

To: Council

On: 17 December 2020

Report by: Chief Executive

**Heading: Impact of COVID-19 on Renfrewshire's Communities – Social
Renewal Plan**

1. Summary

- 1.1 On 24 September 2020, Council considered a report on the impact of COVID-19 within Renfrewshire's communities. It was recognised within the report that the pandemic had impacted on all parts of daily life, and in some cases had exacerbated existing vulnerabilities or created new difficulties for people in relation to for example health and wellbeing or income and employment.
- 1.2 In addition, it was recognised that the pandemic will have impacted different groups in different ways, and that there was a requirement to identify the impacts on women, young people, people with a disability and on black and minority ethnic communities in particular.
- 1.3 It was agreed that officers would work with partners to develop a Social Renewal Plan for Renfrewshire, which would recognise the significant inequalities that exist in Renfrewshire and set out joint plans to address these in light of COVID-19. It is intended that this will be finalised in early 2021.
- 1.4 To support the development of the Social Renewal Plan and to develop a deeper understanding of COVID-19 on local people and communities, partners have commenced a *community impact assessment*. This paper provides an update on progress and findings for elected members.

- 1.5 Specifically, partners have been working together to assess the data available on the local and national impact of COVID-19, with a particular initial focus on income and employment, financial insecurity, community support and health and wellbeing. Initial data in relation to these key areas is summarised in Section 3 of this report.
- 1.6 In addition to the ongoing data analysis, work has also commenced on a programme of listening events involving local people and representative groups. These events are important in terms of identifying the issues that are being experienced, whilst also providing an opportunity for the Council and its partners to involve local people and community level organisations in developing solutions. Section 4 of this paper highlights the engagement that has taken place to date and the events which are planned during December 2020 and January 2021.
- 1.7 Overall the work undertaken has highlighted that local people and communities across Renfrewshire are continuing to experience significant impacts on their lives as a result of the pandemic. Initial data and findings from the engagement events indicate that people on low incomes and/or who have insecure employment have been severely impacted, and most notably women and young people. The impact from loss of income or employment has been difficult, as local businesses and organisations have responded to the lockdown and restrictions since March 2020.
- 1.8 There is also increasing evidence that low income rather than unemployment, is the driving factor for people seeking support to access food or help with fuel costs locally. Whilst issues in relation to low income have been a significant focus for partners in recent years, the pandemic has undoubtedly exacerbated the issues being experienced.
- 1.9 The Council is working closely with both Renfrewshire wide and local community-based organisations to ensure people get access to the support they need, with an enhanced focus on ensuring that local people receive support and advice to maximise household income wherever possible. In addition, the organisation is working with partners to roll out targeted employability programmes such as the Kickstart programme, the youth job guarantee scheme and support to businesses themselves.
- 1.10 Ongoing issues in relation to social isolation and wellbeing also continue to be experienced across communities, with mixed views being expressed currently in terms of the use of digital technology to support social connection. Whilst some of the emerging evidence suggests that people have valued being provided with devices and connectivity through local and national programmes, it is clear that people miss being able to meet face to face to

undertake social activities, and there remain issues for people in terms of digital exclusion and loneliness and isolation more generally.

- 1.11 Further work is now required in terms of assessing the particular impact of the pandemic on specific groups including carers, young people, people from a black and minority ethnic background and women. This will be progressed through various listening events in December and January 2020.
- 1.12 More detailed analysis of the key issues being experienced will also be available through the findings of the Public Services Panel survey, which was recently distributed to 1500 local people. The panel findings will also be used to inform discussions at a community level through the Local Partnership meetings scheduled in February 2021.
- 1.13 Work will continue to gather and analyse available data and community engagement feedback on the impact of the pandemic in Renfrewshire. This will inform the final drafting of a Social Renewal Plan in Renfrewshire by March 2021, which will be fully aligned to the Economic Recovery Plan submitted for Council approval on 17 December 2020.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that members note:
 - the progress that has been achieved in terms of assessing the impact of COVID-19 on local people and communities to date; and
 - the emerging issues which have been identified by partners through this initial programme of work.

3. Background

- 3.1 As outlined in the paper to Council in September 2020, the coronavirus pandemic is now recognised as being the most significant challenge to have faced the international community in modern times. Since the crisis unfolded in early 2020, many local people and businesses have been impacted by the crisis, through for example bereavement, loss of income and isolation and loneliness.
- 3.2 The Council remains very much in the response phase in terms of supporting local people, communities and businesses that have been impacted by the pandemic. Whilst a significant number of services had been permitted to restart under the Scottish Government's Routemap to recovery, in recent weeks a number of restrictions have been introduced which have again impacted service delivery. In particular, the move to Level 4 restrictions recently required leisure services and non-essential businesses to close until 11 December 2020. Restrictions on hospitality, travel and indoor gatherings also remain in place.

- 3.3 The Council continues to be required by the Scottish Government to put into place new or enhanced levels of support and services in response to the pandemic, including the provision of support to vulnerable people, to those isolating, and also in the form of business support grants. Services are working in close partnership with communities, businesses and residents to ensure that essential services continue to be provided across Renfrewshire and that vulnerable people receive the support and protection that they need.
- 3.4 Notwithstanding the need to balance both the immediate and longer term response to the pandemic, local partners have been working closely to develop a Social Renewal Plan for Renfrewshire. As agreed by Council in September 2020, the Social Renewal Plan will be closely aligned to the Economic Recovery Plan that has been developed for Renfrewshire, in recognition of the crucial link between income and employment and overall health and wellbeing. It is intended that the Social Renewal Plan will set out how the Council will work with partners to learn from the pandemic, and build on this experience to tackle the inequalities that exist across Renfrewshire's communities.
- 3.5 In order to support the development of the Social Renewal Plan, Council also agreed that the organisation would work with partners to develop a deeper understanding of the impact of COVID-19 on Renfrewshire's people and communities through a community impact assessment. This was agreed following analysis of initial data on the impact of the pandemic, which highlighted that COVID-19 has fundamentally impacted local people, businesses and communities, but in many different ways. For some people, COVID-19 has exacerbated existing inequalities or wellbeing issues, whilst for others it may be the first time that certain issues such as unemployment or ill health have been experienced.
- 3.6 It is also anticipated that the true impact of the pandemic on individual wellbeing will take time to fully emerge, particularly around issues such as physical and mental health, domestic violence, alcohol and drug misuse and wider risk of harm. Some groups of people will have been more disproportionately impacted than others, with potentially more significant impacts on women, young people, people with a disability and within the local BAME population. Much will depend on the starting point of each individual, with potentially more significant impacts on those people already experiencing wellbeing issues.
- 3.7 As well as supporting the Council and its partners to better understand the impact of COVID-19 on local communities, it is recognised that the community impact assessment process also provides a meaningful opportunity to involve local people in identifying solutions to the issues that are being experienced across communities.
- 3.8 **This learning and listening approach**, is very important as it will continue to strengthen relationships between the Council, local people, communities and

partners, whilst allowing partners over the longer term to adapt what they do and to target or even redirect resources, to where they are most needed.

- 3.9 It was recognised by Council that the community impact assessment would take place over a period of a number of months, and section 4 of this report provides a summary of some of the key findings to date from this work.

4 Community Impact Assessment – initial analysis

- 4.1 Services have been working to progress the community impact assessment with partners, which has three core elements:

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

- 4.2 In terms of the first of these two parts of the community impact assessment, further analysis has been undertaken of all data available across a broad number of themes, with an initial focus in relation to income and employment and health and wellbeing. Key messages from the data analysis are highlighted in the sections below for each theme:

COVID transmission

- As at 7 December 2020, there had been 4953 confirmed cases of coronavirus through a positive test (878 positive cases reported to Council in September 2020)
- As at 29 November, 271 deaths relating to COVID-19 had been reported by National Register Scotland (206 deaths reported to Council in September 2020)

Employment

- The COVID-19 restrictions in place since March 2020 have had a dramatic impact on the national and local economy and will have implications for the Renfrewshire economy especially in the short to medium term. These are covered within the accompanying Economic Recovery Plan report to full Council, which recognises that COVID has had the biggest impact on those on low incomes and in the least secure jobs.
- The [October 2020 Scottish Local Authorities Economic Development \(SLAED\) report](#) notes:

“Early indications are that changes in the labour market brought about by COVID-19 will have the biggest impact on those on the lowest incomes and in the least secure jobs. It is also expected that there will be a disproportionate impact on young people, women, those with disabilities and minority groups, which will in turn increase existing social and economic inequalities. Those leaving education are likely to be displaced and without a next positive destination, and many young people previously employed will become unemployed as businesses cease to operate”

- In terms of Renfrewshire’s position, the Claimant Count (reflecting those on Universal Credit and seeking work) in October 2020 was 7,230, representing an 80% increase since March (6.3% of the working age population).
 - The increase in female claimants from March to October is particularly pronounced, increasing 92% from 1,360 to 2,160.
 - The increase in claimants aged 18-24 is also marked, increasing 91% from March to October (745-1,425).
 - Claimants aged 50+ also increased considerably from 1,000 in March to 1,845 in October, an increase of 85%.
- The number of people in receipt of Universal Credit in Renfrewshire increased by 70%, from 7,604 in March to 12,943 in August 2020, slightly higher than the percentage increase for Scotland as a whole in the same time period (64%).
- At its peak in August 2020, 28,300 people in Renfrewshire were registered with the UK-wide furlough scheme, with 8800 people remained registered on the scheme at the end of October 2020.
- Grant support for businesses affected by the COVID-19 restrictions since March 2020 has resulted in approximately £28.5m being paid out to individual business with premises in Renfrewshire. Primarily focused on retail, hospitality and leisure sectors the various grant schemes have resulted, more than 2,500 businesses have been supported. Similar grants will continue to be payable (monthly in arrears) to businesses affected by the individual tiered restrictions in place from October 2020.
- Around 4,000 self-employed businesses in Renfrewshire have taken advantage of UK Government’s Self- Employed Income Support Scheme (SEISS) since its inception in March 2020. Designed to compensate for the loss of income for such businesses we estimate this has had a value to date of approximately £9.6m.
- In a recent Scottish Government survey across Scotland, 22% of people polled thought that COVID-19 represented a high or very high threat to their job.

Financial Insecurity and Community Support

- The Advice Works Service provided support to 3952 people between April and October 2020. 2725 people were in the recognised priority groups for Child Poverty, including 1378 who were part of a family with a disabled adult or child and 413 lone parents. Work has been ongoing to increase signposting to Advice Works, including through community groups who are supporting people with food. An advice worker has also been embedded within Renfrewshire FoodBank to enhance referrals.

- 6225 crisis grant applications were made between April and October 2020, an increase of 1030 on the same period last year. At a national level it was recently reported that Scottish Welfare Fund crisis grant applications were 30% higher in September 2020 than in September 2019.
- Renfrewshire Citizens Advice Bureau (RCAB) provided support to 4242 clients between April and end October 2020 an increase of 446 on the same period last year, with over 6000 contacts received. Benefit issues are consistently the number one reason for contacting RCAB, with almost 50% of those contacting about a benefit issue seeking advice about Universal Credit.
- Home Energy Scotland have estimated that COVID-19 may lead to an increase in fuel bills of up to 37% as people stay at home more. This translates to an extra £32.31 per month on fuel bills - £387 over the year for a household.
- The Energy Advocacy service has continued to operate over the phone during the period of the pandemic and has supported 290 clients to achieve savings of over £90k.
- Many community based organisations have become involved in providing fuel vouchers for those in need of top-ups for their pre-payment meters. STAR Project, Renfrewshire Foodbank and others are providing vouchers, and organisations can register with Home Energy Scotland to provide this service. Renfrewshire Affordable Credit Alliance (RACA) ran a recent seminar for practitioners with Home Energy Scotland to encourage sign up and more general links to Home Energy Scotland, who can provide a variety of advice and assistance with regard to energy saving and reducing bills.
- Renfrewshire Foodbank has provided food support to 3148 adults and 1200 children to date this year which is broadly in line with the previous year, as increasing numbers of people also seek support from local community groups and organisations. The main reason clients are attending the foodbank has changed from Benefit Issues (which has historically been the most reported issue) to Low Income.
- A Community Food Network has been in place since April 2020, at first distributing food funded by the Scottish Government, and since the end of September, food funded by the Council via the charity FareShare. Leaflets with details of Advice Works and Advice Renfrewshire have been issued to all these groups and introductions to Advice Works have taken place for those not already linked. Organisations within the network have started referring clients to Advice Works.
- Council officers are also working to link community food organisations to other support, such as affordable credit providers, energy advice and mental health support.
- STAR Project are a well established Renfrewshire wide organisation that has been working with the Council during the pandemic. Since April 2020 they have supported 7968 adults and children with food. Pre-Covid, STAR Project were reporting roughly 350 visits per quarter to their Community Fridge and Pantry, so this is an increase of more than 6700. STAR

commenced a shopping service in June using funding from Scottish Government via Community Anchor organisation, Linstone Housing. The shopping service has been used by 218 individuals to date.

- Neighbourhood Hubs were set up in spring 2020 to provide additional support to people who were shielding during the lockdown period. The purpose of the Neighbourhood Hubs is to provide support to improve the quality of life for people referred to the Hubs by the Local Assistance Team that was in direct contact with residents. The hubs can help people to access food, support, and befriending amongst many other aspects. Up to 20 November, Neighbourhood Hubs have dealt with a total of 510 referrals and 107 prescription referrals.
- The neighbourhood hubs have led on the Connecting Scotland programme and by end of this year 1250 devices and/or connectivity will have been distributed to vulnerable people directly or through partner organisations.

Impact on health and wellbeing

At a Scottish level, the impact of COVID-19 on health provision is being closely monitored with regular reports produced by Public Health Scotland. These indicate:

- The number of A&E attendances nationally decreased to 40% of normal pre-COVID-19 levels in the week ending 29 March. Since then, A&E attendances increased steadily and have remained between 75% and 90% of normal levels since the week ending 21 June. The latest data shows that A&E attendances are at 75% of normal levels.
- The number of emergency admissions nationally dropped to 60% of normal pre-COVID-19 levels in the week ending 29 March. Since then, emergency admissions increased and have remained between 85% and 95% of normal levels since the week ending 21 June. Latest data shows emergency admissions are at 90% of normal levels.
- The number of planned hospital admissions nationally dropped to 27% of normal pre-COVID-19 levels in the week ending 19 April. The number of planned admissions has been increasing gradually since then, rising to 80% of normal levels at mid October. The week ending 25 October saw a slight dip, with planned admissions at 71% of normal levels.
- There has been a reluctance from people to seek non-COVID-19 healthcare treatment during the COVID-19 pandemic. National surveys suggest that at the end of October between 25-28% of people agreed or strongly agreed that they would avoid contacting a GP practice at the moment even if they had an immediate medical concern (not related to Coronavirus).

At a Renfrewshire level, there has also been an impact on service provision and demand. As reported recently to Renfrewshire IJB for example:

- Percentage of routine occupational therapy referrals allocated within 9 weeks, has seen a decrease in performance from 42% at March 2020 to 18% at June 2020.
- There has been a reduction in the uptake rate of the child health 30- month assessment from 95.5% at March 2020 to 83% at September 2020, which can be directly attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic. This figure increases to 87% when including children who were seen slightly late due to lockdown impacting on assessments.

Mental health and wellbeing

- In Scotland wide Ipsos MORI surveys carried out between May and July 2020 report that between 53-59% of people felt lonely some/most/almost all or all of the time.
- RAMH First Crisis service has had 283 referrals since 1st April 2020– with the top 3 reasons for contact being anxiety/stress, depression/low mood and suicidal thoughts/behaviours.
- The Hear For You Helpline has received 62 referrals since being established in April. 3 top reasons are anxiety/stress, depression/low mood and loneliness. This is seen more as an emotional support line, also providing signposting and info on practical support and is complemented by other organisations such as ROAR and Active Communities providing a similar service for their users.
- RAMH Counselling Service received 399 referrals between April and October, 210 of which went on to receive counselling and 814 appointments took place.

4.3 In terms of the Community Voice Campaign, partners have been working to develop a programme of listening events over winter 2020, with the findings being used to inform the overall community impact assessment and resulting Social Renewal Plan.

4.4 An overview of findings from recent sessions is provided in the following sections. It is clear from this initial work that:

- The impact of the pandemic on people with low incomes or who are in more insecure employment is increasingly apparent to community groups and support organisations across Renfrewshire.
- Food insecurity and fuel poverty are seen as being particular issues, with high ongoing demand for community based supports.
- There are particular concerns with the ongoing nature of restrictions and the health and wellbeing of local people, particularly in relation to loneliness and isolation and the impact that this can have on mental health and wellbeing. Young people were a particular area of concern.
- Digital exclusion was flagged as an issue, with many groups and organisations stating that online provision had worked well in some instances, but that significant issues remained in terms of access and engagement through online means.

- Engagement indicates that some specific groups are also experiencing potentially a greater impact as a result of the pandemic, including those from black and minority ethnic communities, women, and carers.
- 4.5 Further targeted engagement with these groups will be prioritised going forward. During December and January 2021, further sessions are planned with the Community Resilience Group, the Diversity and Equality Alliance Renfrewshire Group and with local womens groups.
- 4.6 An overview of feedback provided to date through the listening events programme is summarised in the sections below.

Engagement through Get Heard Scotland Programme

Services have worked with *Get Heard Scotland* (GHS), a programme coordinated by the Poverty Alliance and funded by the Scottish Government as part of *Every Child Every Chance*, the Scottish Government's Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan.

Between August and October 2020, the Poverty Alliance carried out interviews with 11 organisations that work with people living on low incomes in Renfrewshire. These interviews focused predominantly on the impact that the Covid-19 pandemic has had both on the organisations themselves and on the people that they work with, with a particular focus on the themes of employment; mental health; digital exclusion, and community support.

Key issues raised:

- Reduced income experienced by many people in-work as a result of unemployment or furlough, with a disproportionate impact felt by women (particularly women with children), people from Black and minority ethnic (BME) backgrounds, and young people. Some people were being supported that were previously unknown to organisations.
- The pandemic was said to have exposed existing issues, for example the prevalence of insecure employment for young people whose income even from part time working had collapsed.

"You cannot be well when you are worried about your financial stability."

- The mental health impact of the pandemic on people on low incomes living in Renfrewshire has been significant. For people living with mental health issues prior to the crisis, the loss of vital supports and connections was said to have made their issues more acute. At the same time, many people have been experiencing mental health issues for the first time.
- Some supports that had been set up in response to the pandemic were highlighted as important, for example the helpline for mental wellbeing support that had been established by Renfrewshire HSCP in partnership with local organisations.
- Digital exclusion has had a significant impact on people living on low incomes through the course of the pandemic. A number of initiatives aimed at tackling digital exclusion were viewed positively - the provision of laptops, smart phones and tablets by Renfrewshire Council, local housing associations and third sector organisations was said to have made a positive impact.
- Many outreach services have not been operational during the pandemic but have been delivered online or by phone. Engagement suggests it is really important to re-establish these face to face services to promote access.

- It was highlighted that many local organisations are not fully engaged with black and minority ethnic(BAME) communities. As a result, the needs of BAME communities in Renfrewshire may not be fully known or understood. It was also suggested that some BAME communities may be less likely to seek support from services due to perceived stigma.

Community Resilience Group

- Officers from the Chief Executive's Service have worked with Engage to establish a local group which supports shared conversations between community based organisations around resilience and changes in demand and need.
- The group has met three times since September 2020 and it is clear that community groups are still supporting a significant amount of demand in relation to access to food, and support for isolation and wellbeing.
- Groups noted ongoing work to sustain their services by accessing all available funding and the valuable roles that volunteers can have in supporting the work that they do.
- In terms of social isolation and loneliness, the group has shared experiences about what has worked and what hasn't worked, and the innovative solutions that they have come up with to keep in contact with vulnerable people. Whilst the use of digital to support online activities was hugely welcomed, it was recognised that it was not accessible or positive for everyone. Particular challenges had been noted in terms of engaging with young people through social media, particularly where here had been good engagement previously to undertake sprints on wellbeing activities on a face to face basis pre COVID.

RYP - Unheard Voices Project

Supported by Renfrewshire Council's Youth Services, Renfrewshire Youth Voice's 'Unheard Voices Campaign' – began in spring 2020. Its purpose was to understand how COVID 19 and the 'lockdown' has impacted the lives of both young individuals and those of an older age group. The campaign has been recognised by Young Scot as good practice.

They devised various ways to gather data about the impact of the pandemic. Including journal entries, surveys, vlogs, podcasts and selfies - to make participation as accessible as possible. The purpose of this exercise was to provide Renfrewshire Youth Voice with information to help ensure that support provided will meet the needs of young people during the pandemic and how services can be better informed of the impact of COVID-19 after lockdown and restrictions are removed.

The findings from the campaign are currently being reviewed by RYP.

4.7 In addition to the listening events, a significant piece of research and survey work is currently being undertaken through the Public Services Panel. The Panel is a representative group of approximately 1500 local people who have agreed to complete at least one survey per year to inform the work of the Council and its partners. The panel was refreshed prior to COVID-19 and in late November 2020, panel members received the 2020 Public Services Panel by either post or by email in line with their preference at recruitment.

4.8 The 2020 panel survey is wholly focused on assessing the impact of COVID on local people with a range of questions asked on issues such as:

- Mental health and wellbeing

- Managing income
- Issues or concerns within the home
- Community support
- Access to digital technology

4.9 It is anticipated that initial results from the Panel survey will be available in early January, and will be then be used to support the development of the Social Renewal Plan in early 2021. Importantly the findings will also inform discussions with each of the Local Partnerships on the impact of COVID across local communities. This will be a key focus of the Local Partnership meetings scheduled for February 2020.

5. Emerging priorities and next steps

5.1 Overall the work undertaken to date has highlighted that local people and communities across Renfrewshire are continuing to experience significant impacts on their lives as a result of the pandemic. Initial data and findings from the engagement events indicate:

- people on low incomes and/or who have insecure employment have been severely impacted, and most notably women and young people.
- There is also increasing evidence that low income rather than solely unemployment, is the driving factor for people seeking support to access food or help with fuel costs locally. Whilst issues in relation to low income have been a significant focus for partners in recent years, the pandemic has exacerbated issues being experienced.
- Ongoing issues in relation to social isolation and wellbeing also continue to be experienced across communities, with mixed views being expressed currently in terms of use of digital technology to support social connection.
- There is a need to more fully assess the particular impact of the pandemic on specific groups including carers, young people, people from a black and minority ethnic background and women.

5.2 The Council is working closely with both Renfrewshire wide and local community-based organisations to ensure people get access to the support they need, with enhanced focus on ensuring that local people receive support and advice to maximise household income wherever possible. In addition, the organisation is working with partners to roll out targeted employability programmes such as the Kickstart programme and youth job guarantee scheme and support to businesses themselves.

5.3 Work is also ongoing with the HSCP and a range of local groups and organisations across sector to provide support at a community level, through for example neighbourhood hubs, community food provision, support for

isolation, mental health and wellbeing helplines and the provision of digital devices and connectivity to support digital inclusion.

- 5.4 In terms of the next steps of the community impact assessment process, further work is now required in terms of assessing the particular impact of the pandemic on specific groups including carers, young people, people from a black and minority ethnic background and women. This will be progressed through various listening events in December and January 2021.
- 5.5 More detailed analysis of these key issues will also be available through the findings of the Public Services Panel survey, which was recently distributed to 1500 local people. The panel findings will also be used to inform discussions at a community level through the Local Partnership meetings scheduled in early 2021.
- 5.6 Work will continue to gather and analyse available data and community engagement feedback on the impact of the pandemic in Renfrewshire. This will inform the final drafting of a Social Renewal Plan in Renfrewshire by March 2021, which will be fully aligned to the Economic Recovery Plan which has been submitted for Council approval on 17 December 2020.

Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – the pandemic has had and will continue to have a significant impact on the resources available to the Council. Given the anticipated longer term financial challenges facing the Council, the requirement for targeting of resources in priority areas will be essential.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** - the commitment of the Council's workforce since the pandemic emerged has been fundamental to the ability of services to continue to support local people, businesses and communities. A significant proportion of the Council's workforce live locally in Renfrewshire, and many of the social impacts outlined in the report are also being experienced by our employees. Targeted support is being offered to employees in order to address issues such as financial insecurity and mental health and wellbeing.
3. **Community/Council Planning** – There has been a strong partnership response to the COVID-19 pandemic in Renfrewshire with community and third sector organisations working closely together to maximise the resources available at a local level to meet the needs of local people and communities. This will be a critical focus going forward as partners work collectively to mitigate the impact on those most negatively impacted in our communities.
4. **Legal** - New legislative requirements have been put into place by the Scottish Government to support the country's response to COVID-19. There may be further

changes to these requirements or further legislation as the lockdown measures ease, which the Council will require to respond to.

5. **Property/Assets** - none
6. **Information Technology** – none
7. **Equality and Human Rights** - The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report because it is for noting only. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.
8. **Health and Safety** - none
9. **Procurement** – none
10. **Risk** – none
11. **Privacy Impact** - none
12. **COSLA Policy Position** - none
13. **Climate Risk** – none

List of Background Papers

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