04	Work with local equalities led community groups and employees to deliver progress against the six equalities outcomes  Following engagement, draft equality outcomes were agreed by Council and published in March 2021. These will be subject to further engagement during 2021 and 2022 in light of COVID.			Strategic Partnerships and Inequalities Manager	31-Mar-2023	
CESDP21 - 03 - 05	Develop and publish Local Child Poverty Action Report  The Local Child Poverty Action report was agreed by Leadership Board in June 2021 and subsequently published. Child poverty has been identified as a particular area of focus for the Community Planning Partnership, and an initial scoping session for partners to identify next steps around child poverty was held in September 2021.			Strategic Partnerships and Inequalities Manager	30-Jun-2020	
CESIP20 - 03 - 05	Promote ethical procurement and work with our suppliers to ensure that they do not use exploitative labour  During the financial year 2020/21 all tenders were evaluated in accordance with the requirements of legislation, statutory guidance and good practice The procurement team supported the Council's commitment to the Modern			Strategic Commercial and Procurement Manager	31-Mar-2023	



	Slavery Charter and all Works contracts provided a link to the Council's Statement in Relation to the Procurement of Construction Contracts (The Construction Charter) which promotes fair and ethical treatment of the workforce and supply chain.			
CESDP21 - 03 - 01	<p>Implement the recommendations of the Renfrewshire Alcohol and Drugs Commission</p> <p>The final report of the Alcohol and Drugs Commission was presented to the Council and Community Planning Partnership in December 2020. An update on progress was provided to the Leadership Board on 15 September. 12 projects are currently being supported by the £2m funding allocated by Council to support the work of the commission, with £1.34m of funding allocated to date. This work is being overseen by a programme board chaired by the Chief Executive</p>	Head of Policy & Commissioning	31 Mar 2023	
CESIP20 - 03 - 09	<p>Promote fair working practices including payment of the living wage across the Council's supply base. Include Fair Work as a standard agenda item at supplier review meetings to be considered alongside all other contract management matters</p> <p>Fair Work practices are scored as standard in all our contracts, these actively promote payment of the Living Wage. Corporate Social Responsibility, Sustainability, Community Benefits and Workforce Development are included in the KPIs available via the Contract and Supplier Management (CSM) Module on PCS-T, the procurement team are committed to rolling this CSM Module out across all strategic contracts.</p>	Strategic Commercial and Procurement Manager	31-Mar-2022	
CESDP21 - 03 - 02	<p>Develop the Social Renewal Plan, including a Community Impact Assessment, and reviewing existing work around poverty through work with Poverty Alliance/Get Heard programme of engagement.</p> <p>Some early areas of focus have been identified and a number of projects designed to address financial insecurity and poverty are in delivery, including around food and fuel insecurity, fair work and income maximisation. An update on the plan was brought to Leadership Board in December 2021.</p>	Head of Policy & Commissioning	31-Mar-2023	
CESDP21 - 01 - 20	<p>Support Digital Inclusion, as part of the Digital Strategy</p> <p>The Service is leading on a number of workstreams. In terms of the smart data workstream, work is currently underway to map the use of data across the Council and to identify early opportunities to progress our approach to data management and analysis. The Digital Citizen workstream is progressing well with the establishment of a new Citizen Voices group and proposals being developed include a place based digital inclusion pilot in partnership with SCVO. Free Online Safety Ambassador training has been offered out to the community and staff in partnership with GetSafeOnline. The service is a part of the Digital Skills and Leadership workstream working towards upskilling our workforce with plans to provide more digital skills training, self-serve resources online and recruit staff digital champions. The service also co-ordinates all activities relating to the Connecting Scotland programme with almost 2000 devices secured to date to support vulnerable people living across communities.</p>	Head of Policy & Commissioning	31-Mar-2023	



## Creating a sustainable Renfrewshire for all to enjoy

Context	Risk Statement	Owned by	Current Controls	Likelihood	Impact	Evaluation
<p>SRR.21.04.04 <b>Climate, Sustainability &amp; Adaptability</b></p> <p>Renfrewshire Council declared a Climate Emergency on 27 June 2019 and agreed to establish a cross-party working group to explore options and to make recommendations to Council by the end of financial year 2019/20. The actions required are potentially complex and multi-faceted, and need to be supported by organisations across all sectors, and in partnership with local communities. Actions include: pledging to work proactively with others to make Renfrewshire net zero by 2030, taking into account both production and consumption emissions; and assisting communities to become more resilient to the impacts of global warming, particularly to flooding and to drought.</p>	<p>The climate emergency brings a risk to Council and its communities in relation to increased extreme weather as well as food insecurity. We need to focus on mitigation and adaptation, and ensure a just transition so no one is left behind and none is disadvantaged in the transition to net zero. The Council would need to take action and support those most disadvantaged. A key risk is that the Council is not in control of all of the levers, and cannot deliver everything required in isolation, so there is a risk that others do not contribute to meet the 2030 target.</p>	<p>Head of Policy &amp; Commissioning</p> <p>(Climate Change Working Group)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) The Council has used the Climate Change Assessment Tool – helps public sector organisations in Scotland self-evaluate their performance under the public sector duties of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009</li> <li>(2) The Carbon Management Plan has specific objectives to reduce emissions and these are included in other key documents such as the Council Plan</li> <li>(3) Implementation of the Corporate Asset Management Strategy ensures that property assets are managed effectively and efficiently through the provision of relevant management and performance information</li> <li>(4) The Energy Management Team: ensure energy management initiatives are aligned to the capital investment programme and corporate asset strategy to optimise use of property estate and reduce overall running costs and energy consumption levels. Promote reductions in energy usage and advise employees and residents about energy efficiency</li> <li>(5) Through the Procurement Unit, sustainability and community benefits are considered in the development of all contract strategies</li> <li>(6) Currently developing a plan for the Council, and Renfrewshire, to achieve net zero, to be published in 2022</li> <li>(7) The Climate Change Sub-Committee of the Leadership Board - its work programme, and the appointment of a Lead Officer to lead the Programme</li> <li>(8) Launch of the Climate change action fund – to support a range of initiatives/feasibility to test new ways of working and to be ready to lever external funding</li> <li>(9) Climate Panel / Partnership Forum to support engagement and ensure all voices are heard, including traditionally underrepresented groups</li> <li>(10) Community Climate Fund – fund for community organisations to enable behaviour change and local green projects to make our communities more resilient</li> </ol>	04	04	16 High
Action Codes	New Actions			Assigned To	Date	Status
CESDP21 - 04 - 02	<p>Lead the coordination of Council-wide efforts to respond to the climate emergency and support the work of the Climate Emergency Working Group.</p> <p>The Climate Change Sub-Committee of the Leadership Board was established in October 2020 to provide oversight and scrutiny of the Council's activities on climate change, and specifically its progress in terms of meeting the target of achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2030. The Sub-Committee met most recently on 17 November 2021 and considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Progress updates in relation to the overall Climate Emergency work programme being progressed by services</li> </ul>			Head of Policy & Commissioning	31-Mar-2022	



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initial findings from the Climate Change survey</li> <li>• Proposals to support the establishment of a new Community Climate Fund</li> <li>• A presentation from Children's Services on the learning and teaching that is taking place across Renfrewshire on climate issues, with particular input from the children and staff of St Margaret's Primary School.</li> <li>• A presentation from the Head of Economy and Development on climate change and planning policy.</li> <li>• Support for a National Climate Ambition statement that organisations across Scotland were asked to endorse prior to COP 26, following a National Leadership Summit in October 2021</li> <li>• The Council's Annual Public Sector Bodies Climate Duty report for 2020/21</li> <li>• Key priorities to be progressed over the next 6 month period by officers.</li> </ul> <p>To support this Programme a lead officer has been appointed, and in 2022 the absolute focus will be on producing the plan for net zero for the Renfrewshire Council area. The first action for this will be to determine the baseline emissions for both the Council and the council area in order to produce a route map for net zero by 2030.</p>			
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## Appendix 2: Corporate Risks, longer-term or imminent





### Working together to improve outcomes

Context	Risk Statement	Owned by	Current Controls	Likelihood	Impact	Evaluation
<p>CRR21.05.05 <b>Financial Sustainability</b></p> <p><b>Financial recovery from Covid19 and ongoing Brexit impacts</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Rebuilding of financial resilience following unprecedented costs incurred in responding to the pandemic</li> <li>- Anticipated reduced income from NDR/CT over the medium term as full economic implications of the pandemic hit local businesses and communities</li> <li>- Pricing volatility and shortage of labour and materials</li> </ul> <p><b>Best value report</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Recommendation in Best Value report to prioritise how services need to be provided in future to be funded from within available resources.</li> </ul> <p><b>Cost &amp; Income pressures</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Future grant settlements and the level of funding available.</li> <li>- Implications of national economic policy choices to protect certain services from real terms reductions in funding such as the Police and NHS</li> <li>- Future Local Government pay settlements and non- payroll related inflation</li> <li>- Demographics &amp; demand pressures, such as an ageing population with increased associated service demands, and increases in demand for children's social care</li> <li>- Implications of welfare reform &amp; poverty levels, including growth in Council Tax Reduction caseload.</li> <li>- Reductions in income from fee generating services such as local planning and parking; implications of the</li> </ul>	<p>If significant cost pressures are not successfully planned for and managed effectively over the medium to longer term, this could jeopardise the financial sustainability of the council and result in a significant impact on availability and quality of front-line services and capital investment resources.</p>	<p>Head of Finance &amp; Business Services</p>	<p>(1) Revised Medium to Longer Term Financial Planning Strategy reassessed the various risks to the Council's short, medium- and longer-term financial sustainability. Refreshed report to Council on 30 September 2021 outlined the immediate financial concerns and plans to address these, utilising flexibilities agreed by the Scottish Government; however as the position continues to develop and evolve close monitoring will be required to ensure Council manages costs in the short term and fully appreciates the longer term consequences of actions taken to address short-term risks. Committee reports of this nature cover a wide range of current and future financial and economic factors e.g. Strategic Economic and National Policy Context, Cost Pressures, Pressures on Income and Mitigation Strategies to deal with such uncertainties.</p> <p>(2) A well-developed and embedded budget planning, budget setting and budgetary control system is in place throughout the organisation and this informs members and officers regarding financial performance and stability. This facilitates robust and transparent decision making and incorporates an escalation process with regards budget management issues which may arise.</p> <p>(3) In conjunction with the medium to longer term financial outlook and the Council's continued "Right for Renfrewshire (R4R) Programme", Renfrewshire Council has been pro-active in planning for the future by identifying and agreeing a planned release of resources. This is required to meet emerging budget pressures and is utilised in conjunction with the Council's long-term debt smoothing strategy to support the release of planned savings over a number of years; however, the pandemic has interrupted the planned delivery of savings under RFR, so the full programme has been reviewed. However it remains the case that savings will continue to require be generated at scale in order to ensure the ongoing financial sustainability of the Council.</p> <p>(4) There is close financial monitoring of the agreed savings to ensure they are delivered within the agreed timescales or where this is not now possible, to understand and reschedule planned delivery to achieve the associated objectives. Monitoring is undertaken via a combination of financial and operational measures, actions and related update reports.</p> <p>(5) Regular updates and bespoke reports are provided to CMT and the Council with regards the national fiscal position, likely developments and the impact on the council through close liaison</p>	05	05	<p>25 <b>V.High</b></p>

national economic recovery and associated risks/uncertainty in economic factors e.g. interest rates.				with national groups e.g. CIPFA DoFs, COSLA and the Scottish Government. This liaison remains critical in ensuring the Council is aware of potential financial developments and is in a position to influence these.			
<b>Liability for predecessor organisations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Removal of limitation period for historic child abuse</li><li>- Redress for Survivors (Historical Child Abuse in Care) (Scotland) Act/ Local Government financial contribution</li></ul>				(6) Levels of and use of reserves has been a key tool in addressing the costs of the pandemic, therefore the planned use of and rebuilding of reserves in the medium term, and the Council’s Capital Investment and Treasury Management Strategy, are key to ensuring ongoing financial sustainability.			
				<b><u>Other controls</u></b>			
				(7) Reports and publications from Audit Scotland in relation to the Local Government financial outlook, financial planning and related developments and improvements are supplemented with a Renfrewshire context report, with both reports being submitted to the Council's Audit Risk and Scrutiny Board. Audit Scotland representatives have an open invite to these policy board meetings.			
				(8) Utilisation and energy consumption has clarified priority areas for investment in the Council’s estate and this has supported and informed investment decisions and the formulation of the Council’s Capital and Revenue budgets.			
<b>Action Codes</b>	<b>Linked Actions</b>				<b>Assigned To</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Status</b>
(Continual Monitoring)							

Context	Risk Statement	Owned by	Current Controls	Likelihood	Impact	Evaluation
<p>CRR21.05.06 <b>Cyber Attack [NEW]</b></p> <p><u>Context:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Review of the council's cyber environment</li> <li>▪ Ever increasing criminal cyber activity</li> <li>▪ Increasing reliance on electronic systems</li> </ul>	<p>While the council's cyber protections are robust, cyber attacks are becoming more and more frequent and sophisticated, and the council could be subject to an attack such as that on SEPA, with the risk of significant impact on council service provision.</p>	<p>CMT</p>	<p>For security reasons, controls are not published in the public domain</p>	<p>04</p>	<p>04</p>	<p>16 High</p>
Action Codes	Linked Actions		Latest Note	Assigned To	Due Date	Status
	As agreed by the Corporate Management Team					

Context	Risk Statement	Owned by	Current Controls	Likelihood	Impact	Evaluation
<b>CRR21.05.07</b> <b>Financial Stability</b> <u>Context:</u> Imminent shorter-term risk for financial stability, recognising the immediate financial situation of the Council (note: the medium to longer-term financial position is captured under financial 'sustainability')	If significant short-term costs and income losses are not closely monitored and understood, this could destabilise the finances of the council to an extent beyond the financial resilience of the Council, resulting in a need for immediate cost control measures, or short-term savings which have an immediate impact on service delivery	Head of Finance & Business Services	(1) Initial cost/income loss information across both General Fund and HRA collated to inform national position across local government has been built on and refined over a number of iterations, and continues to be updated as informed by national developments (2) Cost data gathered has included key partners in Renfrewshire Leisure and the Renfrewshire IJB, as well as smaller bodies and other delivery partners (3) Budget monitoring reports to Policy Boards have been adapted to include costs and income loss specific to the pandemic in order to highlight costs incurred and those expected over the remainder of the current financial year. Budget reports have also been adapted to focus on the forecast year end outturn position as opposed to the historic periodic position (4) Fundamental review of the Right for Renfrewshire programme has been undertaken in order to recalculate potential cost savings in year and to reprofile agreed savings, the delivery of which has been interrupted by the pandemic (5) Expert treasury management advice sought in relation to the potential for the debt smoothing strategy to deliver any further savings in the short term which would support the Council's immediate financial stability; along with consideration of other technical accounting measures which may be utilised following agreement with the Scottish Government and COSLA (6) Clear analysis of the Council's reserves position and potential for reprioritisation or redirection; including the development of plans to rebuild financial resilience of the Council in the medium term (7) Ongoing discussion with CMT to agree the financial consequences of the pandemic for each service and how these will be managed; including the use of financial flexibilities permitted by the Scottish Government in the use of existing allocated resources (8) Review of capital plan and ongoing projects to ensure clear understanding of phasing of potential spend.	03	05	15 High
Action Codes	Linked Actions	Latest Note		Assigned To	Due Date	Status

Context	Risk Statement	Owned by	Current Controls	Likelihood	Impact	Evaluation
<p><b>CRR21.05.08</b>  <b>Impact on Regulatory Services due to Covid-19 and EU withdrawal.</b></p> <p><u>Context:</u>  Increased demands have been placed on Regulatory Services (Environmental Health and Trading Standards) due to Covid-19 and EU withdrawal.</p> <p>Resource and funding will be required to meet the current demands and ensure that statutory duties are not impacted.</p>	<p>There is a risk, due to the shifting legislative landscape and rapidly increasing demands on Regulatory staff arising from COVID-19 and the EU Exit on 1 January 2021 that statutory duties may not be able to be met.</p>	<p>Head of Communities and Public Protection.</p>	<p>(1) Continue with the Service restructuring as part of the Right for Renfrewshire programme. In particular, the re-modelling to ensure a strong and resilient workforce moving forward. This will also support the retention of skilled and qualified employees within the service.</p> <p>(2) Additional resource requested as part of financial planning process to support the service restructure process. This includes the request for £250k "unavoidables" to allow retention of key qualified employees to cover both Brexit and Covid duties.</p> <p>(3) Working with REHIS, Society of Chief Environmental Health Officers for Scotland and University West of Scotland, Renfrewshire Council has taken on a student from September 2021 as part of the first cohort of new trainees under a new Environmental Health course. This will lead to a larger number of EHOs to come through and replace an ageing workforce.</p> <p>(4) Full complement of staff who are authorised to work on all aspects of Covid-19.</p> <p>(5) Wider staff being trained in functions to release EHO/TSO to focus on Covid-19 or EU withdrawal work at Airport.</p> <p>(6) Discussions with Glasgow Airport to understand impacts of changes at Glasgow Airport from EU withdrawal.</p> <p>(7) Discussions with DEFRA and Food Standards Scotland on Import/Exports duties</p>	03	05	15 High
Linked Actions			Update	Assigned To	Due Date	Status
CRR20.05.04a	Training and authorisation of staff for Covid-19 related activity		On-going training and updates following changes to legislation and guidance. Additional permanent staff (Environmental Health Compliance Officers) recruited from Scottish Government Covid funding to manage some additional workload. Authorisations review with Scheme of Delegations being reviewed early in 2022.	Communities and Regulatory Manager		
CRR20.05.04b	Sitting on EU withdrawal working group (Imports and Exports) with regards to Export Health Certificates and impacts		Regular meetings with appropriate bodies to understand landscape for EU withdrawal and impacts on Renfrewshire.	Communities and Regulatory Manager		

Context	Risk Statement	Owned by	Current Controls	Likelihood	Impact	Evaluation	
CRR21.05.09 <b>Administration of Elections</b>	Administering elections in the context of a global pandemic brings specific challenges that if not carefully managed could impact on the ability to meet deadlines and provide a covid-safe environment.	Elections Management Board	(1) Guidance from the Electoral Management Board for Scotland is always followed closely (2) Contingency Management Packs are developed as standard for all electoral events (3) Continual collaboration between Elections Management Team, Civil Contingencies, Risk Management and Health and Safety Teams to anticipate and plan for required mitigations (4) Dynamic Risk Assessment where required (5) Capacity of supply chain monitored	03	05	15 High	
<u>Context:</u> Local Government Elections in May 2022 and the potential for by-elections (while Covid-19 conditions persist). Challenges include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>ensuring a covid-safe environment for staff, candidates and electorate</li><li>potential higher levels of absence across the Election Management Team and polling staff due to illness or requirements to self-isolate</li><li>Legislative changes likely which will have a significant impact on the conduct of elections</li></ul>							
Action Codes	Linked Actions	Latest Note			Assigned To	Date	Status
To be determined as any legislative changes emerge							

Context		Risk Statement	Owned by	Current Controls	Likelihood	Impact	Evaluation
CRR20.05.10 <b>Commercial vehicle and operator licence compliance</b>		Renfrewshire Council requires its fleet of vehicles to be effectively managed, otherwise there could be sustained impact in several areas including community care, housing maintenance and repairs, streetscene operations and waste collection.	Head of Operations and Infrastructure	<u>Governance</u> (1) Training and Compliance Officer in post monitoring compliance performance and linking to inspection activity (2) Monitoring and tracking of vehicle servicing (3) Tachograph analysis system ensuring monitoring and compliance of driving staff (4) Operator Licencing Awareness Training (OLAT) conducted for all operational service managers (5) Full compliance audit report focusing on Operator Licence and Compliance completed in 2019 by Freight Transport Association (FTA) (6) Regular monitoring of Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) updates and controls (7) Quarterly attendance at Logistics UK ( formerly FTA ) and APSE Transport boards	03	05	15 High
<u>Context:</u> The council's vehicle fleet, managed by Environment & Infrastructure Services, comprises around 500 vehicles including heavy and large goods vehicles, light vans and cars. The council implements a range of measures to ensure ongoing vehicle operator licence compliance.				<u>Operational</u> (8) Reduction in average age of Council Fleet (9) Workshop equipment and tooling improvements			
Action Codes	Linked Actions		Latest Note		Assigned To	Date	Status
(Presently monitoring compliance until such times as the risk can be reduced)							

Context	Risk Statement	Owned by	Current Controls	Likelihood	Impact	Evaluation
CRR20.05.11 Expansion of Early Years Provision	The expansion of early years will see an increase in hours from 600 to 1140 per year for eligible children, with flexible options for parents. This brings some challenges around staffing, infrastructure, independent provision, hard and soft FM for the council. The impact of Covid on infrastructure timeline and risk around independent and third sector sustainability is currently unknown.	Head of Quality and Curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Programme Board meets every six weeks to review current risks and issues.</li> <li>(2) Tendering documents will set out expected quality standards to ensure all partner agencies are aware and able to comply.</li> <li>(3) Ongoing programme of engagement with independent providers.</li> <li>(4) Promotion of early learning and childcare as a career option.</li> <li>(5) Professional learning and development for local authority and providers in place.</li> <li>(6) Communications plan for all stakeholders in place.</li> <li>(7) Tracking of data relating to phasing, demand for places and capacity of providers.</li> <li>(8) Increased hourly rate to providers and commitment to delivering 1140 in funded providers settings despite the delay in the legislative requirement to provide 1140 hours.</li> <li>(9) Procurement routes which minimise our dependency on any one particular approach (SEMP, negotiated price with internal DLO, measured term contracts</li> <li>(10) Project programme for infrastructure fully developed and revised milestones identified in light of Covid.</li> <li>(11) Scottish Government has removed the original implementation deadline due to unavoidable delays arising from Covid-19 and has not provided a revised date.</li> </ul>	02	04	08 Moderate
<b>RISK CLOSED</b> - Early Years Expansion is now being fully delivered						

## Appendix 3: Business-as-Usual Risks

As explained in paragraph 3.5 of the paper, business-as-usual risks will be taken through an assurance model rather than the traditional risk management model. This approach recognises that since these risks are not generally related to our ambitions but rather are inherent by default of the type of organisation we are, and the services we provide, there is more to be gained by shifting our focus away from risk scoring and towards risk assurance.

In 3.5 we extracted the 6 current *significant* areas of business-as-usual risk from the risk profile, however this approach also enables an expansion of this grouping to take in other aspects of business-as-usual risk that would likewise benefit from this new approach.

### Our Vision for future development (subject to stakeholder engagement)

- We will target a Practical Assurance Questionnaire (PAQ) at Heads of Service level as these senior officers already have lead roles in terms of governance and delegated responsibilities.
- We will target performance at the 'first line of defence' (i.e. aimed at being assured that risks are being managed at the front line), but development of the new model will be in collaboration with the 'second line of defence' (i.e. council professionals who lead on policies and standards in relation to certain aspects of risk, such as Health & Safety, Information Governance etc, for which we expect front line and organisational compliance.
- We will see better links with assurance in relation to the management of insurable risks and liabilities.
- We will develop a 'portal' that will allow Heads of Service to routinely undertake assurance activities and the portal will enable the second line of defence professionals to access that data rather than disturbing Heads of Service with multiple related questions.

### Where are we now in the development process?

- We are starting to get the right people around the table
- We are starting to explore the question sets for each 'module'
- We are starting to explore what evidence should be provided to support self-assessment
- We have had an early conversation with ICT colleagues about the concept and how information might be gathered and shared



## If expanding on the current BAU risks, what might we expect?

We need to ensure that whatever is included within the model is going to offer added value, provide us with the information and outputs we need but at the same time not be burdensome or onerous for Heads of Service. The areas of activity that will fall within scope therefore need to be carefully considered. At this time we would anticipate that the modules will cover the following, or similar to the following:

community and public safety	people wellbeing and development	health, safety & managing adverse events	organisational resilience	financial control (including crime/ counter fraud)	procurement
asset management	information handling	project management	partnership management	service performance monitoring	complaints, comments and claims handling

The Board will be kept updated as this development progresses.





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**To:                Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Board**

**On:                24<sup>th</sup> January 2022**

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

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**Heading:      Absence Statistics – Quarter 2 and Quarter 3 of 2021/22**

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## **1.      Summary**

- 1.1    The purpose of this report is to provide the Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Board with absence monitoring information for quarter 2 ending 30th September 2021 and for quarter 3 ending 31<sup>st</sup> December. The report highlights the continued support in place for employees in response to the Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic.
- 1.2    The council has continued to follow Government guidance throughout the pandemic, and this has contributed to a reduction in short term absence with fewer people circulating socially and within workplaces. Working from home continues to reduce the opportunity for transmission, particularly as a result of not having to commute as well as the vaccination programmes impact on suppressing the virus.
- 1.3    The council continues to support those employees on longer term absences, particularly where the absence has been impacted by delayed or postponed medical interventions.

## **2.      Recommendations**

- 2.1    It is recommended that the Board notes the content of this report.
-

### 3. Background








3.1 The Scrutiny Board agreed that absence levels will be reported on a quarterly basis. It was agreed that the report will include the following information relating to supporting attendance: -

- Absence statistics broken down by service and category of staff.
- Reasons for absence broken down by service and category of staff.
- Progress made by services in relation to their supporting attendance action plans.








### 4. Sickness absence statistics Quarter 2, ending September 2021

4.1 A comparison of service and council overall absence performance for quarters ending September 2020 and September 2021 is detailed in table 1 (including covid) below and table 2 (without covid), which is on the following page. In line with the reporting requirements for Scottish Councils, absence is expressed as a number of work days lost per full time equivalent (FTE) employee.

**Table 1: Q2 Year on year service and council absence performance with covid**

Service	Quarter Ending September 2020	Quarter Ending September 2021	Variance +/- year on year
Chief Executives	1.43	1.52	+0.09 
Childrens Services	1.52	2.22	+0.70 
Communities and Housing Services	2.09	3.04	+0.95 
Environment and Infrastructure	3.99	4.03	+0.04 
Finance & Resource Services	2.15	1.86	-0.29 
Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership	3.05	5.41	+2.36 
Council Overall	2.50	2.93	+0.43 
<b>Council Overall Target</b>	2.10	2.10	n/a




**Table 2: Q2 year on year service and council absence performance without covid:**

Service	Quarter Ending September 2020	Quarter Ending September 2021	Variance +/- year on year
Chief Executives	1.43	1.34	-0.09 
Childrens Services	1.52	1.97	+0.45 
Communities and Housing Services	2.09	2.56	+0.47 
Environment and Infrastructure	3.99	3.82	-0.17 
Finance & Resource Services	2.15	1.51	-0.64 
Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership	3.05	5.23	+2.18 
Council Overall	2.50	2.67	+0.17 
<b>Council Overall Target</b>	2.10	2.10	n/a




## 5. Sickness absence analysis and trends – Quarter 2

- 5.1 The following tables detail the workdays lost due to absence by employee group for the quarter: including non-teaching employees, teachers, and council overall

**Table 3: Q2 Year on year employee group and council absence performance with covid**

Employee Group	Quarter Ending September 2020	Quarter Ending September 2021	Variance +/- year on year
Non-Teaching	3.03	3.59	+0.56 
Teachers	0.84	1.01	+0.17 
Council Overall	2.50	2.93	+0.43 

**Table 4: Q2 Year on year employee group and council absence performance without covid**

Employee Group	Quarter Ending September 2020	Quarter Ending September 2021	Variance +/- year on year
Non-Teaching	3.03	3.32	+0.29 
Teachers	0.84	0.79	-0.17 
Council Overall	2.50	2.67	+0.17 








## 6. Sickness absence targets analysis – Quarter 2

- 6.1 non-Teaching employee absence level of 3.59 days lost per FTE employee is **1.49 days above** the council target of 2.10 days, but if covid absences are removed, this equates to 3.32 days lost per FTE which is **1.22 days above** the council target.
- 6.2 In addition, the Teacher absence level of 1.01 days lost per FTE employee is **0.12 days below** the council target of 1.54 days, but if covid absences are removed, this equates to 1.35 days lost per FTE which is **0.19 days below** the council target.
- 6.3 The Council has recorded an overall absence rate of 2.93 days lost per FTE employee, which is **0.83 days above** the council target of 2.10 days, but if covid absences are removed, this equates to 2.67 days lost per FTE which is **0.57 days above** the council target.








## 7 Sickness absence statistics Quarter 3 ending December 2021

- 7.1 A comparison of service and council overall absence performance for quarters ending December 2020 and December 2021 is detailed in table 5 (including covid) and table 6 (without covid), which are on the following page. In line with the reporting requirements for Scottish Councils, absence is expressed as a number of work days lost per full time equivalent (FTE) employee.

**Table 5: Q3 Year on year service and council absence performance with covid**

Service	Quarter Ending December 2020	Quarter Ending December 2021	Variance +/- year on year
Chief Executives	1.55	1.78	+0.23 
Childrens Services	3.09	3.33	+0.24 
Communities and Housing Services	3.23	4.43	+1.20 
Environment and Infrastructure	3.93	4.30	+0.37 
Finance & Resource Services	2.47	2.38	-0.09 
Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership	3.84	5.31	+1.47 
Council Overall	3.25	3.64	+0.39 
<b>Council Overall Target</b>	2.80	2.80	n/a




**Table 6: Q3 Year on year service and council absence performance without covid**

Service	Quarter Ending December 2020	Quarter Ending December 2021	Variance +/- year on year
Chief Executives	1.55	1.37	-0.18 
Childrens Services	3.09	3.07	-0.02 
Communities and Housing Services	3.23	3.89	+0.66 
Environment and Infrastructure	3.93	4.01	+0.08 
Finance & Resource Services	2.47	2.02	-0.45 
Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership	3.84	5.05	+1.21 
Council Overall	3.25	3.35	+0.10 
<b>Council Overall Target</b>	2.80	2.80	n/a




## 8. Sickness absence analysis and trends – Quarter 3

- 8.1 The following tables detail the workdays lost due to absence by employee group for the quarter: including non-teaching employees, teachers, and council overall

**Table 7: Q3 Year on year employee group and council absence performance with covid**

Employee Group	Quarter Ending December 2020	Quarter Ending December 2021	Variance +/- year on year
Non-Teaching	3.46	4.16	+0.70 
Teachers	2.62	2.19	-0.43 
Council Overall	3.25	3.64	+0.39 

**Table 8: Q3 Year on year employee group and council absence performance without covid**

Employee Group	Quarter Ending December 2020	Quarter Ending December 2021	Variance +/- year on year
Non-Teaching	3.46	3.81	+0.35 
Teachers	2.62	2.07	-0.55 
Council Overall	3.25	3.35	+0.10 

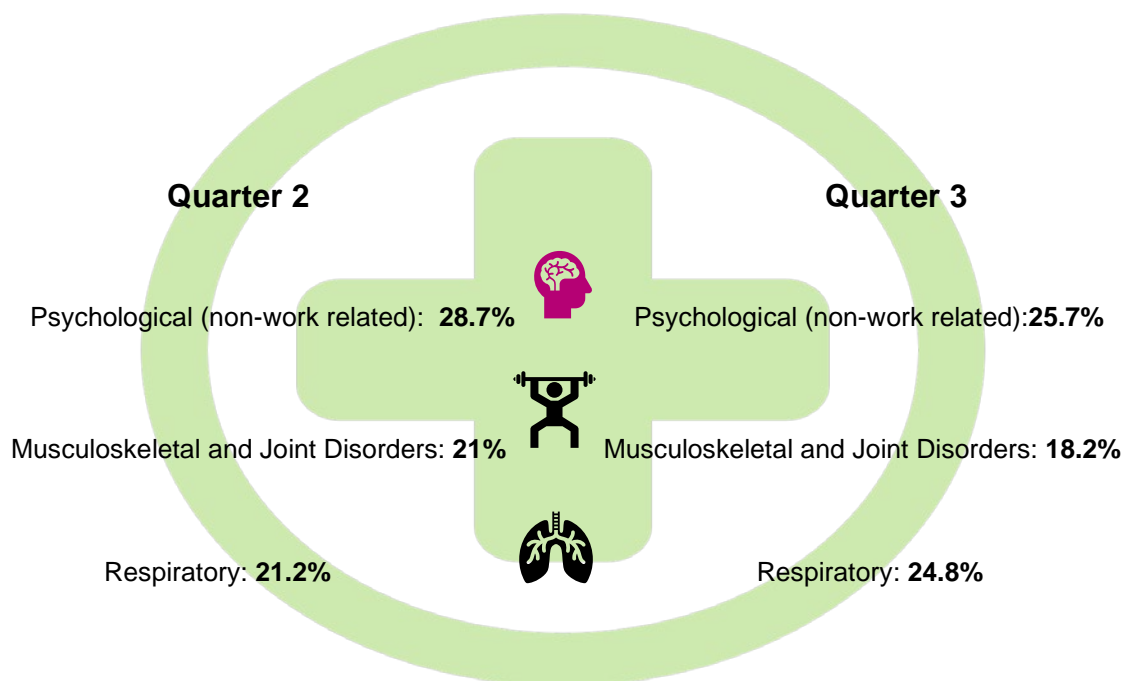
## 9. Sickness absence targets analysis – Quarter 3

- 9.1 non-Teaching employee absence level of 4.16 days lost per FTE employee is **1.36 days above** the council target of 2.80 days, but if covid absences are removed, this equates to 3.81 days lost per FTE which is **1.01 days above** the council target.
- 9.2 In addition, the Teacher absence level of 2.19 days lost per FTE employee is **0.65 above** the council target of 1.54 days, but if covid absences are removed, this equates to 2.07 days lost per FTE which is **0.53 days above** the council target.
- 9.3 The Council has recorded an overall absence rate of 3.64 days lost per FTE employee, which is **0.84 days above** the council target of 2.80 days, but if covid absences are removed, this equates to 3.35 days lost per FTE which is **0.55 days above** the council target.



**10. Sickness absence reasons and related support measures during quarters 2 and 3.**

10.1 The main sickness absence reasons presented and their percentage contribution by quarter are:



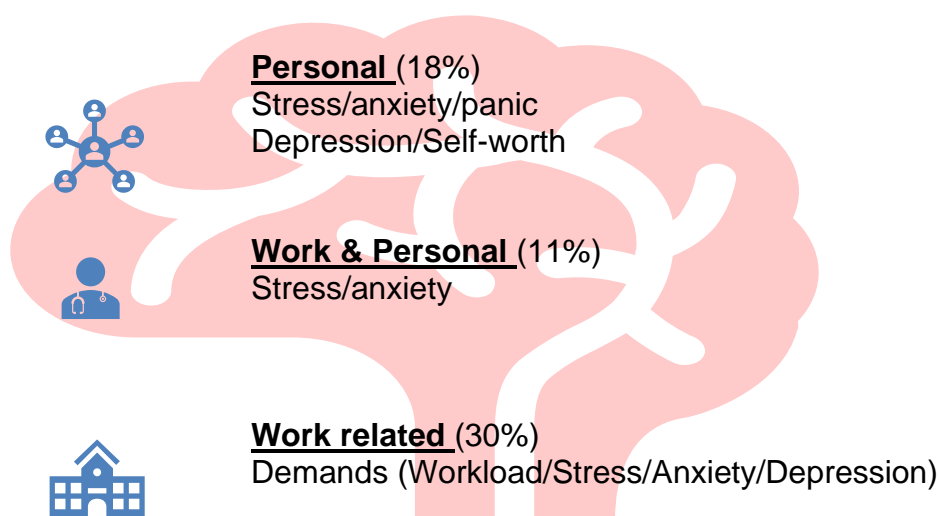
10.2 Psychological (non-work related), Musculoskeletal and Joint Disorders and Respiratory remain the top presenting reasons.

10.3 To support employees with psychological absences, the council provides a range of support services that employees can be referred to at an early stage for assistance, such as the council's Occupational Health Service and the Time for Talking employee counselling service.

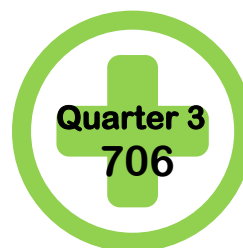
10.4 Through the Occupational Health Service, employees can access Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) for more complex psychological issues.

10.5 The Time for Talking counselling service provides confidential support to employees with a range of personal health and well-being issues. It operates a flexible approach to appointments offering telephone consultations in the early mornings or evenings as well as throughout the day. As part of the Covid-19 control measures, the face-to-face service was temporarily suspended in line with UK Government's guidance and is currently operated through secure video conferencing and telephone consultations.

- 10.6 For quarters 2 and 3 there were a **total of 519** appointments supported by the Time for Talking counselling service. The 3 main presenting reasons are **personal, work, and personal and work**. (which are expressed below as a % of all overall referrals):



- 10.7 Stress risk assessments are undertaken to support employees who have identified stress as having an impact on their wellbeing. An action plan is agreed and undertaken at a local level with the specialist support from HR and OD.
- 10.8 HR and OD work in collaboration with the NHS Choose Life Team, who offer safeTalk and ASIST on suicide awareness and prevention. Additionally, work continues with NHS colleagues to promote the “Doing Well” service which supports employees with depression and low moods.
- 10.9 The Physiotherapy service supports employees with Muscoskeletal and joint disorder conditions through the Council’s Occupational Health Service. As part of the coronavirus (Covid-19) control measures, the face to face service was temporarily suspended until September in line with UK Government’s coronavirus (Covid-19) guidance. However, the service has continued to be provided throughout the period using secure video conferencing and telephone consultations.
- 10.10 For quarters 2 and 3 there were a **total of 1,479** appointments arranged through the Occupational Health Service, this includes management referrals and wellbeing referrals. The graphics below detail the referrals per quarter:



## **11. Coronavirus (Covid 19)**

- 11.1 Covid19 sickness absence continues to be monitored through a dedicated team within HR and OD and reported to the Corporate Management Team daily. The team work closely with our colleagues in public health and monitor the impact of test and protect within our schools and workplaces.
- 11.2 The HR and OD team have been working collaboratively with all key stakeholders, including the Trades Unions, across the council to ensure that any activities being undertaken, especially by key workers, are in line with any changes to the guidance or legislation as it has emerged.
- 11.3 A key continued priority for the council is protecting the mental health and wellbeing of the workforce. The HR and OD team, working closely with the communications and marketing service, regularly engage with the workforce to provide access to a wide range of mental health and wellbeing support and services.
- 11.4 The corporate personal protective equipment group continues to ensure that stocks of PPE are maintained at a reasonable level and are available for all those who require it. The group monitors new and emerging guidance to manage impact and ensure resilience.
- 11.5 The team continue to implement updated Government guidance, reflecting changes to local policy where necessary. This includes the ways in which those who are currently working from home can apply practical solutions to ensure they are working safely, including display screen equipment or the type of office equipment they require. The health and safety team continue to offer virtual assessments and advice to support everyone with their set up. Employees with existing medical conditions are offered additional support from Occupational Health.

## **12. Measures to support attendance at work**

- 12.1 A number of measures being progressed to support attendance at work, include the following: -
  - HR and OD, working closely with Occupational Health, embarked upon the employee seasonal flu vaccination programme. This will continue until the end of January 2022.
  - The corporate absence review group, which consists of senior managers, are currently reviewing all of the current supporting attendance policies and processes.
  - We are in the process of renewing the Occupational Health and Employee Counselling contracts with a view to developing a robust employee assistance programme. This involves collaboration with the key stakeholders across the council and trades unions.

- HR and OD and the Business World Team are working to improve the absence information available to managers, and to streamline supporting attendance related processes to facilitate prompt absence reporting, recording and updating of relevant systems.
- Increased frequency of reporting sickness absence information to the Corporate Management Team and Absence champions. This will assist to help develop supportive strategies and interventions that will enable employees to be supported back to work.
- In collaboration with the communications and marketing service, regular information and guidance continues to be issued, particularly around well-being issues as we move through the stages of the Scottish Government's recovery route map.

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### Implications of this Report

- 1 **Financial Implications** - Improvement in attendance impacts on the financial costs of absence.
- 2 **HR and Organisational Development Implications** - HR and Organisational Development Practitioners will continue to work with service managers and consult with the Trade Unions, on the implementation of the Supporting Attendance at Work Policy and Guidance and initiatives detailed in this report.
- 3 **Community Planning**

Children and Young People - none.

Jobs and the Economy - none.

Community care, health and wellbeing - provides for continuous improvement in health and attendance.

Safer and Stronger - provides for improved service performance across the Council.

Greener - none.

Empowering our Communities - none.
- 4 **Legal Implications** - none.
- 5 **Property/Asset Implications** - none.
- 6 **Information Technology Implications** - none.
- 7 **Equality and Human Rights Implications** - none.

- 8     **Health and Safety Implications** - it is integral to the Council's aim of     securing the health and well-being of employees.
- 9     **Procurement Implications** - none.
- 10    **Risk Implications** - Without continued effective supporting attendance focus, there is a risk that sickness absence levels will adversely impact on the Council both financially and in terms of service delivery. Consequently, supporting attendance activities are monitored via the Corporate Risk Register.
- 11    **Privacy Impact Implications** - none.
12.   **Cosla Policy Position** – none
13.   **Climate Risk** - none

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**List of Background Papers** - none.

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**To:                Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Board**

**On:                24 January 2022**

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

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**Heading:       Commissioner for Ethical Standards in Public Life in  
Scotland – Annual Report 2020/21**

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**1.                Summary**

- 1.1            The Acting Commissioner for Ethical Standards in Public Life in Scotland has issued his 2020/21 Annual Report (the Report). The Report is available on the Commissioner's website at <https://www.ethicalstandards.org.uk/publication/esc-annual-report-2020-21>.
- 1.2            The Report provides details of investigation of complaints about the conduct of councillors, members of devolved public bodies and MSPs and scrutiny of Scotland's Ministerial public appointments process. Where there has been contravention of the relevant Code, the Commissioner reports this, in the case of councillors and members of public bodies, to the Standards Commission for Scotland and in the case of MSPs and in relation to lobbying complaints, to the Scottish Parliament.
- 1.3            The statutory functions of the Commissioner in relation to conduct and public appointments are set out in the Report together with details of the restructure exercise that was conducted.
- 1.4            The Report refers to a revised strategic plan for 2020 to 2024 which was redrafted as of 31 March 2021 and an explanation for the revision is outlined within this report at Section 3.
- 1.5            This report also refers to the revised Code of Conduct for Councillors which was issued in December 2021.

## **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 That the 2020/21 Annual Report by the Commissioner for Ethical Standards in Public Life in Scotland be noted; and
  - 2.2 That the actions taken in Renfrewshire in relation to the Code of Conduct and members' development be noted.
- 

## **3. Background**

- 3.1 The Report outlines that on 1 April 2019 Caroline Anderson commenced her term as Ethical Standards Commissioner. In April 2021 Ian Bruce took over as Acting Ethical Standards Commissioner as the Commissioner took an extended period of leave. The Report advises of the significant activity during a particularly challenging period due to staff movement and restructure.
- 3.2 The Report notes that during 2020/21 public appointment activity was halted for a time due to the pandemic as officials were redeployed to other duties. Some administration tasks were backlogged at the end of the year and backlogs developed in MSP, councillor, and devolved public body complaints because of reduced staffing capacity.
- 3.4 The Report detailed the challenges faced by the organisation during the year due to, among other things, the loss of staff because of which the Standards Commission for Scotland issued directions to the Commissioner (an action without precedent) with a view to providing assurance to itself and others that the office was acquitting its functions in accordance with its founding legislation. This, combined with high staff turnover and the absence of engagement with an Advisory Audit Board, led to their external auditor undertaking a wider scope audit.
- 3.6 The Report advised that under Section 22 of the Public Finance and Accountability (Scotland) Act 2000, the external auditors have now sent the accounts and their report to the Auditor General who will in due course make the audited annual report and accounts, and any additional report that is required, available for laying in the Scottish Parliament.
- 3.7 The Report highlighted that since the temporary appointment of the Acting Commissioner for Ethical Standards in Public Life in Scotland, action has been taken to remedy as many of the issues as possible. A revised strategic plan, to address recommendations from their external auditor, was developed for the next three years, which incorporated the values that were missing from the previous version and clear statements of intent about how the office would fulfil its statutory obligations in accordance with the expectations of the Parliament, public and stakeholders.

## **4 Complaints About Conduct**

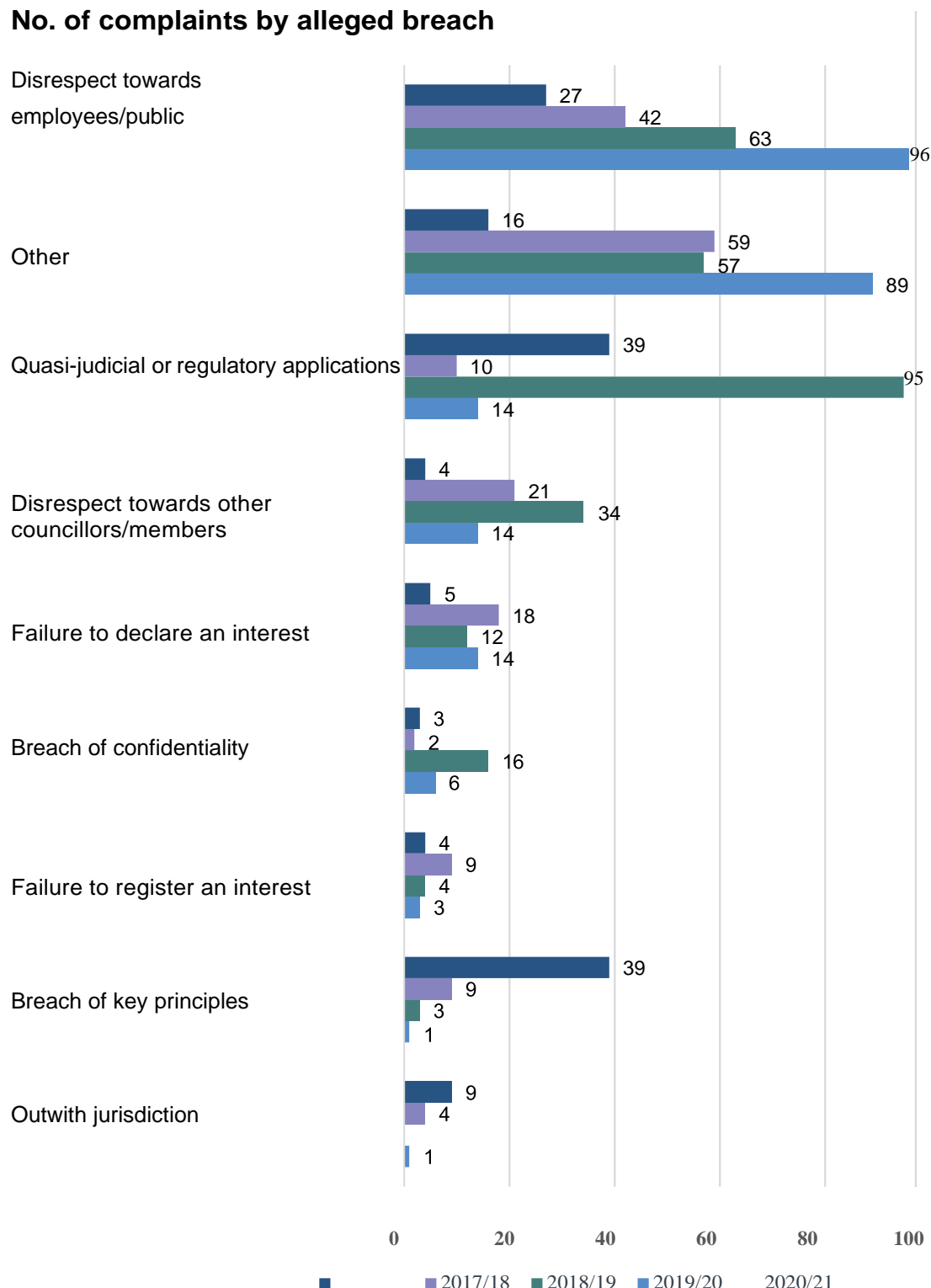
- 4.1 The Report advised that nationally the Commission experienced a slight decrease in the number of complaints received. The largest category of complaints related to disrespect toward employees/public (96).



4.2 Nationally, during 2020/21 the Commissioner received a total of 238 complaints, compared with 284 in 2019/20. Complaints originated from: Members of the Public (169); Councillors (52); Council Officers (7) and Others (10.)

4.3 The categories of complaints received, and the number of complaints received for 2020/21 are indicated below and are compared with the figures for the previous years.

### No. of complaints by alleged breach



- 4.4 The Report advised that nationally a total of 24 cases (49 complaints) progressed to full investigation and were reported on and finalised during the year, with 17 being breach reports (regarding 39 complaints) which were heard by the Standards Commission, and 7 being reported on as non-breach (regarding 10 complaints).
- 4.5 No specific figures relative to Renfrewshire Council are included in the Report. However, information has been received separately from the Commissioner that, during the period covered by the report, five complaints were received compared with five in 2019/20 and three in 2018/19.
- 4.6 Of the five complaints received in 2020/21 relating to Renfrewshire Council, three of these were about disrespect to the public/council officers, one related to a declaration of interest and one concerned disrespect towards councillors.
- 4.7 Four of the complaints were dismissed at the admissibility stage and did not progress to investigation. One of the complaints progressed to investigation where the Commissioner found the Councillor in breach of the Code of Conduct and referred the case to the Standards Commission for Scotland.

## **5 Code of Conduct**

- 5.1 At the Council meeting held on 16 December 2021, a report was submitted relative to the revised Councillors' Code of Conduct which came into force on 7 December 2021.
- 5.2 The purpose for the review of the Code was to bring it up to date, to make the Code easier to understand and to take into account developments in society such as the increased use of social media. It also proposed to strengthen the Code to reinforce the importance of behaving in a respectful manner and to make it clear that bullying and harassment was completely unacceptable and should not be tolerated. The aim was to produce a Code that was fit for purpose and would ensure the highest standards of conduct by councillors to maintain and strengthen the trust of those they were elected to serve.
- 5.3 The Revised Code of Conduct has been circulated to Councillors along with the Guidance which accompanies the Revised Code. These documents can also be accessed on the Standards Commission website through the undernoted links:-
- Revised Code of Conduct - <https://www.standardscommissionscotland.org.uk/codes-of-conduct>
  - Revised Guidance - <https://www.standardscommissionscotland.org.uk/guidance/guidance-notes>

- The Standards Commission has also updated and revised its Advice Notes in light of the changes to the Code. The revised Advice Notes can be found at:-  
<https://www.standardscommissionscotland.org.uk/education-andresources/professional-briefings>

5.4 The Head of Corporate Governance is available for members should they wish to seek advice on the Code of Conduct generally and specifically in relation to the registration and declaration of interests. In addition, the Standards Commission on 22 September 2021 provided a 'roadshow' on the Code of Conduct for Councillors for Renfrewshire.

5.5 It is intended that a briefing on the revised Code will be provided to elected members in early 2022. In addition, the Members' induction post the 2022 local government elections will include a session on the revised Code of Conduct.

## **6 Future Plans**

6.1 The Report advised that the of the Commission's strategic objectives during 2020/21 were drawn from the revised 2020/24 Strategic Plan and these were detailed in the Report.

## **Implications of the Report**

1. **Financial** - None
2. **HR & Organisational Development** - None
3. **Community Planning** – None
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 Implications** – None

13. **Climate Risk** - None

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**Background Papers - none**

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**To:**                **Audit, Risk & Scrutiny Board**

**On:**                **24 January 2022**

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**Report by:**     **Lead Officer**

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**Heading:**       **Linking the National Cycle Route 7 with Howwood**

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## **1                    Summary**

- 1.1                At its meeting on 23 August 2021, members of the Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Board agreed an annual programme of activity for the Board for 2021/2022.
- 1.2                At its meeting on 15 November 2021, members of the Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Board agreed to a request to include a review which would look into linking the National Cycle Route 7 to Howwood including a clear and safe link is created to the Whithorn Way was included in the annual programme of activity for the Board for 2021/2022.
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## **2                    Recommendations**

- 2.1                The Board is asked to:
- approve the purpose and scope of the review;
  - approve the provisional timescale as outlined in Appendix 1 to this report;
  - authorise the Lead Officer to contact any organisations recommended by the Board who may have information useful to the Board and who may be potential witnesses;

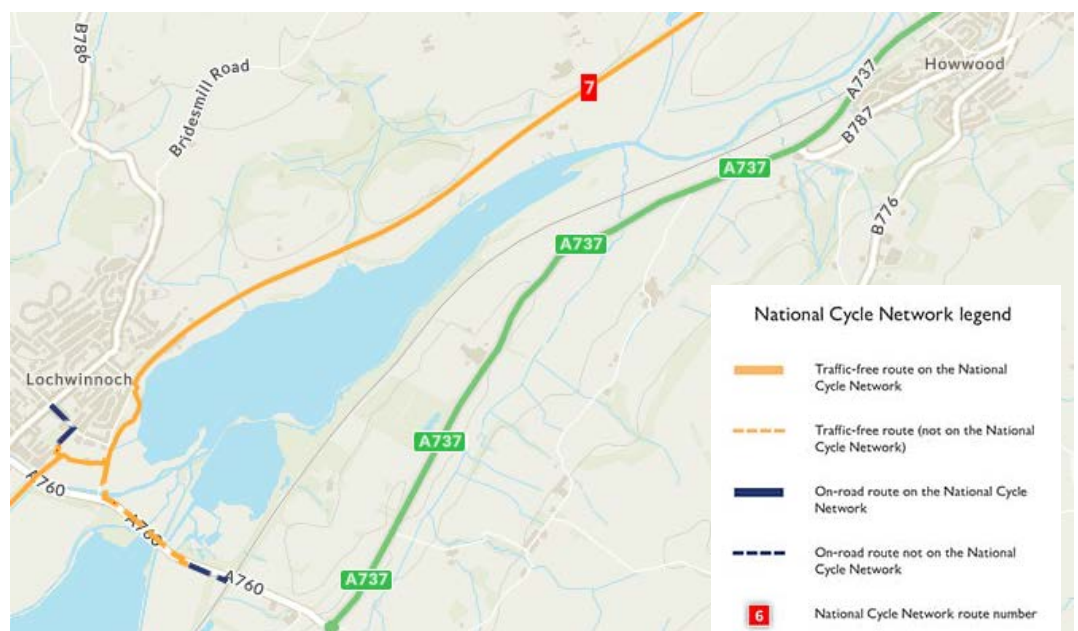
- delegate powers to the Lead Officer, in consultation with the Convenor, and grant the Convenor of the Board permission to alter the timetable having regard to the availability of evidence and witnesses throughout the course of the review; and,
- authorise the Lead Officer to make the necessary arrangements to progress the review within the agreed timescales.

### 3 Background

3.1 **National Cycle Network Route 7** connects Balloch on the southern banks of Loch Lomond with Aberfoyle, Strathyre, Callander, Lochearnhead and Killin. It forms the southern section of the long-distance Lochs and Glens Way route.

3.2 The route is described by Sustrans as having a mixture of traffic-free paths and quiet road sections and being reachable throughout the route via traffic-free paths and also by regular train connections.

3.3 From Lochwinnoch it is accessible from an on-road route (not part of the National Cycle Network) from the Main Street (via Church Street / Lochhead Avenue) on the east and also from a mixture of traffic-free route and on road route (not part of the National Cycle Network) from Lochwinnoch Train Station on the west.



3.4 **The Whithorn Way** is a newly mapped 143-mile walking and cycling route, which follows much of the westerly pilgrimage route to Whithorn, which was travelled by pilgrims over centuries.

- 3.5 The route follows established paths and cycleways where possible, including extensive use of the National Cycle & Path Route 7.
- 3.6 To aid users, the route is split into several sections in available guides. Lochwinnoch connects two sections; Paisley to Lochwinnoch and Lochwinnoch to Kilwinning.
- 3.7 There are currently no published dedicated active travel (pedestrian and cycling) routes from **Howwood** to Lochwinnoch.

## **4 Purpose of the Review**

- 4.1 The key purpose of this review will be to:
- (1) understand what motivates people to use, and the demand for, walking and cycling from the National Cycle Route 7 at Lochwinnoch to and from Howwood;
  - (2) set out the current provision for walking and cycling from the National Cycle Route 7 at Lochwinnoch to and from Howwood; and;
  - (3) identify any other mitigation that could be recommended which the Council could pursue within available resources.

## **5 Scope of the Review**

- 5.1 In relation to 4.1(1) above, the focus of the review will be on reviewing research available on this subject and reporting this back to the Board at subsequent meetings. Consideration will also be given to the potential use of social media to seek feedback from residents on this topic.
- 5.2 In relation to 4.1(2) above, the Lead Officer will focus on the existing provision, predominantly services currently provided by Environment & Infrastructure and Policy & Commissioning.
- 5.3 In relation to 4.1.(3) above, a significant focus of the review will be on other options that could supplement existing provision to provide a link between the National Cycle Route 7 at Lochwinnoch and Howwood which includes a link to the Whithorn Way.

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## **Implications of the Report**

1. **Financial** **- none**

2. **HR & Organisational Development** - none
3. **Community Planning** - none
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. 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**  
Supporting and enhancing opportunities for active travel is an area being explored as part of Renfrewshire's planning for net zero.

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### **List of Background Papers**

(a) Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Board Annual Programme approved 23/08/2021

The foregoing background papers will be retained within Finance and Resources for inspection by the public for the prescribed period of four years from the date of the meeting.

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## Appendix 1

### Timetable for Linking the National Cycle Route 7 with Howwood Review

Date of Board Meeting	Stage of Review
Monday 24 January 2022	Commencement of review
Monday 21 March 2022	Continuation of review
Monday 13 May 2022	Continuation of review
Monday 22 August 2022	Continuation of review
Tuesday 27 September 2022	Draft report to Board
Thursday 29 September 2022	Final report to Council

