

# Corporate & Democratic Services



**Joint Business Management and Improvement Plan 2022/23  
& Service Annual Performance Report 2021/22**



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# INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the 2022-2023 Business Management and Improvement Plan for Corporate & Democratic Services. I am delighted to share highlights of the work carried out by Corporate & Democratic Services (CDS) over the last year and to set out our priorities for the year ahead.

Much of our efforts last year continued to be dominated by our response to the global pandemic. Teams across CDS have shown outstanding commitment, compassion, resilience, and creativity to channel their skills, knowledge, and abilities to help the most vulnerable in our communities, to support businesses and to keep the organisation functioning. As public health restrictions have eased, we have supported staff to move to hybrid working, continuing to learn new digital skills, and to adapt our work practices which ensure the health and safety of everyone. We have ensured elected members were able to maintain democratic oversight and decision-making which is at the heart of local government. And of course, we have been preparing to welcome newly elected and returning elected members to the Council following the Local Government elections.

This plan is an extension of our 2021-22 Business Management and Improvement Plan, with continuing progress in our improvement work. Our priorities will focus on addressing the financial challenges facing our communities and the Council, and supporting the organisational wide programme of transformation and change, both of which are inextricably linked

This Plan sets out how CDS will support delivery of the Council's corporate objectives and priority outcomes; achieving financial sustainability and enabling change and transformation, especially through the Perth and Kinross Offer; and our commitment to continue to deliver high quality services despite the significant challenges we face as an organisation.

**Karen A Donaldson**



# VISION, STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND SERVICE PRIORITIES

**Vision:** We support the Vision of the Community Planning Partnership, for our area:

“Creating a confident, ambitious, and fairer Perth and Kinross, for all - who live and work here.”

This Plan aims to translate this vision into an agenda for CDS to deliver positive outcomes for our citizens and communities by supporting the Perth and Kinross Officer and **working together so everyone in Perth and Kinross can live life well.**

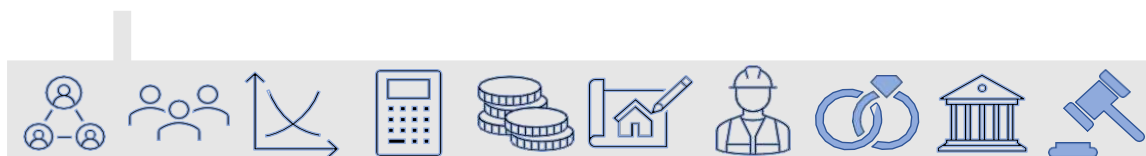
## Strategic Objectives:

The Council’s five strategic objectives, outlined in the current Corporate Plan, inform decisions about policy direction and budget spending:

- Giving every child the best start in life
- Developing educated, responsible, and informed citizens
- Promoting a prosperous, inclusive, and sustainable economy
- Supporting people to lead independent, healthy, and active lives
- Creating a safe and sustainable place for future generations.



CDS connect and collaborate with Services, Partners, and Communities as enablers for the Perth & Kinross Offer and delivery of the Council’s strategic objectives.



CDS Key Priorities					
GET THE BASICS RIGHT	PEOPLE, SKILLS, CAPACITY	DIGITAL & DATA	PROPERTY & INFORMATION ASSETS	CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE	SMARTER WORKING

This section uses case studies to convey the breadth and depth of activity across the Service, providing insight into what we do and the impact we have. It also sets out priorities for 2022/23.

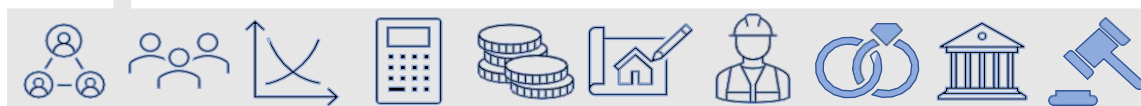
<i>Getting the Basics Right</i>
<p>This matters because CDS provides the Council's strategic management of corporate resources - being people, finances, property, ICT and digital, and information assets. It maintains the Council governance framework and system of internal control, ensures legal and regulatory compliance, effective scrutiny, and accountability in respect of Council decision-making.</p>

## Performance Summary for 2021/22

The Council continues to operate in a particularly challenging financial environment characterised by pressures on Council funding, growing demand for Services and increasing inflation on the cost of service delivery and capital investment.

The Finance team developed a long-term funding strategy to enable the Council to approve a 6-year funded Capital delivery programme for 2022/23 - 2027/28 with provision for £155m of additional Capital investment, including the PH2O project. Through pro-active treasury management, annual savings of around £700,000 per annum were secured on the Council's borrowing for Capital investment. Working with Services across the Council, the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan was updated in November 2021; the 2020/21 financial statements approved and audited by September 2021 and elected members were supported in setting the Revenue and Capital budgets in February 2022. In conjunction with the Council's Economic Development teams and Local Taxes & Benefits team, approximately £25m of business grant support was distributed to local businesses and a further £6m to individuals and families in welfare payments in 2021/22.

The Procurement Team have supported the tendering for major projects,



such as the Cross Tay Link Road and the replacement social care case management system. The Team were category winners at the Go Awards Scotland and received national recognition for their work on community benefits, being highly commended in the Social Value category. Getting the “governance basics” right ensures lawful, ethical, and effective decision-making at all levels. It creates and supports an organisational culture that is risk aware, commercially aware, solution focussed and legally compliant; ensuring that the Council not only does the right things but does things right.

A review of the Democratic Services Team was completed in 2021-22 and a leaner management structure is now place. Our Registrars Team continued to provide a compassionate and professional service, as well as a successful relocation to the Council Building. Our Licensing Team supported businesses with the ability to trade during difficult conditions.

Throughout the pandemic period involving working from home, the HR Team have ensured that staff and elected members continued to be paid accurately and on time, processing back-dated pay awards and additional Scottish Government additional Covid Thank You payments to staff timeously. Statutory returns have been completed with accuracy and on time.

### **Case Study: Supporting the Community 2021-22**

The year ending 31 March 2022 was the second year of the COVID-19 pandemic and the citizens and communities of Perth and Kinross continued to need additional support to help mitigate the impacts of the health crisis. Effective collaborative working between Revenues & Benefits, Finance and Economic Development Service ensured the Council made the best use of funds provided to tackle financial insecurity and to provide timely support to businesses and households.

Over the last two years, the benefits and grants landscape became increasingly more complex. New support arrangements were introduced by government including Business Grants, Self-Isolation Support Grants, Low Income Pandemic Payment, Cost of Living Awards, Financial Insecurity Funding, which were in addition to traditional support like Housing Benefit and Crisis Grants. Despite the complexity and additional administrative burden, grants and benefits have been provided to the communities of Perth and Kinross in 2021-2022 as set out in the table below.

A 20% growth in the number of rateable lands and heritages in Perth and





Kinross over a five-year period, the growing financial pressure on businesses and the passing of the Non-Domestic Rates (Scotland) Act 2020 (the first rating Act since 1975) highlighted how Non-Domestic Rates can be used to deliver support to businesses. In addition to grant payments, a total of £23.6m was awarded in rates relief and reductions in 2021-22.

The Welfare Rights and Scottish Welfare Fund Team continue to support our citizens and communities with welfare benefit advice, representation, and payment of support grants. The team's efforts generated a minimum of £5.3 million in benefit gains which went directly in the pockets of Perth and Kinross residents. The team assisted around 5,000 households and had a Benefit appeals success rate of 84%.

A summary of the key support payments and activity range is shown below:

Activity	£	Volume
Housing Benefit	£19.80m	4,900
Council Tax Reduction	£6.80m	8,600
Self-Isolation Support Grants	£1.46m	5,154
Low Income Pandemic Payment	£1.30m	9,968
Discretionary Housing Payments	£0.85m	3,002
Community Care Grants	£0.72m	1,478
Crisis Grants	£0.43m	5,286
Financial Insecurity Fund	TBC	995

### Case Study: Upgrade of Building Management Systems (BMS)

In 2020, the Property Services instructed works to over 70 sites with BMS. System software was amended, and new controllers installed on site to maximise plant efficiency, reduce energy consumption, reduce carbon emissions, and improve site comfort levels. An investment of £300,000 included the upgraded remote monitoring system which was adapted to maximise analysis and improve data management of the sites. Alarm functions were also adapted to increase system performance and improve compliance of the property estate portfolio.



Savings and key success factors to date from August 2021 to May 2022 are as follows:

- Reduction in energy Consumption - 2,137,902 kWh
- Reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions - 347 tonnes. (35% of annual savings target)
- Cost reduction - £70,000 (ROI will be achieved in under 4 years)

By 2024, the target is to have 100 sites remotely connected to the system, further reducing energy consumption, CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and energy costs.

These good practice principles for energy management have delivered financial savings that have been diverted to support frontline services. We are recognised as a leading council in energy and carbon reduction through the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) annual benchmarking exercise.

### CDS Priorities for 2022/23

An external review during the first part of 2021 highlighted many strengths across the Council's finance function. It also focussed on opportunities to enhance its value contribution through investment in systems, processes and people and the development of a **Financial Strategy** which will inform the budget setting process over the next 5 years. The Financial Strategy is being developed in tandem with the new Transformation and Change Strategy to help address the financial challenges facing the Council.

One of the four elements of Transformation and Change will be re-structuring and consolidation of dispersed corporate activities. This will include a review of the Finance functions which will focus on the **consolidation of resources** and the streamlining and modernisation of processes.

The new Democratic Service team are looking forward to working with the newly elected council to facilitate **smooth and effective governance** and **improved decision-making**. To better support our elected members, a comprehensive induction and member development programme has been developed. Open and transparent democratic decision-making is a key element of effective governance. We will review governance arrangements to ensure that the democratic service is modern, efficient, effective, and accessible to the public; continuing to livestream Council and Committee meetings, developing the capacity to facilitate hybrid(virtual/in person) meetings, and adapting our procedures, processes, systems, and structures to ensure that we can deliver the best possible service.

The ongoing health, economic and social situation arising from the Covid 19 pandemic continue to affect businesses and our communities. Significant increases in the cost of living, with inflation reaching a 40 year high of 9% and forecast to rise higher, increasing food prices and further rises in the energy





price cap are placing acute pressures on households and businesses. The demand levels for **customer services, welfare support and advice, crisis grant applications and other financial support schemes** is therefore expected to continue to rise. It is anticipated our communities will continue to require support for some time to come, especially as COVID-19 related government financial support schemes end.

### *Developing People, Skills, and Capacity*

This matters because people are our most valuable assets. The last two years have demonstrated that skilled, motivated people with a can-do approach make a difference to the lives of those who live, work, and learn in Perth and Kinross. The wellbeing of staff is paramount. Staff have been flexible and agile in meeting the many challenges thrown down by the pandemic. We need to attract and retain staff with the values, skills and behaviours which are critical to success; ensure our employment offer remains competitive and employ a diverse and inclusive workforce.

## **Performance Summary for 2021/22**

The Council is proud to be a **Fair Work employer** and to retain **Living Wage Accreditation**. We continue to apply the Fair Work principles of Effective Voice, Opportunity, Security, Fulfilment and Respect. We consult and engage with employees and recognised trade union representatives when developing or improving our employment practices and arrangements, many of which were adapted during the Covid pandemic. The procurement strategy requires fair work practices, including the Living Wage, and underpins our work with partner providers and commissioned services.

We have continued to support the health and wellbeing of our employees through practical support, practices, and opportunities for learning, ensuring our people develop their capacity and resilience to deliver services. A new **Employee Assistance Programme** called PAM (People Assist Management) Assist which provides confidential counselling for employees, with 24/7 access to qualified counsellors for any psychological problems.

## **Case Study: Developing Our Young Workforce and Career Pathways**

HR worked with apprentices, trainees, and their supervisors to design a new way of working that would provide the support they required during induction and throughout their training, whilst continuing to meet the stringent



requirements of the Scottish Qualifications Agency (SQA) and Skills Development Scotland upon which our funding is reliant.

Apprentice/Trainee Teams chats were created, and regular Connections events continued providing opportunities for networking and personal development. These were supplemented by 1 to 1 meetings with both apprentices and their supervisors focused on achieving the qualification as well as personal wellbeing and additional support needs.

One of the key aims of our apprenticeship and trainee programmes is to address current and anticipated skills shortages through the development of apprenticeship and trainee programmes and the creation of career paths for trainees. The increase in Early Years provision has resulted in the recruitment of additional Modern Apprentices in this area. Tailored Connections events and development activities were jointly designed and organised to support supervisors who were new to the PKC programmes and to help them best support their trainees and apprentices.

In Adult Social Care, a new Service Level Agreement has been introduced to strengthen the delivery model. Plans are also in place to introduce a mentoring programme, group recruitment and induction to support networking and share good practice which will support our apprentices to develop careers in adult social care.

Three new Graduate Apprenticeships in Road Building and Maintenance have provided career development opportunities for current staff which helped retain skills and experience, thereby enhancing in-house capacity and avoiding a recruitment exercise in what is a competitive skills market.

### **CDS Priorities for 2022/23**

We are proactively working with all Services to enable them to make informed decisions about their workforce requirements to ensure they are fit for the future. We are committed to creating **a dynamic HR Delivery model to support the Council's Transformation & Change Programme**, ensuring agile and efficient HR support is available in the right place at the right time to enable smarter working across the Council. We have committed to building a framework to create greater mobility and flexibility in our workforce, embracing digital advances in technology and developing our employment offer to clearly articulate the values and behaviours developed as part of the Perth and Kinross Offer.

Supporting **the health and wellbeing of our employees remains a key priority** as the organisation continues to adapt and incorporate the lessons of the pandemic to ensure the effective delivery of services to the people of Perth and Kinross. The ongoing impact of the pandemic on employee mental and physical health will remain



an area of focus and more general health and wellbeing issues will also be a key priority to identify and address. Our activity will be directed using data from sickness absence reports and from employee feedback which will be gathered directly from individual conversations, our DisABILITY employee network, employee surveys and other engagement activity. **Health and Wellbeing is integral to the priorities in our Corporate Workforce Plan 2021-23.**

We will use external frameworks to access resources and ideas and to ensure that our progress can be measured using acknowledged best practice; we have signed up to the Development stage of the **Equally Safe at Work** programme, part of the Scottish Government's strategy to eradicate violence against women and girls and will take forward an action plan of education and support to achieve this standard.

### *Exploiting Digital Opportunities and Data Insight*

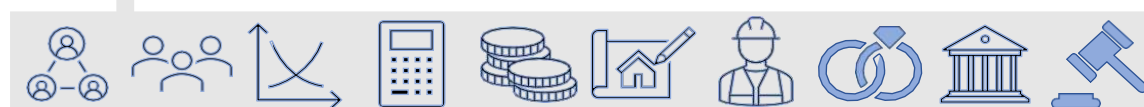
These matter because digital technology and information continue to underpin every service in the organisation and are strategic enablers which will establish new frontiers for how the Council delivers services in the future. Pioneering data analytics and visualisation tools will enable us to use data to tell a compelling story and provide colleagues and elected members with evidence to make better financial, strategic, and policy decisions.

## **Performance Summary for 2021/22**

The full fibre infrastructure, delivered via the Tay Cities Local Full Fibre Network (LFFN) project, is now in place. Focus has now moved to **“lighting up” connections** to dispersed Council offices and schools, to provide secure access to centrally stored systems and Internet resources. It is anticipated that this work will be completed for most connections by the end of 2022.

The cross-disciplinary **Digital Participation** Working Group, chaired by the Chief Digital Officer, brings together Services and external partners to promote opportunities for helping citizens at risk of digital disadvantage. The Group has been instrumental in facilitating training for a network of local digital champions; investing in loan laptops for citizens' use; and funding a range of creative digital projects nominated by local community groups via a Digital Inclusion Fund. Research into levels of digital participation across Perth & Kinross has been commissioned to baseline the local position and inform future digital participation initiatives

Following a competitive tendering exercise to replace the SWIFT Social Care Case Management system, a contract was entered into with the Servelec



Access Group in February 2022 for the supply of their **MOSAIC Social Care Case Management** product.

### Case Study: Data Literacy

Data literacy can be defined as the ability to work with data – to capture and maintain it correctly, to analyse it, to use it to gain insight and to communicate with it effectively. Data literacy improvement is important for any organisation seeking to make better use of data. Recognising this, our Data & Analytics programme incorporates high-level objectives to improve data literacy across the organisation.

The Council's data literacy improvement plan sets out a blended approach to improvement; it started with an initial assessment of data literacy across council services, using an online questionnaire supplemented by workshops with various staff groups. This assessment was used to establish a baseline and inform approaches to improvement.

A key element of the improvement plan is communications and engagement, to ensure that staff are generally 'data aware'. The festive period of 2021 provided an ideal opportunity to run a communications campaign which provided information about the data and analytics programme in a light-hearted, non-technical and innovative way under the banner '12 Days of Data'.

PKC research identified that while data literacy improvement is an emerging area of interest, there is little in the way of mature best practice examples.

The 12 Days of Data campaign set out to address feedback that data and analytics related communications are often perceived to be overly technical and difficult to understand. It used non-technical language and Microsoft Teams based channels that staff were already comfortable with. The main learning point being that data and analytics is relevant to everyone and is not just for the specialist.

Feedback from the 12 Days of Data campaign has been positive, with high levels of interaction with the daily posts on MS Teams. The use of a seasonal theme encouraged engagement and each of the daily posts over the 12 days incorporated a small snapshot of information that was easier to digest than longer, more formal learning materials.

The campaign also encouraged staff to visit our MS Teams Data Centre channel, building a community which will go on to participate in future data literacy improvement activities. This will include the development of targeted data literacy learning pathways and training modules, and of course further

CDS BMIP 2022-23



awareness raising communications.

## CDS Priorities for 2022/23

Our COVID experience underlined the importance of our whole-Council mobile working and online services platforms to front line services and integrated working. We will continue to develop and improve these platforms to empower staff working in our communities to capture, access and exchange the data they need, while on the move and to provide anytime / anywhere access to a wider range of quality online services.

Technology has never been more important for shaping and delivering services; evolving our hybrid working model; and communicating with each other, with citizens and partners. How we are developing our ICT / digital infrastructure, capabilities, capacity, leadership, and skills matters more than ever. A fresh, fit for the future **Digital Strategy** continues to be developed, against the backdrop of post-COVID remobilization; the maturing Perth & Kinross Offer and the emerging Transformation and Change Programme.

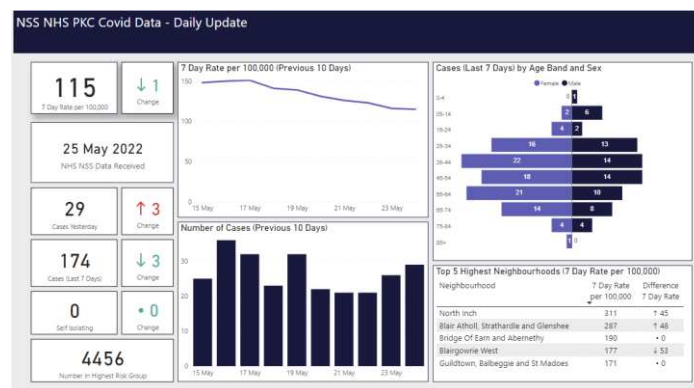
Implementation of **Mosaic as the Council's new social care platform** is opening new opportunities for streamlining processes; and information sharing between Services and support partners, like the NHS. This means re-thinking the way we work to develop this key business system as a tool to be used by citizens to engage meaningfully with us, rather than a tool we use to do things for them. The Mosaic programme team is working towards a potential go-live date in September / October 2023

Perth & Kinross Council is increasingly adopting cloud solutions at points of change, with the pace of this migration accelerating because of commercial decisions by vendors to make new / updated business systems only available as cloud services. Cloud solutions offer potential for increased business system flexibility, scalability, and agility to enable our new hybrid working model. Migrating a system to the cloud requires a collaborative approach between Services, Information Security; Data Protection and IT to ensure the cloud / hosting arrangements we sign up to keep our data safe, accessible, reportable, and recoverable. The whole cloud "lifecycle", from acquisition / migration to repatriation of data at the end of a contract needs to be managed and monitored. **One key system moving to a cloud-based solution is the integrated HR and Payroll system 'ResourceLink'.** This is due to be migrated over the summer of 2022.

The Council's **Data and Analytics (DA) programme** continues to build the capacity and create the capabilities necessary for introducing new technologies. These tools are starting to be used effectively and delivering benefit.



An example is Power BI - Covid Cases Daily Report. In mid-2021, Covid case numbers started rising rapidly again, and there was a need for fast and easy access to the most accurate case figures to aid the Council and Health & Social Care Partnership's response and resilience planning. A Power BI report was developed by the IT Data Services team to provide both daily headline case figures and a series of interactive visualisations which can be used to understand and analyse case numbers by neighbourhood, demographics, and time.

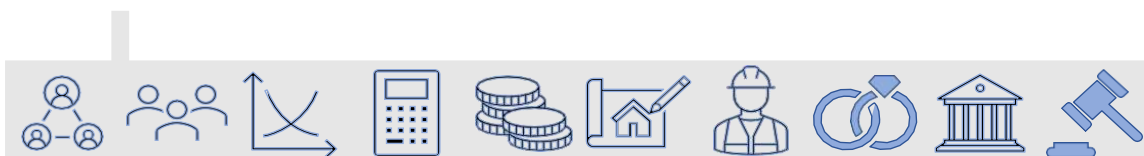


The Power BI Covid Cases – Daily Update is highly innovative and illustrates the new capabilities now available as outputs from the data and analytics programme. Interactive Power BI visualisations which are easy to interpret and understand used trustworthy data extracted from NHS source automatically using new data pipelines.

Our work is continuing from a proof-of-concept solution, illustrating how we can build data insight using Microsoft Power BI – the Council's new analytics platform.

## Protecting our Physical and Information Assets

These matter because our property and infrastructure assets (including schools, houses, offices and depots, and other infrastructure) are an integral element of effective service delivery and capital funding stimulates development and regeneration in local areas. Our information is also a valuable business asset, critical to effective strategic and operational decision-making across the organisation.





## Performance Summary for 2021/22

### Case Study: Records and Information Security

We implemented successfully the Corporate Digital Platform programme, which was a multi-faceted project, designed to streamline and modernise paper processing activities across the organisation and ensure compliance with our legal requirements in terms of public records management. This programme delivered a digital mailroom and introduced hybrid mailing resulting in financial savings, efficiencies, and a reduction in use of paper. It also included the design and delivery of an Electronic Document Management System (EDMS) and the ongoing digitisation of paper records.

Successful delivery of a corporate EDMS was a fundamental element of the Council's Records Management Plan, which is submitted to the Keeper of the Records of Scotland (the Keeper) to ensure compliance with obligations under the Public Records (S) Act 2011 (PRSA 2011). The EDMS will keep the council on track as a "digital by default" organisation, producing savings in electronic storage and legacy file server systems. EDMS supported the delivery of services during the pandemic by enabling access to files from remote work locations and own devices and will be integral to the success of new hybrid working models.

On receipt of the Council's progress update review (PUR), the Keeper's team commended PKC on continued compliance with both the spirit and letter of the PRSA obligations. The Keeper's team was especially pleased that PKC has not only implemented EDMS but had approved records retention across the Microsoft 365 platform.

The next phase of the EDMS project will focus on records management capability within Business Systems.

We have continued to make strides in improving the council's cyber resilience considering the current heightened risks. Over the last year, we have implemented a Cyber Incident Response plan (CIRP) and Incident Response Team. This includes several cyber-attack playbooks.

Continuing measures to enhance our cyber-resilience include:

- Procurement of phishing simulation software
- Senior management and elected member cyber security exercises and briefings by the Scottish Business Resilience Centre



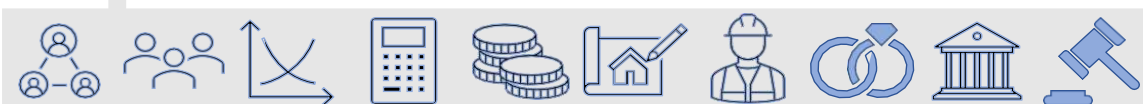
- Cyber Response plan testing
- Cyber maturity assessment by Quorum Cyber who are the Security Operations Centre partner
- Revise business continuity plans with a focus on cyber resilience
- Building in-house expertise through a staff member undertaking a cyber security degree (which is fully funded by Skills Development Scotland), and recruitment of a cyber graduate apprentice

### Case Study: Riverside Primary School



The new Riverside primary school is set to be one of Scotland's first Passivhaus certified primary schools. The move to Passivhaus certification in our schools is in response to the Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan adopted by Perth & Kinross Council in December 2021.

The internationally recognized Passivhaus standard delivers buildings with a much lower reliance on operational energy than the typical standard in Scottish construction. It delivers this through rigorous quality control processes and technical requirements during both design and construction. The Passivhaus standard helps lower our CO2 emissions and gives us the assurance that Perth and Kinross Council will meet the energy requirements for funding set by the Scottish Futures Trust (SFT) Learning Estate investment programme (LEIP).

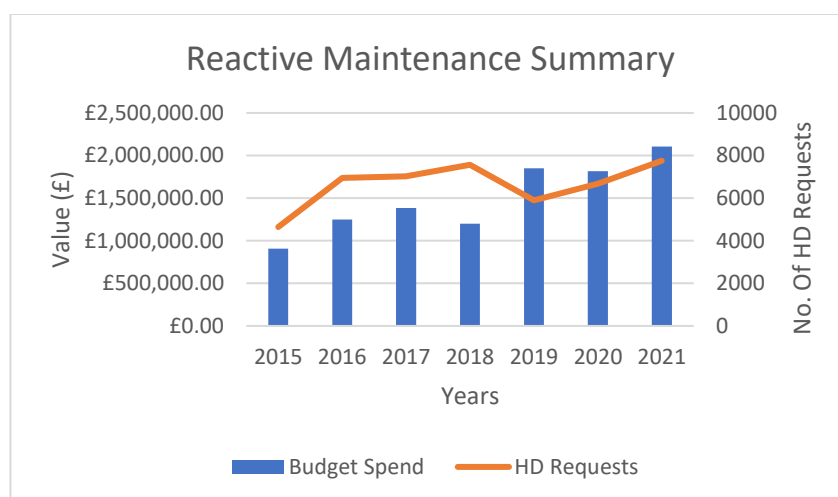


Passivhaus not only sets a construction standard which PKC will need to attain in its move to a zero-carbon estate, it also moves us towards delivering on the construction quality outcomes as highlighted in the Cole report in 2017. To deliver better quality assurance and control, the report recommended independent third-party quality checks and better design team integration throughout the project stages. Passivhaus is the only independent certification scheme which delivers both.

The school is currently on site, with completion in spring/summer 2023.

### Case Study: Maintenance & Investment Team

There has been an increase in maintenance demand via our Help Desk (HD Requests) since lockdown and an increase in volume of maintenance delivered since the pandemic. This challenge has been met by the team with a positive attitude and transparent discussion with clients, resulting in no major failures or disruptions to Service delivery (through building availability) across the Council.



Close working relationships and proactive budget management within first quarter of 2021/22 realised £350k of energy savings due to effective energy management to fund a backlog of Cemetery walls issues that were needed to ensure public safety. These works are progressing in conjunction with Bereavement Services.

The Unpaid Work Team have been working closely with Maintenance teams and communities to make best use of available budgets and in the spirit of the Perth & Kinross Offer. Together, we have painted several community facilities at minimal cost, to the satisfaction of the Community groups.



## Case Study: Ventilation Improvements and Installation of CO2 monitors.

Following lockdown in March 2020, Property Services commenced an exercise of surveying all PKC buildings. This exercise assessed the adequacy of existing ventilation arrangements to be able to mitigate the risks of Covid-19. The surveys identified several actions, including re-programming of existing ventilation systems, repairing windows, accelerating servicing of equipment, and installing additional ventilation in numerous buildings to ensure they could be put into operation safely. These actions were all undertaken in accordance with Industry and Scottish Government Guidance available at the time.

In tandem with this exercise, the team also used Integrated Environmental Solutions (IES) dynamic modelling software to ensure the ventilation strategy adopted for each building would be effective. During this process and through dialogue with Scottish Futures Trust and the Scottish Government, Perth & Kinross Council were identified as one of the leading Councils with a well-developed strategy to mitigate the impact of Covid -19 within its operational buildings.

As such many of the actions suggested by Scottish Government in their document 'Coronavirus (Covid –19): guidance on reducing the risks in schools were developed by the Council's Energy and Engineering Team. In collaboration with Education & Children's Services and installation contractors, the team were also key drivers in the successful CO2 monitor roll out across schools to meet Scottish Government targets. The Council was one of the few Councils to fully meet the initial Scottish Government target of 1 device per teaching and learning space. The early data from this exercise was again used by the Scottish Government to develop their ongoing strategy to ensure an appropriate response to the Covid –19 pandemic.

## CDS Priorities for 2022/23

Maintaining / Improving our Property Estate: Over the last two years, Property Services was diverted from much of its capital works to deal with essential covid safety measures across the estate. There has been an escalation of maintenance demand due to pent up issues during lockdown, remobilisation of properties, overall estate condition and complexities in working in Covid environment. The focus for 2022/23 is **managing the increasing demand for maintenance within available budgets**. An escalation in contract costs tied to CPI (Consumer Prices Index) combined with national supply chain difficulties with materials and resource supply will also bring significant challenges. National tender price inflation is affecting contracts planned to be awarded in 2022/23 and the amount of work deliverable in current / future planned programmes.

Cyber-attacks are increasing in prevalence and in the potential damage they can do. Our security landscape is continuously evolving to anticipate and prevent unauthorised intrusion, to keep our valuable information assets



secure. CDS is partnering with external specialists to implement a **managed 24/7 Cyber Security Operations Centre (SOC)**. This will significantly enhance our security capacity and capabilities for early threat detection, containment, response, and remediation. Encompassing the use of automated machine learning and advanced modelling techniques to combat cyber-attacks, our SOC will put us at the forefront of threat protection in the Scottish public sector and help us keep pace with emerging threat advances, deliver 24-hour monitoring, provide early warning of possible rogue activity and trigger professional, informed incident responses to suspected threats.

Our IT infrastructure and networks protect our systems with up-to-date cyber-security measures and have PSN (Public Service Network) accreditation.

The move towards achieving the Scottish Government targets of **net zero** by 2045 and intermediate reduction targets before then, requires to be embedded in all corporate decision making. CDS will be involved in facilitating the necessary changes in practices to achieve these statutory targets.

### Improving our Customers' Experience

This matters because, like getting the basics right, our external and internal customers expect to have an excellent experience when they use our services. Our internal processes need to be lean providing efficient, timely and accurate information to our customers at first point of contact and throughout the duration of their interaction with the Council. Our ambition is to continue to embrace the *Customer Service Excellence Model*.

## Performance Summary for 2021/22

### Case Study: Procurement Team and Community Benefits

As part of our Sustainable Procurement Policy, the Procurement Team ask suppliers to work in partnership to support local communities in a real and sustainable way, thereby creating a positive social impact from contracted spend. In recognition of our creative, community-focussed approach to Community Benefits in Procurement, the Procurement Team were winners of the "Social Value" category in the 2020 National Procurement Awards – Scotland's leading public procurement awards. This was followed up with a Highly Commended award at the 2020/21 UK National GO Awards.

To help both communities and suppliers get the best out of community benefits, we created an innovative way for local organisations to ask for what





they needed – the Community Benefits Wish List. Local communities can add to the Wish List using our online Community Benefits Wish List form, explaining what they need for example, sponsorship, donations of material or labour, presentations, work experience placements, etc. A list of all current requests on the Wish List is published on our procurement pages, alongside an interactive map showing the location of the requests. This offers suppliers a straightforward way to connect with communities and organisations who have a defined need and to be able to identify the type of benefits they, as a contractor, could supply.

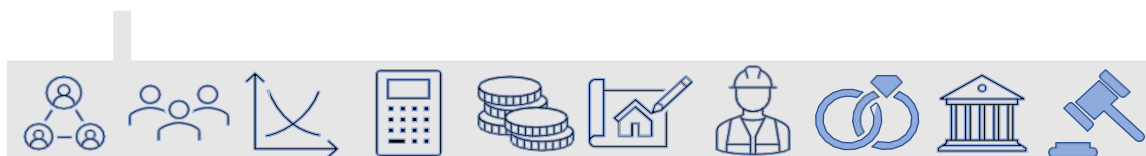
To date, a wide-ranging array of benefits have been delivered by suppliers, including placements for prison leavers, financial support for local charities, employment opportunities and careers workshops for young people. The Procurement Team work hard to raise awareness of this approach, working closely with the Supplier Development Programme to promote the initiative amongst SMEs.

We have demonstrated our Wish List approach at various Procurement and Economic Development forums, including as part of a Community Engagement Workshop at the Annual National Procurement Conference. The workshop was attended by more than 100 delegates, and there is now UK-wide interest in our approach. Our Community Benefits approach has been included in a Scottish Government publication, measuring social impact in public procurement: SPPN 10/2020 and was part of a case study created by SCRIG (Scotland's Centre for Regional Inclusive Growth).

### **Case Study: Child Abuse in Care Redress Scheme**

The Redress for Survivors (Historical Child Abuse in Care) (Scotland) Act 2021 led to the establishment of a financial redress scheme. Claiming redress requires people to provide evidence of their care experience; one of the ways this can be obtained is by people exercising their right to make a subject access request for the information about them which is held by the authority. It was recognised that many requestors were also seeking information about their life experiences, to make sense of what were often difficult and traumatic experiences.

This led to a significant increase during 2021/22 (19% more than during 2020/21) in the number of people exercising their right to access information about themselves (or about deceased partners or parents) held by Perth and Kinross Council. These requests were frequently for large volumes of sensitive and distressing information, which require processing to remove third party and other information, before they can legally be released. The





volume of work which the Information Governance team was dealing with led to delays in responding to people at what was often a time of heightened emotion.

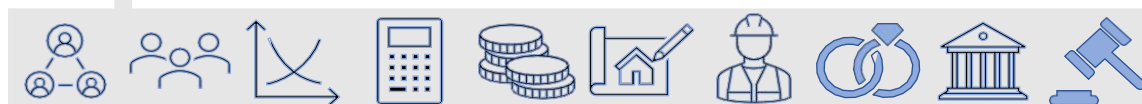
Working with Education and Children's Services, additional funding was secured to employ two officers to deal primarily with requests for historical care records. This additional resource has resulted in an improvement in the time taken to respond to requestors, with almost all requests relating to care experience being responded to, either in full or partially, within statutory timescales. Ongoing training will enable staff to access information held on social work systems which will streamline and speed up the service provided to requestors. They will also use the Archives held by CulturePK to look for evidence when no records are held on social work systems.

Recognising the distressing content of many records, the Information Governance team has developed communications which direct individuals to contact external support organisations. When no information is held, members of the team provide guidance on where requestors could try to find evidence. All requestors are treated compassionately and with empathy, and there is a recognition of the particularly difficult circumstances of people who are seeking evidence for the Redress Scheme.

### **CDS Priorities for 2022/23**

Whilst interrupted by the 2-year pandemic, it is planned that development work will restart in 2022/23 to develop an ambitious **Customer Service Strategy**. This will include a new model of service, customer insight and engagement and developing customer engagement based on the national Customer Service Excellence model.

We will continue to promote **digital channels** and make sure no citizen is excluded. We are investigating opportunities for new and emerging technologies including webchat to improve service operation and design. This will be aided by robust demand analysis



## Working Smarter

This matters because a strategic and integrated approach to people, technology and property is essential to improving how we work as a Council to support delivery of the Perth and Kinross Offer. Our experience in responding to the Covid 19 pandemic has demonstrated that as an organisation we can implement radical change at pace and scale. We will therefore continue to challenge our traditional assumptions about work and workplace, embrace different ways of working which improve productivity, enhance the employee and customer experience, and achieve better outcomes for our communities.

### Performance Summary for 2021/22

Working Smarter has meant being more flexible about what we do, how we work, who we work with, when and where employees work – ensuring we optimise use of buildings, workspace, and technology to find new and more effective ways of doing things. It is also about supporting wellbeing, enhancing employee experience, and promoting positive life work balance. Over the last year, we have seen a stop start impact in terms of remobilising our offices, in line with public health requirements as prevalence of Covid-19 changed across the country. A gradual return to corporate offices was facilitated in line with emerging public health guidance from early 2022. This return was assisted with new HR guidance on hybrid working and the installation of IT equipment to facilitate hybrid meetings in additional offices. The return has also seen a reduction in paper files facilitated by new ways of working and the new EDMS.

Office based staff are now settling into new hybrid working patterns and Covid public health restrictions have been eased. Maintaining a healthy and safe work environment for all remains a priority and everyone has a responsibility for looking after themselves and respecting each other. A range of good practice mitigations and support remain in place to safeguard the health and wellbeing of staff, elected members, and members of the public. These include promotion of the Distance Aware Scheme.

### Priorities for 2022/23

Over the next few months, we will be working with teams in offices to **review workspace requirements** based on how they are using hybrid working; this will help determine overall space requirements and consider the need for quiet spaces, collaboration spaces, bookable rooms with and without hybrid meeting equipment. This exercise will ensure we are making best use of our office accommodation and digital kit, supporting staff to work flexibly and to aid productivity.



# ORGANISED TO DELIVER

## Governance and Management Structure of the Service

CDS has the key resource functions relating to people, money, property, and information. This brings together the key **strategic enablers of change and transformation**. It also is the central service which **supports the Council's democratic processes and civic role** and manages the **governance framework**.

CDS provides **specialist customer services** directly to the communities of Perth and Kinross through its Registrars, Licensing, Information Governance, Local Taxes & Benefits and Welfare Fund & Welfare Rights teams. It also provides the Council's general enquiry service for residents, businesses, and visitors through the Customer Contact Centre.

CDS employs 522 people working a full time equivalent of 464 permanent employees across a diverse range of functions and activities.

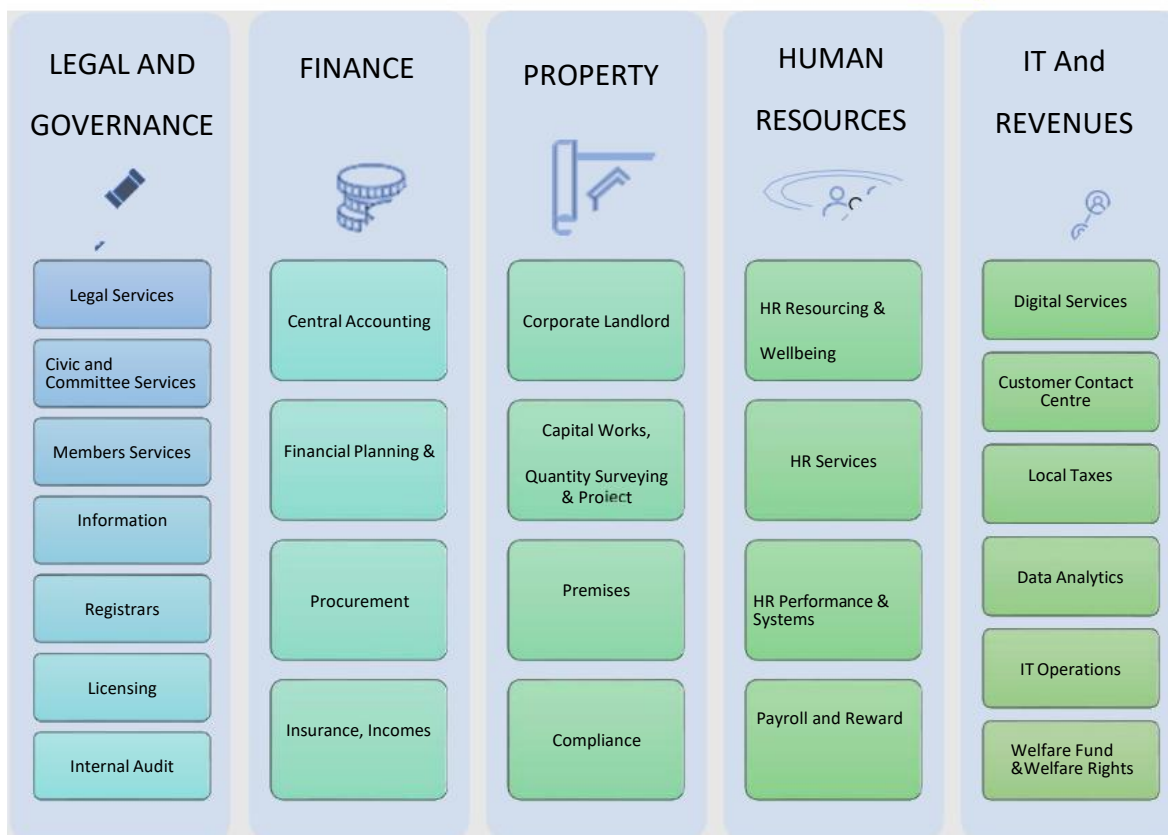
CDS fulfils a significant role in the Council's leadership and governance structure. With representation on the Executive Leadership Team, CDS provides the core expertise in corporate resources, digital / IT, legal and financial advice to the Chief Executive, Executive Directors, Elected Members and Conveners of Committees of the Council.

Key statutory roles are held by officers within CDS; Monitoring Officer (Head of Legal & Governance Services), Section 95 Officer (Head of Finance) and the Data Protection Officer. The Head of IT & Revenues is the Chief Digital Officer.

Heads of Service and Senior Service Managers are members of the Extended Executive Leadership Team (EELT). Many also have leadership roles on several key groups and Boards within and out with the organisation and contribute to the national policy and strategic agenda via Cosla or their respective professional associations.



This 'At a Glance' Diagram of Corporate Services shows the different Divisions and teams within the Service and a brief outline of their responsibilities. More detail can be obtained on our ERIC page [Here](#)



## Customer Focus and Community Engagement

Customer Experience is normally associated with external customer contact and service teams who deal directly with the public. However, our internal customers are just as vital (the next person in the process is your customer). Employee experience is at the heart of HR service delivery.

Customer engagement and improved communication with customers across all the Service's work will be progressed to ensure CDS is listening carefully to its customers' needs, and to develop exceptional levels of insight into how it could transform and improve to the benefit of customers.

We also directly provide customer services to the public in line with the Customer Service Excellence Standards (Formerly Charter Mark). The Welfare Rights Team already hold accreditation at the highest level possible for Welfare Benefits Advice and Representation at Courts and Tribunals. Working proactively with Scottish Government and partners, Welfare Rights staff share best practice and influence guidance and process to ensure



policy objectives are optimised.

## Preparing our People for the Future

People are the Council's most important asset and remain at the heart of everything it does. The people who work in CDS are dedicated and committed to public service and use their talents and skills to provide the best possible services to our customers and communities. We remain committed to investing in the support and development of our employees – providing 1:1 time, team discussions, wellbeing support and access to learning and development – leadership training, continuing professional development, digital skills, and certificated qualifications.

The Council's Corporate Workforce Plan (2021 – 2023) (Report No. 21/84 refers), together with the Organisational Development Plan and Health & Wellbeing Plan, collectively set the direction for how we develop our workforce for the future. These plans will evolve to support and enable the Transformation and Change Programme, with engagement and consultation with employees and trade unions throughout.

The Service continues to have a strong track record of employing modern apprentices and professional trainees, as well as offering graduate work experience opportunities across all our teams. This approach ensures a pipeline of talent for future roles. CDS currently provides twelve opportunities for trainees, working across Energy and Engineering, Data analytics, Payroll, Internal Audit and Legal services, with a further three opportunities in Cyber Security and HR.

The pandemic has changed the way we live and work; in CDS many teams have continued in their normal workplace with changes in work practices – for example, Registrars, IT, and property teams. Many staff were working from home and are now settling into new hybrid work patterns, where this is appropriate for the customers they serve. Keeping people safe and promoting wellbeing remain priorities for the Council as an employer of a large and diverse workforce and we continue to work collaboratively with trade unions on health and safety and employment matters.

We are ambitious for how we enhance the collective contribution of CDS in service delivery to our customers and communities and in how we support and enable the Council to achieve its priority outcomes. With increasing demands and reducing resources, how we work is as important as what we do. We will continue to develop:

- Strong relationships that enable CDS to act as professional adviser and as a critical friend. Influential and solution focussed people that are connected, astute and politically aware, providing relevant and



timely advice that leads to more informed decision making and better outcomes.

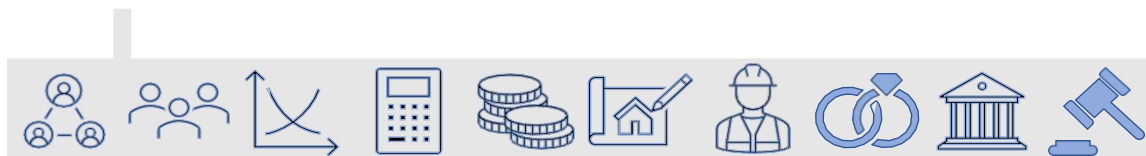
- Confident and visible leaders who understand public services, role model technical excellence and lead by example.
- Skilled people equipped with the knowledge, skills, and experience to achieve our priorities and meet future challenges.
- Clear career frameworks and succession planning arrangements that define roles and set expectations of our people, to support the attraction and retention of high-performing and diverse talent.
- Team structures and ways of working that promote collaboration, integration, and knowledge-sharing.
- Clear, consistent, and accessible data governance, helping to protect data integrity, and improve evidence-based decision making.
- Effective risk management that is integrated and embedded into our core business processes and a review of the Council's risk appetite.
- Enhanced reporting and monitoring of strategic financial performance and associated risks, that informs governance, decision making and financial management for the Council.

## Partnership Working

Our values drive our behaviours and actions in all that we do. These are **Ambition, Compassion, and Integrity**. Our staff are also expected to demonstrate strong ethical behaviour, respecting the rule of law and the appropriate codes of conduct.

Our Service includes several professional disciplines, each subject to its own governing body and professional standards. We provide support for continuing professional development and learning for all to maintain and develop skills and knowledge to enable us to continue to provide the best possible advice and support.

Our approach to working with our customers and stakeholders is to be collaborative, supportive, enabling, and agile. Our approach is to work collaboratively with Services and Partners to deliver the best possible outcomes for our citizens and communities. Several key community-wide developments and service activities will be supported by officers in CDS. Some examples include:





- Major construction projects such as Cross Tay Road Link Road, City Hall Museum, and enhancements to the school estate.
- Comrie Flood Protection Scheme
- Child Poverty
- Support for asylum seekers and Ukraine refugees
- Health & Social Care – Review of the Integration Scheme
- The Perth and Kinross Offer
- Local Action Partnerships
- Work with Third Sector to ensure seamless referrals to welfare rights
- Community Vaccination Centres and Food Support
- Wellbeing Economy Alliance - UNCRC (United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child) focussed pilot project in Letham
- 2022 Transformation and Change Programme.

We want every member of CDS to fulfil their respective professional roles to the best of their ability and take ownership in leading, piloting innovative ideas, learning from others, and improving outcomes for communities and citizens.

Collaboration with other functions is essential in the delivery of this plan. We will continue to promote a One-Council approach, share knowledge and information, solve problems together, and develop creative solutions jointly to drive better quality outcomes for our communities.

## Financial and Resource Management

CDS itself has a net revenue budget of £36.4m in 2022/23 which represents 8.8% of the Council's Revenue Budget. CDS has direct responsibility for a capital budget of £57m through to 2028/29, split between IT and Property Services.

Property Services makes up £17.5m, 48% of the CDS Net Revenue Budget. Our considerable property estate needs to be maintained to high standards to address conditions issues as well as challenges relating to climate change, Net Zero and emerging technology and legislation. In the next period, it is anticipated that demand for maintenance will continue to exceed previous levels of activity. Currently, the construction market is highly volatile and unpredictable in the short to medium term, and this is problematic for investment planning because of cost uncertainty and concern over the supply of labour and materials.

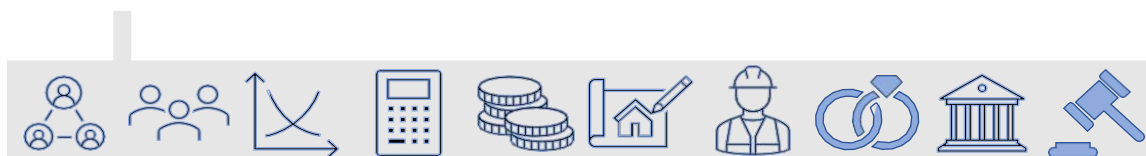


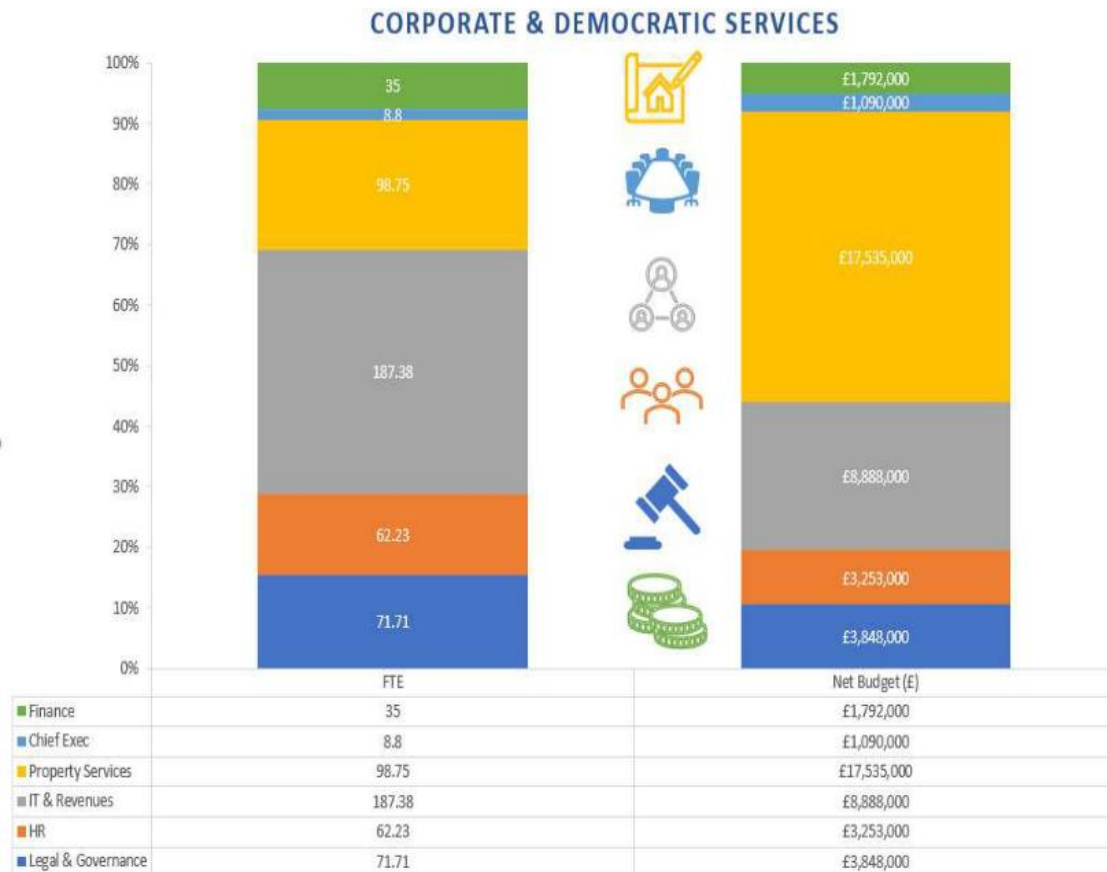
IT investment ensures our core infrastructure components (servers, cyber security, user devices, Microsoft estate and business systems and telephony etc) provide a stable platform from which to build digital and transformative change. It ensures the technologies needed to deliver frontline services remain up to date, secure, available, and developed to meet evolving customer needs and the Council's emerging operating model. The last two years have also seen seismic disruption to IT supply chains with lead times for some equipment increasing from 3 weeks to 13 months. This volatility and unpredictability are likely to continue into 2023.

Budget monitoring for the overall Council revenue budget of £430million and capital budget of £640m through to 2028/29 is reported to the new Finance and Resources Committee.

The Investment Blueprint and Delivery Plan will ensure investment decisions support corporate objectives and priority outcomes - investment in maintaining and developing the assets which are used to deliver services (including schools, houses, operational buildings, and infrastructure) and the utilisation of capital funding to stimulate economic development and regeneration in local areas are essential enabling activities. Delivery of the Council's ambitious capital programme supports key outcomes such as tackling climate change, cultural transformation, and improving the school estate.

A graphical representation of CDS' Net Revenue Budget and FTE is shown below.





The Service makes a significant contribution to the overall strategic objectives directly through our service delivery, and through our professional advice and support to other Services and Partners in all that they do.

CDS participates in the cross-service Planning, Performance and Risk (PPR) group as part of the corporate policy and governance arrangements. CDS is committed to embedding self-evaluation and performance management across all teams to drive improvement and more integrated ways of working.

CDS welcomes the new modernised performance reporting system procured in Spring 2022 by the PPR group lead officer. This will help us to embed effective performance management principles and disciplines throughout the Service. Our 2021-22 performance against key corporate indicators will shortly be available on our web site at, [PK Performs](#) selecting '**Organised to Deliver**'. Previous year's performance indicators are available online now.

As part of the business planning process for 2022/23, CDS undertook a

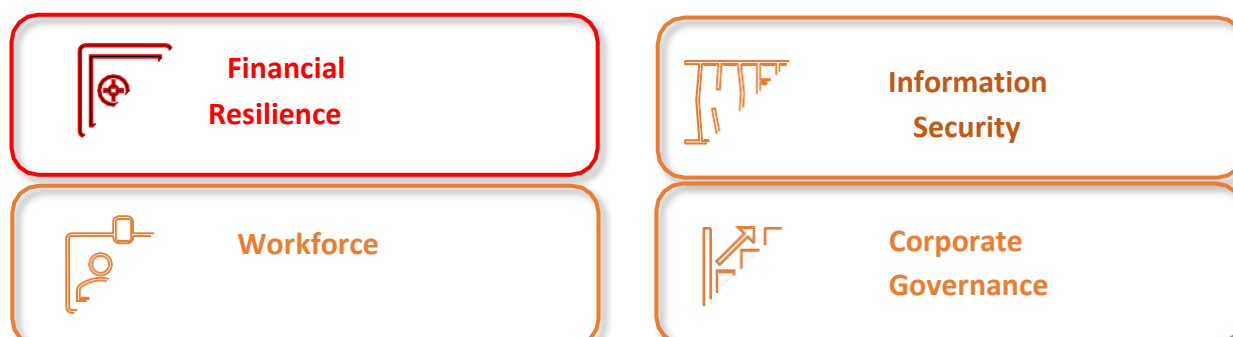


PESTLE and SWOT analysis to gain insight into the emerging demands and risks which may affect our performance and the organisation's capacity to deliver services. This insight helped shape our improvement priorities.

We are aware of Audit Scotland's recommendations (Best Value Assurance Report August 2019) around improving how performance management and performance reporting is used to drive continuous improvement, and we are investing resources to change the way we use data and information. Work has commenced on developing a balanced scorecard within our performance management arrangements.

Effective risk management is a key element of the Council's system of internal control and an essential element of good governance. CDS has responsibility for the development and management of the Council's Strategic Risk Management Framework; ensuring that there is a consistent and coherent approach taken across the organisation to the identification, assessment, analysis, mitigation, and management of strategic and key operational. An update to the Strategic Risk Register will be presented to the appropriate Council Committee in summer 2022.

As the core corporate functions, CDS are the risk owners in relation to several of the key risks facing the Council including financial management and accountability, information security, workforce, and corporate governance.





As key enablers of change and transformation, CDS also play a key role in supporting the organisation in managing and mitigating the spectrum of strategic risks from reducing the impact of climate change to tackling poverty and inequality across Perth and Kinross. Involving and engaging staff in the critical agendas of equality and fairness, sustainability and climate change will ensure everyone can contribute effectively.



As part of our business planning activity during 2021-22, CDS regularly reviewed the opportunities and threats emerging from the external environment and updated its Service Risk Register.

## KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

The section below provides 2021/22 performance indicators where the information is currently available. The remaining indicator will be updated later this year when the information becomes available.

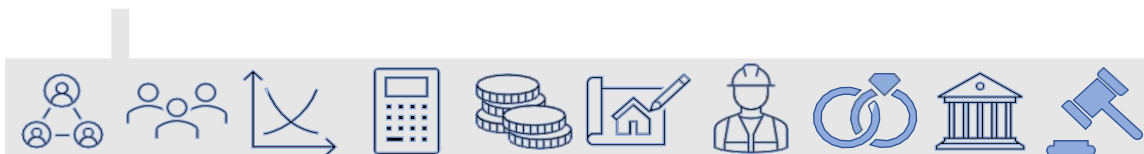
 <p><b>% OF THE HIGHEST PAID 5% EMPLOYEES WHO ARE WOMEN</b></p> <p>2021/22 <b>54.0%</b> 2020/21 <b>53.8%</b></p>	 <p><b>THE GENDER PAY GAP</b></p> <p>2021/22 <b>-1.1%</b> 2020/21 <b>-1.2%</b></p>	 <p><b>SICKNESS ABSENCE DAYS PER EMPLOYEE – NON-TEACHING</b></p> <p>2021/22 <b>10.9</b> 2020/21 <b>8.3</b></p>	 <p><b>% OF INVOICES SAMPLED THAT WERE PAID WITHIN 30 DAYS</b></p> <p>2021/22 <b>94.0%</b> 2020/21 <b>89.7%</b></p>
 <p><b>PROPORTION OF INTERNAL FLOOR AREA OF OPERATIONAL BUILDINGS IN SATISFACTORY CONDITION</b></p> <p>2021/22 <b>89.8%</b> 2020/21 <b>85.4%</b></p>	 <p><b>PROPORTION OF OPERATIONAL BUILDINGS THAT ARE SUITABLE FOR THEIR CURRENT USE</b></p> <p>2021/22 <b>93.5%</b> 2020/21 <b>89.7%</b></p>	 <p><b>SUPPORT SERVICES AS A % OF TOTAL GROSS EXPENDITURE</b></p> <p>2021/22 <b>TBC</b> 2020/21 <b>3.8%</b></p>	 <p><b>% INCOME DUE FROM COUNCIL TAX RECEIVED BY THE YEAR END</b></p> <p>2021/22 <b>97.7%</b> 2020/21 <b>96.6%</b></p>

### Comments on Performance Indicators

Council performance in the Corporate Services' indicators has mirrored the national experience during the COVID-19 pandemic. The 2021/22 performance in respect of these indicators shows that as the restrictions have eased, performance levels are returning to normal ranges.



Sickness absence has increased from an average of 8.3 to 10.9 days for non-teaching employees. This excludes Covid-related absences. The requirement for most staff to work from home changed the way we work and meant resources, systems, processes, tools, and technology being deployed very differently. Working digitally and from home and recording COVID-19 absences differently saw reductions in sickness absences, in line with other organisations in 2020/21. Our sickness absence indicators continue to be impacted and these are being closely monitored. We have identified some factors that we consider have contributed to increases in absences and these are used to shape our wellbeing support for employees, including advice and support for managers. We will continue to work with our trade unions and professional associations to prioritise support for the health and wellbeing of our workforce who are essential to delivering the best possible services to the people of Perth and Kinross.





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## Links to relevant documents

[Community Plan and LOIP 2017-2027](#)

[Corporate Plan 2018-2022](#)

[Corporate Workforce Plan 2021-2023](#)

[Revenue budget and Reserves Strategy Report Feb 2022](#)

[Local Government Benchmarking Framework Report 2020-21](#)

[All Annual accounts](#)

[Council budgets](#)

[Past Council Strategies, Performance Reports and Business Plans](#)

[Best Value Assurance Report 2019](#)

