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Council Building
2 High Street
Perth
PH1 5PH

27/09/2023

A hybrid meeting of **Perth and Kinross Council** will be held in **the Council Chamber** on **Wednesday, 04 October 2023** at **10:30**.

If you have any queries please contact Committee Services on (01738) 475000 or email Committee@pkc.gov.uk.

THOMAS GLEN
Chief Executive

Those attending the meeting are requested to ensure that all notifications are silent on their device and other devices are in silent mode.

Please note that the meeting will be broadcast online and recorded. The recording will be publicly available on the Council's website following the meeting.

Members:

Provost X McDade
All Councillors

Perth and Kinross Council

Wednesday, 04 October 2023

AGENDA

MEMBERS ARE REMINDED OF THEIR OBLIGATION TO DECLARE ANY FINANCIAL OR NON-FINANCIAL INTEREST WHICH THEY MAY HAVE IN ANY ITEM ON THIS AGENDA IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE COUNCILLORS' CODE OF CONDUCT.

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- 2 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
- 3 **MINUTE OF MEETING OF PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL OF 30 AUGUST 2023 FOR APPROVAL** 7 - 16
(copy herewith)
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(copy herewith 23/262)
- 5 **NOTICE OF MOTIONS**
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Report by Head of Planning & Development (copy herewith 23/263)
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(copy herewith 23/264)
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- 10 **MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2024-30** 173 - 218
 Report by Head of Finance (copy herewith 23/267)
- 11 **WORKING SMARTER TRANSFORMATION PROJECT –
 PULLAR HOUSE MOTHBALLING/CITY CENTRE
 ACCOMMODATION OPTIONS** 219 - 234
 Report by Head of Property (copy herewith 23/268)
- 12 **APPOINTMENT TO COMMITTEES/OUTSIDE BODIES** 235 - 236
 (copy herewith)
- 13 **CHANGES TO 2024 COMMITTEE TIMETABLE**
 Environment, Infrastructure and Economic Development
 Committee scheduled for 27 March be moved to 7 February at
 1pm.
 Learning and Families Committee scheduled for 27 March be
 moved to 11 March at 1pm.
 A special meeting of Perth and Kinross Council be arranged for 19
 August at 1pm.
 Property Sub-Committee scheduled on 19 August be moved to 21
 August at 1pm.
- 14 **ELECTED MEMBERS BRIEFING NOTES**
 Council is asked to note the following [Elected Members Briefing
 Notes](#) that have been issued to elected Members since the
 previous Council meeting:
 18 August 2023 Letters sent at the request of Council
 22 August 2023 Scottish Government consultation on Council
 Tax
 23 August 2023 Appointment - Director Strategy, People &
 Resources
 23 August 2023 Visitor Levy
 29 August 2023 People Seeking Asylum
 30 August 2023 Homelessness performance 2022/23
 5 September 2023 Update on RAAC in buildings
 6 September 2023 Place Based Investment Programme
 7 September 2023 SLARC survey results
 13 September 2023 People Seeking Asylum
 13 September 2023 Perth Harbour
 13 September 2023 Recycling Centre opening times
 13 September 2023 Strike Ballot
 14 September 2023 Scotland's Census - First Outputs
 14 September 2023 Transformation and Change update
 14 September 2023 Public Toilets
 14 September 2023 Industrial Action
 22 September 2023 Appointments - Director and Strategic Leads
 26 September 2023 Statutory review of polling places and districts

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PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL

Minute of hybrid meeting of Perth and Kinross Council held in the Council Chamber, 2 High Street, Perth on Wednesday 30 August 2023 at 10:30am.

Present: Provost X McDade, Depute Provost A Parrott, Bailies C Ahern, A Bailey, R Brock and C McLaren, Councillors K Allan, H Anderson, L Barrett, P Barrett, B Brawn, S Carr, A Chan, D Cuthbert, S Donaldson, E Drysdale, J Duff, A Forbes, M Frampton, N Freshwater (from Item 5(i) onwards), K Harvey, D Illingworth, I James, N Khogali, G Laing, B Leishman, I MacPherson, I Massie, S McCole, T McEwan, J Rebbeck, C Reid, W Robertson, C Shiers, F Smith, C Stewart, G Stewart, R Watters and J Welch.

In Attendance: T Glen, Chief Executive; L Simpson, Head of Legal and Governance Services; C Mailer, Executive Lead – Strategic Planning and Transformation; B Renton, Executive Director (Communities); S MacKenzie, Head of Finance; C Guild, Head of Innovation, F Robertson, Head of Culture and Communities Services, J Pepper, Chief Officer – Health and Social Care Partnership/Chief Social Work Officer, N Sutherland, S Merone, S Hendry, R Ramsay and M Pasternak (all Corporate and Democratic Services).

Apologies: Bailie M Williamson.

Provost X McDade, Presiding.

Prior to the commencement of business the Provost congratulated Councillor Peter Barrett on his recent award by Perthshire Pride on his work as the Council's Equalities Champion.

The Provost also congratulated Clare Mailer on her appointment as Director of Strategy, People & Resources beginning 1 September 2023.

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

Provost McDade welcomed all those present to the meeting. An apology was noted as above.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declaration of Interests in terms of the Councillors' Code of Conduct.

3. MINUTE OF MEETING OF PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL OF 28 JUNE 2023 FOR APPROVAL

The minute of meeting of Perth and Kinross Council of 28 June 2023 was approved as correct record.

4. OUTSTANDING BUSINESS STATEMENT

The Outstanding Business Statement was noted, and it was agreed to remove the completed actions.

5. NOTICE OF MOTIONS

5(i) Proposed Closure of Methven Branch Surgery

Motion By Councillors E Drysdale and G Laing

This Council notes with great concern the proposal to close the Methven Branch Surgery with patients to be offered care at Victoria Practice, Glover Street in the centre of Perth instead. Such a move would cause significant inconvenience and disruption to patients who have been attending Methven branch surgery, especially those who rely on public transport or who are mobility impaired. At a time also of increasing population migration into West Perth, this closure would be a hugely unwelcome development.

This Council calls on the Leader of the Council and the Leaders of all other political groups within Perth & Kinross Council on behalf of those families affected by this latest proposal, to write jointly to the practice managers, NHS Tayside Primary Care Services and Perth & Kinross Health and Social Care Partnership to request an urgent meeting to discuss alternative options for the primary care of the 1500 patients in the Methven area.

1st Amendment by Councillors D Illingworth and F Smith

1. The Council acknowledges the significant dismay, disappointment, and anger of the people of Methven and surrounding area caused by the proposal to close Methven Surgery.
2. The Council recognises the immense strain placed on GP practices across Scotland caused by a shortage of GPs and that that strain is forcing The Victoria Practice, Glover Street to propose closing Methven Surgery.
3. The Council notes that the Victoria Practice and NHS Tayside are working hard to communicate with members of the Methven community, Methven and District Community Council, ward councillors and MSPs to make sure that all alternatives to closure are being explored.
4. The Council will support any initiative to create a volunteer led community transport group in Methven that could be used not only for patient transport to Glover Street, but for other community purposes.

2nd Amendment by Bailie C McLaren Councillor P Barrett

To replace Item 4 of the 1st Amendment with :

4. Council Instructs Officers to engage with any local community efforts to establish a Community Transport Group.

Calls upon the Leader of the Council, local members and the Vice-Chair of Perth and Kinross Integrated Joint Board to write to the Practise Managers, NHS Tayside Primary Care services and Perth and Kinross Health and Social Care

Partnership to request an urgent meeting to discuss alternative options for the primary care of the 1500 patients of the Methven branch surgery.

THERE FOLLOWED A RECESS AND THE MEETING RECONVENED AT 11.15AM.

At this point the mover and seconder of the 1st Amendment agreed to incorporate the 2nd Amendment into the 1st Amendment and remove Items 1-3 of the 1st Amendment.

The 1st Amendment therefore became the substantive Amendment.

The mover and seconder of the Motion then agreed to incorporate the Amendment into the Revised Motion.

Resolved:

In accordance with the Revised Motion as follows:

- **This Council notes with great concern the proposal to close the Methven Branch Surgery with patients to be offered care at Victoria Practice, Glover Street in the centre of Perth instead. Such a move would cause significant inconvenience and disruption to patients who have been attending Methven branch surgery, especially those who rely on public transport or who are mobility impaired. At a time also of increasing population migration into West Perth, this closure would be a hugely unwelcome development.**
 - **Council Instructs Officers to engage with any local community efforts to establish a Community Transport Group.**
 - **Council Calls upon the Leader of the Council, local members and the Vice-Chair of Perth and Kinross Integrated Joint Board to write to the Practise Managers, NHS Tayside Primary Care services and Perth and Kinross Health and Social Care Partnership to request an urgent meeting to discuss alternative options for the primary care of the 1500 patients of the Methven branch surgery.**
- 5(ii) Calling for improved financial and practical support from UK Government to facilitate planned increases in Asylum Seeker Dispersal to Perth & Kinross**

Motion By Councillors E Drysdale And G Laing

Last month the UK Government restated its policy to reduce its reliance on contingency hotels accommodation for asylum seekers. This month, Perth & Kinross Council was advised of the Government's intention to increase the numbers to be housed in two hotels within Perth City Centre by 85%. These measures are being rolled out imminently so far without clarity on many practical considerations, on dealing with the impact on public services, and on sufficiency

of increased funding to the Council. The matter of local private housing accommodation for those eventually granted asylum has still to be addressed.

The people of Perth & Kinross have a proud history of offering support and sanctuary to those fleeing conflict – most recently from Ukraine, Afghanistan and Syria – and this will certainly continue, however Governments must provide practical and financial resource to assist the local authority and public partners in looking after our guests.

Council therefore calls upon the Leader of the Council and leaders of all political groups within Perth & Kinross to write to the UK Home Secretary urgently requesting further financial and practical assistance so that asylum seekers who arrive in Perth & Kinross can be properly looked after, in a caring and compassionate manner.

Amendment Councillors P Barrett and W Robertson

Council notes

1. The concerns that local authorities are consistently raising with UK and Scottish Governments which include:
 - Lack of funding and pressure on local services, particularly in relation to health services;
 - Licensing of hotels given the long term nature of stays and that these are the single address of residents;
 - Safeguarding and how matching of individuals to room share will be managed;
 - Infectious diseases testing and management of outbreaks;
 - Support for those whose mental wellbeing will be affected;
 - Lockable furniture for service users;
 - Dispute resolution;
 - Activities for people.
2. English local authorities have received additional funding from the Department for Education to develop their capacity for Unaccompanied Asylum -seeking Children (UASC) for National Transfer scheme (NTS) placements, and there are plans to extend this funding in the coming months. Scottish local authorities are unable to access this funding.
3. It was reported to CoSLA leaders on Friday that one of the significant concerns from local partners is the significant impact on health services which are, in many areas, already struggling to meet the needs of asylum

applicants. NHS England disseminates some funding to Integrated Care Systems in England to support these services. Scottish Health Boards and Health and Social Care Partnerships do not get any such funding. Home Office officials have made it clear that health funding would need to come from Scottish Government as it is a devolved competence. COSLA officers have previously raised this matter with Scottish Government officials, but there has been no clear response to date as to the Scottish Government position in this regard.

Council agrees that that the Leaders of all political groups of Perth and Kinross Council write a joint letter to the Scottish and UK Governments to

- 1) ask for their financial support to assist placements for UASC arriving through the NTS rota and as spontaneous arrivals.
- 2) Seek additional funding for health services.

The mover and seconder of the Motion agreed to incorporate the Amendment into the Revised Motion.

Resolved:

In accordance with the Revised Motion as follows:

Council notes:

1 The concerns that local authorities are consistently raising with UK and Scottish Governments which include:

- **Lack of funding and pressure on local services, particularly in relation to health services;**
- **Licensing of hotels given the long term nature of stays and that these are the single address of residents;**
- **Safeguarding and how matching of individuals to room share will be managed;**
- **Infectious diseases testing and management of outbreaks;**
- **Support for those whose mental wellbeing will be affected;**
- **Lockable furniture for service users;**
- **Dispute resolution;**
- **Activities for people.**

2 English local authorities have received additional funding from the Department for Education to develop their capacity for Unaccompanied Asylum -seeking Children (UASC) for National Transfer scheme (NTS) placements, and there are plans to extend this funding in the coming months. Scottish local authorities are unable to access this funding.

3 It was reported to CoSLA leaders on Friday that one of the significant concerns from local partners is the significant impact on health services which are, in many areas, already struggling to meet the needs of asylum applicants. NHS England disseminates some funding to Integrated Care Systems in England to support these services. Scottish Health Boards and Health and Social Care Partnerships do not get any such funding. Home Office officials have made it clear that health funding would need to come from Scottish Government as it is a devolved competence. COSLA officers have previously raised this matter with Scottish Government officials, but there has been no clear response to date as to the Scottish Government position in this regard.

Council agrees that that the Leaders of all political groups of Perth and Kinross Council write a joint letter to the Scottish and UK Governments to:

- 1) Ask for their financial support to assist placements for UASC arriving through the NTS rota and as spontaneous arrivals.**
- 2) Seek additional funding for health services.**
- 3) Requesting further financial and practical assistance so that asylum seekers who arrive in Perth & Kinross can be properly looked after, in a caring and compassionate manner.**

5(iii) Winter Clothing Grant for School Children

Motion By Councillor B Leishman and Bailie A Bailey

The devastating cost of living crisis shows no sign of ending. This is impacting nearly everyone in society and there are families across every ward in Perth & Kinross that are in great need and would benefit from help in providing winter clothing for their children and young people.

We propose to add an additional £20,000 to the Council's Financial Insecurity Fund with referral routes for applications being broadened to include schools, link workers, self-referrals and those who may be eligible through Welfare Rights and Welfare Fund.

This £20,000 would be taken from the Covid Reserve.

Proposed Amendment by Councillor G Laing

To remove the wording 'school children', so that the grant is also applied to pre-school children.

The mover and seconder of the Motion agreed to incorporate the proposed Amendment.

Resolved:

With the Revised Motion.

6. PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2022/23

There was submitted a report by Chief Executive (23/234) (1) providing an overview of performance against priorities, actions and associated key performance indicators in the period from April 2022 to March 2023, as set out within Corporate Plan 2022-2027. Whilst the revised Corporate Plan was approved by Council in December 2022, this report covers a full financial year reporting period. It recognises activity undertaken in support of corporate priorities both pre-and post-publication of the Plan.

Resolved:

The Annual Performance Report 2022/23, be approved.

7. ARMED FORCES COVENANT PROGRESS REPORT

There was submitted a report by Head of Innovation (23/235) providing members with a Progress Report in relation to the Council's commitment under the Armed Forces Covenant.

Resolved:

The content of the report be noted, and the continued work in relation to the Council's commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant be approved.

8. REVIEW OF COMMITTEE TIMETABLE 2023 AND INDICATIVE 2024 TIMETABLE

There was a report submitted by Head of Legal and Governance Services (23/238) presenting a review of the committee timetable for 2023 and an indicative committee timetable for 2024.

Motion by Councillors E Drysdale and G Laing

To agree the proposals in the report.

Amendment by Councillor J Duff and Bailie C Ahern

To agree the proposals set in the report in relation to the 2023 timetable and to reconstitute the Governance Member/Officer Working Group to further consider the proposed 2024 timetable.

In terms of Standing Order 21.1, a roll call vote was taken:

21 Members voted for the Motion, as follows:

Provost X McDade, Depute Provost A Parrott, Bailies A Bailey and R Brock, Councillors S Carr, D Cuthbert, S Donaldson, E Drysdale, M Frampton, K Harvey, G Laing, B Leishman, I MacPherson, I Massie, S McCole, T McEwan, J Rebbeck, C Stewart, G Stewart, R Watters and J Welch.

18 Members voted for the Amendment, as follows:

Bailies C Ahern, C McLaren, Councillors K Allan, H Anderson, L Barrett, P Barrett, B Brawn, A Chan, J Duff, A Forbes, N Freshwater, D Illingworth, I James, N Khogali, C Reid, W Robertson, C Shiers and F Smith.

Resolved:

In accordance with the Motion.

9. APPOINTMENT TO COMMITTEES/OUTSIDE BODIES

(i) It be agreed that Provost X McDade replace Councillor C Stewart on the Learning and Families Committee.

(ii) It be noted that the following members were appointed to the Appointment Sub-Committee:

- Panel for the post of Executive Director (Strategy, People and Resources)

Bailie A Bailey
Councillor P Barrett
Councillor G Laing
Provost McDade
Councillor C Shiers

- Panel for the post of Executive Director (Economy, Place and Learning)

Bailie A Bailey
Councillor P Barrett Councillor
D Cuthbert
Councillor G Laing
Councillor C Shiers

(iii) In line with the Perth and Kinross Integration Scheme, the positions of Chair and Vice-Chair of the Perth and Kinross Integration Joint Board rotate every 2 years between Perth and Kinross Council and NHS Tayside. The current Chair of the IJB is Bob Benson, NHS Tayside. From 4 October 2023, the position of Chair of the Board will be held by Perth and Kinross Council. It be confirmed that Councillor C Stewart be appointed to the role of Chair of the Integration Joint Board from 4 October 2023.

10. ELECTED MEMBERS BRIEFING NOTES

Resolved:

The Elected Members Briefing Notes, issued since the previous Council meeting and as set out on the agenda, be noted.

11. PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE KINROSS-SHIRE LOCAL COMMITTEE SCHEME OF ADMINISTRATION

Resolved:

Council approves the enclosed changes to the terms of reference for the Kinross-shire Local Committee and instructs the Head of Legal and Governance Services to amend the Council's Scheme of Administration as necessary.

P1. PERTH HARBOUR - MARKETING OF LONG LEASEHOLD OPPORTUNITY

There was submitted a report by Head of Planning and Development (23/236) providing an update on the marketing of Perth Harbour on a long leasehold basis as agreed at the Council's meeting of 8 February 2023 (Report No. 23/42 refers).

Motion by Councillors G Laing and E Drysdale:

- (i) Council accepts the bidder's expression of interest, as detailed in the report, excluding the sale of the Fair Maid tugboat at nil value, and instructs the Head of Planning & Development and the Head of Legal & Governance Services to conclude a legal agreement with the bidder on that basis.
- (ii) Should the bidder agree to exclude the sale of the Fair Maid at nil value, the Executive Director (Communities) is instructed to seek the approval of the Scottish Ministers for a Harbour Revision Order to transfer the Statutory Harbour Authority and Competent Harbour Authority's responsibilities to the bidder.
- (iii) Should the bidder formally advise that it does not wish to enter into a lease that excludes the sale of the Fair Maid at nil value, the Executive Director (Communities) is instructed to seek the approval of the Scottish Ministers for a Harbour Revision Order to close the Harbour in line with Option 5 as agreed on 8 February 2023 (Report No. 23/42 refers).

Proposed Amendment by Councillor P Barrett:

In accordance with the Motion but to set a deadline of one week for the bidder to respond to the proposed offer.

The mover and seconder of the Motion agreed to incorporate the proposed Amendment into the Revised Motion.

Resolved:

In accordance with the Revised Motion.

PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL

OUTSTANDING BUSINESS STATEMENT (OBS)

(Report No. 23/262)

Please note that this statement sets out outstanding decisions of Council / this committee / sub-committee along with an update and estimated completion date. Actions which are overdue are shaded for ease of reference. Where an update reflects that an action is complete then agreement will be sought to its removal from the OBS.

No	Date / Minute Reference / Report Number	Subject Title	Outstanding Action	Update	Lead Officer /Service	Action Due/ completed	Action Expected
11.	21 December 2023. Item 11	Update to 2023 Committee Timetable	To alter the scheduled meetings of the Employees JCC and JNCT to correct sequencing.	Revised Timetable agreed by Council on 30 August 2023. COMPLETE	Democratic Services Manager	COMPLETE	August 2023
12.	30 August 2023. Item 5(i)	Motion on Proposed Closure of Methven Branch Surgery.	Joint letter to be issued by Council Leader, local members and Vice-Chair of Integration Joint Board.	Joint letter issued September 2023.	Democratic Services / Communications Team.	COMPLETE	September 2023

No	Date / Minute Reference / Report Number	Subject Title	Outstanding Action	Update	Lead Officer /Service	Action Due/ completed	Action Expected
13.	30 August 2023. Item 5 (ii)	Motion calling for improved financial and practical support from UK Government to facilitate planned increases in Asylum Seeker Dispersal to Perth and Kinross.	Joint letter to be issued by Leaders of all political groups to both Scottish and UK Governments.	Joint letter issued September 2023.	Democratic Services / Communications Team.	COMPLETE	September 2023

MOTION BY COUNCILLORS S DONALDSON AND R WATTERS**Banking Hub**

“Council notes the major problems that have arisen for local residents and businesses due to the closure of banks in Kinross, Auchterarder and Aberfeldy over the last few years. It considers that the closure of the Bank of Scotland in Crieff next year could have led to a similar outcome but welcomes the promise to establish a banking hub there by summer 2024.

“Council calls on the Council Leader to write to Cash Access UK, and Link, to support applications for banking hubs in the three towns where there is at present no banking provision. It believes that for our town centres to survive and thrive, access to banking services is essential.

“Council further calls on Council officers to provide assistance where appropriate to Cash Access UK, and Link: in particular to help in locating premises in any of the three towns that are successful with their applications for a banking hub.”

MOTION BY COUNCILLORS I MASSIE AND S McCOLE**Proposed Joining of the WHO Global Network of Age-friendly Cities and Communities**

This council notes the great work done by our Health and Social Care Partnership staff in relation to our older population from Integrated care teams, Care at home, Daycare, Care homes and Telecare to name but a few of the services they provide.

The value of our community health and social care services in protecting our most vulnerable people was highlighted during the pandemic and has been described as the glue that binds our communities together.

The standards and principles that underpin our services to older people mirror the standards and principles of the World Health Organisation Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities.

This council calls on the Provost to write to the World Health Organisation to propose that Perth and Kinross join the Who Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities.

This global platform aims to empower cities and communities to become more age friendly by promoting healthy ageing well-being and inclusivity for older adults.

I believe that by participating in this programme Perth and Kinross can benefit greatly and create a community that fosters the dignity and well-being of our older residents.

Perth And Kinross Council

4 October 2023

TAY FOREST NATIONAL PARK BID – ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

Report by Head of Planning & Development
(Report No. 23/263)

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval of the engagement strategy to help shape the Council's bid to create a new national park in northern Perthshire.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that Council:

- agrees to the engagement approach set out in this report and asks officers to seek input from communities and stakeholders
- Agrees that the findings of the engagement exercise will be reported back to Council in early 2024, along with the finalised bid submission.
- Agrees that the proposed name of the new park shall be the Tay Forest National Park
- Notes the branding that has been designed to support the bid.

3. STRUCTURE OF REPORT

- 3.1 This report is structured over the following sections:

- Section 4: Background/Main Issues
- Section 5: Proposals
- Section 6: Conclusion
- Appendices

4. BACKGROUND / MAIN ISSUES

- 4.1 The Scottish Government has announced its intention to form at least one new national park by Spring 2026.

4.2 The process has several stages, which can be summarised as:

- Nominations and Appraisal 2023-24
- Reporter Investigation 2024-25
- Designation 2025-26

Further details on the expected nomination process are available on the Scottish Government's [website and on NatureScot's website](#). The period for submission of nomination bids is understood to potentially run from October 2023 to February 2024.

4.3 In March 2023, the Council agreed to make budget provision to support a bid submission for a new national park in northern Perthshire. The remit for a Member Officer Working Group (MOWG) was agreed in May 2023 and is attached as appendix 1.

4.4 The MOWG has developed the bid proposals, to a point where it is now appropriate to engage communities and stakeholders. This will assist in shaping proposals further ahead of reporting to Council in December and submitting the bid in early 2024.

5. PROPOSALS

Bid Outline

5.1 The Scottish Government will assess bids using criteria [published in draft](#) earlier in 2023. Bids are not expected to provide full detail. For those that are selected by Ministers to progress, matters such as the detailed boundary, or the role and function of a new national park authority, are to be considered by the Reporter at the Inquiry stage.

5.2 The assessment criteria cover the following:

- Outstanding national importance
- Size, character and coherence
- Special needs of the area
- Visitor management and experience
- Added value
- Local support
- Strategic contribution

Scottish Ministers have also indicated their wish to see National Parks as special places for wildlife and biodiversity that will actively support nature recovery and the transformational change needed in approaches to land-use, in order to achieve a just transition to net zero in Scotland.

- 5.3 The bid submission to be reported to Council in early 2024 will be structured around these criteria, supported by an environmental and economic evidence report, and a summary of the engagement to be carried out this October and November.
- 5.4 For the purposes of that engagement, the emerging proposals will be set out more simply, as set out below:
- An explanation of what a national park is.
 - A description of the natural and cultural heritage qualities of the area which would merit national park designation.
 - The scope for a national park authority with a remit to focus on how best to actively manage tourism in the area to ensure it is sustainable and to the benefit of the local economy and the natural environment.
 - The scope for a national park authority to access additional national funds to carry out focused management of the area to achieve those aims.
- 5.5 Although many details of the boundary will only be determined at subsequent stages, a set of Frequently Asked Questions is being prepared for use in engagement material.

Title and Area

- 5.6 The MOWG has developed a vision of a national park which connects Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park with the Cairngorms National Park. This area encompasses a rich diversity of natural and cultural heritage assets and an attractive visitor offer. Much of this relates to:
- the River Tay and its tributaries.
 - the forests of the area.

Accordingly, the MOWG has proposed naming the proposed park the ‘Tay Forest National Park.

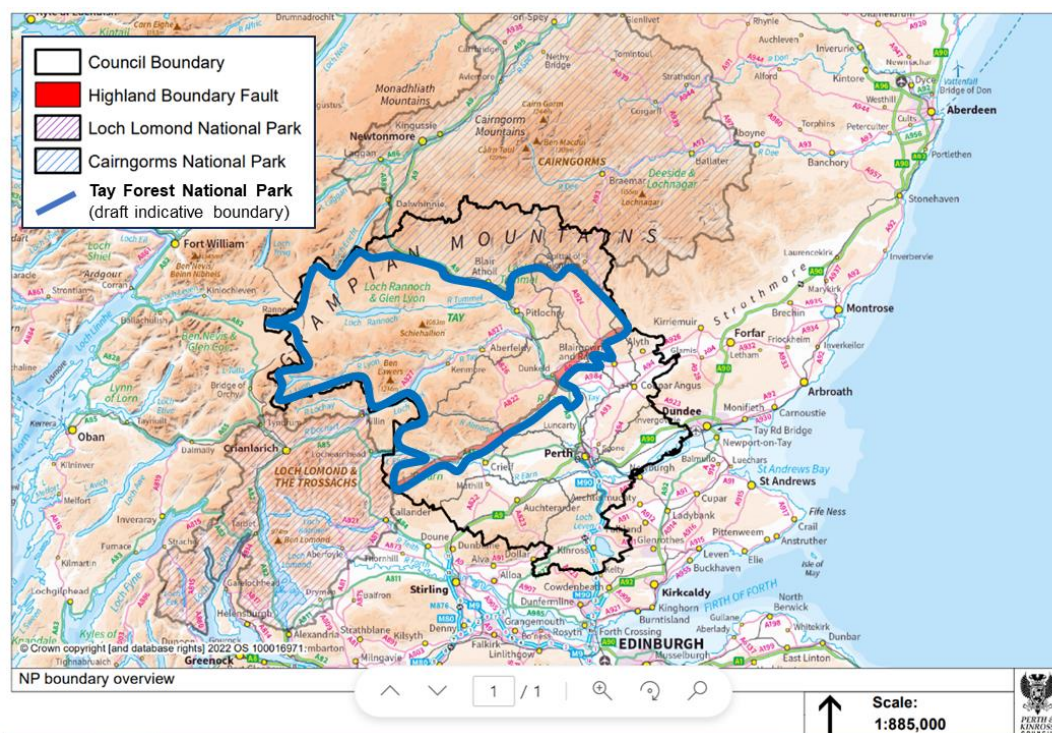
- 5.7 A logo has been developed to support the bid process, which conveys rivers and diversity of trees:



5.8 As noted above, nominations are not expected to define precisely the geographical area of the proposed park, as this will be considered during the Inquiry for selected bids. For the purposes of engagement in shaping the bid, a broad-brush boundary has been identified which:

- connects the two existing national parks
- largely follows the Highland Boundary Fault, as a major geological and landscape feature that influences land use and settlement patterns
- extends south of the Boundary Fault in places to incorporate clusters of high value natural heritage designated sites

A map showing the draft indicative boundary is provided below and is attached as Appendix 2.



5.9 The proposed national park takes in Aberfeldy, Pitlochry, Dunkeld, Birnam, and Comrie. National Park status would provide benefits directly in this area, and indirectly for all of Perth and Kinross. Potential benefits include:

- Additional abilities to carry out visitor management and a joined-up strategy for sustainable tourism in the park and its approach routes.
- A national park planning authority, with a role to be defined but currently envisaged as having 'call-in' powers similar to those of Cairngorms National Park Authority.
- Additional funding from Scottish Government to provide the core resource for a national park authority.
- Additional capacity to help achieve the Council's climate change targets, for example through nature restoration and sustainable travel.

Engagement

- 5.10 Engagement with communities and stakeholders will now take place to shape the bid proposals further. A key aim is to ensure that the bid submission and the vision for a national park it sets out reflects the views of the many different people that live and work in the area.
- 5.11 The engagement period will run for 8 weeks, from 6 October, closing on 1 December. A launch event has been arranged for the morning of Thursday 5 October in Pitlochry's Festival Theatre. A wide range of stakeholders have been invited.
- 5.12 Information on the bid proposal will be provided in a set of dedicated webpages. Individuals will be invited to help shape the bid through structured questions on the Council's Consultation Hub. There will be scope to provide general comments.
- 5.13 In-person drop-in events will be held in four settlements within the proposed park area as follows:

Dunkeld	Monday 30 October, Royal School of Dunkeld
Pitlochry	Wednesday 1 November, Pitlochry High School
Comrie	Tuesday 7 November, Comrie Primary School
Aberfeldy	Thursday 9 November, Breadalbane Community Campus

- 5.14 The drop-in sessions will run from mid-afternoon to evening to allow people with different daily schedules to stop by. It is proposed to hold an online session later in November to supplement the in-person events.
- 5.15 Publicity and awareness raising for the bid and the opportunities to get involved will be carried out.
- 5.16 Consultation findings will be gathered into a report. This will be used to prepare the finalised bid submission. The engagement report and an evidence report setting out environmental and economic information supporting the bid will be reported to Council in February 2024 for approval. They will then be submitted online to the Scottish Government.
- 5.17 If the nomination bid is selected to proceed to the next stage, a reporter inquiry will be held to consider proposals and matters raised by stakeholders in more detail, as referenced in Section 4 above.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The opportunity to submit a bid to create a new national park is a rare opportunity to seek international recognition for Highland Perthshire's outstanding natural beauty and rich cultural and landscape diversity.

Author

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Approved

Name	Designation	Date
Barbara Renton	Executive Director (Communities)	26 September 2023

APPENDICES

- Appendix 1 Report to Council 10 May 2023 Establishment of Member/Officer Working Group National Park within Perth and Kinross
- Appendix 2 Map of draft indicative boundary

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You can also send us a text message on 07824 498145.

All Council Services can offer a telephone translation facility.

1. IMPLICATIONS, ASSESSMENTS, CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Strategic Implications	Yes / None
Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement	None
Corporate Plan	Yes
Resource Implications	
Financial	None
Workforce	None
Asset Management (land, property, IST)	None
Assessments	
Equality Impact Assessment	None
Strategic Environmental Assessment	None
Sustainability (community, economic, environmental)	None
Legal and Governance	None
Risk	None
Consultation	
Internal	None
External	Yes
Communication	
Communications Plan	Yes

1. Strategic Implications

Community Plan/Single Outcome Agreement

1.1 This report supports the following priorities within the Community Plan 2022-27.

- (i) Mental and physical wellbeing
- (ii) Employability

Corporate Plan

1.2 This report supports the following objectives within the Council Corporate Plan 2022 - 27:-

- (ii) People and businesses are increasingly able to prosper in a local economy which support low carbon ambitions and offers opportunities for all;
- (v) Perth and Kinross is a safe and vibrant place, mitigating the impact of climate and environmental change for this and future generations.

2. Resource Implications

Financial

- 2.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report. All costs arising from engagement will be met from the existing budget set for this bid.

Workforce

- 2.2 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Asset Management (land, property, IT)

- 2.3 There are no asset management implications arising from this report.

3. Assessments

Equality Impact Assessment

- 3.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, the Council is required to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between equality groups. Carrying out Equality Impact Assessments for plans and policies allows the Council to demonstrate that it is meeting these duties.

This report has been considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment process (EqIA) with the following outcome:

- (i) Assessed as **not relevant** for the purposes of EqIA

Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 3.2 The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 places a duty on the Council to identify and assess the environmental consequences of its proposals.

This section should reflect that the proposals have been considered under the Act and no further action is required as it does not qualify as a PPS as defined by the Act and is therefore exempt.

Sustainability

3.3 Under the provisions of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 the Council has to discharge its duties in a way which contributes to the achievement of sustainable development. Under the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 the Council also has a duty relating to climate change and, in exercising its functions must act:

- in the way best calculated to delivery of the Act's emissions reduction targets;
- in the way best calculated to deliver any statutory adaptation programmes; and
- in a way that it considers most sustainable.

The information contained within this report has been considered under the Act. However, no action is required as the Act does not apply to the matters presented in this report.

Legal and Governance

3.4 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

Risk

3.5 No significant risks have been identified as arising from this report.

4. Consultation

Internal

4.1 This report has been prepared with input from the Tay Forest National Park MOWG and colleagues in relevant services. Further internal engagement will be carried out as the nomination process continues.

External

4.2 This report sets out an strategy for engaging external stakeholders to help shape the nomination bid. The strategy has been developed by Corporate Communications with the MOWG.

5. Communication

5.1 Planned communications are set out in more detail in the above report and its appendix.

2. BACKGROUND PAPERS

2.1 None.

Establishment of Short-Term Member/Officer Working Group





National Park within Perth and Kinross

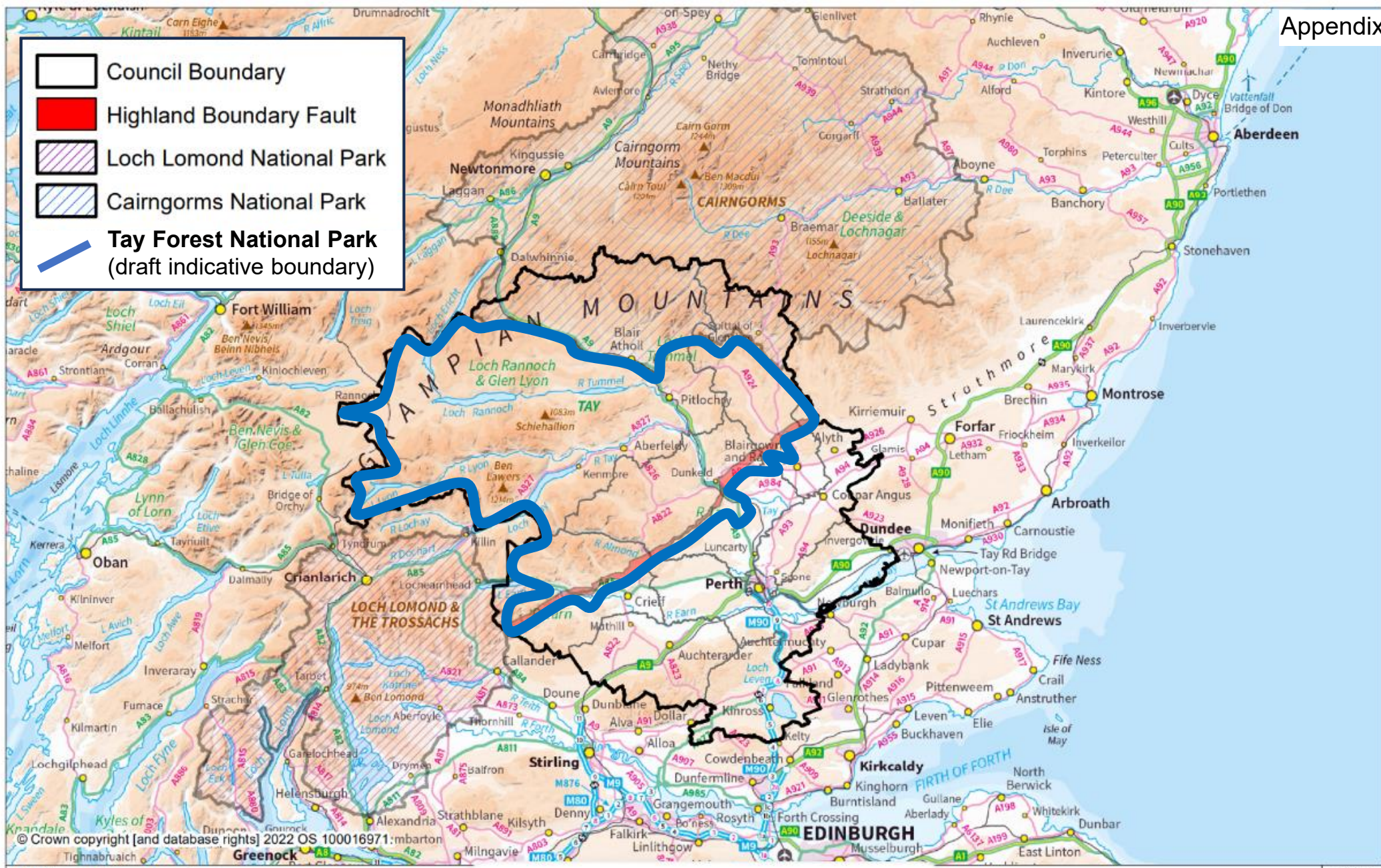
Remit

- Agree a name and the geographic area to be covered by the proposed National Park within Perth and Kinross, principally between Cairngorms National Park and Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park.
- Agree a communications and engagement plan for the community and stakeholder consultation process.
- Develop the draft submission for the creation of a new National Park to the Scottish Government for agreement by Council.

Membership

Provost Xander McDade (Convener)
Councillor Grant Laing (Vice Convener)
Bailie Alasdair Bailey
Bailie Claire McLaren
Councillor John Duff

-  Council Boundary
-  Highland Boundary Fault
-  Loch Lomond National Park
-  Cairngorms National Park
-  Tay Forest National Park (draft indicative boundary)



NP boundary overview

Map navigation controls including a zoom in (+) and zoom out (-) button, a scale indicator showing '1 / 1', and a page number 'Page 35 of 236'.

Scale: 1:885,000



Perth And Kinross Council

4 October 2023

GAELIC LANGUAGE PLAN 2023 – 2028

Report by Executive Director (Education and Children's Services)
(Report No. 23/264)

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 This report outlines the next, and third version, of the Perth and Kinross Council Gaelic Language Plan for the period from 2023 - 2028. This Plan and its commitments and actions are a continuation of the first two Plans and builds on the work of those, with enhanced emphasis on community benefits and Gaelic as an asset. It asks Council to approve the Plan, subject to final review by Bòrd na Gàidhlig which monitors Gaelic Language Plans on behalf of Scottish ministers.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 It is recommended that Council:
- Approves the implementation of the new Gaelic Language Plan 2023 - 2028 subject to any final review comments received from Bòrd na Gàidhlig; and
 - Requests the Executive Director of Education and Children's Services to provide an annual progress update report to the Learning and Families Committee over the lifetime of this new 5-year Plan, and the Scheme of Administration be amended accordingly.

3. STRUCTURE OF REPORT

- 3.1 This report is structured over the following sections:

- Section 4: Background
- Section 5: Proposals
- Section 6: Further Considerations
- Appendices

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The Council's second Gaelic Language Plan 2018 - 2023 ([Report No. 17/416 refers](#)) was approved by Council on 20 December 2017. The Gaelic Language Plan is a statutory plan intended to support the promotion and protection of the Gaelic language in Scotland. Implementation of the Plan is jointly monitored by Perth and Kinross Council and Bòrd na Gàidhlig, the national Gaelic language agency which formally advises Scottish ministers on matters related to the language. Delivery is co-ordinated by Perth and Kinross Council.

- 4.2 The new 2023 – 2028 Plan (Appendix 1) has been submitted to Bòrd na Gàidhlig for formal assessment. Feedback will be provided by 20 December 2023, at the latest, which will be within the 3 months of receiving the Plan, as per section 5 of the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005. There has already been significant dialogue with Bòrd na Gàidhlig during the development phase of the Plan.
- 4.3 The Royal National Mòd, Scotland’s premier Gaelic language and culture festival was held in the City of Perth in October 2022. This was the first Mòd to be held fully in-person since 2019 and it was the first to be held in Perth since 2004, and the eleventh in the region since it began. The Mòd was highly successful with extremely positive feedback from participants and attendees. It brought significant economic and wellbeing impact and benefit to the local community and businesses. This included over 7500 visitors to the city and wider region and an estimated economic boost of over £2.5m. Work continues on the legacy of the Mòd and actions contained within this plan consider that legacy and it is hoped that the Royal National Mòd will return to Perth and Kinross in the near future.
- 4.4 The Scottish Government’s Programme for Government 2023-24 includes the Scottish Languages Bill that will provide a further legislative framework for Gaelic, and now legislative recognition for Scots language. It will provide a new strategic approach to Gaelic Medium Education and will consider the development of a Gàidhealtachd in Scotland.

5. PROPOSALS

- 5.1 The Gaelic Language Plan, at Appendix 1 (English version), sets out Perth and Kinross Council’s strategic commitments and actions that are aligned with the National Plan for Gaelic. These commitments are set out in the **3 Pillars of Gaelic**:

- **Using Gaelic**

A sustainable future for Gaelic involves increasing the number of Gaelic speakers and increased usage. We aim to encourage more individuals to use Gaelic as their preferred mode of communication in daily life.

- **Learning Gaelic**

The aim is to provide diverse opportunities for employees, community members, children and young people and parents to learn Gaelic in ways that ensure its presence in Perth and Kinross. Sufficient skilled Gaelic speakers are required to meet the need for arising vacancies and staff opportunities in Perth and Kinross Council, as well as other employers, and to meet the need for Gaelic experiences that are both formal and informal, and community based.

- **Promoting Gaelic**

We will promote the use of Gaelic, its visibility, and its status to make it a part of daily life in Perth and Kinross. We will work to create a more

positive image for Gaelic and a more significant role for it in the cultural life of Perth and Kinross and across Scotland, ensuring its future.

6. FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Public Consultation - Gaelic Language Plan

- 6.1 The draft Gaelic Language Plan for 2023 - 2028 was issued for public consultation from 7 August 2023 to 31 August 2023.

The consultation was available online via the Perth and Kinross Council's Consultation Hub and it was circulated to, and conversations held with, local and national interest groups, parents, and Perth and Kinross Council employees.

- 6.1.1 57 responses were received, and a summary of the feedback is included in the Plan. The largest number of responses were in relation to provision of Gaelic education and the provision of adult education and language learning opportunities for adults. A number of respondents also commented on the importance of promoting Gaelic culture and heritage. There was positive feedback from respondents that the Plan was easy to read, and particularly, how they identified themselves as fitting in with the Plan.

Council Employee Survey - Gaelic Skills

- 6.2 Perth and Kinross Council employees were asked to complete a short survey that was open during the month of August 2023 and asked about the Gaelic skills they currently had and also sought their interest in learning Gaelic and developing their Gaelic language skills for work or personal purposes.

- 6.2.1 217 staff responded with 41 of those reporting that they were able to understand, speak, read and/or write Gaelic. 40% of staff who responded indicated they were interested in learning Gaelic for personal purposes and 25% responded that they would be interested in learning Gaelic for work purposes. The staff survey was distributed to all staff via managers through the Managers' Weekly Briefing. There are currently 5875 staff in Perth and Kinross Council, and this indicates a response rate of 4%.

Conclusion

- 6.3 The Royal National Mòd in 2022 demonstrated that Gaelic is an asset to the communities and businesses of Perth and Kinross and to the Council as a provider of public services. This was informed by feedback and evidence from visitors and competitors, from Council partners and Arm's Length External Organisations (ALEOs) and from local businesses.

- 6.3.1 The Gaelic language is an asset and is beneficial to the following:

- The economy.
- Tourism and the visitor experience.
- Our culture and heritage.
- Linguistic development and bilingualism.
- Our identity.

- The environment.
- Our health and wellbeing.

6.3.2 The new Perth Museum is scheduled to open in Spring 2024 and will provide a platform for further engagement with the rich Gaelic culture and heritage of the area and the folklore and history that have shaped Perth and Kinross.

6.3.3 The implementation of this Gaelic Language Plan 2023 - 2028 will ensure that Gaelic has a positive image and profile, that it is valued and recognised, it is learnt by many through a range of methods and opportunities and is used in the daily life of communities throughout Perth and Kinross

This will be realised through the Council's vision for Gaelic and under the 3 Pillars of Gaelic as follows:

- More people using Gaelic.
- More people learning Gaelic.
- Better promotion of Gaelic.

Monitoring and Implementation

6.4 A Gaelic Language Plan Steering Group comprising of representatives from the following Council Services will monitor the implementation of the Plan twice annually:

- Communications
- Communities
- Education and Children's Services
- Environmental and Consumer Services
- Finance
- Human Resources
- Organisational Development
- Place and Business Development

6.5 The Gaelic Language Plan Steering Group will continue to report progress to Council annually over the lifetime of this 2023 - 2028 Plan.

Author

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Approved

Name	Designation	Date
Sheena Devlin	Executive Director (Education and Children's Services)	22 September 2023

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All Council Services can offer a telephone translation facility.

1. IMPLICATIONS, ASSESSMENTS, CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Strategic Implications	Yes/None
Community Plan/Single Outcome Agreement	Yes
Corporate Plan	Yes
Resource Implications	
Financial	Yes
Workforce	Yes
Asset Management (land, property, IST)	None
Assessments	
Equality Impact Assessment	Yes
Strategic Environmental Assessment	None
Sustainability (community, economic, environmental)	None
Legal and Governance	None
Risk	None
Consultation	
Internal	Yes
External	Yes
Communication	
Communications Plan	Yes

1. Strategic Implications

Community Plan/Single Outcome Agreement

1.1 This section sets out how the proposals relate to the delivery of the Perth and Kinross Community Plan/Single Outcome Agreement in terms of the following priorities:

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

This report relates to all of these Objectives.

Corporate Plan

1.2 This section sets out how the proposals relate to the achievement of the Council's Corporate Plan Objectives:

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

This report relates to all of these Objectives.

1.3 The report also links to the Education & Children's Services Vision, Values and Priorities in respect of the following key Priority area:

- Learning and Achievement

2. Resource Implications

Financial

2.1 The Gaelic Language Plan identifies where financial resources are required to deliver the commitments it includes. Commitments in relation to corporate communications and signage, for example, are intended to be proportionate: for example, bilingual signage will be installed when signs are due for renewal. Many Gaelic related initiatives are externally funded via Scottish Government or Bòrd na Gàidhlig. The Council will continue to submit bids for this external funding in order to implement key commitments across Council services.

Workforce

2.2 There are no direct workforce implications to this report. The Gaelic Language Plan has provided opportunities for staff development in relation to learning staff accessing Gaelic awareness and training classes and will plan for essential Gaelic posts and desirable Gaelic posts.

Asset Management (land, property, IT)

2.3 There are no asset management implications to this report.

3. Assessments

3.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, the Council is required to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between equality groups. Carrying out Equality Impact Assessments for plans and policies allows the Council to demonstrate that it is meeting these duties.

The Equality Impact Assessment undertaken in relation to this report can be viewed by clicking [here](#).

The proposals have been considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment process (EqIA) with the following outcome:

- (i) Assessed as **relevant** and the following positive outcomes expected following implementation.
 - Gaelic will be recognised as a valuable asset and will benefit to the communities of Perth and Kinross and the Council. It will provide health and wellbeing benefits to speakers and learners, improve the visitor experience to the area, revitalise elements of heritage and culture and have a positive economic impact.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 3.2 The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 places a duty on the Council to identify and assess the environmental consequences of its proposals.

The proposals have been considered under the Act; however, no further action is required as it does not qualify as a PPS as defined by the Act and is therefore exempt.

- 3.3 Under the provisions of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003, the Council has to discharge its duties in a way which contributes to the achievement of sustainable development. Under the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 the Council also has a duty relating to climate change and, in exercising its functions must act:

- In the way best calculated to delivery of the Act's emissions reduction targets.
- In the way best calculated to deliver any statutory adaption programmes.
- In a way that it considers most sustainable.

- 3.3.1 Not applicable.

Legal and Governance

- 3.4 Not applicable.

- 3.5 Not applicable.

Risk

- 3.6 Not applicable.

4. Consultation

Internal

- 4.1 Perth and Kinross Council officers, services and management teams that have commitments in the Plan have been consulted during the development stages of the draft Gaelic Language Plan 2023 - 2028.

External

- 4.2 A public consultation on the draft plan took place from 7 to 31 August 2023.

- 4.2.1 The draft Plan for 2023 - 2028 was submitted to Bòrd na Gàidhlig in September 2023 for initial consideration after approval by Perth and Kinross Council.

5. Communication

- 5.1 A communications plan will be prepared to support the launch of the Gaelic Language Plan once approved.
- 5.2 Gaelic and English versions of the approved Gaelic Language Plan 2023 - 2028 will be published upon final approval by Bòrd Na Gàidhlig.

2. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 2.1 The following background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (and not containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to a material extent in preparing the above report:

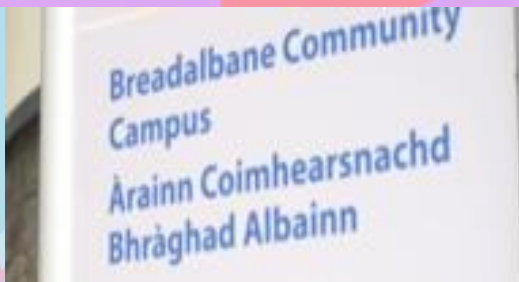
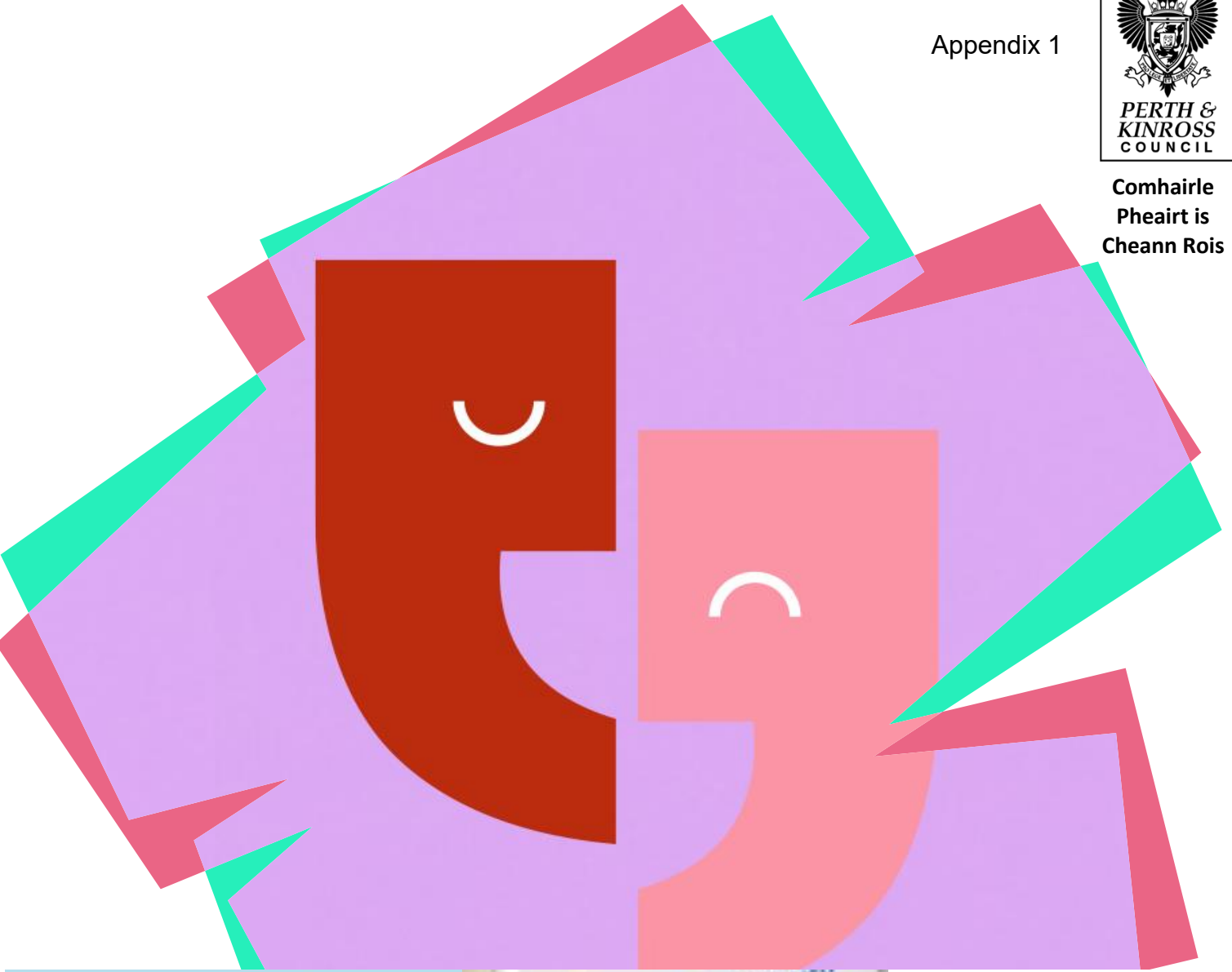
- [National Gaelic Language Plan](#)
- [Guidance on the Development of Gaelic Language Plans](#)

3. APPENDICES

- 3.1 Appendix 1 – Gaelic Language Plan (English version)



Comhairle
Pheairt is
Cheann Rois



Gaelic Language Plan 2023-28 Plana Cànan Gàidhlig 2023-28

A Perth and Kinross where everyone can live
life well, free from poverty and inequalities

Perth & Kinross Council's Gaelic Language Plan has been prepared under Section 3 of the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005

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Our Present	page 7
Our Future	page 9
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Learning Gaelic	page 15
Promoting Gaelic	page 19
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Statistical Information on Gaelic Education in Perth and Kinross	page 28
Statistical Information on Gaelic Speakers in Perth and Kinross Council	page 30

Introduction

We are pleased to present Perth & Kinross Council's third Gaelic Language Plan, a testament to our dedication towards the future of the Gaelic language and culture in our communities.

In line with the National Gaelic Language Plan, we have devised a targeted five-year blueprint (2023-2028) detailing strategic actions to encourage Gaelic use in our localities.

We recognise Gaelic's valuable contribution to our history, heritage, and living culture, and our Gaelic Language Plan continues to support and promote these aspects.

Gaelic Medium Education continues to strengthen in Perth City and in Highland Perthshire, the Perthshire & Angus Provincial Mòd remains an important fixture, and the new Fèis Thatha (Tay Gaelic Festival) continues to expand.

The success of the Royal National Mòd held in Perth in October 2022 demonstrates the commitment of Perth & Kinross Council, its partners, and community residents to the ongoing revitalisation of Gaelic in the region.

Our Gaelic Language Plan aims to leverage the Mòd legacy as a foundation for further growth, fostering increased usage, learning, and cultural promotion of Gaelic.

Councillor Grant Laing

Leader of the Council

Councillor John Duff

Gaelic Ambassador

Background and Structure

Developing a Gaelic Language Plan

The Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005, enacted by the Scottish Parliament, underscores the status of Gaelic as an official language of Scotland, commanding equal respect alongside English.

The Act promotes the use of Gaelic in public life throughout Scotland, encouraging its increased usage in homes, communities, educational institutions, and workplaces.

A significant provision of the 2005 Act empowers Bòrd na Gàidhlig, the national Gaelic language agency, to request that public bodies prepare Gaelic Language Plans. The agency assesses the plans for quality and monitors their implementation progress.

Principle of Equal Respect

The principle of equal respect, enshrined in the 2005 Act by the Scottish Parliament, reflects the value and importance attributed to Gaelic. It recognises that Gaelic speakers aspire to use the language as a normal part of their lives and emphasises the need for a spirit of generosity towards Gaelic throughout Scotland. According to Bòrd na Gàidhlig's guidance, granting equal respect to Gaelic does not necessitate identical treatment of Gaelic and English, nor does it require a specific level of Gaelic provision in all circumstances. Instead, it encourages public bodies to be supportive and accommodating to Gaelic development, adapting their Gaelic Language Plans to facilitate the appropriate extent of Gaelic use based on their unique circumstances and linguistic landscape.

Structure of the Plan

The Plan is divided into three sections:

- Section A: Context - Outlines the development of this Plan, the third Perth & Kinross Council Gaelic Language Plan. It describes our organisation's responsibilities and the historical and current status of the Gaelic language in the area.
- Section B: The Three Pillars of Gaelic - Presents Perth & Kinross Council's strategic commitments and enabling actions in line with the priorities of the National Gaelic Language Plan. It details our contributions to the implementation of the National Plan, the delivery of public services related to Gaelic, and our commitment to consider this Plan when formulating and executing new policies and strategies.
- Section C: Implementation and Monitoring - Provides insight into how we will deliver our Gaelic Language Plan and the measures we will take to monitor progress.

Section A: Context

Serving as one of Scotland's 32 local authorities, Perth & Kinross Council is Scotland's fifth-largest geographical area with a variety of public services. These services, many of which have strong Gaelic elements, span education, children's services, digital and IT, business development, community planning and engagement, as well as leisure and culture. Perth and Kinross is located in the heart of Scotland, covering approximately 5,286 km² and is a large and varied area with an estimated population of 146,652 as of the 2011 census update in March 2015.

We have a long-standing commitment to Gaelic language and culture, acknowledging their role in our heritage, national and local identity, and cultural fabric. Perthshire had its own distinctive Gaelic dialect and traditions, with Gaelic being the language of choice for nearly 13% of the population until the late 19th century.

This third Gaelic Language Plan, created within the framework of the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act 2005 and aligning with the National Gaelic Language Plan and Bòrd na Gàidhlig's Guidance on the Development of Gaelic Language Plans, outlines the following key objectives for Perth and Kinross:

- Increase Gaelic use in our communities, within our public authority services, and in our schools.
- Create opportunities for employees, community members, children, and young people to learn Gaelic in various ways, ensuring its vibrant presence in Perth and Kinross.
- Promote and raise awareness of Gaelic language and culture, recognising Gaelic as an asset to our communities and organisation and ensuring its visibility and appreciation.

The plan details how we will integrate Gaelic into our operations and public service delivery, facilitate communication with key partners, and actively promote and develop Gaelic in our region.

Our Past

Once a Gaelic-rich region, Siorrachd Pheairt (Perthshire) recalls a time when Gaelic was the dominant language. Historical references often include the phrase "bho Hiort gu Peairt" (from St Kilda to Perth) to acknowledge Perthshire as part of the Gàidhealtachd (the Gaelic-speaking region of Scotland).

Gàidhealtachd Pheairt or Garbh Chrìochan Pheairt (Highland Perthshire) was a prominent Gaelic-speaking area until the mid-20th century, with over 60% of the population identifying as Gaelic speakers when the census first included Gaelic in 1881.

Prominent figures such as Queen Victoria and the Duke of Atholl actively supported Gaelic, challenging prevailing public education policies. Nevertheless, the language experienced a rapid decline after the Second World War, with the last known speaker of the Perthshire Gaelic dialect passing away in 1991.

The language has seen some revival aided by Gaelic education programmes and adult-learning initiatives, and migration from other parts of Scotland has also brought Gaelic speakers to Perth and Kinross. Efforts to reverse the language decline are underway throughout Scotland, and our region is no exception.

Our Present

Presently, the number of Gaelic speakers in Perth and Kinross falls below the national average, a challenge we are committed to addressing. The 2011 Census reported 2,169 Gaelic speakers in our region (1.5% of the population), compared to 87,100 (1.7%) in Scotland.

Gaelic has seen a revival in the last decade thanks to collaborative efforts between Perth & Kinross Council and its partners. We have seen growth in Gaelic education and adult-learning programmes. Aberfeldy hosts a large provincial Mòd, and Highland Perthshire features the flourishing Gaelic choir. Breadalbane Academy boasts a thriving traditional music group, and the Perth Gaelic Choir, Guthan Pheairt (Perth Voices), has been re-established with our support. Fèis Thatha (Tay Festival) continues to grow, offering a range of activities. Other groups, such as the Gaelic Society in Perth and the regional branch of An Comunn Gàidhealach, contribute to promoting Gaelic.

In 2022, we hosted the Royal National Mòd in the City of Perth, the annual celebration of Gaelic language and culture. This event brought over 7,500 visitors to the city and injected more than £2.5 million into the local economy. There are plans to build on this legacy and bring the Mòd back to Perth and Kinross in the near future.

As we develop our third Gaelic Language Plan, we aim to achieve the targets set by the National Gaelic Language Plan, represent the aspirations of our Gaelic-speaking community, policymakers, and educators, and complement the Scottish Government's Strategic Objectives.

Gaelic in Education

Gaelic education starts with playgroups in Perth City and Aberfeldy that introduce the language to children aged 0-5. Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) Gaelic provisions at Breadalbane Academy and is planned for in Goodlyburn Primary School for children aged 3 to 5 years. Gaelic Medium Primary Education (GMPE) has been available at Goodlyburn Primary School since 1993 and Breadalbane Academy since 2011, aiming to achieve bilingual proficiency in Gaelic and English by P7.

The Languages 1+2 initiative delivers weekly Gaelic (Learners) sessions in schools across Highland Perthshire, reaching over 600 primary pupils per year. Other primary schools in Perth & Kinross Council have also started delivering Gaelic in Languages 1+2.

Within secondary education, Perth Academy and Breadalbane Academy offer Gaelic (Learners) and Gàidhlig (Fluent) as subjects. Students from all four secondary schools within Perth City can choose Gaelic (Learners) at certificate level through the Perth City Campus (PCC) initiative.

Adult education classes, both online and in-person, cater to community members and employees of Perth and Kinross interested in learning Gaelic.

Gaelic in the Community

Community initiatives bolster the presence of Gaelic in Perth and Kinross. The Gaelic Society of Perth, established in 1880, organises monthly cèilidhs and educational events. Informal Gaelic conversation groups gather in Perth, attended by fluent speakers and learners. Libraries throughout Perth and Kinross and Goodlyburn Primary School host Gaelic Bookbug sessions. Comann nam Pàrant Obar Pheallaidh and Comann nam Pàrant Peairt actively support and promote Gaelic and Gaelic Medium Education. Religious institutions throughout the region offer valuable contributions to Gaelic usage through Gaelic services and community engagement.

Arts, Culture, Heritage, and Tourism

Cultural events and festivals celebrate Gaelic in Perth and Kinross.

The Perthshire & Angus Provincial Mòd, organised by the Aberfeldy & District branch of An Comunn Gàidhealach, brings together local choirs and performers, including Aberfeldy Gaelic Choir and Guthan Pheairt.

Gaelic music, arts, and literature events occur at venues including Perth Concert Hall, Birnam Institute, and Pitlochry Festival Theatre and in the Perform in Perth Festival. The Royal National Mòd returned to Perth in 2022, marking the area's eleventh hosting of Scotland's premier Gaelic festival, 10 occasions in Perth and once in Blairgowrie in 1996.

Our Future

Embracing Gaelic

This plan is designed to leverage the benefits of Gaelic, viewing it as an asset that brings economic, environmental, linguistic, and cultural advantages. Furthermore, Gaelic contributes to the health and well-being of our region, which is deeply rooted in the Gaelic language and culture.

Effective Communication with the Public and within our Organisation

Using Gaelic at the initial point of contact with the public fosters a welcoming environment for Gaelic use. It raises the language's profile, creates practical opportunities for its utilisation, and encourages members of the public to engage with Gaelic in subsequent interactions with the public authority.

We aim to integrate Gaelic into our public authority's corporate identity and signage. This not only raises the visibility of the language but also enhances its status. We encourage young people and community members to take pride in their Gaelic identity and appreciate the benefits of bilingualism.

Gaelic in the 3rd Decade of the 21st Century

We understand the importance of developing Gaelic to ensure its suitability for all appropriate purposes. Through language corpus development, we aim to ensure that Gaelic continues to evolve and embraces technological advancements and lifestyle changes.

We view Gaelic as a valuable asset that enriches the lives of individuals, communities, businesses, and the overall identity of the Heart of Scotland. We aim to foster its economic, environmental, and sustainable growth while ensuring its continuous evolution as both a language and an invaluable asset.

Section B: The Three Pillars of Gaelic

Our Gaelic Language Plan: The Three Pillars

Our Gaelic Language Plan is constructed around **Using Gaelic**, **Learning Gaelic**, and **Promoting Gaelic**.

Each of these pillars represents a crucial component in nurturing and sustaining Gaelic within our organisation and communities. We aspire to see Gaelic thrive, be cherished and be appreciated throughout our region.

To Note: All commitments and actions in the Gaelic Language Plan will be assessed by each service and judgments made on viability and impact.

Using Gaelic

We understand that a sustainable future for Gaelic involves increasing the number of Gaelic speakers and increased usage. We aim to encourage more individuals to use Gaelic as their preferred mode of communication in daily life.

In our communities, we are committed to:	Timelines	Evidence from Steering Group – Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boosting existing and budding Gaelic language and culture groups by enhancing awareness of their activities. • Collaborating with partners to augment Gaelic language learning opportunities. • Boosting the use of Gaelic via musical, cultural, and linguistic activities in collaboration with local organisations. • Initiating Community Gaelic Hubs in Perth City and Highland Perthshire to spur the use of Gaelic in services and promotions. • Nurturing the Perthshire & Angus Provincial Mòd committee by providing necessary support and explore the feasibility of establishing another provincial Mòd within the Perth & Kinross Council area. • Supporting the expansion of Fèis Thatha and continue to promote the event. • Collaborating closely with Comunn na Gàidhlig, Fèisean nan Gàidheal, An Comunn Gàidhealach, and other Gaelic development bodies to ensure plentiful high-quality Gaelic usage opportunities. • Acknowledging the valuable contributions to Gaelic from other institutions and sectors including religion, sports and business. 	<p>Ongoing and continuous work with interest groups, the Mòd, Fèis Thatha, Gaelic organisations and partners and over the lifetime of the Plan</p> <p>Initiate virtual Gaelic Hubs from January 2024</p>	

In Business and Place Development, we will:	Timelines	Evidence from Steering Group – Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leverage research that underscores the impact of Gaelic on the Scottish economy for planning purposes. • Champion the economic advantages of Gaelic for the local community and businesses. • Enrich the visitor experience with Gaelic heritage and cultural offerings. 	<p>Use current research and evidence.</p> <p>Upon release of National Gaelic Tourism Strategy in late 2023/early 2024</p>	

In Communications, we will:	Timelines	Evidence from Steering Group – Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcomingly accept communication in Gaelic and endeavour to provide replies in Gaelic that may include reception and phone services based on staff skills. • Distribute and publish news releases, materials and important public information in both Gaelic and English. • Regularly circulate Gaelic content through social media and improve Gaelic content on our website. • Include Gaelic in public and internal meetings when Gaelic is the main subject and Gaelic greetings in relevant civic and other events. 	<p>As received</p> <p>Target: monthly publications</p> <p>Target: weekly social media content</p> <p>As meetings arise</p>	

In Continuing to Develop Language Corpus, we will:	Timelines	Evidence from Steering Group – Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure accessibility of Gaelic when used in published and communicated information. • Adhere to the most recent Gaelic Orthographic Conventions guidelines in our written materials. • Seek advice from Ainmean-Àite na h-Alba (Scottish Placenames) for signage and community collaborations. 	As required and necessary in communications, publications and signage	

In Signage and Branding, we will:	Timelines	Evidence from Steering Group – Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt a bilingual corporate logo and brand, ensuring equal prominence for both languages in all communications. • Include Gaelic and English in signage where appropriate, considering visibility enhancement during renewal opportunities in council buildings, town/village nameplates and schools. 	<p>Approve design at April 2024 and rollout over the lifetime of the Plan</p> <p>Ongoing currently and from date of publication of this Plan</p>	

In Arts, Culture, and Heritage, we will:	Timelines	Evidence from Steering Group – Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilise Gaelic in the re-launched City Hall and collaborate on projects related to the Stone of Destiny and with Arms' Length External Organisations (ALEOs). 	<p>From opening of Perth Museum</p> <p>From January 2024 and for the</p>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revive storytelling, folklore, and local heritage and cultural projects that foster a sense of place and community connection. 	lifetime of the Plan	
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In Organisational Development, we will:	Timelines	Evidence from Steering Group – Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage staff to use Gaelic in their work. • Introduce a standard bilingual email signature and out-of-office reply for all staff. 	From November 2023 and for the lifetime of the Plan	

Learning Gaelic

We aim to provide diverse opportunities for employees, community members, children, and young people and parents to learn Gaelic in ways that ensure its thriving presence in Perth and Kinross.

Sufficient skilled Gaelic speakers will be required to meet the need for arising vacancies and staff opportunities in our organisation and others and to meet the need for Gaelic experiences that are informal and community-based.

In Education, we will:	Timeframe	Evidence from Steering Group – Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the continued strategic development of Gaelic Early Learning and Childcare (Sgoil Àraich) in alignment with our existing Gaelic Medium Primary Education (GMPE) provision. • Sustain the operation of two Cròileagain (Gaelic Playgroups) and Gaelic Bookbug, twice weekly in Perth City and Aberfeldy, promoting continuity into Early Years Gaelic. • Implement a promotional strategy to increase the annual uptake of Gaelic Medium Education. • Ensure high-quality learning and teaching across all aspects of Gaelic education, meeting the needs of all learners. • Ensure GME Secondary provisions provide annual improvement planning and progress reports tied to their standards and quality process in line with the national guidance on Gaelic education. • Grow Gaelic as part of Languages 1+2 delivery through staff training and development opportunities. • Develop the Àrd-sgoil A9 project (A9 High Schools Project) to enhance the GME secondary school experience with peers. • Create a programme of activities and events that boost learners' confidence, self-esteem in Gaelic, and employability skills. 	<p>Ongoing and continuous from date of approval of Plan</p> <p>Ongoing promotional strategy</p> <p>Ongoing and continuous quality assurance of learning and teaching, 1+2, Àrd-sgoil A9, programme of activities, involving learners more and CECYP.</p> <p>Exploration of catchments by June 2024</p> <p>Staffing Standard by April 2024</p>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involve GME learners in curriculum design, school ethos, environment, and broader achievement experiences, making them ambassadors for Gaelic. • Incorporate the needs of looked-after children and care leavers with Gaelic into Perth & Kinross Council policy. • Explore the viability of reviewing the current catchment areas of Gaelic Medium Education. • Implement a staffing standard for Gaelic education, encompassing teaching and single-status staff, in partnership with Perth UHI. 		
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In Organisational Development, we will:	Timelines	Evidence from Steering Group – Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further develop partnerships, including with ALEOs and community planning partners with Gaelic language plans, to promote Gaelic and support common approaches and commitments. • Enhance workforce capacity through recruitment to grow the Gaelic education workforce in the in line with national approaches. • Increase the number of modern apprentices, graduate trainees, and mentoring volunteers who engage with Gaelic. 	<p>Ongoing and from approval of Plan</p> <p>Ongoing and taking cognisance of output from national workstream on recruitment from Faster Rate of Progress on Gaelic</p> <p>Ongoing work with Skills Development Scotland on post-school destinations</p>	

We will provide language learning opportunities to:	Timelines	Evidence from Steering Group – Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employees of Perth & Kinross Council who would benefit from having an ability in Gaelic to undertake their duties. • Employees of Perth & Kinross Council who would like to work in Gaelic or learn Gaelic out of personal interests. • Members of local Gaelic choirs, local Gaelic interest groups, the Perthshire Gaelic Society, the Perthshire and Angus Provincial Mòd, and Fèis Thatha. • Parents of children and young people in GME, Cròileagan, or accessing early years Gaelic. • Community members who wish to learn Gaelic for personal or work interests and who would become active in the Gaelic community over time. • Senior phase secondary school-aged young people, including Care Experienced and who may wish to follow a post-school pathway in Gaelic. 	<p>Continuation of language learning opportunities and throughout the lifetime of the Plan for all stakeholders</p> <p>Target: at least 3 a year for each group</p>	

For learning Gaelic at home, we will:	Timelines	Evidence from Steering Group – Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage families to learn together in the home through partnerships and initiatives by organisations including Education Scotland, Comann nam Pàrant and Stòrlann, Fèisean nan Gàidheal and e-sgoil. • Encourage the use of media and online Gaelic learning resources, including SpeakGaelic, LearnGaelic, GoGaelic, Gaelic for Parents, Duolingo, and other language applications. • Create resources, including games and educational materials, to make Gaelic learning at home natural, enjoyable, and supportive of the GME experience. 	<p>From November 2023 and for the lifetime of the Plan enhance the support for families.</p> <p>Creation of resources, games and materials by June 2024</p>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considering available research and evidence, support families in using Gaelic more at home, especially if they have children in GME. 	<p>As available and published</p>	
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<p>In Business and Place Development, we will:</p>	<p>Timelines</p>	<p>Evidence from Steering Group – Date</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand adult and family learning activities related to the Gaelic landscape of Perth and Kinross, developing accessible learning resources and guided outdoor opportunities, including digital trails. • Provide training for leaders and volunteers in outdoor learning and guided walks focused on our Gaelic landscape. 	<p>From January 2024 and for the lifetime of the Plan. Target: 4 activities a year</p> <p>Training offered once a year for the lifetime of the Plan</p>	

Promoting Gaelic

We will promote the use of Gaelic, its visibility, and its status to make it an integral part of daily life in our region. We will work to create a more positive image for Gaelic and a more significant role for it in the cultural life of Scotland, ensuring its robust future.

In Communications, we will:	Timelines	Evidence from Steering Group – Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Convey the message that we welcome public communication in Gaelic. 	On website and through social media by April 2024	

With Families, we will:	Timelines	Evidence from Steering Group – Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote Gaelic language learning among children, young people, and their families by highlighting resources that support Gaelic learning. 	By June 2024 and annually thereafter	

In Education, we will:	Timelines	Evidence from Steering Group – Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote and highlight the work of organisations and groups that actively support teachers, young people, and parents in Gaelic education, including Stòrlann, Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, e-Sgoil, Fèisean nan Gàidheal, Comann nam Pàrant, FilmG, Education Scotland and national bodies responsible for GME and GLE. Stay abreast of research concerning Gaelic development. Publicise the availability of Gaelic Medium Education in local press and on our website. 	<p>From November 2023 and annually thereafter with schools and families</p> <p>Continue to publicise GME</p>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrange regular information sessions for prospective parents of Gaelic Medium Education, providing guidance on available options. • Foster a positive and inclusive attitude towards Gaelic in school communities, boosting confidence among children and young people. 	<p>and at points of registration</p> <p>Twice annually deliver information sessions</p>	
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<p>In Organisational Development and Workforce Planning, we will:</p>	<p>Timelines</p>	<p>Evidence from Steering Group – Date</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote careers that value Gaelic skills and raise awareness of apprenticeships, training programs, and career routes in Gaelic to broaden the Gaelic labour market. • Collaborate with agencies to plan and support events showcasing Gaelic-related careers. • Integrate knowledge of the public authority's Gaelic Language Plan and training opportunities into new staff induction. • Include Gaelic as an essential or desirable skill in job descriptions related to delivering the Gaelic Language Plan. • Conduct internal audits of Gaelic skills and training needs. • Provide Gaelic awareness training to staff and elected members. • Demonstrate equal respect for Gaelic and English in bilingual services and resources, promoting Gaelic services. 	<p>Annual promotion and careers events at course choice and at points when young people are considering post-school destinations</p> <p>Induction information by June 2024</p> <p>Annual audit of skills in Gaelic in August for the lifetime of the Plan</p> <p>Annual awareness training</p>	

In Communities, we will:	Timelines	Evidence from Steering Group – Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the establishment of community groups and networks with shared interests in promoting Gaelic. • Collaborate to further reintroduce Shinty to Perth & Kinross Council communities and support the Shinty sessions at Goodlyburn Primary School. • Promote Cròileagain and Gaelic Bookbug to all families with children under five years old. • Create a Perth and Kinross Gaelic Community Forum. • Enhance Gaelic visibility within our communities. • Continue to have a Gaelic spokesperson and ambassador for Council matters. 	<p>Networks for Gaelic groups by April 2024</p> <p>Shinty to be further established by August 2024</p> <p>Community Gaelic Forum by April 2024</p>	

In Business and Place Development, we will:	Timelines	Evidence from Steering Group – Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote projects that enrich and sustain the Gaelic language, bolstering the confidence of Gaelic users. • Promote VisitScotland's Gaelic Tourism Strategy to partners and within Perth & Kinross Council. • Develop a toolkit and guide for local businesses, including the tourism and hospitality sector, on the benefits of using Gaelic. • Promote Gaelic as an economic asset and its benefits in businesses, social enterprises, and the local authority. We will focus on cultural tourism, the food and drink industry and sustainable approaches to land management and renewables. 	<p>Highlight and promote the National Tourism Strategy by April 2024</p> <p>Develop toolkit and promotional materials by May 2024 and continue to update annually over the lifetime of the Plan</p>	

In Arts, Culture, and Heritage, we will:	Timelines	Evidence from Steering Group – Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with Bòrd na Gaidhlig and Creative Scotland to advance Gaelic arts and culture. • Work to host the FilmG Awards in Perth. • Collaborate with local arts organisations to develop an annual programme of Gaelic events. 	<p>Host FilmG by 2026</p> <p>Annual programme of events in place by August 2024</p>	

With Partners, we will:	Timelines	Evidence from Steering Group – Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with other public authorities with the Gaelic language plans to establish a network for joint actions and commitments. • Promote Perth & Kinross Council's good practices in Gaelic to national forums. • Re-establish the East Coast Gaelic Regional Group to share resources and good practices and to collaborate on common actions. 	<p>Network of public bodies and East Coast Group established by April 2024 and meet twice annually thereafter</p>	

In the Implementation and Monitoring of the Plan, we will:	Timelines	Evidence from Steering Group – Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish and maintain a Gaelic Language Plan Steering Group with representation from relevant Council departments. 	<p>By March 2024 and twice annually thereafter for the lifetime of the Plan</p>	

Section C: Implementation and Monitoring

Schedule

This Gaelic Language Plan will be active for five years from 2023 until a new plan is developed.

Plan Distribution

Our Gaelic Language Plan will be published on our website in both Gaelic and English, with physical copies available at our public offices and local libraries. Copies will be distributed to our Arms' Length External Organisations (ALEOs), community planning partners, contractors, Gaelic organisations, and other stakeholders. The Plan will be accessible to our employees via the intranet, and its launch will be publicised through social media and press releases.

Administrative Arrangements for Implementing Our Gaelic Language Plan

Once this Plan has been approved by the Senior Management Team, Elected Members of Perth & Kinross Council, Scottish Ministers, and Bòrd na Gàidhlig, it will officially become Perth & Kinross Council's policy. The Strategic Lead for Education and Learning will be responsible for fulfilling the plan's commitments, with regular updates provided to our communities and staff about the progress of our Gaelic Language Plan.

Resourcing Our Plan

The necessary resources for this plan will be allocated from existing Perth & Kinross Council budgets. We will also seek financial support from external bodies, including Bòrd na Gàidhlig and the Scottish Government Specific Grant for Gaelic Education.

Monitoring and Implementing Our Plan

Our third Gaelic Language Plan spans the period from 2023 to 2028. A Gaelic Steering Group, including representatives from various council services, will meet twice annually to coordinate actions, supervise progress, and evaluate the plan's execution. We will actively involve customers, partners, and stakeholders, seeking their feedback and insights on our progress.

The plan's execution will be monitored through the strategic planning processes of our Budget and Service Plans and our Annual Performance Reports. Monitoring activities will encompass the following:

- Twice annually Gaelic Steering Group meetings with minutes distributed

- Cooperation with elected members overseeing Gaelic
- Annual reports to the Council
- Reports to local Gaelic forums
- Bi-annual reports to the Senior Management Team and Strategic Leads of the Council
- Annual report to Bòrd na Gàidhlig
- Feedback from surveys, questionnaires, and course evaluations
- External assessments

Working with Partners and External Agencies

Perth & Kinross Council acknowledges the importance of partnerships to progress this plan within our communities and beyond. We will continue to work with local and national organisations to foster Gaelic opportunities within Perth and Kinross.

Local partners include Culture Perth & Kinross, Perth College UHI, Horsecross Arts, Birks Cinema, PKAVS, Live Active Leisure, and the local community organisations mentioned in this plan.

On the national level, we will work with Visit Scotland, Historic Environment Scotland, Scottish Natural Heritage, and Skills Development Scotland and utilise our local connections with community planning partners.

We also plan to cooperate with national Gaelic organisations such as Bòrd na Gàidhlig, An Comunn Gàidhealach, Comunn na Gàidhlig, Fèisean nan Gàidheal, and MG ALBA.

Moreover, we will cultivate relationships with other local authorities by:

- Participating in the Gaelic Local Authority Network (GLAN) and the Community Learning and Development Review Group for Gaelic.
- Joining a Tayside and East Coast regional network that includes Fife Council, Dundee City Council, Angus Council, and Aberdeen City Council.

Contact Details

Overall Responsibility

The Senior Officer responsible for overseeing the preparation, delivery, and monitoring of Perth & Kinross Council's Gaelic Language Plan is:

Executive Director
Education & Children's Services
Perth & Kinross Council
2 High Street
Perth
PH1 5PH

Tel: 01738 475000

Day-to-day Operation

For inquiries regarding the day-to-day operation of the plan, please contact:

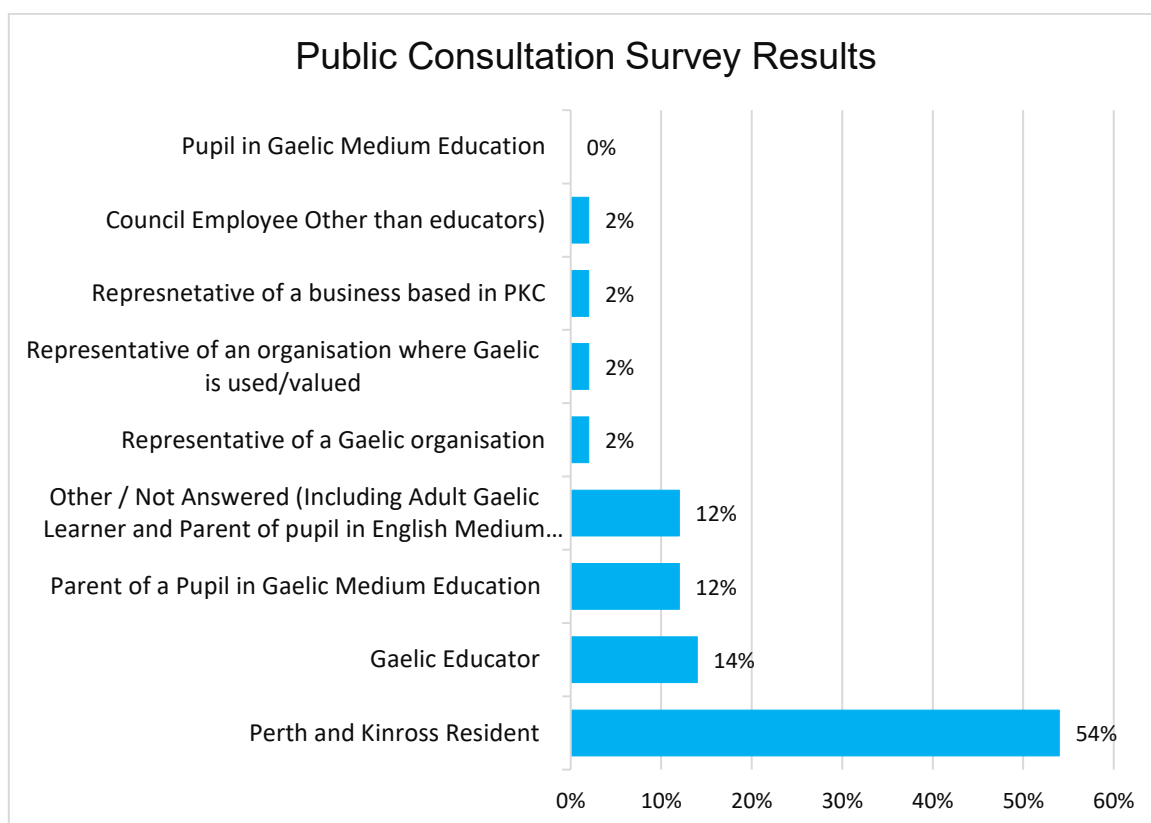
Gaelic Development Manager
Education & Children's Services
Perth & Kinross Council
2 High Street
Perth
PH1 5PH

Email: gaelic@pkc.gov.uk

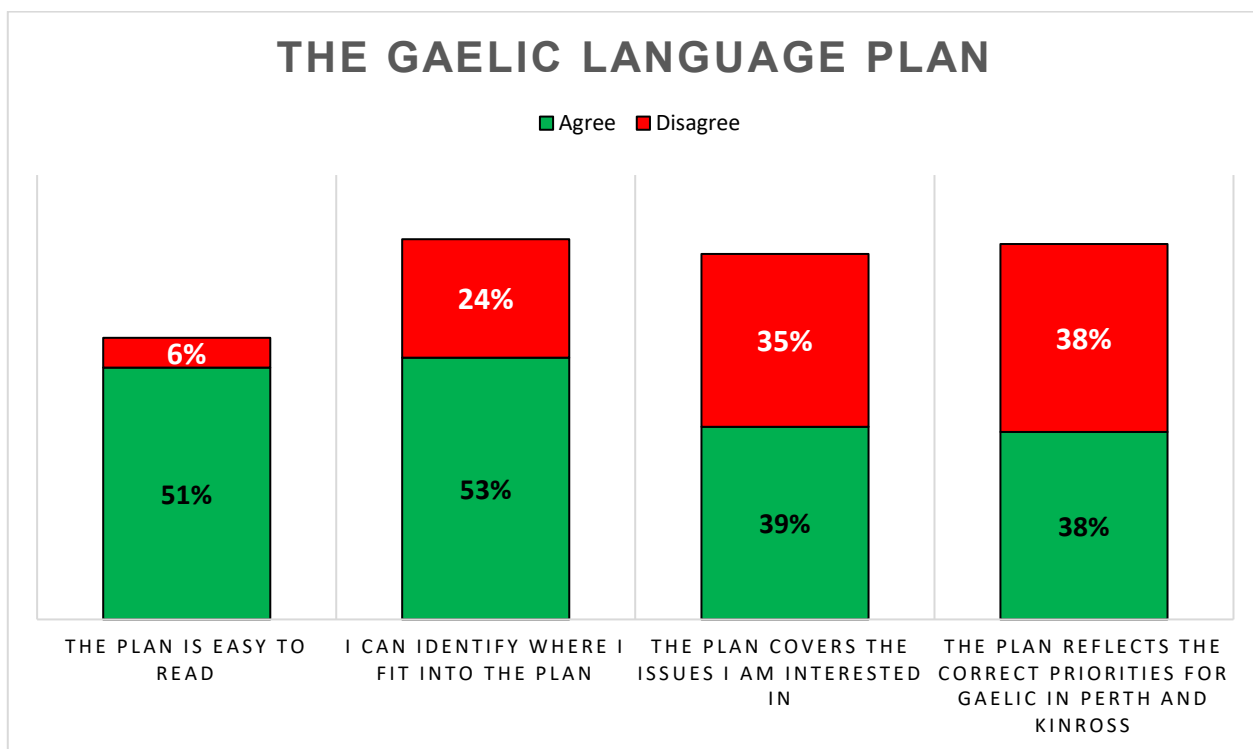
Public Consultation Survey Results

Perth and Kinross Council’s Draft Gaelic Language Plan was out for public consultation for a period of around 4 weeks from 07 August 2023 to 31 August 2023. The Plan was made available through the online PKC and national Consultation Hub, and a small number provided feedback on the consultation in writing.

There was a total of 57 responses on the draft Gaelic Language Plan.



People were asked.... To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the Gaelic Language Plan?



People were asked.....What is currently not included in the Plan? The most common thmes that emerged were:

- A stronger commitment and clear pathway for adults in our communities and staff to learn Gaelic
- It’s a waste of money

People were askedDo you have any recommendations on how we could improve our plan? The most common themes that emerged were:

- Clearer targets
- More adult learning opportunities
- Better communication and awareness raising on Gaelic activities nearby, e.g. Dundee
- The consideration of a single site and continuum of provsion for Gaelic education 0-18

People were asked.....If they had any further comments on the Plan. The most common themes that emerged were:

- More opportunites for adults and senior members of our communites to use and learn Gaelic
- Waste of time and money and nobody appreciates it.
- More community involvement and experiences

Statistical Information on Gaelic Education and Early Learning in Perth and Kinross Council

Early Learning and Childcare Provision in Perth and Kinross

Location	School	Number of Pupils 2023/24
Aberfeldy	Breadalbane Academy (Primary)	9
Perth	Goodlyburn Primary School	Planned for opening in 2023/24

Gaelic Medium Education Provision in Perth and Kinross Council

Location	School/Centre	
Aberfeldy	Breadalbane Academy (Primary)	18
	Breadalbane Academy (Secondary)	11
Perth	Goodlyburn Primary School	26
	Perth Academy	9

Languages 1+2 – Gaelic Provision in Primary Schools in Perth and Kinross

Location	Number of Pupils 2023/24
Highland Perthshire - Royal School of Dunkeld, Glenlyon Primary School, Blair Atholl Primary School, Kinloch Rannoch Primary School, Pitlochry High (Primary), Breadalbane Academy (Primary)	Circa 600

Gaelic (Learners) Secondary

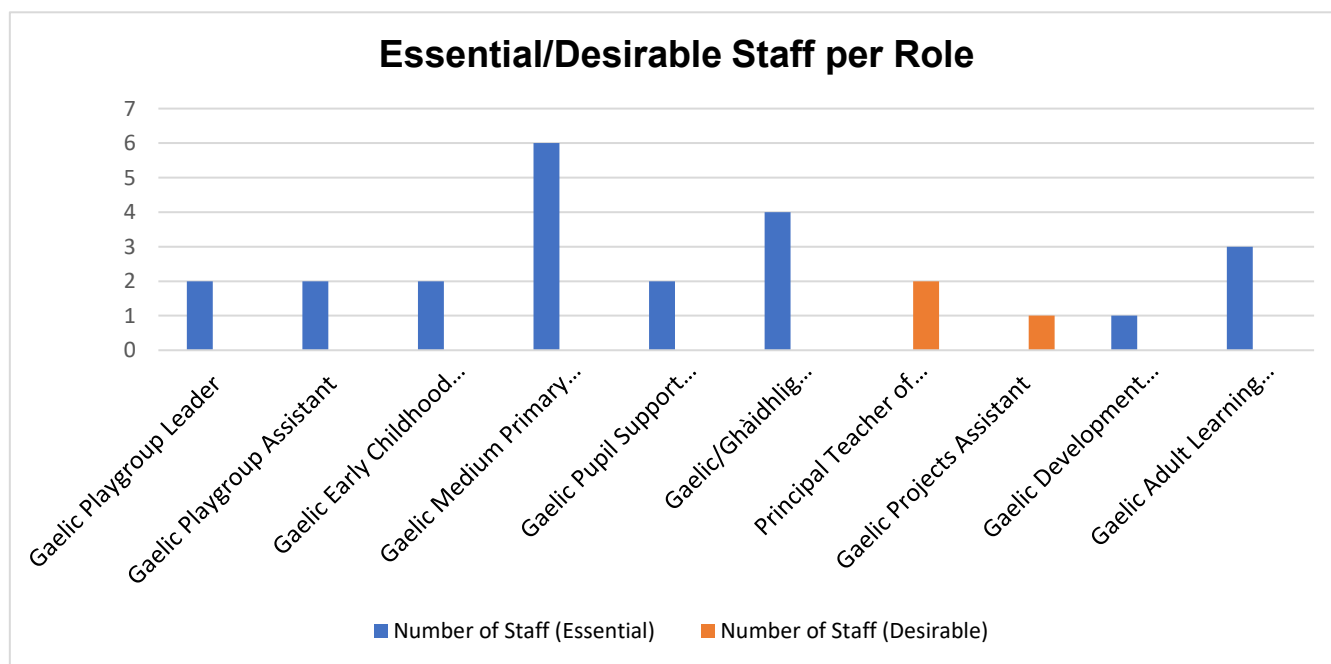
Location	Number of Pupils 2023/24
Breadalbane Academy (Secondary)	119
Perth Academy	15

Statistical Information on Gaelic Speakers within Perth and Kinross Council

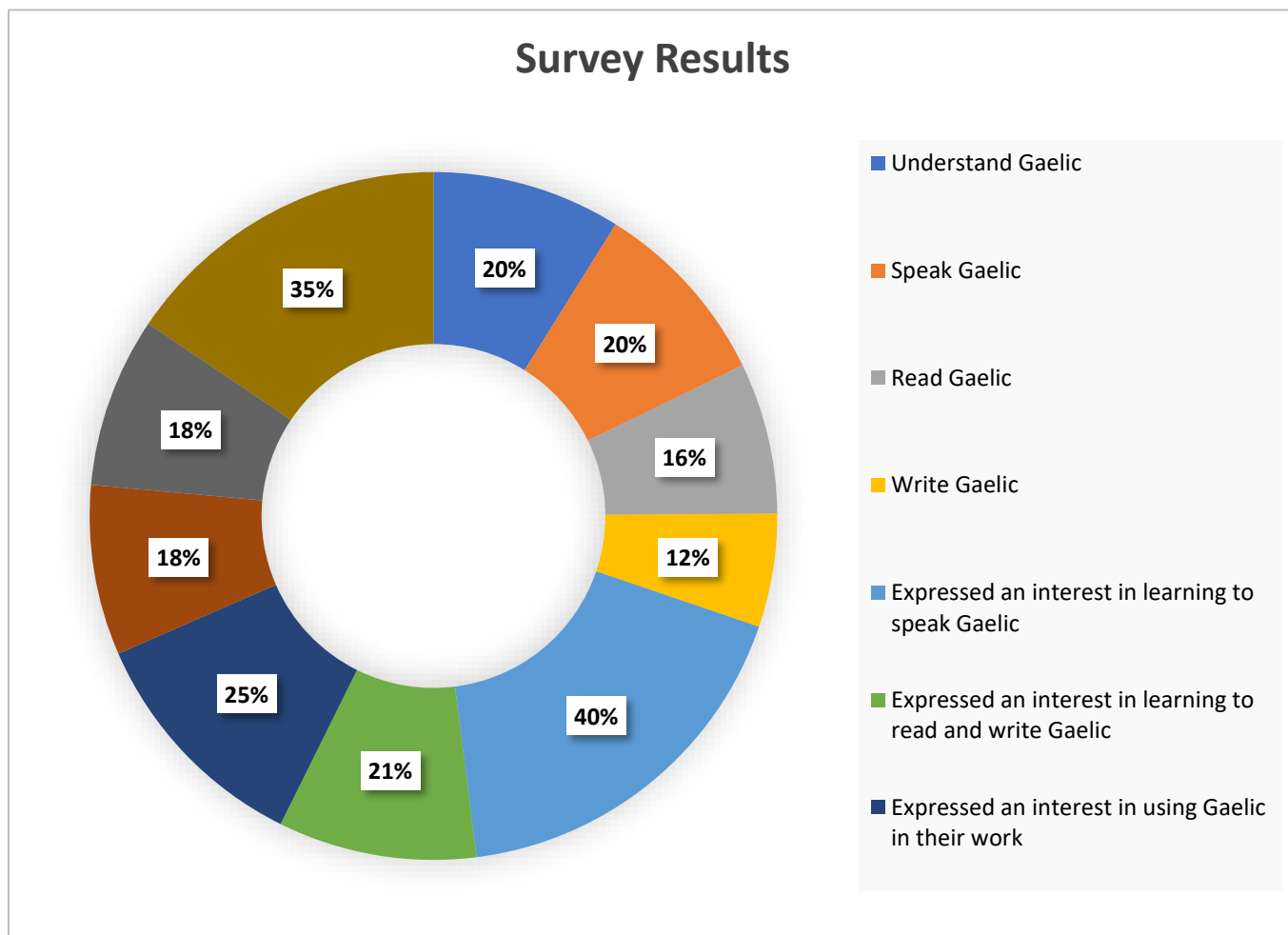
Perth and Kinross Council employ the following staff in, or are recruiting to, roles where Gaelic language skills are deemed essential or desirable.

Role	Number of Staff	Essential/Desirable
Gaelic Playgroup Leader	2	Essential
Gaelic Playgroup Assistant	2	Essential
Gaelic Early Childhood Practitioner	2	Essential
Gaelic Medium Primary Teacher	6	Essential
Gaelic Pupil Support Assistant	2	Essential
Gaelic/Ghàidhlig Secondary Teacher	4	Essential
Principal Teacher of Languages (Gaelic)	2	Desirable
Gaelic Projects Assistant	1	Desirable

Gaelic Development Manager	1	Essential
Gaelic Adult Learning Tutors	3	Essential
Total No of Staff	25	



A staff survey was conducted in 2023 on Gaelic language within Perth and Kinross Council. A total number of 217 members of staff responded. The results are displayed in the table below.



Perth And Kinross Council

4 October 2023

**PERTH & KINROSS COUNCIL EQUALITIES MAINSTREAMING REPORT 2023-25
and EQUALITIES PERFORMANCE REPORT 2021-23**

Report by the Head of Innovation
(Report No. 23/265)

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 Perth & Kinross Council, along with all other public authorities, is required to publish a new Equalities Mainstreaming Report which details our equality aims, outcomes and actions every 4 years. In addition, the report must be reviewed every 2 years to ensure the commitments are still being met and no significant changes are required. This review has been completed and the revised Equalities Mainstreaming Report for the next 2 years can be accessed [here](#).
- 1.2 This paper also provides our related Equalities Performance Report combining information for 2021/22 and 2022/23 and includes the Annual Diversity in Employment Report for the same periods.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that Council:
- (i) Approves the Equalities Bi Annual Performance Report 2021-23 (Appendix 1)
 - (ii) Approved the Equality & Diversity in Employment Report 2021 – 23 (Appendix 2)

3. STRUCTURE OF REPORT

- 3.1 This report is structured over the following sections:
- Section 4: Background/Main Issues
 - Section 5: Proposals
 - Section 6: Conclusion
 - Appendices

4. BACKGROUND / MAIN ISSUES

- 4.1 Perth & Kinross Council is committed to equality of opportunity for all, both as a service provider and as an employer. We value our diverse communities in the area and work in partnership with them to provide services that are inclusive and accessible. We recognise that to promote social inclusion and

good relations between different groups, we need to incorporate our equalities principles, ethos and work into the planning, implementation and monitoring processes for all our Council Services. We have a proven track record of doing this regularly, and well for our diverse communities in Perth and Kinross.

- 4.2 By working in partnership to promote equality, we believe that we will make better use of all available resources, and in doing so, provide better services to the citizens and communities of Perth and Kinross.
- 4.3 We are legally obliged by the Equality Act 2010 to pay 'due regard' to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, victimisation and harassment; to advance equality of opportunity and to foster good relations between those people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 4.4 We recognise that discrimination, victimisation and harassment are unlawful and unacceptable, and we will take action to prevent this occurring. If this does occur, we will take agreed and appropriate action to deal with it.
- 4.5 We also recognise that, when used legally and appropriately, positive action strategies can support greater inclusion by addressing the adverse effects of historical discrimination or other causes of inequality and disadvantage. We will therefore implement positive action strategies to make our services more inclusive when this is the right thing to do. Further to this, the Equality Act 2010 requires us to:
 - remove or minimise disadvantage suffered by people due to their protected characteristics
 - take steps to meet the needs of people with certain protected characteristics where these are different from the needs of other people
 - encourage people with certain protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.
- 4.6 This report seeks to update members of progress in relation to our equality outcomes within the Equalities Bi Annual Performance Report for the period 2021-23 (appendix 1). The report sets out how the aims and outcomes within our Equalities Mainstreaming Report 2021-25 are being achieved and the impact they are making. In addition, we have a stand alone Equality and Diversity in Employment Report 2021 – 23 (appendix 2).
- 4.7 The Council's updated Equality Mainstreaming Report outlines the four aims and sixteen outcomes highlighted in appendix 3, that set out our agreed commitments to progressing equality and diversity actions, working with our communities to do this, and outlining how this work will be integrated into our day-to-day practice.

4.8 It includes recognition of the distinct roles for the Council as an Education Authority and Licensing Board which are classed as separate public bodies under the Equality Act 2010. In respect of the Equalities Mainstreaming Report, we remain fully committed to progressing the outcomes and aims set in 2021 and have made some minor updates to reflect our new Corporate Plan and key priorities in relation to our equalities work. A full review of the mainstreaming report will be undertaken in early 2025 to ensure we continue to meet our commitment to equalities in Perth & Kinross Council as well as our legislative responsibilities in this area.

5. PROPOSALS

5.1 Since 2018, we have been publishing an Annual Equalities Performance Report, including specific actions which have been progressed to meet the existing Equality Outcomes.

5.2 This year we are producing a combined 2-year report for 2021/22 and 2022/23 to ensure that we are providing Elected Members with information reported that is timely and up to date.

5.3 Our Equality Outcomes must satisfy at least one aspect of the General Equality Duty:

- eliminating discrimination,
- advancing equality of opportunity, or
- fostering good relations between communities

5.4 Equality is at the heart of what we do here in Perth & Kinross Council and our equality outcomes demonstrate that they positively meet the 4 aims of our mainstreaming report:

- Perth and Kinross is a safe, welcoming and accessible area;
- Perth and Kinross visibly celebrates equality and diversity;
- Perth & Kinross Council will keep our community informed and engage with them about our services, opportunities and support available to them;
- Perth & Kinross Council will increase people's awareness of equality and diversity

5.5 In addition, our 16 [Equality Outcomes](#) support these 4 aims and provide more detail about what we are trying to achieve, as outlined within the appendix reports. We continue to work collaboratively across the organisation by cross-referencing our equality outcomes with the appropriate strategic key priorities and underpinning actions, ensuring we work together with our diverse communities to achieve them.

5.6 Over the past two years, there have been a number of key equalities workstreams, events and projects progressed successfully. Key highlights include:

- The reintroduction of equality events which have attracted larger audiences than ever before. These include Perthshire Pride, the Mela festival, Ukrainian Independence Day and Chinese New Year celebrations.
- Work carried out by our CASA (Children Alone Seeking Asylum) Team to support unaccompanied young people seeking asylum in Perth & Kinross, with all reaching a positive destination, either in school or at college.
- Increasing our staff equality networks to include Women's wellbeing and receiving positive feedback about the impact on mental health and wellbeing of participants.
- Opening our civic hall to host Friday prayers from our Muslim community with an average of 150 participants weekly.
- Increasing our schools programme to include equality conversations with pupils, gaining feedback and insight into their experiences of equality and diversity.
- Investing over £160k into community groups to help them support local people in relation to food poverty and create sustainable solutions for the future.
- Delivering a programme of equality and diversity learning and development sessions, for our workforce in relation to all aspects of protected characteristics.

6. CONCLUSION

6.1 This report provides members with an update in relation to progress of our Equality Aims and Outcomes within the Equalities Mainstreaming Report 2021 – 25 as well as the Equality and Diversity in Employment Report. Once approved they will be made publicly available in accessible formats as in previous years. This includes Easy Read and British Sign Language (BSL) and can also be translated into other languages upon request.

Author

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Approved

Name	Designation	Date
Charlene Guild	Head of Innovation	8 September 2023

APPENDICES

- Appendix 1 – Equalities Bi Annual Performance Report 2021-23
- Appendix 2 – Equalities in Employment Report 2021-23
- Appendix 3 – Equalities Mainstreaming Report 2021 – 25, Aims and Outcomes

If you or someone you know would like a copy of this document in another language or format, (on occasion, only a summary of the document will be provided in translation), this can be arranged by contacting the Customer Service Centre on 01738 475000.

You can also send us a text message on 07824 498145.

All Council Services can offer a telephone translation facility.

1. IMPLICATIONS, ASSESSMENTS, CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Strategic Implications	Yes / None
Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement	Yes
Corporate Plan	Yes
Resource Implications	
Financial	Yes
Workforce	Yes
Asset Management (land, property, IST)	Yes
Assessments	
Equality Impact Assessment	None
Strategic Environmental Assessment	None
Sustainability (community, economic, environmental)	None
Legal and Governance	Yes
Risk	Yes
Consultation	
Internal	Yes
External	Yes
Communication	
Communications Plan	Yes

1. Strategic Implications

Community Plan/Single Outcome Agreement

- 1.1 This report supports the delivery of the Strategic Objectives within the Perth and Kinross Community Plan (Local Outcomes Improvement Plan) and the Corporate Plan 2022/23-2027-28.

2. Resource Implications

Financial

- 2.1 There are no additional financial implications arising directly as a result of this report at this time. Ongoing work is managed within existing budgets and any new developments which may arise in future will be subject to budget approval as appropriate.

Workforce

- 2.2 There are no additional workforce implications arising directly as a result of this report at this time. Ongoing work is managed within existing resources.

Asset Management (land, property, IT)

- 2.3 There are no additional Asset Management implications arising as a result of this report at this time. Any new proposed developments which arise in the future will be subject to the relevant approval process at the time.

3. Assessments

- 3.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, the Council is required to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between equality groups. Carrying out Equality Impact Assessments for plans and policies allows the Council to demonstrate that it is meeting these duties:

(i) Assessed as **not relevant** for the purposes of EqIA
n.b Although this report relate to Equalities Work it will be the individual work within the report which is subject to Impact Assessment rather than the report itself.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 3.2 The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 places a duty on the Council to identify and assess the environmental consequences of its proposals.

Sustainability

- 3.3 Under the provisions of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 the Council has to discharge its duties in a way which contributes to the achievement of sustainable development. Under the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 the Council also has a duty relating to climate change and, in exercising its functions must act:

- in the way best calculated to delivery of the Act's emissions reduction targets;
- in the way best calculated to deliver any statutory adaptation programmes; and
- in a way that it considers most sustainable.

- 3.4 No steps are required to be considered relating directly to this report.

Legal and Governance

- 3.5 The Head of Legal and Governance Services has been consulted during the development of this report.

Risk

- 3.6 Any risks associated will be mitigated by the monitoring and reporting procedures which are in place for the work concerned.

4. Consultation

Internal

- 4.1 This report has been developed across all services within the Council represented on the Equalities Operational Group.

External

- 4.2 The work reported here contains reference to the extensive partnership work which goes on with strategic partners in all sectors to deliver our equality outcomes – this is regularly reported and consulted on through the Equalities Strategic Forum and Community Equalities Advisory Group (CEAG) chaired by the Elected Member with lead responsibility for Equalities.

5. Communication

- 5.1 The report will be made available internally and externally when approved.

2. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 2.1 No other background papers were referred to in the preparation of this report.



Equalities Bi-Annual Performance Report 2021 - 23

'A Perth and Kinross where everyone can live life well, free from poverty and inequalities'.

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Introduction

Appendix 1

Our organisational vision is of “*a Perth & Kinross where everyone can live life well, free from poverty and inequality*”. Equality is at the heart of what we do here in Perth & Kinross Council and we have designed our equality aims and outcomes (2021-25) to make this commitment clear. We have set measurable actions and ensure we are working in partnership with communities to make our aims a reality that support our organisational priorities and values.

This report sets out our progress and activity, for the two year period from April 2021 to March 2023, in delivering our agreed Equality Outcomes across Council services and where applicable as an Education Authority and Licensing Board.

While these outcomes ensure we are fulfilling our statutory obligations in relation to the services we provide and as an employer, we also know that developing and delivering our equalities workstreams is the right thing to do and will help us to meet our strategic key priorities. The aims and outcomes as well as our commitment to progressing in the area of equality and diversity is contained within our [Mainstreaming Report 2021 – 25](#) and remain unchanged after our 2023 review.

As an employer, we continue to drive forward the Fair Work agenda to ensure that fairness and equity is at the heart of all the Council’s employment practices. We are committed to promoting equality and diversity across our workforce and our Equality and Diversity in Employment Report is included in Appendix 2 of this report.

In addition, a full range of workforce data is published on the Council’s website: [Human Resources Management Information](#).

Link to our Corporate Plan 2022-27

Our Corporate Plan sets out our organisational vision of “a Perth & Kinross where everyone can live life well, free from poverty and inequality” – reflecting the importance of equality in everything we do. To achieve our vision, we have committed to seven key priorities detailed below. Equality and diversity is an integral part of each priority and we continue to work in partnership with our communities and people from all protected characteristic groups to help us tackle inequalities, improve our practices, develop new ways of working and achieve our aims.

Perth and Kinross Council Priorities

- Tackling poverty
- Developing a resilient, stronger and greener local economy
- Protecting and caring for our most vulnerable people
- Tackling climate change and supporting sustainable places
- Enabling our children and young people to achieve their full potential
- Supporting and promoting physical and mental wellbeing
- Working in partnership with communities



A Perth and Kinross where everyone can live life well, free from poverty and inequalities

In addition, to help our workforce further understand the need to consider equalities and diversity in all we do, an internal learning programme has been developed to embed our organisational values of **ambition**, **compassion** and **integrity** and the associated [values & behaviours framework](#).

Equality Protected Characteristics across Perth & Kinross

There are nine protected characteristics in the Equality Act: disability, sex, race, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, age, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity and religion and belief.

Age

Disability

Race

Religion and belief

Sex

Sexual Orientation

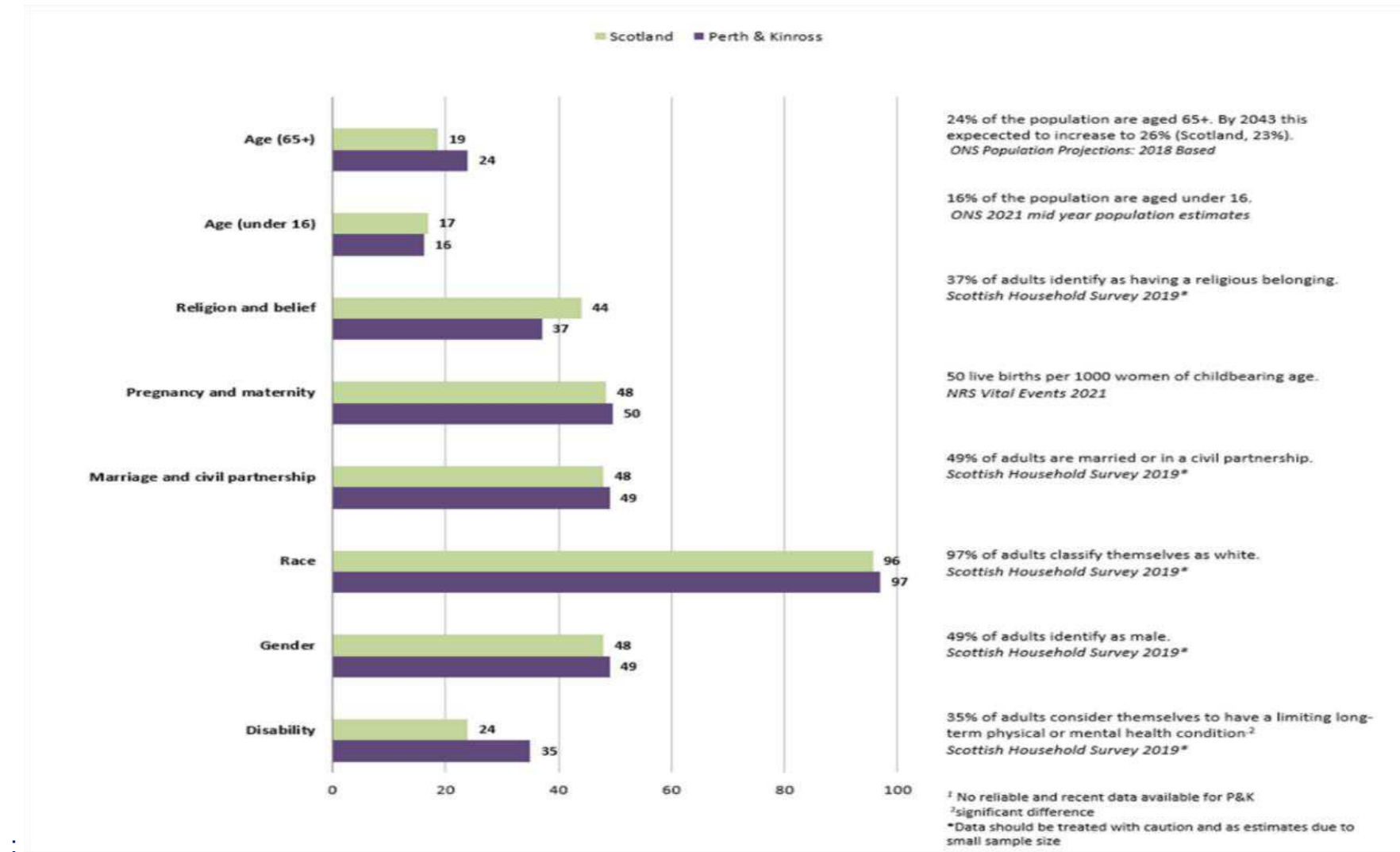
Gender Reassignment

Pregnancy and maternity

Marriage and civil partnership

We inform our approach through local statistics issued by the [Scottish Government Equality Evidence Finder which](#) is updated twice a year with equality data and evidence from a wide range of policy. We are also still awaiting more information which will be available shortly as a result of the 2021 Scottish Census and will ensure that this new data is reflected in our next reporting cycle.

Some notable local statistics associated with the protected characteristics in Perth & Kinross include:



4 A Perth and Kinross where everyone can live life well, free from poverty and inequalities.

Please note that local information on gender reassignment statistics is not available. The Registrar General maintains a Gender Recognition Register which is not open to public scrutiny, where the birth of a transgender person whose acquired gender has been legally recognised is registered. This shows any new name(s) and the acquired gender, enabling the transgender person to apply for a new birth certificate.

Our equality aims and outcomes - activity from 2021 – 23

Our Equalities Mainstreaming Report 2021- 25 sets out our approach to fulfilling our legal and moral obligations in relation to activity and progress in the area of equalities and with protected characteristic groups. We have set out four clear aims to help us to achieve our commitments to continually improving and developing our equalities work with communities.

- We will keep our community informed and engage with them about our service, opportunities and support available to them.
- Perth and Kinross is a safe, welcoming and accessible area.
- Perth and Kinross visibly celebrate equality and diversity.
- We will increase people’s awareness of equality and diversity.

Each of the aims and outcomes and accompanying aims within the report are linked to a Strategic Priority from the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan which fits in with our mainstreaming approach and is highlighted through this report.

In addition to the four aims, we have 16 specific equality outcomes which set out specific actions to meet the aims, where we concentrate our work to demonstrate progress and increase awareness, internally and externally of equality and diversity issues.

Having these outcomes allows us to report regularly in a clear and measured way and the information below sets out examples, case studies and activities related to our progress over the past two years.

Equality and Diversity action and performance 2021-23

Perth and Kinross is a safe, welcoming and accessible area (LOIP Strategic Priority – Mental and Physical Wellbeing)

Equality Outcome 1 - *People from equality protected groups will be made welcome and respected in the area*

We have an equalities calendar of key dates and events for our diverse communities in place. Events and meetings are always popular and help people from different backgrounds and cultures to have a sense of belonging in the area. We continue to be involved with and encourage our communities to take part in major events such as Chinese New Year, Perthshire Pride and Mela festival. We also provide advice and support to new community led initiatives such as Mela Markets and Ukrainian Independence Day. The lighting of Perth Bridge and other key buildings, in appropriate colours, has been a visible way of highlighting these dates to the wider community and continues to prove extremely popular with equality groups, sending a clear message of inclusiveness, that everyone's experiences, matter, that we are all valued members of the community and everyone is welcome here in Perth and Kinross. Each year, we are experiencing more visitors to these events and hearing increased feedback from our equality groups about the positive impact they are having on community relationships, understanding between cultures and recognition of their local contributions. (see also Equality Outcome 7 for more detail).

As our population becomes more diverse it is important that equality protected groups feel even more welcome and respected. We have established regular groups with third sector organisations and community groups supporting LGBT+ communities (**LGBT+ Development Group**) and Minority Ethnic communities (**Minority Ethnic Community Groups Forum**) whilst a **Community Integration Network** has now been established with third sector and community groups supporting newer communities to the area including refugees and those seeking asylum. The table below highlights the recent changes to our population.

2021/22	2022/23
<p><i>EU Settlement Scheme (as at 31/3/22)</i></p> <p>Applications 11,800</p> <p>3 main applicant countries – Poland (3,970) Romania (2,930) and Bulgaria (1,460)</p> <p>Applications by age - Under 18 (1,930) 18-64 (9,600) 65+ (260)</p> <p>Application decisions - Total concluded (11,440), Settled status (5,900), Pre-settled status (4,650), Refused (360), Withdrawn/void (220), Invalid (230)</p> <p><i>8th highest local authority in Scotland in terms of applications made (and highest of the 3 Tayside local authorities)</i></p>	<p><i>EU Settlement Scheme (as at 31/3/23)</i></p> <p>Applications 12,780 (+980)</p> <p>3 main applicant countries – Poland (4,140) Romania (3,230) and Bulgaria (1,560)</p> <p>Applications by age - Under 18 (2,070) 18-64 (10,430) 65+ (280)</p> <p>Application decisions - Total concluded (12,500), Settled status (6,380), Pre-settled status (4,810), Refused (750), Withdrawn/void (300), Invalid (260)</p> <p><i>8th highest local authority in Scotland in terms of applications made (and highest of the 3 Tayside local authorities)</i></p>

With regards to our local **sanctuary seeking population**, we have fully participated in three most recent resettlement schemes for people from Syria, Afghanistan and Ukraine.

Syrian programme – 33 people from 7 families have settled in Perth and Kinross since 2015.

Afghan programme – 15 people from 4 families have settled in Perth and Kinross since 2021.

Ukraine programme – 451 displaced people have settled in Perth and Kinross Council since March 2022.

The table below shows a breakdown by location of where in Perth and Kinross the families have settled, as at August 2023.

% distribution across PKC	Perth city	Strathmore (Blairgowrie & surrounding areas)	Strathearn (Crieff and surrounding areas)	Kinross & South Perthshire	Carse of Gowrie	Highland Perthshire (Dunkeld, Pitlochry, Aberfeldy and surrounding areas)
Syria	100%	-	-	-	-	-
Afghanistan	100%	-	-	-	-	-
Ukraine	32%	31%	11%	5%	3%	18%

Over the past two years, we have also supported the arrival of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking young people through the National Transfer Scheme.

In February 2022 the UASC element of the team changed its name to CASA (Children Alone Seeking Asylum) thereby putting the emphasis on these young people being children first and foremost. This fits in with The Promise whereby Local Authorities will be able to “*demonstrate that they are embedding destigmatising language and practices across the way they work*”. We now have 24 young people from 11 different countries with over 14 different languages being spoken by the young people, many of whom are fluent in a number of languages.

People Seeking Asylum – 2 hotels have been used in Perth as part of a Home Office Resettlement programme since December 2021 to provide accommodation for a male population of people going through the asylum process. People Seeking Asylum – 2 hotels accommodating 101 males from 15 different countries as at end of March 2023

CASE STUDY – CASA SUPPORT

Over the past two years, the team based in Youth Services has also led the support for the arrival of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking young people through the National Transfer Scheme (NTS). In February this year the UASC element of the team changed its name to CASA (Children Alone Seeking Asylum) thereby putting the emphasis on these young people being children first and foremost. This fits in with The Promise, whereby Local Authorities need to be able to “*demonstrate that they are embedding destigmatising language and practices across the way they work*”.

The team continued to participate in the National Transfer Scheme on a voluntary basis, receiving young people from Kent and Southeast of England where the number of arrivals via small boats has continued to increase. In October 2021, the NTS became mandatory and all Scottish Local Authorities were directed to participate. This led to increasing numbers of requests to share our model of practice with smaller local authorities who were only just beginning their journey of caring for children alone seeking asylum. The team have provided advice, support and guidance to over 12 Local Authorities.

The team have consistently surpassed their obligations under the rota to place a young person within 10 days of referral. There is no choice over age/gender of young person being transferred via mandated referrals. The team have also placed young people out with their rota turn when vacancies permit.

All of the CASA young people are in positive destinations either in college, ESOL classes or in employment. Bespoke packages of education have been created for those without a full time college place including provision of small group and 1:1 support with an ESOL teacher on Tuesday afternoons at Scott Street. The young people continue to make good use of local resources such as Scott Street drop in, gyms, sports clubs and their free bus pass.

Four workers in the team are now trained to undertake age assessments, having completed a three-day training programme.

CASE STUDY – MUSLIM PRAYER SPACE

Since January 2023 following extensive engagement between representatives of Perth Islamic Association and our Equalities and Safer Communities Teams, a temporary safe prayer space (for males and females) has been offered in our Civic Hall on Fridays. This has allowed the expanding congregation sufficient room to pray while they work to secure new accommodation for their Mosque, as they have outgrown their current premises. Attendance at Friday Prayers has almost trebled over the past year with an average attendance of 133 between January and March 2023. The community have been grateful for the support offered as well as engagement opportunities with the Council Leader, Chief Executive, Elected Members, Safer Communities staff, Police Scotland and CASA Support.

Equality Outcome 2 - Staff from equality protected groups will be made welcome and respected in the Council workplace

Perth and Kinross Councils' commitment to equality in employment, including compliance with the Equality Act 2010, is reflected in our corporate Equalities Policy and our Equal Pay Policy which provide the frameworks within which we work. Information on Equality and Diversity is made publicly available to prospective employees ([Equalities_Leaflet.pdf \(pkc.gov.uk\)](#)) and current employees ([Perth & Kinross Council - Employment information - Employment equality \(pkc.gov.uk\)](#)) as well as forming a core part of the Employee [Induction](#) programme.

During 2022/23 we introduced new guidance for staff on use of pronouns in the workplace with support from members of our LGBTI+ Staff Network.

We continue to commit to important wellbeing partnership workplace initiatives including the See Me in Work programme which has a formal partnership agreement in place. A number of wellbeing initiatives are also promoted regularly to all staff.

Our staff networks to support wellbeing have now increased and we have the following active groups in place:

- Women's Wellbeing
- Men's Wellbeing
- Belong (for staff for are from Black, Asian or other ethnically diverse group)
- LGBTI+ (*for staff who may be LGBTI+ and their allies; and/or staff who have friends or family who may be LGBTI+.*)
- disABILITY (*for staff who have a disability, whether visible or invisible, or long-term health condition or have family/friends with same*)

All of the groups meet on a regular basis to discuss any work related projects, offer support and advice to members who may be experiencing challenges and help drive and influence good practice across the organisation in relation to their specific areas of interest. The groups have increased in membership with employees valuing the time to discuss topics and issues relevant to their lives. The disability group have been involved in the joint project with Perth Autism Support around neurodiverse employees, recruitment and training and their personal experiences have provided an important perspective. A new group around Women's Wellbeing started in 2022 which is being well attended with topics like Menopause and Women's Health being regular features. We will continue to promote these groups internally to grow membership and increase influence in the work we do around these areas.

Equality Outcome 3 - Reduce and remove physical and social barriers for those with disabilities to access public spaces

We continue to work closely with individuals and organisations in the Third Sector such as the Centre for Inclusive Living; Vision PK and Deaf Links to assess the impact of any decisions which will impact on disability groups. Case Study examples below:

CASE STUDY: D-code Project

During 2021/22 we were pleased to introduce an exciting new British Sign Language (BSL) Project in Perth and Kinross. The project offers customer information and virtual tours in BSL for a number of cultural attractions in the area. The customer information is presented in short BSL film clips which are accessible using a QR code.

The project was identified as an initiative to improve accessibility for Deaf BSL users, following the development of a local British Sign Language plan. The project aims to make Perth and Kinross visibly more accessible for people who are Deaf BSL users,

attract new visitors to the area and to assist organisations to make their facilities more accessible. We also ensure staff at all of the cultural attractions involved in tours and visits received Deaf Awareness training to help them to provide a better service and understanding of challenges experienced by those who use BSL.

CASE STUDY: Disability Access Day

Disabled Access Day, the national annual initiative to raise awareness of the importance for inclusive access. To celebrate disabled access day The Centre for inclusive Living PK (CILPK) worked with the Council's Equalities Team to host 2 events.

The first took place in the Civic Hall, on Monday 13th March 2022 between 11am-2pm and was an open event a variety of information stalls showing how CILPK are helping to support services to become accessible. Key speakers included CILPK members sharing their experiences around accessibility and showcased the work of Euan's Guide. There were some great performances from the Makaton Choir and attendees had the opportunity to try out some electric buses hosted by Stagecoach nearby.

A second event took place at the Academy of Sport and Wellbeing at Perth College UHI on Thursday 16th March 2022. This was a free event which encouraged people of all ages with physical, sensory or learning disabilities to try something new and to find out more about what's available in their local community. Some of the activities included Boccia, Fitness and Yoga, supported by Perth and Kinross Disability Sport and Vitalityme.

We have had a lot of positive feedback from attendees at both these events with new skills being learned, connections being made and ideas for further events and projects being generated and agreed.

Equality Outcome 4 - People from equality protected groups have increased confidence to report hate crime and/or bullying incidents

Unfortunately, people still experience Hate Crime and bullying incidents in the local area. The figures provided by Police Scotland in relation to hate crime incidents reported to them locally are detailed below:

2021/22 – Reported Hate Crime Incidents	2022/23 – Reported Hate Crime Incidents
<p>121 (increase of 22 from 99 reported incidents in 2020/21)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Race - 83 (+18) • Religion – 3 (-2) • Disability – 5 (-1) • Sexual Orientation - 25 (+12) • Transgender – 4 (+2) • Other (multi-strand) – 1 (-7) 	<p>118 (decrease of 3 from 121 reported incidents in 2021/22)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Race - 78 (-5) • Religion – 2 (-1) • Disability – 7 (+2) • Sexual Orientation - 21 (-4) • Transgender – 0 (-4) • Other (multi-strand) – 10 (+9)

The level of reporting remains steady across the past two years and we have been taking action to reduce and eradicate this type of crime in Perth and Kinross through a number of initiatives. To support individuals who may be experiencing or have experienced any type of hate crime, we sign post to the following third-party reporting centres in Perth and Kinross who provide support and reassurance:

- Centre for Inclusive Living, 90 Tay Street, Perth PH2 8NP
- Perth College UHI, Crieff Road, Perth
- Victim Support Perth, Unit B1, Highland House, St Catherines Road, Perth, PH1 5YA
- PKAVS, The Gateway, North Methven Street, Perth, PH1 5PP
- ESOL Perth, 2nd Floor Drummond House, 6 Scott St, Perth, PH1 SEJ

In addition, people with disabilities can sign up to the Keep Safe Scheme, which also has our own local Safe Place branding. There are 45 organisations currently designated as Safe Places and 121 individuals with Keep Safe cards. The Centre for Inclusive Living PK are working with Police Scotland and I Am Me to increase funding to manage, develop and promote the scheme. A series of drop-in sessions are currently planned to raise awareness of the scheme and plans for staff training in participating venues is underway.

The Equalities Strategic Forum and Safer Communities Partnership also monitor Hate Crime incidents and undertake awareness raising campaigns. Further to this, in November 2022 we formally recognised the definitions of Islamophobia and Antisemitism. This gives support to these important issues, raises awareness within our workforce and communities.

In terms of Schools, our Education and Children’s Service produces an Equalities and Bullying Annual Report. The tables below show reported bullying incidents recorded across schools in Perth and Kinross on the SEEMIS recording system.

2021/22 - Bullying Incidents (Actual or perceived)	2022/23 - Bullying Incidents (Actual or perceived)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexual orientation (e.g., homophobia, bi-phobia) - 18 • Additional Support Needs - 14 • Age - Nil • Body Image and physical appearance - 30 • Disability - Nil • Gender identity or Trans identity 8 • Gypsy/travellers - Nil • Marriage/civil partnership of parents/carers or other family members- 2 • Mental Health - 2 • Not Known- 151 • Other - 35 • Race and racism including culture - 26 • Religion or belief - 1 • Sexism and gender -5 • Socio-economic - Nil 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sexual orientation (e.g., homophobia, bi-phobia) - 24 • Additional Support Needs - 23 • Age - Nil • Body Image and physical appearance - 50 • Disability - 4 • Gender identity or Trans identity 5 • Gypsy/travellers - Nil • Marriage/civil partnership of parents/carers or other family members- 2 • Mental Health - 3 • Not Known- 232 • Other - 53 • Race and racism including culture - 57 • Religion or belief - 2 • Sexism and gender -3 • Socio-economic - 1

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young carer -1 <p>Total - 280</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young carer – Nil • Asylum Seekers or refugee status – 1 • Sectarianism - 1 <p>Total – 461.</p>
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Over the past year there has been a concerted effort by education colleagues and pupils to raise awareness of bullying and its impacts, encouraging children and young people to speak out when they feel they are seeing, hearing or experience bullying. This, along with improved recording mechanisms has seen an increase in incidents that have been reported.

Equality Outcome 5 - *Support is provided to those at risk of or who are survivors of gender-based violence*

Perth and Kinross Violence Against Women (VAW) Partnership co-ordinates activity to eradicate violence against women and girls in the area. It meets quarterly and reports to the P&K Community Justice and Safety Partnership with an annual report presented and published once agreed.

In November 2022, the Violence Against Women (VAW) Lead Officer and the VAW Partnership delivered another successful series of events as part of 16 days of Activism.

Sessions throughout 16 days included:

- “Transforming the response of Older People in Domestic Abuse in later life” seminar. This was the first of its kind for the partnership was very important as in 2019/20 it was reported that in Scotland, 11.6% of females and 3.9% of males aged 60+ years experienced partner abuse (Scottish Crime and Justice Survey).
- A CONSENT session with Perth UHI
- The Universal Story afternoon tea - a safe and welcoming space for Women- Hosted by Lubna Kerr and held at the Birks in Aberfeldy, with performances of poetry, spoken words, true life stories comedy.
- Reclaim the Night and a safety campaign highlighted by Gender Equality Perth on “How safe do women feel in the City Centre”.

A short film was produced [16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence 2022 - YouTube](#). The campaign continues to demonstrate the work of the partnership and the commitment with our partners to eradicate violence against women and girls and shows solidarity with women across the world in addressing violence against women and girls.

Throughout 2022/2023 the VAW Coordinator continued to support partner agencies to review funding following the impact of Covid 19 which has increased waiting lists for women accessing services. This will be reflected in priorities for 2023/24.

Equality Outcome 6 - Pupils from equality protected groups will have a positive school experience and will feel safe and respected in school and when online

We have a Pupil Equity Fund which is allocated directly to schools and targeted at closing the poverty related gap. This money is used to focus on early vocabulary and language, literacy, numeracy and health and wellbeing including self-regulation and growth mindset.

2021/22 - Pupil Equity Fund Allocation	2022/23 Pupil Equity Fund Allocation
Total allocation to PKC- £2,037,810	Total allocation to PKC- £1,937,930
Highest Primary School allocation – Goodlyburn Primary School £129,623	Highest Primary School allocation – Inchview Primary School £106,575
Highest Secondary School allocation - Perth Grammar School £80,312	Highest Secondary School allocation – Blairgowrie High School £69,825
Highest all-through school allocation – St John’s Academy - £111,596	Highest all-through school allocation – St John’s Academy - £107,800

We also continue to provide English as an Additional Language (EAL) service in schools, which supports EAL children, age 3 – 18 and sees community bilingual staff (Polish Community Link, Community Learning Assistant (Urdu) and Romanian-speaking pupil support assistant) offer support to families. There are over 1,900 EAL pupils in local schools currently.

In addition, we have started a series of equality conversations with school pupils across Perth & Kinross which will allow us to gather feedback and evidence in terms of how they feel in relation to safety and respect both in school and online.

EQUALITY AIM – PERTH AND KINROSS VISIBLY CELEBRATES EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY (LOIP Strategic Priority – Mental and Physical Wellbeing)

Equality Outcome 7 - Multicultural and equality-related events (including virtual ones) and key dates in the calendar will be visibly celebrated and promoted

We continue to deliver an extensive and popular multi-cultural events and community lunch club programme with our communities and partner organisations in the third sector. We want to celebrate diversity to ensure everyone feels safe and has a deep-rooted sense of belonging. Cultural events are important for helping people to feel part of our community. A successful and visible way that this can be achieved is by lighting Perth Bridge and St Paul's in relevant colours to mark key calendar events.

Events highlighted annually by use of the Lighting Scheme with the Perth Bridge (and other buildings) being lit up in colours included:

- International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia
- Eid
- Diwali
- Perthshire Pride
- World Refugee Day
- Gypsy/Roma/Traveller History Month
- World Aids Day
- Polish Independence Day
- LGBT History Month,
- Chinese New Year
- Transgender Day of Remembrance
- Show Racism the Red Card Wear Red Day

During 2021/22 we slowly saw the return of some in-person events on a smaller scale as pandemic restrictions eased. These included the reintroduction Perthshire Pride in the Yard; Chinese Autumn Mooncake Festival; St. Andrews Day Multi-cultural event and food to mark Chinese New Year. In 2022/23 our events were back better than ever with bigger audiences than reported in previous years:

- Chinese New Year – approximately 5000 attendees.
- Ukrainian Independence Day – approximately 1500 attendees.
- Perthshire Pride – approximately 6500 attendees.
- Mela Festival – approximately 7000 attendees.
- Mela Markets – Markets held 4 times a year with approximately 200 –300 attendees.
- Festive Diversity Day – approximately 3000 attendees.
- Sri Lankan New Year - approximately 400 attendees

CASE STUDY: Perth Parrots



Perth Parrots are the LGBTI inclusive Floorball club that formed in 2019 with the vision to offer a safe and welcoming space for the LGBTI+ community in Perth and beyond. They are positive sporting role models and challenge discriminatory behaviour in sport.

On Saturday 3 September 2022, the Parrots were invited to a Civic reception by Provost Xander McDade to celebrate the Launch of their new football kit and entrance into the National Floorball League. The event was attended by friends and family and those who helped, guided, supported and funded the club. The Equalities Team were also represented at this colourful event which featured a performance by the Edinburgh Gay Men's Choir.

The club has also been awarded its Silver Paces Award from Live Active Sport which recognises the club's commitment to self-governance and focus on embedding a sustainable club for the future.

We know the difference the club makes for its members and one told us that:

“To get to this stage in terms of club development, membership development and community impact has been a challenge, but it was eased with the financial support of the PKC Community Investment Fund. I hope that this in some way helps evidence what can be achieved with financial support of this kind and I will always be grateful as this fund was the first grant our club ever received and greatly helped us on this journey. Knowing my fellow Parrots as I do, I was beaming with pride as each of them puffed out their feathers a little and individually glowed as a team as we paraded our new kit. While I wouldn’t want to single anyone one member out, I should highlight that for some, even attending training and conquering social anxiety is an achievement and I know every one of our members has grown a little in self-confidence”

CASE STUDY: Perth & Kinross MELA festival

The first Mela festival post pandemic was held on Sunday 5 June as part of our wider Jubilee celebrations here in Perth & Kinross. Mela originates from the Sanskrit word “gathering” or “to meet” and thousands of people turned up to do just that. The festival is a celebration of our many cultures and diverse communities and the crowds were entertained by a colourful and vibrant parade from Tay Street to the North Inch Park. This is where the festival took place with a variety of music and dance performances throughout the day. Local community members shared their culture including food and clothing with plenty of activities for children and adults throughout the day.

A member of Perth Welfare Society who helped to organise the day told us:

“To have the Mela in your own city is fabulous, it gives so many people the opportunity to learn about other cultures, it gives people who are from ethnic minority communities a sense of belonging. The Mela festival brings so much colour and happiness to many. We are very grateful to be part of this and look forward to many more! The Mela festival highlights the importance of diversity in Perth and Kinross! A multi-cultural city that is being embraced by all. People from other cities are now telling others about Perth Mela – something we wanted for a long time!!



EQUALITY AIM – PERTH & KINROSS COUNCIL WILL KEEP OUR COMMUNITY INFORMED AND ENGAGE WITH THEM ABOUT OUR SERVICES, OPPORTUNITIES AND SUPPORT AVAILABLE TO THEM (LOIP Strategic Priorities – Poverty; Mental and Physical Wellbeing; Employability; Digital Participation)

Equality Outcome 8 - People from equality-protected groups are provided with accessible information about the services provided by the Council including crisis support in the event of an emergency

We continue to provide updated [equalities content on pkc website](#) for all and we have a dedicated page providing signposting information and advice to EU citizens and local businesses on the EU Settlement Scheme. We also continue to deliver on our British Sign Language (BSL) Plan and have a dedicated BSL section on our [website](#) detailing what we are doing, the progress we are making with key messages translated into BSL.

We acknowledge that support is needed for those who want to improve their digital skills or who need access to equipment to do this and have set up a Digital Participation Working Group as part of the recovery response to the pandemic (further detail is provided in Equality Outcome 9).

We also offer support from interpreters to access the services that people who do not have English as a first language need and updated our Translation and Interpreting Guidance for staff in January 2023. This coincided with the organisation signing up to the Scottish Procurement Framework for Interpreting, Translation and Transcription services. We also continue to implement the Council's Gaelic Language [Plan](#) and have an Adult Literacies Partnership in place. The top 5 languages currently requested for translation are Romanian, Polish, Ukrainian, Bulgarian and Arabic.

Equality Outcome 9 – People from equality-protected groups will be supported to digitally participate

The multi-agency Digital Participation Working Group established post pandemic met regularly and contributed to the areas of work below:

2021/22	2022/23
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Digital Inclusion Fund, which is open to applications from groups who either run community facilities or support individuals with digital skills. Over 15 applications were supported in 2021/22 • Commissioned research which completed in June 2022 to provide a baseline on levels of digital participation across P&K, broken down by various demographics and geographies. The analysis of this research will result in the establishment of a new Action Plan for the Working Group to take forward. • Through Housing’s Digital Inclusion Project, we focused on supporting our most vulnerable tenants to become digitally included. 236 devices were purchased along with relevant data allowances. Over 100 tenants have been supported through the Project. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2022/23 grants of over £10k were awarded to community groups for projects, mainly focussing on providing broadband and wi-fi access in community facilities and supporting training for those currently digitally excluded. • A larger grant of £25k was provided to support an increase in the recycling and repurposing of IT equipment, which is ultimately given to those who would otherwise be unable to access digital technology. • 4 community groups which support equality groups received Digital Devices to help support their community activities: Perth Six Circle Project; Centre for Inclusive Living; Rainbow Heartlands and Perth Minorities Association)

Equality Outcome 10 - People from equality-protected groups are supported to access employment opportunities.

The Council provides an employment support service (Employment Support Team) which assists people with learning disabilities, autism, acquired brain injury, or mental ill health to access employment opportunities.

Employment Support Team Summary 2021- 23

The Employment Support Team supported 172 individuals to prepare for, access or retain paid employment throughout 2021/22. They deliver a successful hybrid supported employment service model, meeting with service users in the community as well as working from home for admin and remote meetings. While we can deliver remote services, face to face contact with people is preferred and found to be most effective. Team bases and hot desks remain in St Catherine's shared base with the Supported Living Team as well as a base at Blairgowrie Adult Resource Centre. There are 4 Team members covering Perth and Kinross localities ensuring service users from all areas are assured of a supported employment service.

Throughout the past few years, there has been a focus on progressing individual referrals awaiting a supported employment service. The number of referrals to the team had accumulated due to ongoing pressures relating to Covid-19. However, the team has worked hard to support over 150 individuals to return to work following periods of absence due to Covid-19 and furlough and this included liaising with employers. They also continued to support others who were made redundant from their work to access alternative employment or development opportunities.

Another important part of the Employment Support Team's role is employer engagement, advice and support. The team have engaged with 138 employers over the past two years. They have also offered the following support to people trying to get back into employment:

- Delivered Work Skills courses for individuals with learning disabilities or to those starting out on their journey into work or preparing to return to employment following a gap from work.

- Produced Easy Read information for numerous services ensuring individuals with disabilities, impairments or sensory loss are provided with information which can be easily read and understood. Here is a link to an example https://www.pkc.gov.uk/media/30861/Easy-Read-Employment-Support/pdf/Easy_Read_General_Guide_Oct_2020.pdf?m=637400940577070000 <https://www.pklearning.org.uk/Planning-A-Better-Future-Together-Easy-Read/>
- Secured short term funding, for people with sensory loss or physical disabilities through the Challenge Fund – (No-one Left Behind) to be able to support ten people through the service. Referrals continue to be received from these client groups from providers and this is now being mainstreamed into the work of the team [No One Left Behind: delivery plan - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](http://www.gov.scot)
- Used social media platforms to share information and engage with individuals and other agencies; the EST has 626 followers on Facebook / 329 on Twitter

Equality Outcome 11 - *People from equality groups will be supported to participate in equality conversations around The Perth & Kinross Offer*

Our Equalities team hold regular Community Equalities Conversations which aim to better understand the experiences of local equalities groups, identify priorities and develop ways for individuals, communities, public, private and third sectors to work together. This also fits in with our new Corporate Plan key priority to work in partnership with our communities and we remain committed to the principles and ethos of The Perth and Kinross Offer that everyone has something to offer.

From the conversations, we want to find out:

- the extent to which people feel heard and able to influence local decisions.
- the issues that are important to people.

- any barriers or disadvantage that people experience.

The table below demonstrates the breadth of conversations we have held with our diverse communities here in Perth & Kinross. These discussions have resulted in a wealth of information about how people in protected characteristic groups are experiencing life in Perth & Kinross. We have built relationships and working partnerships as a result of the equality conversations and fed back on outcomes as a result to our Community Planning Partners, Executive Leadership Team and Elected Members.

2021/22	2022/23
<p>Equality Conversations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • April 21 – Gypsy/Traveller Women’s Group – 2 participants • June 21 – Families Empowering Communities – 3 participants 	<p>Equality Conversations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • July 22- Perth Six Circle – 15 participants • September 22 – Perthshire Welfare Society – 10 participants • October 22 – Perth Minorities Association – 4 participants • November 22 – Perth Chinese Association – 1 participant • December 22 – Jar of Jewels Independent Women’s Group – 2 participants • January 23 – Pitlochry High School – 81 participants • January 23 – Crieff High School – 12 participants • February 23 – Saints in the Community – 4 participants

Equality Outcome 12 - People from equality-protected groups with lived experience of inequalities will be involved in shaping our policies to tackle poverty and social exclusion

The ongoing cost of living crisis is affecting everyone in Perth and Kinross, but particularly the most vulnerable people in our communities. We play a key role in helping to protect people from escalating costs and undertake a wide range of work to support people who are finding themselves in financial difficulty. We continue to co-ordinate the response to child poverty across Perth and Kinross through our Local Child Poverty Action [Plan](#). This highlights the major partnership effort across the area to help and support families facing poverty. We are also supporting people living in food poverty, working with community organisations and networks across the area and building on the connections we made with local groups during the Covid pandemic. We paid out over £200,000 to our housing tenants who were struggling to pay their rent

through the Tenancy Sustainment Fund. We also distributed over £160,000 to community groups to empower them to support local people who were struggling with food poverty. This vital work will continue and develop as our resident's face rises in the cost of living.

Overcrowding, homelessness, dampness, food and fuel poverty, poor neighbourhood condition, and negative aspects of place and community can have a detrimental impact on our children and young peoples' developmental milestones, educational attainment, emotional wellbeing, and wider outcomes in life. Our contribution includes preventing and responding to homelessness by ensuring that families have immediate access to good quality housing. We recognise that good quality affordable housing, of the right size and close to family networks, employment and education can positively impact on children and young people. We play a significant role in supporting adult and community learning to increase life chances, skills and employability for local people through our statutory Community Learning and Development role as set out in the [Perth and Kinross Community Learning and Development Plan \(pkc.gov.uk\)](http://pkc.gov.uk). Open space allows children and young people to be physically active and challenge themselves, so they sleep and eat well and form healthy habits. We know that children and young people who play outdoors often have better social networks, are more confident and are more involved in their local communities.

Our housing and welfare rights staff also work to identify any particular disadvantages faced by their customers from equality protected groups.

Case Study: Cost of Living Support

In response to the Cost of Living crisis funding was provided to community groups providing direct support to equality groups including Perthshire Welfare Society (for a warm space); Rainbow Heartlands (LGBT+ winter support) and Mangin' Manashees and Rajpot Gypsy/Traveller groups (for a financial insecurity project). Our colleagues at Rainbow Heartlands gave the following feedback:

"We would like to say thank you to Perth & Kinross Council for their support through the Cost-of-Living Community Funding. Without such support, we would not have been able to provide the delivery of services and activities during such a challenging period. It has enabled us to build new approaches to support those within the LGBT+ community. The grateful attitude and kindness from many community members has really helped to build up our ability to interact between groups, individuals, and organisations in quite a seamless way".

EQUALITY AIM – PERTH & KINROSS COUNCIL WILL INCREASE PEOPLE’S AWARENESS OF EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY (LOIP Strategic Priority – Skills, Learning and Development)

Equality Outcome 13 - A staff learning and development programme for equality and diversity will be delivered and will be extended to partner organisations.

We ensure that equality issues are a key element of our staff learning and development programme and produce regular Equalities Newsletters for staff and Elected Members. All of our Equalities Newsletters can be accessed [here](#). The table below gives an update on all the equalities learning opportunities available to staff over 2021-23.

2021/22	2022/23
<p>Equalities Learning and Development opportunities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • April 21 – Understanding HIV via zoom – 15 participants • May 21 – Deaf and BSL Awareness via zoom – 45 participants • May 21 – Beyond Religion and Belief via zoom – 14 participants • July 21 – Keep Safe Scheme via zoom – 20 participants • November 21 – Why I wear the Hijab via teams – 9 participants • November 21 – Trans Awareness and Inclusion via zoom – 27 participants • December 21 – A Hidden Communication impairment – 28 participants • January 22 - A Hidden Communication impairment – 42 participants 	<p>Equalities Learning and Development opportunities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • June 22 – Deaf and BSL Awareness via zoom – 29 participants • June 22 – Understanding HIV via zoom – 10 participants • October 22 – Beyond Religion and Belief via teams – 15 participants • October 22 – Why I wear the Hijab via teams – 4 participants • November 22 – Inclusive Communication via teams – 14 participants • November 22 – Gypsy/Traveller Cultural Awareness via teams – 24 participants • December 22 – Gypsy/Traveller Awareness for Councillors via teams – 9 participants • January 23 – Disability Awareness via teams – 20 participants • January 23 – Deaf and BSL Awareness via zoom – 17 participants • February 23 – Active Bystander via teams – 5 participants

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of staff completing equalities e-learning modules completed - 747 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • February 23 – LGBT Historical Timeline in person – 7 participants • March 23 – Islamophobia Causes and Cures via teams – 10 participants • March 23 – Gypsy/Traveller Hate Crime Awareness via teams – 8 participants • Number of staff completing equalities e-learning modules completed - 1209
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Equality Outcome 14 - *Our school curriculum will include equality and diversity topics.*

Our schools are enriched with a diverse mix of pupils and staff with lived experiences from different cultures and backgrounds. We strive to promote equality and diversity to ensure that every pupil and staff member is treated with respect, as well as recognising that all individual differences are valued. The promotion of equality and diversity is an important aspect in school curriculum throughout Scotland and every child has the right to be supported by their caregiver, teachers, and staff to grow, learn, and develop throughout their education experiences.

Examples of the work we have been actively working with schools on include the following campaigns: Show Racism the Red Card (39 schools and over 2000 pupils), Nil by Mouth (5 schools and over 300 pupils), Anne Frank Trust (12 schools and around 600 visits to exhibitions) and Heartstone Story Circles (6 primary schools). Show Racism the Red Card told us:

“We are extremely proud to work within a partnership where active Anti-Racism is such a clear and continuing priority. With the continuing diversification of the region, we are determined to support this project and those like it that normalise inclusion, justice and anti-discrimination”.

Equality Outcome 15 - *Our employment policies will reflect that we are a fair and inclusive employer.*

We are committed to developing employment policy and practices that not only support and enable delivery of our corporate priorities for the people of Perth and Kinross but also allow colleagues to feel supported while at work and to have a balance to their working life. Our Equality and Diversity in Employment Report for the same period provides more detail and is included in Appendix A of this report.

Equality Outcome 16 - *People providing externally commissioned, contracted or licensed services on behalf of the Council (including ALEOs) are aware of their responsibilities in relation to equality*

This outcome cannot be achieved without a range of work with partner organisations and we continued to fund previously commissioned equality-related projects totalling £130,000 from the third sector. This includes St Johnstone Community Trust, PKAVS Minorities Communities Hub, Ethnic Minorities Law Centre and MECOPP Gypsy/Traveller Carers Project. These organisations provide regular monitoring information and 'community intelligence', which help us plan our services accordingly. These organisations are represented at the Equalities Strategic Forum along with our partner ALEOs. Specific [procurement equalities guidance](#) for prospective tenderers and suppliers remains in place.

Our Licensing Board ensures that equality issues are given consideration in its decision-making process and Equality Impact Assessments are undertaken for all reports that go to Licensing Board.

Case Study – Wire Women

Perth and Kinross Council commissioned 18 professional makers and creatives from around the region to work with community groups to create new work that was then shown in an exhibition and became part of a summer long trail which was seen by thousands of people. The commissions were awarded on the basis that all projects would be decided and led by the community groups and the artist role was to facilitate. The outcomes were not only the artworks, but all groups learnt new skills, had a renewed sense of place and were given a reason to come back together again post COVID. Members of the groups went on to gain qualifications as part of the project and to return to work after a long absence.

The artists were tasked with ensuring groups were open and welcoming to all and included a group of LGBTQ+ young people, a group who were recovering from addiction, a group who, despite severe disabilities, learnt about glass blowing.

Annex - Fulfilling our Equalities Duties:

Equalities Policy Statement

Perth & Kinross Council is committed to equality of opportunity, both as a service provider and as an employer. The Council values the diversity of the communities in its area and works towards providing services which are inclusive and accessible. The Council recognises that social inclusion and promoting equality of opportunity and good relations between different groups can only be achieved by incorporating equalities into the planning, implementation and monitoring processes for all our Services. Perth & Kinross Council are, along with all other Scottish public authorities, legally obliged by the Equality Act 2010 to pay 'due regard' to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, victimisation, and harassment; to advance equality of opportunity and to foster good relations between those people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

By working in partnership to promote equality the Council we will make better use of all available resources leading to increased satisfaction by service users and service providers.

We recognise that discrimination, victimisation and harassment is unlawful and unacceptable and we will take action to prevent this occurring. If this does occur, we will take agreed and appropriate action to deal with it.

We also recognise that, when used legally and appropriately, positive action strategies can help to counteract the adverse impact of past discrimination or other causes of disadvantage. We will therefore implement positive action strategies, where appropriate, to make our services more inclusive. This is required by the Equality Act 2010 which require the Council to have due regards to the need to:

- remove or minimise disadvantage suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
- take steps to meet the needs of people with certain protected characteristics where these are different from the needs of other people.

- encourage people with certain protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

This policy continues to meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012. It remains compliant with predecessor legislation as unamended and takes account of the Public Sector Equality Duty stemming from the Act and the Human Rights Act 1998.

The policy should be considered alongside other relevant Council policies, guidance and codes of practice where appropriate but in particular those relating to our duties as an employer.

Assessing our equalities work

Under the Equality Act 2010, we are required to **eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations** between equality groups. Under Part 1 of the Act 'The Fairer Scotland Duty', we are required to actively consider how it can **reduce inequalities of outcome** caused by socio-economic disadvantage, when making strategic decisions.

During 2022/23 the previous Integrated Appraisal Toolkit (IAT) was replaced by the [Impact and Value Assessment](#) of which an Equality and Fairness Impact Assessment remains part, to assess all proposals against criteria for reducing poverty and socio-economic disadvantage, eliminating discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations between equality groups.

This approach is used at the initial stages of any proposal or policy development to screen for any likely negative or adverse effects in relation to poverty and human rights. If the screening process identifies that there are implications, then a full Equality and Fairness Impact Assessment should be undertaken.

Governance of our equalities work

Our governance arrangements set out the structure we put into place to ensure we are meeting all of our outcomes, aims and legislative responsibilities in relation to equalities work. This ranges from formal Committees that we report into regularly to groups that work directly with our communities and help us to gather and analyse feedback:

The Equalities Governance structure works well in ensuring the needs of all our local communities are heard and understood by the Council and its key partners. The main groups are: -

- **Equalities Operational Group** - led by officers across council services to support the delivery of the Equality Outcomes, mainstream equalities work and measure performance.
- **Equalities Strategic Forum** - provides a platform to ensure that some local equality protected communities of interest, such as minority ethnic communities, LGBT+ communities and disability groups, are still able to effectively influence discussions at a locality level despite not necessarily having a visible or large presence in specific localities. Chaired by Elected Member with Equalities Lead remit.
- **Community Equalities Advisory Group (CEAG)**- driven by community organisations who work with local people from equality protected groups to share their knowledge and experience in relation to equalities. Chaired by Elected Member with Equalities Lead remit.

Equality and Diversity in Employment April 2021 – March 2023

Introduction

Our Corporate Plan 2022 – 2027 sets out a vision for Perth and Kinross where everyone can live life well, free from poverty and inequality. It outlines seven key priorities with equality and inclusion threaded through each one and our Equality Mainstreaming Report identified as key to delivering several of the priorities. We also emphasis our commitment to better engage with people and communities, ensuring they have a voice through our key priority to work in partnership with our communities.

As an employer we support our employees to contribute to the achievement of our Corporate Plan objectives and to develop an environment where our activity is driven by our Values and the behaviours associated with them.

Our obligations as an employer and service provider are set out in the Equality Act 2010. The general duty of the Act require us to :

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
- Foster good relations between people from different groups - this involves tackling prejudice and promoting understanding between people from different groups.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups.

We have equality specific policies which are focused on achieving these objectives like our Corporate Equalities Policy and the Equal Pay Policy. We also have our Equality and Fairness Impact Assessment tool to ensure that all of our employment policies work towards these goals by considering the impact of a policy on specific groups of people. This assessment is focused around the legally protected characteristics established in the Equality Act but also expands these to consider the impact on groups such as armed forces veterans and unpaid Carers. We have also been specific in our Mainstreaming Report about actions relating to our work as an employer thereby providing a focus and means of measuring progress.

This report considers activity across all aspects of the employment lifecycle including recruitment and will include :

1. Our Progress - an update on progress towards the achievement of the employment related actions in the Equalities Action Plan 2021-25 included in our Mainstreaming Report
2. Our Data - key data relating to the key findings of our Equal Pay Audits from 2022 and 2023 and recent recruitment activity
3. Our Plans - examples of how our activities and specific initiatives support diversity and inclusion in employment and our plans to continue to incorporate an equality focus into all of our employment practice. This will develop Perth and Kinross Council as a role model for other employers.

Our Progress

Our Mainstreaming Report details our equality aims both for our organisation and the wider community. There are specific employment actions which support the achievement of these.

1. Staff from equality-protected groups will be made welcome and respected in the Council workplace

- We have established organisational Values (**Ambition, Compassion and Integrity**) and an accompanying Behaviours framework which is incorporated into our day to day work and specific processes such as recruitment, induction etc..
- Our values support our efforts to further develop an inclusive working environment by encouraging discussion and engagement and sit alongside specific initiatives such as the establishment of Staff Networks which offer a voice and support to members of specific groups (LGBTI+, Disability and Race) and their allies.
- We hold a number of accreditations and have committed to specific initiatives and promote these to support awareness of our aims to provide support where required. These include :
 - Gold Award status in the Armed Forces Covenant Employer Recognition Scheme. This reflects the work that we undertake to support existing and former members of the Armed Forces.
 - Disability Confident leader award, supporting disabled people into work through the Guaranteed Job Interview Scheme. Our Occupational Health provider continues to give advice along with relevant agencies, such as Concept Northern and Access to Work, in order that we can, where possible, reduce the barriers and make adjustments to enable our disabled employees to effectively use their talents and abilities in our workplace, thereby sustaining their employment.
 - Carer Positive accreditation which supports our ambition to be a supportive employer for those with caring responsibilities and is reflected in the provision of flexibility in working arrangements and specific carer leave.

- SeeMe is an initiative aimed at ending mental health discrimination and we continue to offer mental health first aid training and awareness raising in this area.
- We are working with Perth Autism Support (PAS) on a Workplace Equality Fund project aimed at improving the experiences of neurodiverse Perth and Kinross Council employees and recruitment candidates. We are one of only two councils in Scotland progressing this important work and PAS are working with individual service teams to establish the experiences of managers and colleagues, providing training and support for them in the workplace. They have also, with the help of our disABILITY staff network, established a group of neurodiverse employees who are contributing their lived experience to the development of supporting guidance and training material.
- We are working towards the Equally Safe at Work (ESAW) Development standard developed by Close the Gap. This supports employers to improve employment practice to advance gender equality at work and prevent violence against women. A working group attended by an Elected Member has been established and awareness raising is underway as the first step in completing our plan of activities.
- We have amended our HR system to allow employees the opportunity to use the prefix Mx thereby increasing their opportunity to reflect their gender identity.

2. People from equality protected groups are supported to access employment opportunities.

- We provide tailored support for specific groups and all the accreditations mentioned above are promoted on our [MyJobScotland site](#). In addition each page on this site includes a British Sign Language video providing information about living and working in Perth and Kinross and offers support in applying for vacancies. Our own website also provides support for applicants including a dedicated [Equality leaflet](#), advice on applying which remind applicants of our commitment to guarantee applicants an interview to candidates with a disability who meet the criteria for the advertised position and an accessible [video](#) giving advice on preparing for interview.
- We already put in place reasonable adjustments to our recruitment processes including using the Guaranteed Job Interview Scheme. The project with PAS referenced above will further support the development of our recruitment practice to ensure that it considers and adapts to the needs of neurodiverse applicants.
- Our [Employment Support Team](#) supports people with specific support needs to secure employment and employers to meet their resourcing needs. In doing so they also promote the Council as an employer. They also promote employability initiatives, and the Council takes part in these where appropriate – most recently offering work placements under the Long Term Unemployed scheme.

- We continuously monitor our recruitment performance through data and feedback from candidates and managers and use this information to adapt our processes to ensure that everyone feels that they are supported through our recruitment process.
- We continue to support our younger citizens to gain employment. We have recently been accredited as a Young Person's Guarantee employer which highlights this to young people and we continue to offer our well established [Modern Apprenticeships, Graduate Apprenticeships and Trainee programmes](#).
 - We offer Modern Apprenticeship (MA) programmes across a variety of frameworks including areas which we have identified as being difficult to recruit to. MAs are offered to young people aged 16 – 24. Achievement rates of our modern apprenticeship programme have remained high with 91.4% of young people completing the MA programme in the last financial year and achieving a positive destination, contributing to a pipeline of future talent to both the Council and the local area. In addition to Modern Apprenticeships we also offer Graduate Apprenticeships in Social Services and Healthcare and Cyber Technology and provide an opportunity for young people to achieve a degree while working.
 - For those young people who already hold a degree we have a Professional Trainee scheme which provides roles in which a young person will be supported to complete either a postgraduate qualification or a relevant technical qualification, creating a pipeline of future talent. Graduate Work Experience opportunities have also taken place in Economic Development, Energy, Transport Planning and Climate Change teams.

3. A staff learning and development programme for equality and diversity will be delivered and will be extended to partner organisations

- Our Organisational Development, Equalities and Human Resources Teams developed a programme of internal and external activity. The external opportunities were promoted widely to develop understanding and skills which will help further our inclusion agenda and, by raising awareness of these within partner organisations, will impact on the wider equality environment.
- We have developed a new e-learning module for employees to support our recruitment activity. It focuses on fair recruitment processes and provides insights and tests understanding of the issues that can arise in all stages of recruitment from writing job adverts through to interview and job offers. It is complimented by another newly developed e-learning module – Understanding Unconscious Bias.
- We have promoted a fully funded Level 2 Certificate in Equality and Diversity to our employees, offered through the Skills Network.
- We have included the development of training material, including potentially an e-learning module, in the PAS project and this will be rolled out in the coming months.

4. Our employment policies will reflect that we are a fair and inclusive employer.

- Our employment policies reflect our accreditation status and the requirements of these programmes. In addition, we have adapted our employment policy template to include a more comprehensive statement about equality and are in the process of transferring existing policies to this format.
- We are committed to the Scottish Government Fair Work Framework and are a Living Wage employer. Providing employees with an effective voice is a fundamental element of Fair Work and we work to ensure that all employees have this opportunity through established staff networks, relevant groups, focus groups and engagement events. We also issue a regular employee survey to gather employee views and use these as a key element of our employment policy development process.
- At the early stages of our employment policy development process, we use the Equality and Fairness Impact Assessment to ensure that proposals will meet our obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and to identify any issues which need to be addressed prior to policies being finalised. The assessment is completed once any required changes have been made to the policy and the outcome posted on our website.

To support our efforts to effectively deliver our Mainstreaming Report commitments we continue to be active in understanding our employees and candidates through the collection and analysis of data, communicating with employees and raising awareness of our equality and inclusion work.

Data Collection

We have a mechanism in place to record protected characteristic information for each individual employee, however providing this information is voluntary and consequently the levels of information can depend upon the returns received. To understand the equality 'make up' of our workforce and the issues that are important to them is fundamental to the development of an inclusive workplace. Improved data will enable us to incorporate future positive action strategies for specific equality groups, where appropriate, within our workforce planning activity, policies etc. To achieve this the following actions were taken:

- **development of** a survey, with trade union input and relevant staff networks was issued to employees. Responses received developed the quality of workplace data, particularly as it relates to workers with the protected characteristics of **disability** and **ethnicity**,

- review of our recruitment equality data collection process which improves the quality of the data carried forward into employment records as well as allowing us to consider changes in recruitment policy and practice to support more inclusive recruitment practice.

By completing both of these actions and continuing to promote the importance of comprehensive data, we have improved the levels of employee data collected, evidenced in our workforce data information below.

Raising Awareness

There is an annual calendar of Equality Activity led by the Equalities Team and this is shared internally to increase employee awareness of the activity, its purpose and the issues relating to it. The monthly Health and Wellbeing Briefing also regularly includes references to equality-related issues, most often with a disability focus, and other health and wellbeing activities such as podcasts reference equality issues and are available to the wider community as well as employees.

Inclusive Communications

We aim to make everything we do accessible to all and are continuing to develop our internal communication through the use of different formats including subtitled videos, dedicated BSL interpreted videos and highlight options for access where possible. An example of this is our Health and Wellbeing Briefing which is produced using Sway and includes advice on the use of accessibility mode. [Guidance](#) is also available, providing colleagues with information needed to support any request for information in another language or format.

Our Data 2022 - 2023

We have noted below information about our workforce and our recruitment process. All Figures relate to those at 31 March in each year (2022 and 2023).

Employees in post

Sex

2022				2023			
Female		Male		Female		Male	
No	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
4316	73%	1607	27%	4330	73%	1579	27%

Note that, at this time, we do not hold information on other gender identities therefore the options of male and female are the only categories available at this time. We also do not offer the opportunity for employees to indicate if the gender that they identify with is different to that they were assigned at birth.

Age

	2022		2023	
Age Group	No.	%	No.	%
16-19	38	0.5	32	0.6
20-29	740	11.8	696	12.5
30-39	1221	21.1	1245	20.6
40-49	1576	26.9	1587	26.6
50-59	1773	30.1	1777	29.9
60-64	463	7.8	461	7.8
65+	112	1.9	111	1.9

We continue to have a normal distribution across the age groups with an average age of 46, however the peak falls in the 50 – 59 band indicating an older workforce with 10% of employees aged 60 or older.

Disability

2022				2023			
% Yes	% No	PNTS	% Not known	% Yes	% No	PNTS	% Not known
2	11	6	81	2	11	7	80

Although there has been a slight improvement in disclosure rates the majority of employees continue not to share their status. Male employees have a higher incidence of declaring a disability (2.3% of male employees compared to 1.8% of female employees) indicating a greater level of confidence about sharing this information.

Ethnicity

2021/22				2022/23			
% BME	% White	PNTS	% Not known	% BME	% White	PNTS	% Not Known
1	87	6	6	1	87	6	6

The ethnicity profile has remained unchanged over the two year period including the percentage of employees who have either not provided information or preferred not to respond.

Sexual Orientation

	2021/22	2022/23
LGB	1.1%	1.3%
Heterosexual	40.3%	43.8%
Other	0%	0.1%
Prefer not to say (PNTS)	1.6%	1.5%
Not known	57%	53.2%

While the majority of staff choose not to respond to this question, we have an overall increase in disclosure from 35.7% in May 2020 to 45% in March 2023.

Religion and Belief

	2021/22	2022/23
Christian	16%	16.9%
Other religions	1.3%	1.6%
None	22.4%	24.9%
PNTS	2.2%	2.3%
Not known	58.1%	54.3%

The proportion of disclosure (although higher than 2020) is still low with more than half of the workforce not responding. Of those who have responded the majority indicate that they do not have a religion.

Recruitment and Selection

We gather equality information from applicants to vacancies as part of our online application process, this is kept separate from the application form itself and is not provided to the interview panel. However, we do ask on the application form if a candidate is eligible for interview under the interview guarantee scheme as part of our Disability Confident commitment.

The table below shows recruitment equal opportunities monitoring for the period compared to the same period the previous year. It also shows the number of applicants identified by their protected characteristic and the number of those applicants who were appointed. The information is based upon equalities monitoring questionnaires voluntarily completed by applicants.

In order to provide meaningful comparisons for each selected protected characteristic, the success rates for each under represented group has been measured against the success rate of its comparator. A success rate measures the percentage of the group that were successful in gaining employment and is a more accurate way to establish potential barriers to employment.

This process references each protected characteristic in isolation and due to the anonymity of the process it is not possible to bring these together. This means that we cannot for example detail how many white, female applicants were appointed.

In addition, as our reporting process relates to data only all applicants' details are considered and it is not possible to exclude the details of those who did not meet the minimum eligibility criteria. We acknowledge that this may have an impact on the outcome of our calculations.

Protected group	No. of applicants	No of applicants shortlisted	No of offers made	Success rate of groups (% of applicants)	Success rate of groups (% of shortlisted)	Success rate of total offers ↓
Female	5591	1764	744	13%	42%	70%
Male	2271	675	266	12%	39%	25%
Prefer Not To Say (PNTS)	400	110	58	15%	53%	5%
BME	462	88	31	7%	35%	3%
White	7339	2335	977	13%	42%	91%
PNTS	461	126	60	13%	48%	6%
LGBTI+	302	84	27	9%	32%	3%
Heterosexual	7328	2283	953	13%	42%	89%
PNTS	632	182	88	14%	48%	8%
Disabled*	136	49	18	13%	37%	2%
Non-disabled/ no response	8135	2518	1050	13%	42%	98%
Other religions	215	42	14	7%	33%	1%
Christian	2151	666	259	12%	39%	24%

No religion	4873	1554	664	14%	43%	62%
PNTS	1023	287	131	13%	46%	12%

Recruitment and Success Rates 2022/23

*relates to those who indicated they were eligible for the guaranteed interview scheme

Breakdown of applicant data

Sex

- We attract a lower proportion of female applicants than is represented in our workforce (68% vs 73%)
- Women are more successful in being invited for interview (42% vs 39% of male applicants) but are only slightly more successful in being offered employment (13% of female applicants vs 12% of male applicants). However the significantly higher number of female applicants does mean that there are more than double the number of offers made to females than males.
- The significantly higher number of female applicants may mean that more vacancies may progress to a single sex interview cohort.
- The significantly higher number of female applicants may mean that more vacancies may progress to a single sex interview cohort resulting in reduced opportunity for male appointments.
- The type of posts advertised and the frequency with which these are recruited to will also impact the balance of appointments between males and females. We know, for example, that care and teaching posts are traditionally more attractive to women resulting in more female applicants, increased likelihood of a single sex interview pool and subsequently, a female appointment.

Disability

- 13% of applicants declaring a disability were offered employment – the same figure as non-disabled applicants.
- However because of the small proportion of disabled applicants they did represent only 2% of those offered employment.

Ethnicity

- BME applicants made up 6% of total applicants (compare to last Scottish data - Census 2011 - showing 4% BME population) but only 19% of BME applicants were shortlisted compared to 32% of White applicants.
- Offers of employment to BME candidates made up 3% of total offers with only 7% of BME applicants successful compared to 13% of White applicants

Overall

It is clear from applicant diversity that the key change required is to attract a more diverse candidate field both overall and to specific job types. **We need to do more to ensure that everyone with the right skills and experience feels able to apply for any vacancy.**

It is also important that people who participate in our recruitment processes and our existing employees feel comfortable to share information on their protected characteristics as this will provide us with a greater understanding of work that we need to do to ensure everyone feels welcome in Perth and Kinross Council. **We need to take further action to encourage disclosure of equality information.**

It is also important to acknowledge that difference or outcomes are often not related to a single issue therefore there is a need to consider and take action relating to:

- how different protected characteristics come together (intersect) in affecting the overall situation for our employees as well as the experience of each applicant
- how the impact of one process can impact on the outcome of another, for example we can see that our recruitment process and the profiles of those offered employment has an impact on our pay gaps.

Pay Gaps

Our latest Equal Pay Audit and Pay Gap Information relates to information gathered in April 2023. We consider information relating to gender, disability and ethnicity. However, it should be noted that while we have information on gender for all employees, for Disability and Ethnicity categories, information is based on what is provided by employees. Calculations are based on average hourly rates of pay and do not include any additional payments such as overtime, temporary higher duty payments/ acting up allowances or part time additional hours.

Sex

2021/22			2022/23		
Female Hourly rate	Male Hourly Rate	Pay Gap %	Female Hourly rate	Male Hourly Rate	Pay Gap %
19.95	19.74	-1.1%	21.34	21.28	-0.3%

The overall average hourly rate (and therefore the resultant pay gap) is most heavily influenced by the distribution of males and females across grades.

Ethnicity

2021/22			2022/23		
BME Hourly rate	White Hourly Rate*	Pay Gap %	BME Hourly rate	White Hourly Rate*	Pay Gap %
16.06	20.00	19.7%	18.78	21.48	12.6%

*This figure makes a comparison between white and non-white employees; the data attributed to the white category includes employees who are white but also includes employees who prefer not to answer or have not disclosed. The 2023 pay gap when excluding the 752 employees who have not provided a response would be 36.6% compared to 29.9% in 2022.

Disability

2021/22			2022/23		
Identified as disabled Hourly rate	Identified as not disabled Hourly Rate*	Pay Gap %	Identified as disabled Hourly rate	Identified as not disabled Hourly Rate*	Pay Gap %
19.11	19.91	4%	19.08	21.38	10.7%

*This figure includes employees who have stated they are not disabled but also those who have chosen not to disclose this information. The pay gap for 2022/23 excluding employees who have not responded would be 11.2% in favour of those who self-identify as non-disabled.

Meaningful and statistically reliable information can only be produced when we have more accurate information through employee self-disclosure of disability within the meaning of the Equality Act (2010). Efforts to support this continue to be made via ongoing communication encouraging completion of this information.

Our Plans**Recruitment**

To do our best as an organisation we need to have the best people delivering and supporting the services required by our community. In doing this we are mindful of the need to provide opportunities for those who may often find themselves excluded from employment. We have a number of tools and commitments in place to assist us in this – a Corporate Workforce Plan, accreditations such as Disability Confident, our Apprenticeship and Trainee programmes, improved equality information on the MyJobScotland site, the use of Values Based Recruitment and improving levels of data collection.

Future activities will include:

- Reviewing our recruitment advertising practice which currently is focused on the MyJobScotland website and the Council's own social media channels. To ensure that we are reaching as wide and diverse an audience as possible we will undertake an assessment of options in this area and adapt our practice in line with the findings of this exercise.

- Progressing the project with PAS to ensure that our recruitment practices are inclusive and consider specifically the requirements of neurodiverse applicants. A programme of related training and support materials will be rolled out to assist recruiting managers in this regard.
- Reviewing our recruitment processes and, where appropriate, incorporating the suggestions and guidance included in the Scottish Government Minority Ethnic Recruitment Toolkit into our practice.

Health and Wellbeing

We are aware of the impact of the past few years on our employees and that it is vital that we work together to create and sustain a healthy working environment and positive wellbeing culture to ensure that we Live Life Well. To support this we have put in place a range of support mechanisms and have produced a Health and Wellbeing plan both of which continue to be developed through analysis of wellbeing data and feedback received through different mechanisms including a dedicated focus group made up of employees from across Council departments.

We seek to support our employees through ill health prevention, early intervention and building resilience, particularly in times of change. We have a large workforce which is geographically dispersed and culturally diverse. Providing managers with the tools and support to manage their employees is fundamental as we evolve our approach. Our Health and Wellbeing Framework is principles-led, evidence-based and outcome-driven. It is supported by the provision of an Occupational Health service which can provide advice and specific services such as physiotherapy, counselling support and health surveillance to support employees to remain at work and in continued employment in the event of changes in their health.

Future activities will include :

- Building on our recent Disability Confident re-accreditation at Leader level by working as part of a geographical group of employers to gain examples of best practice from others. We will then identify which practices to adopt within the Council and to support other employers in Perth and Kinross to develop their accreditation activity.
- Recognising that our highest cause of absence remains mental health issues; we will continue to review and develop the suite of information and tools created during the pandemic to support employees in this area. We will also continue to promote the Able Futures mental health support service and review options for other external support. This will supplement the continued focus on increasing the knowledge and skills of managers to support colleagues experiencing mental health issues and to develop a healthy workplace.

Employment Policy and Practice

We are committed to developing employment policy and practices that not only support and enable delivery of our corporate priorities for the people of Perth and Kinross but also allow colleagues to feel supported while at work and to have a balance to their working life.

It is important when developing policies and practice that we engage with those who will use them. We engage with recognised trade unions and colleagues generally and through specific groups to understand what is important to them, what issues they face and how we can go forward taking account of their lived experience as an employee and citizen of Perth and Kinross. Examples of this approach include the development of Trans Support Guidance which is being developed in consultation with the LGBTI+ staff network and which will be launched in 2023, the Health and Wellbeing employee focus group and the group of neurodiverse employees working with PAS to develop a toolkit to support managers, employees and job applicants.

Future activities will include :

- Improving the quality of our workforce equality data with further promotion of the importance of providing this information and the process used.
- Offering a more comprehensive opportunity to employees to disclose their gender identity including trans status.
- Continuing to work with trade unions and staff network groups to identify key issue that our employment practice needs to address and the development of policies to achieve this.
- Reviewing our employment policy and practice in line with the approaches suggested by the CloseThe Gap as part of the Equally Safe at Work programme.
- Working to support our employees who also undertake caring responsibilities for family members.
- Launching flexible working guidance designed to support the delivery of services to the citizens of Perth and Kinross whilst facilitating practices that will support the work life balance of our employees and takes account of issues specific to individual protected characteristics.



Equalities Mainstreaming Report 2021 – 25 Aims & Outcomes

Equality Aim 1: Perth and Kinross is a Safe, Welcoming and Accessible Area	
<i>(LOIP Strategic Priority Link – Mental and Physical Wellbeing)</i>	<p>Equality Outcomes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. People from equality protected groups will be made welcome and be respected in the area 2. Staff from equality protected groups will be made welcome and be respected in the Council workplace 3. Reduce and remove physical and social barriers for those with disabilities to access public spaces 4. People from equality protected groups have increased confidence to report hate crime and/or bullying incidents 5. Support is provided to those at risk of or who are survivors of genderbased violence 6. Pupils from equality protected groups will have a positive school experience and will feel safe and respected in school and when online
Equality Aim 2: Perth and Kinross visibly celebrates equality and diversity	
<i>(LOIP Strategic Priority Link – Mental and Physical Wellbeing)</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Multicultural and equality related events (including virtual ones) and key dates in the calendar will be visibly celebrated and promoted
Equality Aim 3:	



Perth & Kinross Council will keep our community informed and engage with them about our services, opportunities and support available to them

(LOIP Strategic Priority Links – Poverty; Mental and physical wellbeing; Employability; Digital participation)

8. People from equality protected groups are provided with accessible information about the services provided by the Council including crisis support in the event of an emergency
9. People from equality protected groups will be supported to digitally participate
10. People from equality protected groups are supported to access employment opportunities
11. People from equality groups will be supported to participate in equality conversations around the Perth and Kinross Offer
12. People from equality protected groups with lived experience of inequalities will be involved in shaping our policies to tackle poverty and social exclusion

**Equality Aim 4:
Perth & Kinross Council will increase people's awareness of equality and diversity**

(LOIP Strategic Priority Link Skills, Learning and Development)

13. A staff learning and development programme for equality and diversity will be delivered and will be extended to partner organisations
14. Our school curriculum will include equality and diversity topics
15. Our employment policies will reflect that we are a fair and inclusive employer
16. People providing externally commissioned, contracted or licensed services on behalf of the Council (including ALEOs) are aware of their responsibilities in relation to equality and diversity

Perth And Kinross Council

4 October 2023

DRAFT CORPORATE DELIVERY AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2024/25

Report by the Chief Executive

(Report No. 23/266)

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 This report presents the draft Corporate Delivery and Improvement Plan (CDIP) for 2024/25 for consideration. It is being brought alongside the Medium-Term Financial Plan to strengthen the alignment between the priorities set in our Corporate Plan, improvement activity, and budget and resource allocation. This approach will enable elected members to better consider organisational priorities and improvements alongside budget setting. The final CDIP will be brought back to Council for approval after the final 2024/25 budget is set next year. This will enable any adjustments following the budget to ensure improvement activity is aligned with the funded priorities set by Council.
- 1.2 To support a robust approach to reporting on the Council's Corporate Plan this report also highlights four amended, replacement or new key performance indicators and seeks approval for these to be added to monitoring for future annual performance reports.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Council:
 - approves the draft Corporate Delivery and Improvement Plan for 2024/25.
 - approves the proposed amendments to the key performance indicators for the Corporate Plan priorities as set out in Appendix 2.

3. STRUCTURE OF REPORT

- 3.1 This report is structured over the following sections:
 - Section 4: Background
 - Section 5: Summary Information
 - Section 6: Key Performance Indicators
 - Appendix 1: Draft Corporate Delivery and Improvement Plan 2024/25
 - Appendix 2: Proposed amendments to key performance indicators for the Corporate Plan

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The Corporate Delivery and Improvement Plan (CDIP) is a new element of the Council's strategic planning and performance framework. Introduced this year as part of new performance reporting and strategic planning arrangements, it complements the Annual Performance Report approved by Council in August (Report No. 23/234) by setting out key proposed improvement activity for the year ahead.
- 4.2 This replaces the service-by-service approach to identifying improvements which was previously in place through Business Management and Improvement Plans. Presenting improvements at an organisational level gives Council the opportunity to see the overall areas of focus for the year ahead more easily. By bringing the final CDIP for approval at the start of the financial year it also means Council will have sight of in-year improvement activity at the start of the new financial year, rather than at the end of the first quarter, or sometimes later, as was the case with the previous approach.
- 4.3 The CDIP is intended to be read in conjunction with the [Annual Performance Report for 2022/23](#) and details improvement activity intended to address areas for development identified in the Annual Performance Report (APR) and demonstrate our duty to deliver Best Value. The APR acts as our annual look back at how we have delivered on the priorities of the [Corporate Plan](#), while the CDIP is our look forward to what we will focus on doing to achieve the priorities of the Corporate Plan in the year ahead.
- 4.4 Linking improvement activity to previous performance and aligning this to the delivery of the Corporate Plan are key to maintaining a robust and effective performance management framework. This is critical to the success of the Council in delivering and improving outcomes for individuals and our communities.

5. SUMMARY INFORMATION

- 5.1 The draft Corporate Delivery and Improvement Plan for 2024/25 sets out key strategic improvement activities which officers have identified to address previous performance or introduce new activity which will contribute to the delivery of the Council's key priorities. It does not represent all of the work which is ongoing to meet our statutory duties or to maintain existing areas which are performing well. Given the scope of the Council's responsibilities these would be too much to contain in any one single document, but the impact of this 'business as usual' work is demonstrated through the performance measures agreed as part of the Corporate Plan.

- 5.2 The proposed improvement activity identified within the CDIP has been developed with service leads by cross-referencing the Corporate Plan priorities with areas for improvement identified in the Annual Performance Report for 2022/23 and our supplementary report on performance aligned to the Best Value themes. It also includes areas for improvement, where they link to delivery of our Corporate Plan priorities, which have been identified through customer feedback, self-evaluation, benchmarking, and other strategic documents.
- 5.3 The draft CDIP sets out proposed improvement activity for elected members to consider as the Council approaches planning for the 2024/25 budget setting cycle. It has been brought to Council on the same agenda as the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP), so that elected members can consider the proposed improvement activity within the context of the financial planning information provided within the MTFP.
- 5.4 Engagement with elected members on the proposed improvement activities will form part of the budget preparation process. Engagement with local people will be undertaken alongside our annual consultation on budget priorities and will be reported to councillors as normal to be considered when setting the final budget. [Appendix D](#) of Report No. 23/27 shows how this was presented for the 2023/24 budget cycle.
- 5.5 Once the final budget for 2024/5 has been set in early 2024, the agreed and funded improvement areas will be updated within the CDIP and reported back to Council for final approval.

6. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- 6.1 When the Council agreed the Corporate Plan in December 2022 (Report No. 22/311 refers) we committed to *“regularly review and monitor our performance against each of the key priorities to ensure that they are still relevant and effectively contribute to our vision”*. As part of this, while producing the Annual Performance Report 2022/23 we identified a small number of key performance indicators which are not providing the level of information intended.
- 6.2 Of the four indicators:
- two changes are proposed to bring them in line with indicators within the [Local Housing Strategy 2022-27](#)
 - one change is proposed because the existing indicator does not present the most realistic position on the availability of business land
 - one is an additional indicator to supplement and more fully represent the impact of our Welfare Rights Team
- 6.3 Appendix 2 sets out the existing indicators (where relevant) including performance and targets, alongside the proposed replacement indicators so that Council can consider how the alternative indicator would impact on performance reporting.

6.4 If agreed, these updated performance indicators will be used for reporting on the current years' performance when the Annual Performance Report for 2023/24 is brought to Council next year.

Authors

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Approved

Name	Designation	Date
Clare Mailer	Director (Strategy, People & Resources)	8 September 2023

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Draft Corporate Delivery and Improvement Plan 2024/25

Appendix 2 - Proposed amendments to key performance indicators for the Corporate Plan

1. IMPLICATIONS, ASSESSMENTS, CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Strategic Implications	Yes / None
Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement	None
Corporate Plan	Yes
Resource Implications	
Financial	None
Workforce	None
Asset Management (land, property, IST)	None
Assessments	
Equality Impact Assessment	None
Strategic Environmental Assessment	None
Sustainability (community, economic, environmental)	None
Legal and Governance	None
Risk	None
Consultation	
Internal	Yes
External	None
Communication	
Communications Plan	None

1. Strategic Implications

Community Plan / Corporate Plan

- 1.1 This report sets out improvement activity to be undertaken to support the delivery of the Council Corporate Plan 2022-27.

2. Resource Implications

Financial

- 2.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Workforce

- 2.2 There are no workforce implications arising from this report.

Asset Management (land, property, IT)

- 2.3 There are no asset management implications arising from this report.

3. Assessments

Equality Impact Assessment

- 3.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, the Council is required to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between equality groups. Carrying out Equality Impact Assessments for plans and policies allows the Council to demonstrate that it is meeting these duties.
- 3.2 This report has been considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment process (EqIA) with the following outcome:
- (i) Assessed as **not relevant** for the purposes of EqIA

Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 3.3 The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 places a duty on the Council to identify and assess the environmental consequences of its proposals. no further action is required as it does not qualify as a PPS as defined by the Act and is therefore exempt.

Sustainability

- 3.4 Under the provisions of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 the Council has to discharge its duties in a way which contributes to the achievement of sustainable development. Under the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 the Council also has a duty relating to climate change and, in exercising its functions must act:
- in the way best calculated to delivery of the Act's emissions reduction targets;
 - in the way best calculated to deliver any statutory adaptation programmes; and
 - in a way that it considers most sustainable.
- 3.5 The information contained within this report has been considered under the Act. However, no action is required as the Act does not apply to the matters presented in this report.

Legal and Governance

- 3.6 Not applicable.

Risk

- 3.7 Not applicable.

4. Consultation

Internal

- 4.1 The Executive Leadership Team, Service Senior Management Teams and the Performance, Planning and Risk Group were consulted during the preparation of this report.

External

- 4.2 Not applicable.

5. Communication

- 5.1 Not applicable.

2. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 2.1 None.



Draft Corporate Delivery and Improvement Plan 2024/25

A Perth and Kinross where everyone can live life well,
free from poverty and inequalities

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Introduction

Welcome to our draft Corporate Delivery and Improvement Plan (CDIP) for 2024/25.

This is a new element of the Council's strategic planning and performance framework. Introduced this year as part of new performance reporting and strategic planning arrangements, it complements the [Annual Performance Report](#) by setting out key proposed improvement activity for the year ahead at an organisational level. Together the CDIP and the APR demonstrate how we are delivering on the commitments we set out in our Corporate Plan to work towards our vision of:

a Perth and Kinross where everyone can live life well, free from poverty and inequalities.

This draft Corporate Delivery and Improvement Plan sets out proposed activities within the 2024/25 year of the Corporate Plan cycle to work towards this vision. The proposed strategic improvements included within this plan are for areas where performance reporting shows more attention is needed, or where new activities to support the delivery of our priorities have been identified through customer feedback, self-evaluation, benchmarking and other strategic reports.

Where our performance reporting shows that we are doing well and that current approaches are achieving or exceeding targets we are not proposing additional improvement activity. This work will

continue where it is necessary to maintain performance. As will the large volumes of business-as-usual activity which ensure the effective delivery of our statutory duties and local commitments.

Similarly, previously identified supporting improvements and transformation and change activities - such as consolidation work and our new strategic operating model for the organisation - which will help us deliver the Corporate Plan priorities, are not detailed here. This work is ongoing, and progress will continue to be monitored and reported through agreed [Transformation and Change](#) governance arrangements.

We will continue to report back on ongoing and improvement activity through the Annual Performance Report and have updated the [performance targets](#) for 2023/24 and future years against each of the performance indicators within our corporate plan.

Elected members will be invited to provide comment and feedback on the areas of activity in this draft Corporate Delivery and Improvement Plan through a range of opportunities during the 2024/25 budget setting cycle. Alongside this we will gather public feedback through our annual budget priorities consultation. Once the final budget for 2024/25 has been set in early 2024, an updated Corporate Delivery and Improvement Plan based upon the agreed and funded improvement areas will be reported back to Council for final approval.

**Councillor Grant Laing,
Council Leader**

**Thomas Glen,
Chief Executive**

Improvement activity: Tackling poverty

Corporate Priority Action	What improvements do we want to achieve?	How will we make these improvements?	How will we know if we have been successful?	Strategic Lead	Target date	Linked strategy/plan
Prevent and mitigate the impacts of poverty for children living in Perth and Kinross	A co-ordinated and collaborative approach with partners and communities to mitigate the impact of poverty.	During 2023/24 we are developing an overarching poverty strategy for Perth and Kinross. Key strategic actions for 2024/25 to prevent and mitigate the impacts of poverty for children living in Perth and Kinross will be established as part of that strategy.	Performance measures will be agreed as part of the Poverty Strategy.	Strategic Planning, People & Performance	March 2026	Poverty Strategy (in development) Local Child Poverty Action Report
	Ensuring that costs of participation in school activities are minimised or mitigated to reduce the impact this has on the outgoings of families in or at risk of poverty.	<p>Increasing uptake of free school meals for eligible children.</p> <p>Reduce the cost of the school day.</p> <p>Increasing uptake of the National Entitlement Card for free bus travel to reduce travel costs.</p>	<p>A 5% increase in uptake of free school meals compared to previous year.</p> <p>Schools will be using the Cost of the School Day toolkit and action</p>	Education & Learning	March 2025	Poverty Strategy (in development) Local Child Poverty Action Report

			<p>plans will be in place.</p> <p>A 5% increase in uptake of the National Entitlement Card amongst under-22s.</p>	Customer & Digital Services		
<p>Mitigate cost of living pressures for households experiencing and at risk of poverty</p>	<p>Reduce dependency on foodbanks.</p>	<p>Develop cash first partnerships with the third sector in localities to allow support to be provided to those in need in a way that is easily accessible within their local communities.</p>	<p>Foodbanks reporting reduction in demand.</p> <p>Number of established cash first partnerships.</p>	<p>Strategic Planning, People & Performance</p>	<p>March 2026</p>	<p>Poverty Strategy (in development)</p>

Improvement activity: Tackling climate change and supporting sustainable places

Corporate Priority Action	What improvements do we want to achieve?	How will we make these improvements?	How will we know if we have been successful?	Strategic Lead	Target date	Linked strategy/plan
Supporting the prioritisation of sustainable, cleaner, and greener transport	Develop a long-term sustainable strategy for increasing and maintaining the electric vehicle charging network in Perth and Kinross.	During 2023/24 we are developing an electric vehicle strategy for Perth and Kinross. Key strategic actions for 2024/25 to develop the electric vehicle charging network in Perth and Kinross will be established as part of that strategy.	Performance measures will be established as part of the electric vehicle strategy.	Economy, Development & Planning	March 2025	
	Ensure we have a cleaner and greener Council fleet.	Develop an electric vehicle transition plan for moving council vehicles from diesel/petrol to electric or other zero direct carbon fuel technologies.	Increase in percentage of Council journeys undertaken with electric or other zero direct carbon fuel vehicles.	Environment & Infrastructure	April 2024	

	<p>Integrate active travel options into the development of large infrastructure schemes.</p>	<p>By delivering active travel measures as part of the Cross Tay Link Road, including new and improved paths, controlled crossing facilities, bus stop provisions, a green bridge and a park and choose facility.</p>	<p>Monitoring usage of active travel measures resulting in a 20% reduction of vehicle kilometres.</p>	<p>Economy, Development & Planning</p>	<p>March 2025</p>	<p>Local Development Plan 2</p> <p>Mobility Strategy (in development)</p> <p>Perth Transport Futures</p>
<p>Improve the energy efficiency of our buildings, and encourage our partners and private householders to consider improvements</p>	<p>Improved energy efficiency and reduction in carbon emissions in the Council estate.</p>	<p>During 2023/24 we are developing a Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy (LHEES). Key strategic actions for 2024/25 to improve energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions in domestic properties across Perth and Kinross will be established as part of this strategy.</p> <p>Key strategic actions for 2024/25 to be set as part of the domestic/non-domestic decarbonisation plan being developed in 2023/24.</p>	<p>Performance measures to be established in the LHEES.</p>	<p>Environment & Infrastructure</p> <p>Property Services</p>	<p>March 2025</p>	<p>Climate Change Strategy</p> <p>LHEES (in development)</p>

<p>To conserve and enhance the biodiversity of our natural environment</p>	<p>Increase provision of biodiversity sites.</p>	<p>Developing a long term plan for managed grassland areas.</p> <p>Delivery of UK Shared Prosperity Fund funded Biodiversity Towns and Villages Project and the Greening Industrial Estates Project.</p> <p>Making provisions for biodiversity within the Cross Tay Link Road project, ie green bridge and wetland area.</p>	<p>Volume of uncut areas are increased.</p> <p>Increase in number of biodiversity interventions.</p> <p>Increases in observed biodiversity markers (insects, animals and wildflowers).</p>	<p>Environment & Infrastructure</p> <p>Economy, Development & Planning</p>	<p>March 2025</p>	<p>Climate Change Strategy</p> <p>Tayside Biodiversity Action Plan</p>
<p>To adapt to and mitigate the impact of climate changes on the way we operate</p>	<p>Reduce carbon emissions caused by traffic in Perth city centre.</p>	<p>Delivery of Cross Tay Link Road to divert traffic away from the city centre.</p> <p>Preparing for phase 4 of Perth Transport Futures by scoping investment activity in active travel/public transport.</p>	<p>Air quality and traffic modelling.</p>	<p>Economy, Development & Planning</p>	<p>March 2025</p>	<p>Local Development Plan 2</p> <p>Perth Transport Futures</p> <p>Air Quality Action Plan</p>

Improvement activity: Developing a resilient, stronger and greener local economy

Corporate Priority Action	What improvements do we want to achieve?	How will we make these improvements?	How will we know if we have been successful?	Strategic Lead	Target date	Linked strategy/plan
Support and promote business growth and investment	Unlock new investment and housing land to support business growth.	Commence Perth West Eco Innovation Park.	Level of business interest in Perth West.	Economy, Development & Planning	March 2025	
	Make Perth a more competitive inward investment destination.	Developing and improving the Invest in Perth information and advice website. Working closely with Business Gateway and key businesses and key sector representatives.	Increased levels of interest and awareness in inward investment opportunities in Perth.	Economy, Development & Planning	March 2025	
	Increased number of businesses in the creative industry.	Renewed focus on the Visitor, Cultural and Creative Economy, as a result of greater	Demand for business space for	Economy, Development & Planning	March 2025	

		collaboration through the new strategic operating model.	creative industries will increase.			
Invest in innovative green power and smart technology solutions	Have a Smart Energy Programme supported by public and private investment.	Develop a pipeline of smart energy projects. Develop a decision toolkit to develop business cases for investment.	Increased investment in smart energy projects. Increase in number of registered businesses in energy.	Economy, Development & Planning	March 2025	
Promote what our city and towns have to offer to businesses, investors and tourists	More people to choose Perth and Kinross as a destination for holidays and day trips.	Increased promotion of consumer and visitor offer via Perth City and Perth and Kinross Towns website and social media channels. Deliver national and international tourism campaigns with VisitScotland. Attend or be represented at national and regional travel trade events.	Increased consumer and visitor expenditure, dwell time and overnight stays	Economy, Development & Planning	March 2025	Culture Strategy 2023-2028

<p>Support people into work and encourage business to access initiatives to create new opportunities</p>	<p>Further enhance our employability outreach capacity, supporting individuals in community settings.</p>	<p>Review and increase the number of employability outreach locations and frequency.</p>	<p>Increased numbers of individuals supported in targeted locations and overall increase in number of people supported.</p>	<p>Economy, Development & Planning</p>	<p>March 2025</p>	<p>Economic Wellbeing Plan 2020-2028</p>
	<p>Remove barriers to employment for parents.</p>	<p>Improving access and availability of registered quality childcare.</p> <p>Launch a pilot of community childminding.</p> <p>Use the Parental Employment Support Fund to connect childcare, employability and transport.</p>	<p>Increased number of registered childcare providers.</p> <p>Feedback from pilot.</p> <p>Increase in priority groups supported into employment.</p>	<p>Economy, Development & Planning</p> <p>Education & Learning</p>	<p>March 2025</p>	<p>Local Child Poverty Action Report</p>

Improvement activity: Enabling our children and young people to achieve their full potential

Corporate Priority Action	What improvements do we want to achieve?	How will we make these improvements?	How will we know if we have been successful?	Strategic Lead	Target date	Linked strategy/plan
Ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning	Attainment at key milestones is raised for all children and young people.	Using health and wellbeing census data to inform school level improvement plans. Implementation of the Literacy, Numeracy and Learning and Teaching Frameworks 2-18 through a programme of professional learning.	PKC attainment for each of the indicators within the Corporate Plan will increase to at least target levels.	Education & Learning	Feb 2026 (due to timing of publication of data for 2024/25)	Raising Attainment Strategy 2020-2023 Education Service Improvement Plan 2023-24
	Increase the number of young people going into positive destinations such as work experience, further education, volunteering and employment.	By placing an Employability Youth Worker in each locality to liaise with schools. Early intervention approach in school and delivery of	Increase in participation measure of school leavers entering positive destinations.	Education & Learning	March 2025	

		employability programmes.				
	A school atmosphere conducive to learning and personal development, where children and young people feel safe, secure, listened to and have their views taken into account on issues that affect them.	<p>Implementation of the updated Anti-Bullying Strategy.</p> <p>Key strategic actions for 2024/25 will be established in the updated Anti-Bullying Strategy.</p>	<p>Schools will have robust procedures to reduce bullying in line with improving relationships.</p> <p>Reduction in reported incidences of bullying in schools.</p> <p>Increase in wellbeing measures recorded at school and Local Authority level.</p>			
Reduce the poverty-related attainment gap	Improved understanding of causes of attainment gap so that effective interventions can be identified and implemented.	Review and refresh the PKC interventions toolkit to address the needs of key priority groups.	<p>All schools will plan, record and track pupil progress via the Closing the Gap tool.</p> <p>A reduction in the poverty-related attainment gap,</p>	Education & Learning	February 2026 (due to timing of publication)	Raising Attainment Strategy 2020-2023

			particularly for those most deprived and in key priority groups.			
Ensure that Looked After Children and children with additional support needs achieve comparable outcomes	Improve support to children and young people with additional support needs to realise their potential.	Through the Additional Support for Learning Transformation Programme.	Maintain or reduce placement within independent schools. Increase percentage of children with ASN being supported in mainstream school settings.	Education & Learning	March 2025	Raising Attainment Strategy 2020-2023 ASN Transformation Programme
	Increase in community placements for children and young people responding to immediate need.	Increase the recruitment and range of community placement providers. Support more kinship carers.	Reduction in use of residential placements. Increase in available community placement providers. Feedback from children and young people placed with	Children, Families & Justice	March 2025	

			community providers or in kinship care placements.			
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Improvement activity: Protecting and caring for our most vulnerable people

Corporate Priority Action	What improvements do we want to achieve?	How will we make these improvements?	How will we know if we have been successful?	Strategic Lead	Target date	Linked strategy/plan
Ensure we quickly identify children, young people and adults at risk of harm and abuse and take the necessary actions to keep them safe	Take a trauma-informed approach to interviewing children for evidence to inform ongoing care and protection planning.	Implement the Scottish Child Interview Model.	<p>Number of interviews which have been carried out using the Scottish Child Interview Model.</p> <p>Quality of evidence gathered and suitability for use in ongoing care and protection planning.</p>	Children, Families & Justice	March 2025	

<p>Ensure that people get the right care, accommodation and support where and when they need it</p>	<p>Enhance our housing support offer by implementing an Intensive Housing Support Service for people with complex needs.</p>	<p>Commission a third sector provider to deliver intensive housing support.</p>	<p>Repeat homelessness presentations will be minimised and tenancy sustainment for previously homeless people with complex needs will increase.</p> <p>Feedback from people with complex needs will be positive with better outcomes being reached.</p>	<p>Housing & Communities</p>	<p>March 2025</p>	<p>Local Housing Strategy 2022-2027</p> <p>Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (Home First) 2019-2024</p>
	<p>Maintain sibling relationships for care experienced children to deliver on the principles of The Promise.</p>	<p>Ensure children and young people are listened to and helped to have a say through Family Group Decision-Making and access to Independent Advocacy.</p> <p>Create Lifelong Links plans for every care experienced child, incorporating links with brothers and sisters, where relevant and where</p>	<p>Feedback from care experienced young people.</p>	<p>Children, Families & Justice</p>	<p>March 2025</p>	<p>Perth and Kinross Corporate Parenting Plan 2021-2024</p>

		the young person wishes this.				
<p>Prepare for the establishment of the National Care Service and continue to strive for excellent health and social care outcomes for the people of Perth and Kinross</p>	<p>In June 2023, the Scottish Parliament extended the deadline for the completion of Stage 1 of the National Care Service (Scotland) Bill to January 2024. It was then announced in July 2023 that accountability for the National Care Service would be shared between the Scottish Government, NHS and local authorities. As part of this the latter will continue to employ staff and be responsible for assets such as buildings.</p>	<p>We will continue to monitor national developments and consider activity as required.</p>				

Improvement activity: Supporting and promoting physical and mental wellbeing

Corporate Priority Action	What improvements do we want to achieve?	How will we make these improvements?	How will we know if we have been successful?	Strategic Lead	Target date	Linked strategy/plan
<p>Improve health and wellbeing in Perth and Kinross by increasing overall participation in sport and physical activity and promoting the wellbeing benefits of time spent in our natural surroundings</p>	<p>Increase uptake of sport and physical activities.</p>	<p>Work with key partners to develop programmes which optimise opportunities for physical activity.</p> <p>Social prescribers encouraging the use of outdoor activities.</p> <p>Work with schools and sport groups to increase the number of opportunities for children and young people to take part in physical activity.</p>	<p>Numbers of participants have increased.</p> <p>Reduction in health and social care issues related to inactivity..</p>	<p>Economy, Development & Planning</p> <p>Health and Social Care Partnership</p> <p>Education and Learning</p>	<p>March 2025</p>	<p>Physical Activity and Sports Strategy 2023-2028</p> <p>Health and Social Care Strategic Plan</p>

<p>Improve health and wellbeing in Perth and Kinross by ensuring that people have access to wellbeing support when they need it</p>	<p>Reduce waiting times for people to access Mental Health Services.</p>	<p>Redesigning specialist community mental health services across Tayside.</p> <p>Increase access to preventative and community support.</p>	<p>Reduction in waiting lists (numbers and time).</p>	<p>Health and Social Care Partnership</p>	<p>March 2025</p>	<p>Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Services Strategic Delivery Plan</p>
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Improvement activity: Working in partnership with communities

Corporate Priority Action	What improvements do we want to achieve?	How will we make these improvements?	How will we know if we have been successful?	Strategic Lead	Target date	Linked strategy/plan
<p>Establish locality multidisciplinary teams working with our community planning partners and residents to identify and address local</p>	<p>Deliver a clear, consistent and joined up approach to supporting communities and households with the help and support</p>	<p>Develop additional multi-disciplinary teams in more locations focussed around locally identified needs.</p>	<p>Feedback from communities and staff on the effectiveness of the multi-disciplinary team approach.</p>	<p>Strategic Planning, People & Performance</p>	<p>March 2025</p>	<p>Local Child Poverty Action Report</p>

<p>solutions to local needs</p>	<p>they need to mitigate and move beyond poverty.</p>		<p>Strengthened partnerships within localities with case studies to evidence.</p>			<p>Transformation & Change Strategy 2022-2027</p>
<p>Increase the supply and availability of rural housing</p>	<p>Provide more affordable homes to support liveable and sustainable communities.</p>	<p>Deliver PKC's affordable housing programme of 1,050 over the next 5 years</p>	<p>Maintain 53% / 47% split across urban and rural areas.</p> <p>Achieve an average of 210 affordable housing completions each year.</p>	<p>Economy, Development & Planning</p>	<p>2027</p>	<p>Local Housing Strategy 2022-2027</p>
<p>Develop and expand our approach to working with communities to identify local actions and priorities and deliver on these together</p>	<p>Supporting community groups to manage local assets, such as community halls.</p>	<p>Support community groups to develop Community Asset Transfer (CAT) plans.</p> <p>Carry out engagement activity to promote Community Asset Transfer as an option.</p>	<p>Increase in number of Community Asset Transfers.</p> <p>Increase in community groups applying for community asset opportunities.</p>	<p>Housing & Communities</p>	<p>March 2025</p>	<p>Property Asset Management Plan</p> <p>Community Asset Transfer</p>
	<p>Expand and improve formal community engagement structures, ie</p>	<p>Implement recommendations and actions from review of current local</p>	<p>Increased in engagement with community members</p>	<p>Housing & Communities</p>	<p>March 2025</p>	

	development Local Action Plans.	decision making committees and create new structures where appropriate.	through new structures. Feedback from communities about impact of new local decision making committees.			
	Increased engagement and applications from communities to the Community Investment Fund grants programme.	Review application and assessment process. Further strategic improvements will be identified through evaluation of the 2023/24 Community Investment Fund programme.	Increase in the number of successful applications. Increase in the number of people/communities benefitting from a CIF funded project.	Housing & Communities	March 2025	
Deliver our internal cultural change programme ensuring all staff contribute to our commitment to engage with and be accessible and responsive to our residents and communities	An empowered and skilled workforce who are confident in engaging with resident and communities and demonstrate the organisational values and expected behaviours at all times.	Delivery of action within the Employee Engagement and Cultural Change Programme. Learning and development opportunities for staff on community	Feedback from our workforce, managers and community members. Number of participants in leaning and development opportunities. Reduction in complaints relating to	Strategic Planning, People & Performance	March 2025	Employee Engagement Plan 2023

Draft Corporate Delivery and Improvement Plan 2024/25

		engagement and participation.	behaviours or actions contrary to our organisational values and behaviours.			
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Proposed changes to Corporate Plan key performance indicators from 2023/24

The following proposed changes were identified in the preparation of the 2022/23 Annual Performance Report. Reporting for 2022/23 was undertaken using the indicators agreed within the Corporate Plan, however, to improve the consistency and quality of information for future performance reporting Council is asked to agree the following changes.

Tackling Poverty

Key Actions (summary)	Indicator	Control / Influence	Performance				Targets				Lead Service
			19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26	26/27	
Mitigate cost of living pressures for households experiencing and at risk of poverty	Proposed deleted indicator: Number of new publicly available social housing units including buybacks, conversions and empty homes conversions	Control	250	246	310	203	304	N/A	N/A	340	Economy, Development & Planning
	Proposed replacement indicator: Number of new affordable homes, including new build and buy backs	Influence	320 (285 new build, 35 buy backs)	124 (100 new build, 24 buy backs)	308 (276 new build, 32 buy backs)	203 (167 new build, 36 buy backs)	210	210	210	210	Economy, Development & Planning
Reason for proposed change: The replacement indicator is the one which has been agreed for the Local Housing Strategy 2022-27. Aligning these indicators will ensure reporting is consistent within these different reports.											

Maximise income from benefits and concessions	Proposed new indicator: Total amount of benefit income gained as a direct result of involvement from the Welfare Rights Team	Influence	£6.5m	£5.5m	£5.3m	£6.5m	Not appropriate to set targets				Customer & Digital Services
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Reason for proposed change: This is proposed as an additional indicator to the existing one under this action. After consideration we believe that this additional information will provide a more rounded picture of the impact of work to achieve this action and will enhance performance reporting on the Corporate Plan.

Developing a resilient, stronger and greener local economy

Support and promote business growth and investment	Proposed deleted indicator: Area of immediate available Service Business Land (Ha)	Influence	30	32	37	Will be available October 2023	15	N/A	N/A	15	Economy, Development & Planning
	Proposed replacement indicator: Area of available Serviced Employment Land (Ha)	Influence	N/A New indicator			Will be available October 2023	Maintain balance of between 30-40Ha annually				Economy, Development & Planning

Reason for proposed change: The replacement indicator provides a better indication of the availability of land for new and growing businesses.

Protecting and caring for our most vulnerable people

Ensure that people get the right care and support where and when they need it.	Proposed deleted indicator: Number of PKC homes built for those with particular support requirements (units)	Control	N/A New indicator	8 (PKC)	12 (RSL)	15 (7 RSL & 8 PKC)	10% of all Social Housing built		Economy, Development & Planning
	Proposed replacement indicator: Percentage of affordable homes built to wheelchair and adaptable standard	Influence	N/A New indicator	8%	4.3%	8.9%	10% of all Social Housing built		Economy, Development & Planning

Reason for proposed change: The replacement indicator is the one which has been agreed for the Local Housing Strategy 2022-27. Aligning these indicators will ensure reporting is consistent within these different reports.

Perth & Kinross Council

4 October 2023

MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2024 – 30

Contact Officer: Scott Walker, Chief Accountant
(Report No. 23/267)

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 This report updates the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) approved by Council on 28 September 2022 (Report No. 22/249 refers). The report summarises the implications of the latest projections on future Council General Fund Revenue Budgets over the medium term and provides an update on the Council's Capital Budget, Housing Revenue Account and Reserves position. The report also sets out a proposed approach to the development of the Revenue and Capital Budgets over the short and medium term.
- 1.2 The MTFP is being brought alongside the draft Corporate Delivery & Improvement Plan (CDIP) to strengthen the alignment between the priorities set in the Corporate Plan, improvement activity, and budget and resource allocation. It is anticipated that the final CDIP will be considered by Council following approval of the 2024/25 Final Revenue Budget on 28 February 2024 to ensure that improvement activity is aligned with the funded priorities.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Council:
- (i) requests the Strategic Lead – Finance & Business Support maintain the Medium-Term Financial Plan and further refine the assumptions which underpin it – see paragraph 7.47.
 - (ii) approve the setting of the 2024/25 Final Revenue Budget, updated 2025/26 and 2026/27 Provisional Revenue Budgets on 28 February 2024 – see paragraph 8.5.
 - (iii) approve the setting of the Capital Budget on 28 February 2024 – see paragraph 9.9.
 - (iv) approve the submission of the updated Reserves Strategy to Council on 28 February 2024 – see paragraph 10.7

- (v) endorses the proposals to determine the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget and rent levels for 2024/25 and the five-year Housing Investment Programme at the meeting of the Housing and Communities Committee on 24 January 2024 – see paragraph 11.3.

3. STRUCTURE

3.1 The report is structured as follows:

Section 4	Background
Section 5	Economic and Fiscal Outlook
Section 6	Scottish Government’s Medium Term Financial Strategy
Section 7	Analysis of Medium Term – Perth & Kinross Council
Section 8	Revenue Budget – Proposed Approach
Section 9	Composite Capital Budget – Proposed Approach
Section 10	Reserves Update
Section 11	Housing Revenue Account
Section 12	Workforce Planning Measures
Section 13	Transformation & Change Strategy
Section 14	Risk Assessment
Section 15	Conclusions

4. BACKGROUND

4.1 The Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) is intended to outline the broad “direction of travel” for the Council’s financial management with further detail and options for managing the various challenges being developed as part of the Revenue and Capital Budget process.

4.2 For the purposes of this update, the medium term is broadly defined as the six years to financial year 2029/30.

4.3 On 22 June 2022, the Council approved the Financial Strategy and Transformation and Change Strategy (Report Nos 22/141 and 22/142 refer). Over the last year, the Council has also approved the following key elements of its Financial Strategy as follows:

	<u>Report Reference</u>
Investment Blueprint	21/180
Medium-Term Financial Plan 2023 – 2029	23/249
Housing Revenue Account Strategic Financial Plan	23/9
Strategic Planning Update and 2023-26 General Fund Revenue Budget	23/72
Strategic Investment and Capital Budget Update	23/73
Treasury & Investment Strategy and Prudential Indicators 2023/24 – 2027/28	23/135
Unaudited 2022/23 Annual Accounts	23/196

- 4.4 It is anticipated that the draft Audited 2022/23 Annual Accounts and the draft Annual Audit Report to the Members of Perth & Kinross Council and the Controller of Audit for the Year Ended 31 March 2023 will be considered by the Audit & Risk Committee on 30 October 2023.
- 4.5 The MTFP seeks to provide a range of scenarios for key variables that are used in long-term budgeting and financial planning. There is no one definitive source for such data and the projections have been taken from a range of sources, including the Scottish Government, Government Expenditure and Revenue Scotland (GERS), the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) and the Bank of England.
- 4.6 The report considers the wider economic and fiscal outlook and how this might impact on the Council over the medium term. The report also provides an update on the Council's Revenue and Capital Budgets, Housing Revenue Account, Reserves and other Funds.
- 4.7 Many of the assumptions set out in this report will change over time in response to external factors including the ongoing impact of the cost of living challenges, future spending reviews and the macro-economic outlook.
- 4.8 The Council's financial management and budgetary process is also developing to support the delivery of the strategic objectives with budget proposals and decisions will continue to be aligned with them. This builds on the move to developing outcome-based approaches to the Council's budget where the relationship between how the Council allocates its resources and the outcomes realised through this allocation are more evident. Work is ongoing to further integrate strategic planning and financial planning.

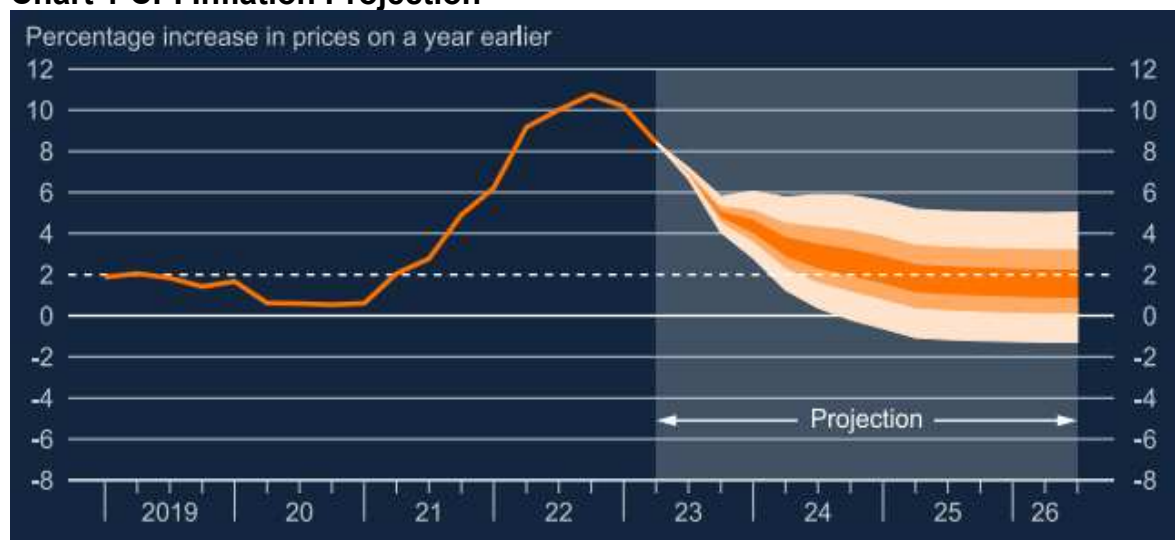
- 4.9 The draft Corporate Development & Improvement Plan (CDIP) sets out proposed improvement activity for elected members to consider as the Council approaches planning for the 2024/25 budget setting cycle. It has been brought to Council on the same agenda as this update of the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP). This will allow elected members to consider the proposed improvement activity within the context of the financial planning information provided within the MTFP.
- 4.10 On 22 June 2022, the Council approved the Financial Strategy (Report No. 22/141 refers). This included a set of principles which should assist the Council in bringing forward a Medium-Term Financial Plan and Revenue Budget that is sustainable over the longer term.

5. ECONOMIC AND FISCAL OUTLOOK

- 5.1 In considering an appropriate approach to preparing the Council's medium-term Revenue and Capital Budgets, it is necessary to consider the outlook for the United Kingdom and Scotland's public finances.
- 5.2 According to the Office for Budget responsibility in their Fiscal Risks and Sustainability publication in July 2023, the 2020s are turning out to be a very risky era for the public finances. In just three years, they have been hit by the Covid pandemic in early 2020, the energy and cost-of-living challenges from mid-2021, and the sudden interest rate rises in 2022, whose consequences continue to unfold.
- 5.3 This rapid succession of shocks has delivered the deepest recession in three centuries, the sharpest rise in energy prices since the 1970s, and the steepest sustained rise in borrowing costs since the 1990s. And they have pushed government borrowing to its highest level since the mid-1940s, the stock of government debt to its highest level since the early 1960s, and the cost of servicing that debt to its highest since the late 1980s.
- 5.4 From this more vulnerable position, governments face growing costs from an ageing society, a warming planet, and rising geopolitical tensions – challenges that no longer loom in the distance in their 50-year projections but pose significant fiscal risks in this current decade.
- 5.5 Together these contribute to a challenging outlook for Governments as they steer public finances through future shocks whilst managing pressures.

- 5.6 In August 2023, the Bank of England published its latest Monetary Policy Report. This latest report advised that the Bank of England’s Monetary Policy Committee had voted to increase the Bank Interest Rate to 5.25% (the corresponding figure in August 2022 was 1.75%).
- 5.7 It also advised that Consumer Price Inflation (CPI) was “well above the 2% target” at 7.8%. However, it is expected to reduce further to around 5% by the end of the year, accounted for by lower energy, and to a lesser degree, food and core goods price inflation. Services price inflation, however, is projected to remain elevated at close to its current rate in the near term. The Bank of England’s forecasts for inflation are set out in the **Chart 1** below.

Chart 1 CPI Inflation Projection



- 5.8 On 30 June the Fraser of Allander Institute published their 2023 quarter 2 economic commentary. In their publication they advise that the Scottish economy had performed better than was expected earlier in the year. However, the outlook for 2024 and 2025 had worsened, reflecting stubbornly high inflation and the continued response from the Bank of England in raising interest rates: which are now at 5.25%, with further rises still possible, rather than peaking at 4.75% as expected in March.
- 5.9 The focus on economic performance and the fiscal outlook is of even greater relevance in that under the fiscal framework of the Scotland Act (2016), a number of taxes including Income Tax (rates not allowances) are now devolved to the Scottish Government. The devolution of these taxes will have an impact on the Barnett Formula and Block Grant from the UK Treasury with adjustments made for each element of taxation devolved to the Scottish Government. This means that the future sustainability of public sector funding

and Scottish Government expenditure will be increasingly dependent upon the performance of the Scottish economy.

6. SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT'S MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY

- 6.1 On 25 May 2023, the Scottish Government published its sixth Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). This updated strategy sets out the medium-term fiscal outlook and provides the context for the Scottish Government's spending decisions in light of a succession of economic shocks, including the Covid pandemic, the war in Ukraine, and the recent period of high inflation all driving significant pressures on the economy, society and the public finances.
- 6.2 The Scottish Government's MTFS suggests a **0.1%** reduction in the Block Grant (Revenue) from the UK Government in 2024/25 with real terms increase of **1.1%** from 2025/26. This latest update indicates an increase in overall funding compared to the MTFS published in May 2022 but this is eroded by the sustained rates of high inflation.
- 6.3 The Central Resource Spending Outlook that is included within the latest MTFS is set out in **Table 1** below. **Chart 1** compares the increase in the spending outlook between the Scotland-wide total and local government and **Chart 2** shows the movement between the Scottish Government's MTFS in May 2022 and May 2023.

Table 1: Central Resource Spending Outlook

	23/24 £billion	24/25 £billion	25/26 £billion	26/27 £billion	26/27 £billion
Social Security	5.290	6.192	6.638	7.000	7.389
Health & Social Care	18.176	18.903	19.660	20.446	21.264
Local Government	10.958	11.403	11.720	12.054	12.417
Other	10.836	11.076	11.286	11.513	11.777
Total	45.260	47.575	49.304	51.013	52.846

Chart 2: Increases in Central Resource Spending Outlook

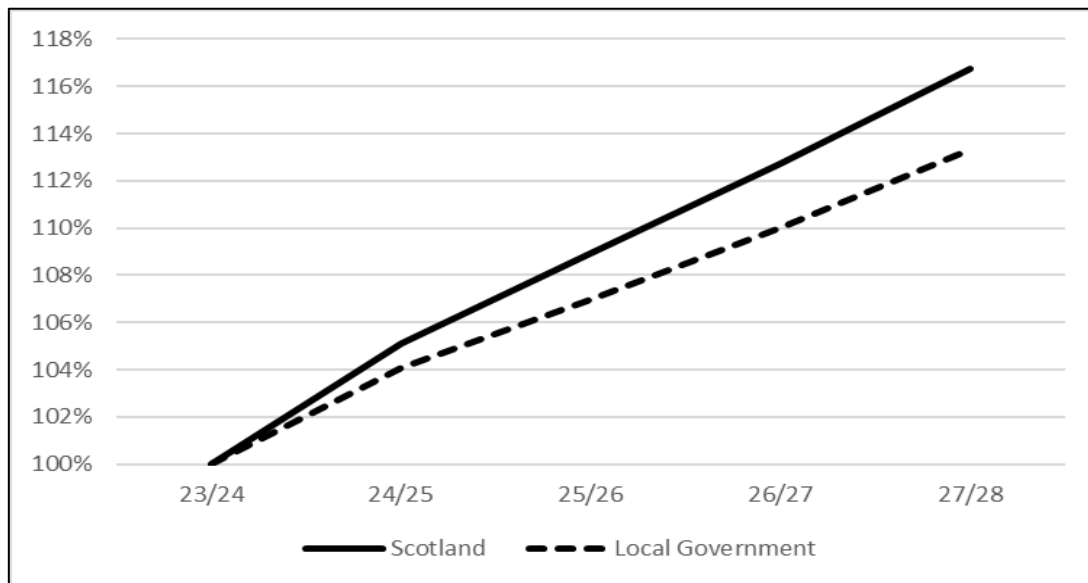
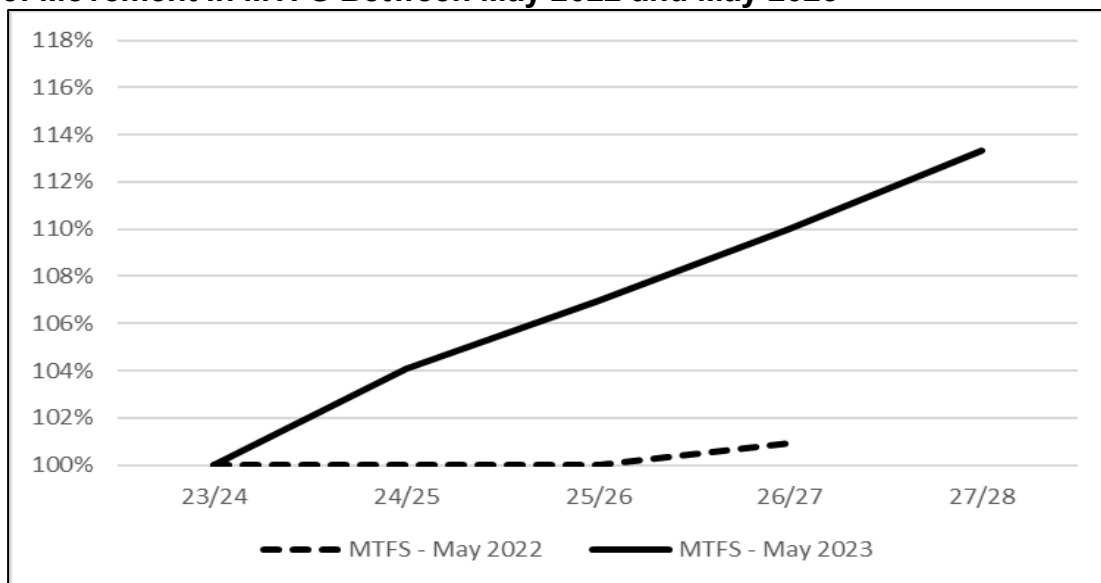


Chart 3: Movement in MTFS Between May 2022 and May 2023



6.4 The figures set out in **Table 1** and **Charts 2 & 3** reflect the funding made available to local government by Scottish Government through the combination of General Revenue Grant, including Specific Revenue Grants, and forecasts of income raised locally by Non-Domestic Rates. This only reflects approximately 50% of actual expenditure by local government which is otherwise funded by service fees & charges and council tax. The revenue funding made available to local government in 2023/24 includes an additional **£343 million** over and above the allocation published in the 2023/24 Scottish Budget document, and a further **£120.6 million** (that was previously allocated as capital) from 2024/25. These reflect funding previously agreed with COSLA to support local government pay deals.

- 6.5 In **Table 2** the Central Resource Spending Outlook is set along side the Central Funding Outlook. This shows a “modelled shortfall” of **£1.875 billion** (or 4% of funding) by 2027/28.

Table 2 Spending versus Funding

	23/24 £billion	24/25 £billion	25/26 £billion	26/27 £billion	26/27 £billion
Spending	45.260	47.575	49.304	51.013	52.846
Funding	45.260	46.535	47.917	49.415	50.971
Modelled Shortfall	-	(1.040)	(1.387)	(1.598)	(1.875)
		(2%)	(3%)	(3%)	(4%)

- 6.6 In terms of Capital, the latest MTFs indicates a **7%** real terms reduction in Barnett funding between 2023/24 and 2027/28. The Central Outlook for Capital Funding (excluding internal government adjustments known as financial transactions) is set out in **Table 3**.

Table 3 Capital Funding

23/24 £billion	24/25 £billion	25/26 £billion	26/27 £billion	27/28 £billion
6.004	5.873	5.882	5.902	5.909

- 6.7 It is anticipated that the Scottish Government will publish updated multi-year spending envelopes for both revenue and capital alongside the 2024/25 Budget (assumed for December 2023). This will reset the portfolio spending envelopes previously published in the Resource and Capital Spending Reviews to reflect the new economic reality and ensure that spending is aligned to the three missions for this Parliament.
- 6.8 Overall, the future funding outlook for local government remains highly uncertain. The outlook for the Scottish Government’s block grant, together with the Scottish Government’s stated spending commitments; the ongoing impact of Covid-19, wider economic outlook and increasing demand pressures on public expenditure indicate that the local government settlement in 2024/25 will continue to be challenging.

7. ANALYSIS OF MEDIUM TERM – PERTH & KINROSS COUNCIL

- 7.1 This section highlights the potential financial implications of changes in key areas affecting the Council’s need to spend and to compare these to the projected level of available resources. The continued development of the

Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) into future years will further establish the Plan as the foundation of the Council's financial management. The Plan recognises the combined impact of increasing need / demand for Council services, particularly because of demographic trends, inflationary pressures (including cost of living) and anticipated pressures on funding. This approach allows the consideration of options and the refinement of strategies to manage these pressures over the medium to longer term.

- 7.2 Expenditure pressures classified as “demographic” or “inflation” related are normally identified in detailed submissions considered by Council in setting Revenue Budgets each year. The MTFP, however, makes global assumptions about these variables in advance of detailed submissions to inform the Council's financial planning process over the medium term. The Plan also assumes that any additional costs in relation to new legislation will be funded by the Scottish Government.
- 7.3 The MTFP is, however, an evolving model, which will require refinement and updating on a regular basis as new information becomes available. The following section of this report focusses on the key areas to be considered in developing future years' budget strategies and sets out the assumptions made in respect of each area. The financial impact of these assumptions is summarised in **Table 6** at paragraph 7.43.
- 7.4 For financial planning purpose this update to the Medium-Term Financial Plan includes the following three scenarios –
- Optimistic – Appendix A(i)
 - Mid-Range – Appendix A(ii)
 - Pessimistic – Appendix A(iii)
- 7.5 The detailed assumptions underpinning each of the scenarios are set out in **Appendix B** with supporting narrative provided under each category below.

Structural Deficit

- 7.6 The Council has operated with a structural deficit for several years with the budget being balanced in year with contributions from Reserves and other non-recurring sources. The structural deficit brought forward from 2023/24 is currently estimated at **£11.954 million**. This is a consequence of two factors. Firstly, the unwinding of the Service concession scheme that applied £10 million of non-recurring funding in 2023/24. Secondly, the recurring impact of decisions taken on 1 March 2023 in setting the 2023/24 Final Revenue Budget and 2024/25 & 2025/26 Provisional Revenue Budgets.

7.7 Addressing this structural deficit is included in all three scenarios.

Employee Pay Inflation

7.8 Discussions on 2023/24 pay settlements with non-teaching unions are currently ongoing, and at the time of writing this report, these have not yet concluded for all staff groups. The 2023/24 Final Revenue Budget includes a budgeted increase of 3%, which will be insufficient. The final pay award, less the Council's existing provision, less the anticipated share of national funding for pay awards being provided by the Scottish Government will result in an additional expenditure pressure in the current year and increase the costs from 2024/25.

7.9 Looking beyond the current year there are several scenarios which could emerge for future pay settlements. Although COSLA maintain a position of seeking parity in settlements for all local government employee groups, recent settlements have included differential pay awards for different staff groups. For the purposes of this update of the MTFP, the mid-range scenario assumes an increase of 3% in each year for all staff groups with 2% and 4% for the optimistic and pessimistic scenarios respectively.

7.10 There is a risk that the assumptions set out in this MTFP and in Appendix B underestimate future pay inflation and vice versa. A 1% movement on pay award assumptions equates to **c£2.5 million** for all staff groups. There is a further risk that differentiated pay settlements impact on the sustainability of the current pay and grading structure.

Increments

7.11 Local authority pay is negotiated nationally and applies to all employees. Most local government employees (Single Status and Teaching staff) are placed on nationally agreed grades which contain several scale points. Each year employees are incrementally moved up to the next scale point on their grade until the maximum point is reached. Increments are an annual cost that the Council is contractually required to pay.

7.12 In terms of the cost of incremental progression, for the purposes of this update, **£750,000** per annum has been assumed for all financial years under all three scenarios. This figure is consistent with the cost of incremental progression in previous years.

Employer’s Superannuation Contributions

- 7.13 Employees (and elected members) in Perth & Kinross Council are automatically admitted to either the Scottish Public Pensions Agency (SPPA) (teachers) or the Local Government Pension Schemes (LGPS) (non-teaching staff) upon entry to the Council. Both schemes are statutory and ensure that the Council complies with its legislative duties. Employees can opt out of either scheme; however, Perth & Kinross Council is listed in statute as an employing authority with a legislative obligation to participate in both schemes.
- 7.14 The most recent triennial review of Tayside Pension Fund was carried out at 31 March 2020 with the recommendations from this review determining the level of employer contributions from 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2024. The Council was formally advised that there would be no change to the LGPS rates in Spring 2021 for that period, with the employer’s contribution remaining at **17%**.
- 7.15 This update of the MTFP covers the period of the next two triennial review as at 31 March 2023 and 31 March 2026 which may impact on financial years 2024/25 and 2027/28. A 1% increase represents a cost pressure of around **£1.149 million** per annum in respect of non-teaching employees.
- 7.16 The teacher’s scheme is administered separately by the Scottish Public Pensions Agency (SPPA) which is an Executive Agency of the Scottish Government. The employer’s contributions for this scheme are set by the UK Treasury. There was a significant increase in employers’ contributions (from 17.2% to 23%) which took effect from 1 September 2019 to 31 March 2023. There is no information on employer contributions beyond this date. The UK Treasury have advised that changes to the employer contribution rates resulting from the 2020 valuations will take effect from April 2024. A 1% increase represents a cost pressure of around **£756,000** per annum in respect of teaching employees.
- 7.17 For the purposes of this update, the following assumptions have been made in relation to increases in the employer’s contribution rates for both schemes.

Table 4 Employers Superannuation Assumptions

	2024/25	2027/28
Optimistic	0%	0%
Mid-range	0%	+1%
Pessimistic	+1%	+2%

Inflation

- 7.18 The most recent Monetary Policy Report was published by the Bank of England on 3 August 2023. This report set out inflation projections through to 2025 which are set out in **Chart 1** above.
- 7.19 The update, in August 2023, advised that the Bank of England expected inflation to fall further, to around 5% by the end of 2023. Beyond 2023, inflation is expected to fall further in 2024 to reach the Bank of England's 2% target by early 2025. External commentators have suggested that these projections may be optimistic.
- 7.20 Under the mid-range scenario, it is assumed that the average level of general inflation for 2024/25 is **3.5%** reducing to **2%** by 2026/27 and beyond. Under the optimistic scenario, inflation reduces from 2.5% to 1% over the same time period and from 4.5% to 3% under the pessimistic scenario.
- 7.21 However, there are also several areas of Council activity where annual cost increases may be significantly more than the level of general inflation. These include energy and fuel where significantly higher increases have been assumed in earlier years.
- 7.22 As the Council also acts as a commissioner of services rather than direct provider, this element of the Revenue Budget may also be exposed to increases beyond that of general levels of inflation e.g. living wage commitments.

Demographics

- 7.23 The MTFP attempts to reflect the potential additional costs to the Council of demographic changes in the population within the area. This includes the number of both young and older people with extremely complex care needs.
- 7.24 This update of the MTFP makes use of the most up to date projections available from the National Records of Scotland and are based on 2018 data (the 2018 data is the most up to date information available).
- 7.25 This area is extremely complex with the changing profile of the local population in terms of need and age. For the purposes of modelling the MTFP, a range of scenarios have been assumed based on information from the National Records of Scotland. This update of the MTFP assumes an increase of around 0.1% for general population growth every year of the Medium-Term Financial Plan.

- 7.26 Beyond this, the MTFP uses projections for different age groups to further refine the potential impact of demographics on the Council. Consistent with previous years, the most significant demographic pressure is around older people with a projected increase of over 23% in the number of local residents aged 80+ over the six-year period of this Plan. This is anticipated to lead to increasing need for access to care services over time from an ageing population compounded by the frailty of individuals with complex care needs requiring more expensive care packages.
- 7.27 The Council continues to support the work of the Health & Social Care Partnership to implement measures to mitigate these pressures. However, in the short-term, additional costs to reflect demand growth have been factored in to the MTFP to inform the Council's financial planning.

Learning Estate

- 7.28 Over the period of this update of the Medium-Term Financial Plan, there will be further significant investment in the learning estate which is reflected in the Composite Capital Budget. The operating costs for the replacement of existing schools such as Perth High School and Riverside Primary School will largely be met from existing budgets. In terms of the impact on the Revenue Budget, the most significant development is, therefore, the provision of a new primary school at Bertha Park. The anticipated additional recurring running costs of the school estate facilities are included in this update of the MTFP.

Implications of Capital Investment Decisions

- 7.29 The 2022/23 Revenue Budget and Reserves Strategy that was approved by Council on 22 February 2022 included an uplift in the loan's charges budget of an additional £450,000 each and every year (Report No. 22/35 refers). This increase, along with the Capital Fund will support the Capital Budget over the medium term. On this basis all three scenarios assume the increase of **£450,000**.

Funding and Income

- 7.30 There are several funding / income streams that can have a significant impact on the financial position of the Council over the medium term which are discussed in further detail below.

Scottish Government Funding

- 7.31 Previously, the MTFP has made separate assumptions in relation to General Revenue Grant (GRG) and Non-Domestic Rates Income (NDRI). Over the last few years, this income has been aggregated and any reductions have been based on a total package of funding. On that basis, these projections are based on the current total package of funding of over **£300 million** (which is the total of GRG and NDRI in 2023/24).
- 7.32 There is currently limited information on levels of specific funding for Scottish local authorities and the mid -range assumptions, set out in **Table 5** below are, therefore, based on no overall increase or a “flat cash” scenario. This reflects both experience in recent years of relatively small movements in funding together with the likely prioritisation of public expenditure on education and health and social care in light of the Scottish Government priorities. This is also supported by the high-level analysis included in the Scottish Government’s Medium Term Financial Strategy. It is stressed that these assumptions are for financial planning purposes only and will be updated upon confirmation of the Local Government Settlement.

Table 5 Scottish Government Funding Assumptions

2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30
0%	0%	0%	+0%	+1%	+1%
£0m	£0m	£0m	£0m	£2.980m	£3.010m

- 7.33 The MTFP assumes that all new legislative pressures and any requirements of the Local Government Finance Settlement such as the social care living wage commitment, Carers Act etc. will be fully funded by the Scottish Government. There is clearly an element of risk in this assumption given anticipated pressures on the Scottish Government’s budget.

Demographics (Impact on Funding)

- 7.34 In line with the demographic pressures discussed above, an estimate of the impact of demographic changes on the General Revenue Grant has been included. This update of the MTFP assumes an increase of approximately 0.1% in funding for general population growth every year of the Medium-Term Financial Plan (under the mid-range scenario). This is highly speculative and is dependent on the funding for Councils with reducing populations transferring to Councils with growing populations. These adjustments tend to take several years to work their way through the Local Government Settlement and the impact is often dampened by the “floor mechanism” which is in place to protect Councils from large movements in funding.

Council Tax Income

- 7.35 For Council Tax, there are potentially two sources of additional income that are factored into this update of the Medium-Term Financial Plan.
- 7.36 Firstly, in relation to the projected growth in the number of Band D equivalent properties. Scenarios have been modelled around the impact of population growth on the Council Tax base in line with the demographic assumptions outlined above.
- 7.37 Second is the capacity for the Council to increase the level of Council Tax charges. On 1 March 2023, the Council approved a Council Tax increase of 3.9% for 2023/24 which was the lowest increase in Scotland. The Council also agreed indicative Council Tax increases of **3.9%** for 2024/25 and 2025/26. Beyond that, under the mid-range scenario, the working assumption for the purposes of preparing this update of the MTFP is that Council Tax will increase by **3%** in each year of the Plan. The actual level of Council Tax, however, will be determined by Council each year in approving the final Revenue Budget.
- 7.38 In addition, there are two other potential developments that may increase the level of Council Tax income which the Scottish Government are currently consulting on. Firstly, there is a proposal to adjust the multiplier on Council Tax bandings E through to H and secondly, whether a premium might be added to second homes.
- 7.39 Both of these proposals have the potential to generate significant levels of additional Council Tax income. However, the timing and phasing of both proposals is not yet clear, so for that reason this additional income has not been factored into any scenario within the MTFP.

Fees and Charges

- 7.40 The proposed MTFP assumes that the Council raises its charges for goods and services by between 3% and 5% per annum. Decisions on actual levels of charges will be considered by the Council in setting the Final Revenue Budget.

Utilisation of Reserves

- 7.41 The Council could consider the utilisation of Reserves on a non-recurring basis to manage budget pressures in the short term. However, Reserves are only available on a one-off, non-recurring basis. Any proposals to utilise Reserves to support recurring expenditure will require either an exit strategy or further savings to be identified.
- 7.42 All the forecasts discussed in paragraphs 7.3 to 7.41 are extremely uncertain. Actual income and expenditure will depend on several factors which are set out within the Risk Assessment (section 10) commentary in this report.

Medium Term Financial Plan – Estimated Net Financial Pressures

- 7.43 The estimated levels of net financial pressures identified under each scenario are summarised in **Table 6** below and set out in detail in **Appendix A**.

Table 6 Estimated Net Financial Pressures

	24/25	25/26	26/27	27/28	28/29	29/30	Total
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Optimistic	14.6	(2.1)	(2.2)	1.5	0.4	(4.7)	7.6
Mid- Range	27.6	11.5	12.0	17.9	15.3	10.5	94.8
Pessimistic	43.6	26.4	27.5	35.1	31.8	27.6	192.0

- 7.44 **Table 6** above sets out scenarios with cumulative net financial pressures of up to **£192 million** over the six-year period. While the level of net pressures identified will undoubtedly change as work progresses on the Revenue Budget, this provides an indication of the scale of the financial challenge potentially facing the Council over the six-year period 2024/25 to 2029/30. These scenarios include the expenditure pressures that will be brought forward as part of the detailed consideration of future years' Revenue Budgets.
- 7.45 There are significant variations between the scenarios due to the sensitivities around the financial modelling. For example, over the six years there is almost £35 million of a difference between the optimistic and pessimistic scenarios on pay inflation. Non staff inflation varies by over £53 million and projected levels of Scottish Government funding by around £36 million.
- 7.46 It is important to note that the budget reductions identified in **Table 6** are in addition to the significant reductions that have been delivered in previous financial years.

7.47 ACTION: The Council is asked to request the Strategic Lead – Finance & Business Support maintain the Medium-Term Financial Plan and further refine the assumptions that underpin it.

8. REVENUE BUDGET – PROPOSED APPROACH

8.1 The MTFP is designed to inform the direction of travel of the Council for financial planning purposes. As detailed budget proposals are developed the broad assumptions included in the MTFP will be superseded by more detailed analysis of individual cost pressures and the identification of potential budget reductions.

8.2 As has been the case for a number of years, the Executive Leadership Team are preparing budget submissions in line with the approved Financial Strategy and Principles and strategic objective in the Corporate Plan as follows -

- Tackling poverty
- Tackling climate change and supporting sustainable places
- Growing a sustainable and inclusive local economy
- Enabling our children and young people to achieve their full potential
- Protecting and caring for our most vulnerable people
- Supporting and promoting physical and mental wellbeing
- Placing communities at the heart of how we work

8.3 The Council previously approved the 2024/25 and 2025/26 Provisional Revenue Budgets on 1 March 2023 (Report No. 23/72 refers). In doing so, the Council approved expenditure pressures of **£8.776 million** and budget reductions of **£7.069 million** which are summarised in **Table 7** below. This is the starting point for the 2024/25, 2025/26 and 2026/27 Revenue Budget that will be considered on by Council on 28 February 2024.

Table 7 2024/25 & 2025/26 Provisional Revenue Budget Decisions

	Expenditure Pressures		Reductions	
	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000
Tackling poverty	45	50	-	-
Tackling climate change and supporting sustainable places	-	-	250	250
Developing a resilient, stronger and greener local economy	-	-	-	173
Enabling our children and young people to achieve their full potential	2,438	2,029	895	397
Protecting and caring for our most vulnerable people	20	20	50	-
Supporting and promoting physical and mental wellbeing	-	-	351	351
Working in partnership with communities	1,112	764	537	205
Organised to Deliver / Transformation	1,837	461	669	2,575
Total per year	5,452	3,324	3,118	3,951
Grand Total		8,776		7,069

8.4 The Executive Leadership Team are updating the previously approved expenditure pressures for 2024/25 and 25/26 and preparing new pressures for 2026/27. These pressures will supersede the high-level assumptions included in section four of the Medium-Term Financial Plan.

8.5 ACTION: The Council is asked to approve the setting of the 2024/25 Final Revenue Budget, updating of the 2025/26 Provisional Revenue Budget and setting of the 2026/27 Provisional Revenue Budget on 28 February 2024.

8.6 A reminder of decisions taken on 1 March 2023 will be shared with elected members in October 2023. Updated Revenue Budget submissions will be shared with elected members from November 2023 to allow for scrutiny of proposals. To streamline the process for both elected members and officers, briefings will be provided when there have been significant changes or material developments impacting on the Council. These will include when budget submissions are available for elected member consideration, and the publication of the Scottish Budget / Local Government Finance Circular later in the year.

Perth & Kinross Integration Joint Board

- 8.7 It is anticipated that Perth & Kinross Integration Joint Board (IJB) will continue to progress the development of integrated budgets which will bring together funding from both the Council and NHS Tayside. Discussions remain ongoing with all three parties as to the potential implications for the Council's Revenue Budget process. The outcome of this will be reported to future meetings of the Council. It is important to recognise the financial challenges faced by both the Council and NHS Tayside and how this may impact on the work of the IJB.
- 8.8 At this time, it is anticipated the IJB will notify the Council (and NHS Tayside) of the funding required for their Strategic Delivery Plan. The level of funding requested will then be assessed in the context of the overall level of resources available to the Council in arriving at a recommendation on funding for the IJB in 2024/25 and beyond.

Arm's Length External Organisations (ALEOs)

- 8.9 Council officers are currently supporting the Council's three Arm's Length External Organisations (ALEOs): Live Active Leisure; Perth Theatre & Concert Hall Ltd. and Culture Perth & Kinross as they review their business models in light of increasing financial pressures on their operation; their recovery from the impact of the Covid pandemic and the opportunities presented by the opening of new facilities.
- 8.10 The budgets for the Council's ALEOs are considered and determined by their respective Boards. In the context of constrained financial resources, the approach adopted to the Council's future funding of their operations will, however, be based on the same focus on reviewing and reducing expenditure as is being applied to Council Services.

9. COMPOSITE CAPITAL BUDGET – PROPOSED APPROACH

- 9.1 On 6 October 2021 the Council approved the Investment Blueprint which supports a more transparent and flexible approach to investment decision making and support the long-term vision of the Council (Report No. 21/180 refers).

- 9.2 The Investment Blueprint set out five overarching principles to inform decision making and ensure that investment of public money is directed to where it is most needed. The principles are that investment decisions must:
- mitigate against the impact of climate change
 - promote inclusive economic growth and a vibrant economy
 - promote equality and fairness
 - support the delivery of sustainable public services through effective management of assets
 - promote and enhance digital inclusion
- 9.3 The Blueprint is intended to help shape and inform a rolling 30 Year unfunded Investment Plan together with a 6-year rolling delivery plan which will detail the delivery of costed and funded projects and programmes developed from proposals within the 30 Year Plan.
- 9.4 Proposals set out within the 30-year investment plan will be subject to the Council's project governance framework, building in further opportunity to review, respond and adapt the Plan to respond to changing needs, circumstances and priorities as they emerge. The Plan will be reviewed annually by elected members to ensure that proposals continue to meet the strategic priorities of the Council.
- 9.5 The Council also agreed that investment proposals would be subject to the 5 Case Model (HM Treasury Green Book approach).
- 9.6 In line with the Investment Blueprint this will be extended to all future programmes in the form of an Impact Analysis Report which will profile the impact of investment proposals on assets.
- 9.7 It is anticipated that the Capital Asset Management Strategy and Capital Asset Management Plan will be considered by Council on 6 December 2023.
- 9.8 However, it is highly likely that the Council will experience further cost pressures on the Capital Budget. The Capital Budget will be updated on 28 February 2024.
- 9.9 ACTION: The Council is asked to approve the setting of the Capital Budget on 28 February 2024.**

10. RESERVES UPDATE

- 10.1 The Council's Reserves Strategy is subject to an annual review to ensure that recommendations on the use of Reserves take due cognisance of the Council's anticipated cash flows and make reasonable provision, within available resources, for both predicted liabilities and unforeseen events. The latest update of the Reserves Strategy was approved by the Council on 1 March 2023 (Report No. 23/72 refers).
- 10.2 The Unaudited 2022/23 Annual Accounts show that the Council had a General Fund Balance (excluding the Housing Revenue Account) of **£70.046 million** at 31 March 2023 with **£51.876 million** earmarked for known commitments. This results in uncommitted General Fund Reserves of **£18.170 million** at 31 March 2023 which is in line with the approved Reserves Strategy.
- 10.3 The Council's Useable Reserves as at 31 March 2023 (per the Unaudited 2022/23 Annual Accounts) are summarised as follows:

Table 8 General Fund Reserves

Total Useable Reserve as at 31 March 2023	£102.674m
Less:	
General Fund Earmarked Reserves (see Appendix C)	£51.876m
Housing Revenue Account <i>These balances are earmarked for use on Housing Revenue Account activities <u>only</u>.</i>	£2.647m
Capital Fund <i>The Fund can be <u>only</u> used to meet the principal element of loan repayments or to defray capital expenditure.</i>	£26.343m
Insurance Fund <i>The fund is used to meet the future liabilities of the Council self-insuring for certain categories of insurance.</i>	£1.306m
Capital Receipts Reserve <i>This Reserve holds proceeds from capital receipts for future investment.</i>	£2.245m
Capital Grants Unapplied <i>The Capital Grants Unapplied Reserve holds capital grants which have been received by the Council for which the capital works have not yet been undertaken or completed.</i>	£0.087m
General Fund Uncommitted Balance at 31 March 2023	£18.170m

- 10.4 The level of uncommitted Reserves of **£18.170 million** represents around **4%** of the 2023/24 net Revenue Budget. This is in line with the approved Reserves Strategy of holding between 2% & 4% of the net Revenue Budget as uncommitted.
- 10.5 In recent years uncommitted Reserves have been required to meet significant additional expenditure responding to both severe weather events and winter maintenance. **Table 9** sets out the levels of over and under spends in winter maintenance over the last ten years with a net use of Reserves of **£3.061 million**. In addition, the Perth & Kinross Integration Scheme adds a further risk in relation to potential health and social care over spends (as was the case in 2018/19 and 2019/20).

Table 9 Winter Maintenance Final Over / Under Spends

2022/23	Over spend of £759,000
2021/22	Over spend of £225,000
2020/21	Over spend of £1.024 million
2019/20	Over spend of £648,000
2018/19	Under spend of £143,000
2017/18	Over spend of £1.300 million
2016/17	Under spend of £540,000
2015/16	Over spend of £59,000
2014/15	Over spend of £260,000
2013/14	Under spend of £531,000

10.6 The updated Reserves Strategy will be presented to Council on 22 February 2023 and will include options on how Reserves might be utilised over the medium term.

10.7 ACTION: The Council is asked to approve the submission of the updated Reserves Strategy to Council on 28 February 2024.

11. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT

11.1 In agreement with tenants, the Council will continue to develop a medium / long term funding strategy for investment based upon linking annual reviews of rents to both the Tenants' and Council priorities; consideration of the state of the local economy and creating more efficient services in the future. Any revisions to the Council's Housing Investment Programme, Housing Repairs, Locality Services and the rental strategy will be subject to consultation with the Tenants.

11.2 It is anticipated that the Health & Social Wellbeing Committee will determine the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget and rent levels for 2023/24 at its meeting on 24 January 2024. It is also anticipated that the five-year Housing Investment Programme will be submitted for consideration by the Committee based on the requirements of the Housing Delivery Plan.

11.3 ACTION: The Council is asked to endorse the proposals to determine the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget and rent levels for 2023/24 and the five-year Housing Investment Programme at the meeting of the Housing & Communities Committee on 24 January 2024.

12. WORKFORCE PLANNING MEASURES

- 12.1 The Council values its employees, their skills, dedication, and passion to ensure it delivers essential services to the people, businesses and communities of Perth and Kinross. Its people continue to be its most important asset and remain at the heart of everything it does.
- 12.2 The Council is currently undertaking a senior leadership review that sets out its ambitions to build and deliver its vision in a way that reflects its values and allows it to best serve the needs of the people of Perth and Kinross. The new structure and operating model will ensure that the Council is organised to deliver the refreshed Corporate Plan and priorities agreed in December 2022.
- 12.3 The Council's purpose, values, culture, and ethos to transform services and deliver efficiencies to prepare for the future remain pivotal. Investment in building the capability and capacity in the workforce through learning and development opportunities, boosting productivity, encouraging innovation and creativity, embracing agility, digital technology and promoting wellbeing and resilience continue to be key to future plans. These commitments will enable it to match its ambition for transforming services, growing the economy, reducing inequalities, protecting vulnerable people and supporting young people to be all they can be.
- 12.4 Financial pressures, changing priorities and demand for Council services continue to inform the Council with a focus on multi-disciplinary teams, integrated working and more locality-based decision-making. The Council in recognition of the inter-connectedness of workforce, digital and use of property are taking a proactive approach in working with communities, its partners and other stakeholders to deliver and prepare for new influences to ensure our workforce supports the delivery of the strategic objectives.
- 12.5 The Council's workforce management strategy continues to provide a strong basis for developing the workforce of the future helping us create the conditions to meet the future workforce, financial and demographic challenges and requirements of the organisation. Adopting a more effective and consistent approach to workforce management, a new leadership competency framework and new leadership performance framework will also be developed and rolled out. This will focus our contributions against Corporate Priorities and the delivery of key outcomes and associated output by leaders and their teams. Development and talent management will also enable us to provide versatile people solutions to support the future strategic direction of the organisation. We continue to invest in training and development opportunities for young people via Apprenticeship and Graduate Programmes. A focus on health and wellbeing and resilience are key to sustaining a healthy working environment and positive wellbeing culture and we continue to review and

refresh the wide range of health and wellbeing initiatives and support we offer to our workforce. The Council is proud to be a Fair Work employer and continues to consult and engage with employees and their trade union representatives on improvements in our employment practices and arrangements. Equalities and fairness will continue to be core principles in its workforce strategy. This will ensure we continue to have the right skills in the right place when we need them and will contribute to working together to ensure everyone can live life well.

13. TRANSFORMATION & CHANGE STRATEGY

13.1 The Transformation & Change Strategy, Financial Strategy and Medium-Term Financial Plan, all align to support the delivery of the Council's vision of "**a Perth and Kinross where everyone can live life well, free from poverty and inequality**" together with the strategic priorities and key objectives outlined within the new Corporate Plan.

13.2 The Transformation & Change Strategy recognised that due to the size and complexity of the organisation a range of approaches to change would be required –

- transforming our customer's experience
- transforming the shape and structure of our organisation
- transforming our systems and processes
- transforming our spending and response to demand

13.3 It also clearly set out that to support the necessary change the Council needed to:

- Take a greater collaborative approach to the delivery of our priorities.
- Create the environment where staff at all levels could take greater responsibility, be risk aware and take greater responsibility and ownership of their own areas of work.
- Have a more accessible organisation, with the right information at the right time for staff to be able to assist and support people more effectively.
- Enable staff and managers to adopt more of an enabling and empowering leadership style.

13.4 It was agreed that the programme would be developed and phased over a five year period, with work undertaken during year one (2023/24) being key to setting the foundation for the successful delivery of the programme in future years. To build these foundations, focus during the first year has been around the Strategic Leadership Review and the nine agreed consolidation workstreams. The nine identified consolidation workstreams look to identify opportunities to consolidate functions and activities that are currently

disaggregated, with the aim of reducing any areas of duplication, improving our systems and processes and putting the customer at the centre.

- 13.5 It was also recognised that to enable change the Council needed to set the right conditions so that its people felt supported through organisational transformation. Fundamental to supporting staff is the cultural engagement programme, which has a focus on purpose, vision and values, ensuring that these are reflected in behaviours. It looks to continue to grow a culture where individuals are valued and treated with respect.
- 13.6 Within the Strategic Planning Update and 2023-26 General Fund Budget Report approved in March 2023 (Report No. 23/72 refers), a £500,000 investment was approved. This funding will provide additional capacity, enabling a greater focus on planning and support to the delivery of the overall programme.
- 13.7 On 13 September 2023, the Finance & Resources Committee were provided with a comprehensive update on the progress being made to deliver the Council's Transformation & Change Strategy (Report No. 23/245 refers). It also provided an overview of the progress made to create the conditions for the organisation to change as well as providing an overview of progress on individual projects.
- 13.8 The Finance & Resources Committee also approved the allocation of additional funding from the earmarked Reserve for Workforce Management & Transformation to support the delivery of the programme.

14. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 14.1 Developing the Medium-Term Financial Plan requires consideration of the strategic, operational and financial risks potentially facing the Council. Both the uncertainty of future events and resource constraints make it impractical to mitigate against all potential risks. In developing the Medium-Term Financial Plan, the Council must also be aware of the sustainability of its expenditure proposals. Significant issues, which are of relevance in determining the Revenue Budget, are outlined below.

Structural Deficit

- 14.2 The Council has a known structural deficit of **£11.954 million** that, in order to deliver a legal, balanced budget will have to be addressed from 2024/25. To the extent that recurring solutions to addressing this gap are not identified, then this remains a risk in future years. The size of the structural deficit will also be influenced by the effect of current year pay awards that exceed budgeted levels and any shortfall in the identification of recurring budget reductions to fund expenditure pressures.

Local Government Funding

- 14.3 It is anticipated that the Council will receive the 2024/25 financial settlement in December 2023. The Scottish Government have advised that information on future financial years will also be issued at that time. However, there is no information on at what level of detail will be provided i.e. individual Council level.
- 14.4 Future funding settlements will be influenced by many aspects of the wider economic climate and UK and Scottish Government policies. The global economic situation including the cost of living, the impact of the UK leaving the European Union and the UK and Scottish Government's response to Covid-19 may result in significant additional uncertainty over future funding levels.
- 14.5 The Scottish Government's most recent Medium Term Financial Strategy also identified a "modelled shortfall" of **£1.875 billion** by 2028/29
- 14.6 The potential for cash and real terms reductions in funding beyond financial year 2024/25 is considered to represent a significant risk in the management of the budget over the medium term.
- 14.7 Once inflation is included, these factors may result in further significant real terms reductions in funding to the Council over the medium term at a time of rising demand for Council services.
- 14.8 At this time, there is also no information on any conditions which may be attached to the local government finance settlement in 2024/25 and beyond, or indeed opportunities.

- 14.9 Following the devolvement of a number of taxes to the Scottish Government, under the terms of the Scotland Acts, the actual level of funding available to the public sector is more directly linked to the performance of the Scottish economy. Income from devolved taxation will be dependent upon the relative performance of the Scottish economy.

Final Pay Awards

- 14.10 The 2023/24 pay negotiations have not yet concluded with non-teaching unions. At the time of writing, negotiations are underway whilst Trade Unions are preparing for industrial action.
- 14.11 In 2023/24 the Council has budgeted for a 3% increase in the pay bill for all staff groups. There is a significant risk that this provision, along with Scottish Government funding, will be insufficient to meet the final pay award for 2023/24. To the extent that the final pay award exceeds the additional funding and the budgeted provision, this will lead to additional costs in 2023/24 and add to the structural deficit for 2024/25.
- 14.12 Beyond the current year, there is also a further risk that future years' pay settlements are more than budgeted assumptions resulting in further financial pressures.
- 14.13 There is a further risk arising from the impact of historic and future pay awards on existing pay and grading structures. Depending on the outcome of final pay negotiations, and how they affect the lower end of the pay scale, there may be a requirement to undertake a review of the pay and grading structure.

Expenditure Pressures

- 14.14 Elected members have previously been briefed on the current challenges in the construction sector and as widely reported, supply chain pressures are emerging across all sectors of the economy. There is accordingly a risk in expenditure pressures within both the Revenue and Capital Budgets increase over the short and medium term.

Implications of Capital Budget

- 14.15 The Council has an established policy of drawing down the Capital Fund to support capital expenditure. As the Capital Fund reduces, resources will have to be redirected from the Revenue Budget to support the loan repayments over the short to medium term.

Council Tax

- 14.16 The Medium-Term Financial Plan and Capital Budget funding strategy assumes levels of growth in the number of Band D equivalent properties. These assumptions are based on levels of growth currently being experienced. If these levels of growth in the number of properties do not continue there is a risk to the budgeted level of Council Tax income.

Perth & Kinross Integration Joint Board

- 14.17 The Integration Joint Board has received significant additional Scottish Government funding, linked to national policy initiatives, over the last three years either directly or channelled through the NHS and there is an assumption that this will both continue and increase in future years in line with Scottish Government announcements. There is a risk that Scottish Government funding for health and social care does not fully reflect anticipated increases in costs including demand and inflationary pressures.
- 14.18 As set out in the Council's response to the Scottish Government consultation on a National Care Service (Report No. 21/185 refers), there is the potential that the final agreed model for delivery may have an impact upon the Council's future.

Inflation

- 14.19 There is a risk that levels of Service specific inflation further exceed budgeted provisions and that levels of general inflation cannot be contained within existing resources. This may lead to further reductions in levels of service in order to contain these inflationary pressures. Further increases in the National Living Wage and "Foundation Living Wage" may exacerbate this risk with pressure to compensate providers and suppliers for enhanced wage rates.

Current Economic Climate

- 14.20 There is a risk that both the Council's capacity to generate income, and the expenditure it incurs in meeting demand for its Services, may be less predictable in the current volatile economic climate.
- 14.21 In terms of income generation, there is a continued risk that Council Tax collection levels, commercial rental income and other areas of income generated by the Council may be further affected.

- 14.22 The economic climate and increases in the cost of living may also increase need for and expenditure on Council services – particularly around poverty. As far as possible, this risk will be managed within the Council’s available resources.

Demographics

- 14.23 The overall population of Perth and Kinross is anticipated to reduce by around 1.0% over the next 25 years based upon National Registrars of Scotland forecasts. This may lead to reduced funding from Scottish Government.
- 14.24 However, within these overall projections the population aged over 65 is projected to grow significantly. This may place an additional financial pressure on both the Council and the Integration Joint Board into future years’ Revenue Budgets and financial plans.
- 14.25 The level and components of growth will be largely dependent on complex net migration patterns which are difficult to forecast with any certainty.
- 14.26 The needs of the population are also changing with more complex intervention measures required to protect young and old people alike.

Climate Change

- 14.27 On 19 June 2019, Council passed a Motion that committed it to leading by example in accelerating the transformational change required to address the Climate Emergency, which had been declared by both the UK and Scottish Parliaments earlier that year. On 18 December 2019, the Council approved an Interim Climate Emergency Report and Action Plan (Report No. 19/362 refers) and on 30 August 2021, the Council agreed to the establishment of a Climate Change Commission (Report No. 21/142 refers) which will provide scrutiny and oversight to Perth and Kinross’s Climate Change Plan.
- 14.28 Legislation has been introduced by the Scottish Government that will aim to ensure Scotland reaches net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2045. There are also a range of challenging intermediate targets and a further possibility that these targets will be accelerated by legislation.
- 14.29 As the Council strives to decarbonise, this will undoubtedly mean significant additional investment will be required. However, it must also be noted that there are major, current and proposed, national funding sources available and the Council must ensure it is in a position to fully capitalise on these.

Response to Covid-19

- 14.30 The long-term impacts of Covid-19 on society remain unknown at this stage. In terms of expenditure, there will be a requirement for the Council to invest in economic regeneration, to further support communities and to respond to emerging developments / health & wellbeing. In addition, there may be further pressures on household incomes leading to increases in poverty that may require a Council response. Similarly, there is likely to be an impact on income streams, both in terms of Council Tax and fees & charges. For this update of the Medium-Term Financial Plan, it is assumed that the initial cost will be incurred in early years with the impact reducing as the Covid-19 virus is managed and / or resources are redirected across the Council.

Arm's Length External Organisations

- 14.31 There is an ongoing risk to the financial sustainability of the Council's three Arm's Length External Organisations. All three ALEOs may experience reduced income and additional costs as they adjust their offer to respond to the consequences of Covid-19 and the pressures arising from wider economic pressures.

Severe Weather

- 14.32 There is a risk that the Council incurs further significant levels of expenditure responding to severe weather as has been the case in previous years – this is summarised in **Table 9** above.

15. CONCLUSIONS

- 15.1 In common with all Scottish local authorities and the wider public sector, Perth & Kinross Council continues to anticipate a period of financial constraint and growing costs and need for services.
- 15.2 Responding to the cost of living challenges has given rise to significant financial pressure on the Council's Revenue Budget over the short to medium term, and the longer-term impact upon service demand; service delivery and the Council's ability to generate and collect income will take some time to establish.
- 15.3 The Council continues to take proactive measures to enable it to address these challenges from a robust financial position and continues to develop and strengthen its arrangements for financial and resource management.

15.4 The continued roll out of the Transformation & Change Strategy will further support the Council's response.

15.5 The Council remains committed to modernising and improving the efficiency of functions. This update of the Medium-Term Financial Plan reinforces the Council's commitment to the delivery of excellent services in the context of meeting challenging savings targets which requires the engagement of the Council's workforce; Elected Members; Community Planning Partners and the communities which it serves.

Author

Name	Designation	Contact Details
Scott Walker	Chief Accountant	chxfinance@pkc.gov.uk

Approved

Name	Designation	Date
Stewart Mackenzie	Head of Finance	25 September 2023
Karen Donaldson	Chief Operating Officer	25 September 2023

1. IMPLICATIONS, ASSESSMENTS, CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Strategic Implications	Yes / None
Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement	None
Corporate Plan	Yes
Resource Implications	
Financial	Yes
Workforce	Yes
Asset Management (land, property, IST)	Yes
Assessments	
Equality Impact Assessment	Yes
Strategic Environmental Assessment	Yes
Sustainability (community, economic, environmental)	Yes
Legal and Governance	None
Risk	None
Consultation	
Internal	Yes
External	None
Communication	
Communications Plan	None

1. Strategic Implications

1.1 The Council's Corporate Plan 2022 – 2027 lays out seven outcome focussed strategic objectives which provide clear strategic direction, inform decisions at a corporate and service level and shape resources allocation. They are as follows:

- Tackling poverty
- Tackling climate change and supporting sustainable places
- Growing a sustainable and inclusive local economy
- Enabling our children and young people to achieve their full potential
- Protecting and caring for our most vulnerable people
- Supporting and promoting physical and mental wellbeing
- Placing communities at the heart of how we work

1.2 This report relates to all these objectives.

2. Resource Implications

Financial

- 2.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report other than those reported within the body of the main report.

Workforce

- 2.2 There are no direct workforce implications arising from this report other than those reported within the body of the main report.

Asset Management (land, property, IT)

- 2.3 There are no direct asset management implications arising from this report other than those reported within the body of the main report.

3. Assessments

Equality Impact Assessment

- 3.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, the Council is required to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between equality groups. Carrying out Equality Impact Assessments for plans and policies allows the Council to demonstrate that it is meeting these duties.
- 3.2 The information contained within this report has been considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment process (EqIA) and has been assessed as **not relevant** for the purposes of EqIA.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 3.3 The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 places a duty on the Council to identify and assess the environmental consequences of its proposals.
- 3.4 The information contained within this report has been considered under the Act. However, no action is required as the Act does not apply to the matters presented in this report.

Sustainability

- 3.5 Under the provisions of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 the Council has to discharge its duties in a way which contributes to the achievement of sustainable development. In terms of the Climate Change Act,

the Council has a general duty to demonstrate its commitment to sustainability and the community, environmental and economic impacts of its actions.

- 3.6 The information contained within this report has been considered under the Act. However, no action is required as the Act does not apply to the matters presented in this report.

4. Consultation

Internal

- 4.1 The Chief Executive, Executive Directors and Chief Operating Officer have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

2. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 2.1 No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above report.

3. APPENDICES

- Appendix A (i) – Optimistic Scenario
- Appendix A (ii) – Mid-Range Scenario
- Appendix A (iii) – Pessimistic Scenario
- Appendix B – Assumptions Underlying Medium-Term Financial Plan
- Appendix C – Summary of General Fund Balances as at 31 March 2023

APPENDIX A (i)

	OPTIMISTIC						Total £000
	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000	2028/29 £'000	2029/30 £'000	
Structural Deficit	11,954	0	0	0	0	0	11,954
STAFF RELATED EXPENDITURE							
Pay Inflation	4,956	5,055	5,157	5,260	5,365	5,472	31,265
Increments	750	750	750	750	750	750	4,500
Employers Superannuation Rates - Single Status	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Employers Superannuation Rates - Teachers	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
NON STAFF RELATED PRESSURES							
Non Pay Inflation	7,582	4,924	3,310	3,561	3,505	2,385	25,267
Demographics	998	-908	748	4,049	2,329	1,018	8,234
Covid-19	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Loan Charges	450	450	450	450	450	450	2,700
Learning Estate	0	0	0	500	500	500	1,500
Service Concessions	0	0	0	0	4,000	0	4,000
FUNDING INCOME ASSUMPTIONS							
Scottish Government Funding	-2,980	-3,010	-3,040	-3,070	-6,202	-6,326	-24,627
Demographics	-1,605	-1,476	-1,410	-1,373	-1,317	470	-6,710
COUNCIL TAX ASSUMPTIONS							
Increase in charge	-4,882	-5,126	-5,382	-5,652	-5,934	-6,231	-33,207
Increase in base	-1,167	-1,212	-1,249	-1,286	-1,325	-1,364	-7,603
FEEs AND CHARGES							
	-1,428	-1,500	-1,575	-1,653	-1,736	-1,823	-9,714
TOTALS	14,629	-2,053	-2,240	1,535	385	-4,698	7,559

APPENDIX A (ii)

	MID - RANGE						Total £000
	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000	2028/29 £'000	2029/30 £'000	
Structural Deficit	11,954	0	0	0	0	0	11,954
STAFF RELATED EXPENDITURE							
Pay Inflation	7,434	7,657	7,887	8,124	8,368	8,619	48,089
Increments	750	750	750	750	750	750	4,500
Employers Superannuation Rates - Single Status	0	0	0	1,149	0	0	1,149
Employers Superannuation Rates - Teachers	0	0	0	756	0	0	756
NON STAFF RELATED PRESSURES							
Non Pay Inflation	11,461	9,061	6,789	6,834	6,870	6,764	47,779
Demographics	1,550	-192	1,537	4,932	3,130	1,911	12,868
Covid-19	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Loan Charges	450	450	450	450	450	450	2,700
Learning Estate	0	0	0	500	500	1,000	2,000
Service Concessions	0	0	0	0	4,000	0	4,000
FUNDING INCOME ASSUMPTIONS							
Scottish Government Funding	0	0	0	0	-2,980	-3,010	-5,990
Demographics	-201	-72	-6	31	87	190	30
COUNCIL TAX ASSUMPTIONS							
Increase in charge	-3,808	-3,998	-3,229	-3,391	-3,560	-3,739	-21,726
Increase in base	-875	-909	-936	-965	-993	-1,023	-5,702
FEEs AND CHARGES							
	-1,143	-1,188	-1,236	-1,285	-1,337	-1,390	-7,579
TOTALS	27,573	11,559	12,007	17,885	15,284	10,522	94,828

APPENDIX A (iii)

	PESSIMISTIC						Total £000
	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000	2028/29 £'000	2029/30 £'000	
Structural Deficit	11,954	0	0	0	0	0	11,954
STAFF RELATED EXPENDITURE							
Pay Inflation	9,913	10,309	10,721	11,150	11,596	12,060	65,750
Increments	750	750	750	750	750	750	4,500
Employers Superannuation Rates - Single Status	1,149	0	0	2,298	0	0	3,446
Employers Superannuation Rates - Teachers	756	0	0	1,513	0	0	2,269
NON STAFF RELATED PRESSURES							
Non Pay Inflation	15,930	14,074	12,152	11,747	12,215	12,154	78,272
Demographics	1,918	47	1,726	5,060	3,358	2,072	14,181
Covid-19	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Loan Charges	450	450	450	450	450	450	2,700
Learning Estate	0	0	0	500	750	1,500	2,750
Service Concessions	0	0	0	0	4,000	0	4,000
FUNDING INCOME ASSUMPTIONS							
Scottish Government Funding	2,980	2,950	2,921	2,891	0	0	11,742
Demographics	1,203	1,332	1,398	1,435	1,491	1,594	8,453
COUNCIL TAX ASSUMPTIONS							
Increase in charge	-1,953	-2,050	-1,076	-1,130	-1,187	-1,246	-8,643
Increase in base	-583	-606	-624	-643	-662	-682	-3,801
FEEs AND CHARGES							
	-857	-883	-909	-936	-964	-993	-5,543
TOTALS	43,610	26,374	27,508	35,084	31,797	27,658	192,031

APPENDIX B

Assumptions Underlying Medium Term Financial Plan

Pay Inflation

	24/25	25/26	26/27	27/28	28/29	29/30
Optimistic	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%
Mid-Range	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%
Pessimistic	4.0%	4.0%	4.0%	4.0%	4.0%	4.0%

Employer's Superannuation – Local Government Pension Scheme

	24/25	25/26	26/27	27/28	28/29	29/30
Optimistic	0%	-	-	0%	-	-
Mid-Range	0%	-	-	1%	-	-
Pessimistic	1%-	-	-	2%	-	-

Employer's Superannuation – Scottish Public Pension Agency (Teachers)

	24/25	25/26	26/27	27/28	28/29	29/30
Optimistic	0%	-	-	0%	-	-
Mid-Range	0%	-	-	1%	-	-
Pessimistic	1%-	-	-	2%	-	-

General Inflation

	24/25	25/26	26/27	27/28	28/29	29/30
Optimistic	2.5%	1.75%	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%
Mid-Range	3.5%	2.75%	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%
Pessimistic	4.5%	3.75%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%

Demographics – General Population

	24/25	25/26	26/27	27/28	28/29	29/30
Optimistic	0.0%	(0.1)%	(0.1)%	(0.1)%	(0.1)%	(0.2)%
Mid-Range	0.1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	(0.1)%
Pessimistic	0.2%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0%

Demographics – Older People

	24/25	25/26	26/27	27/28	28/29	29/30
Optimistic	2.7%	2.2%	3.1%	6.4%	4.5%	3.6%
Mid-Range	2.8%	2.3%	3.2%	6.5%	4.6%	3.7%
Pessimistic	2.9%	2.4%	3.3%	6.6%	4.7%	3.8%

Scottish Government Funding

	24/25	25/26	26/27	27/28	28/29	29/30
Optimistic	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	2%
Mid-Range	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%
Pessimistic	-1%	-1%	-1%	-1%	0%	0%

Council Tax Charge

	24/25	25/26	26/27	27/28	28/29	29/30
Optimistic	5.0%	5.0%	5.0%	5.0%	5.0%	5.0%
Mid-Range	3.9%	3.9%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%	3.0%
Pessimistic	2.0%	2.0%	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%	1.0%

Council Tax – No. of Band D Properties

	24/25	25/26	26/27	27/28	28/29	29/30
Optimistic	800	800	800	800	800	800
Mid-Range	600	600	600	600	600	600
Pessimistic	400	400	400	400	400	400

Fees & Charges

	24/25	25/26	26/27	27/28	28/29	29/30
Optimistic	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%
Mid-Range	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%
Pessimistic	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%

APPENDIX C

	Total Earmarked General Fund Balances
	£'000
Revenue Grants	16,270
Workforce Management (including Transformation)	9,530
Developer Contributions: Commuted Sums & Infrastructure and Affordable Housing	5,540
Affordable Housing (accrued from reduced Council Tax discount)	4,353
Covid-19	2,666
Children & Young People's Residential Care	2,139
Non-recurring pressures from 2022/23	1,699
Car Parking	1,512
Perth High School	1,446
Culture	1,172
Devolved School Management Balances	722
Decant Schools	700
Financial Insecurity	680
School Counsellors	556
Works Maintenance	400
Bertha Park High School	347
Modern Apprentices / Graduate Trainees	340
Property Maintenance	271
Primary School at Bertha Park	270
Perth & Kinross Offer	252
PH20	212
World Cycling Championships	180
Climate Change	153
Ventilation Measures	114
Salix Fund	113
Community Investment Fund	90
Local Action Partnerships	89
Grounds Maintenance	60
Total Earmarked Reserves	51,876

PERTH & KINROSS COUNCIL

4 October 2023

**WORKING SMARTER TRANSFORMATION PROJECT
PULLAR HOUSE MOTHBALLING /CITY CENTRE ACCOMMODATION OPTIONS**

Report by: Stephen Crawford, Head of Property Services
(Report No. 23/268)

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide an update on progress in relation to implementing the budget decision of March 2023 to: -
- a) mothball Pullar House from April 2024 and
 - b) realise savings in 2024/25 and 2025/26 from reviewing operational buildings through rationalisation, consolidation or working with other public sector partners.
- 1.2 The report sets out the high level emerging logistical, financial, operational and strategic risks and opportunities identified whilst undertaking the required work to implement Council's decision. Based on assessment of the implications of the mothballing proposal, it also seeks authority to undertake a more detailed options appraisal and develop a concurrent business case to create a Public Service Hub and retain Pullar House for consideration by Council in August 2024. The report also seeks approval to draw down funding from the Working Smarter earmarked reserves to complete this work.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that Council:
- i. notes the content of the report and the work undertaken to date to progress the decision of Council in March 2023, including the operational, financial, partnership and strategic implications which have been identified
 - ii. pauses the instruction from March 2023 to mothball Pullar House from April 2024
 - iii. notes that officers are currently developing a hybrid working policy for approval by January 2024
 - iv. agrees to the principle of the development of a public service hub
 - v. instructs officers to develop a business case, to include the potential purchase of Pullar House, in accordance with the Council's approved Investment Planning framework, for consideration and decision at a Special Council meeting in August 2024

- vi. in the absence of a viable business case being presented to Council for consideration in August 2024, proceeds to relocate staff and mothball Pullar House from 1 October 2024 and terminate the lease arrangement on 10 September 2025
- vii. agrees to a Special Council meeting on 19 August 2024 to make a final decision on the future of Pullar House; and
- viii. applies the funding of £179,000 from the Working Smarter earmarked reserve to take forward this work.

3. STRUCTURE OF REPORT

3.1 This report is structured over the following sections:

- Section 4: Background
- Section 5: Working Smarter Programme
- Section 6: Perth City Accommodation Analysis
- Section 7: Options
- Section 8: One Public Sector Estate – developing an integrated public service hub.
- Section 9: Conclusion

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 On 1 March 2023, the Council agreed the 2024/25 and 2025/26 provisional Revenue Budgets. This included the decision to make a **£400,000** saving from “mothballing” Pullar House from 1 April 2024 (costs based on operating costs reduced part year from 1 October 2024). In addition, from 1 April 2025, Council agreed a further saving of **£400,000** from the full year effect of “mothballing” Pullar House and **£1 million** from the review of operational buildings through rationalisation, consolidation or working with other public sector partners.
- 4.2 Since then, officers have been undertaking the necessary work to manage the logistical, financial and operational requirements and risks in relation to implementation of Council’s decision. This work has also identified potential opportunities which will not only meet the operational requirements of the Council for office accommodation but also facilitate the strategic ambition to design and deliver more effective and integrated public services in the future, whilst maintaining a strong Council presence in Perth city centre.
- 4.3 These matters are set out in the report, albeit at a high level, recognising that further detailed work will be required to enable Council to make a more fully informed decision regarding the future use, or not, of Pullar House. This work will provide a greater level of detail on the potential options for the building to become a public service hub. This is explored in more detail in Section 8 of this report.

5. WORKING SMARTER PROGRAMME

- 5.1 The Council has previously undertaken a significant office accommodation review in Perth (Perth Office Programme) which delivered a significant reduction in accommodate and subsequent costs in 2016/17. The key objectives of the programme delivered:
- the reduction of operating and property costs through reducing the Council's office accommodation footprint in Perth City.
 - investment in the maintenance; refurbishment and modernisation of Council owned property through savings generated from a phased withdrawal from leased accommodation.
 - Creation of a modern, flexible and efficient working environment for the current and future delivery of public services.
- 5.2 The Working Smarter Programme, approved by the Transformation and Change Board in April 2023, builds on this and is part of the Council approved Transformation and Change Strategy. This project aims to further transform how we work as a Council; making the best use of our people, financial resources, property and other physical assets and by optimising the use of digital technology to deliver modern ways of working.
- 5.2 The programme has inter-dependencies with other transformation projects and workstreams and key Council strategies including:
- One Public Estate
 - Property Asset Management
 - Digital Strategy
 - Corporate Workforce Plan
 - Culture Change Programme
 - Records Management Plan
 - Strategic Commissioning Plan for integrated health and care
 - Climate Change
 - Economic Wellbeing Strategy
 - Community Engagement - working with and within communities.
- 5.3 As part of the wider Working Smarter Programme, there is a specific project focussed on considering Perth City office accommodation options.
- 5.4 The decision of Council in March 2023 has provided a focus for the team. Work has been undertaken to firstly, identify and assess the risks for the Council in relation to moving staff, closing the main city centre public access point, and relocating the corporate records facility and the specialist CCTV infrastructure. This will also include the loss of rental charges from space used by partner organisations. All of these flow directly from the decision to mothball, then exit Pullar House. Secondly, and intrinsically linked, is the need to determine future office requirements within the city centre, given the decision to derive savings through consolidation/ rationalisation of the wider operational estate.

5.5 In terms of Pullar House, the Council currently has a 25-year lease which expires on 10 September 2025. Under the terms of the current lease, the Council has an option to:

- renegotiate the lease,
- walk away or,
- purchase the property at market value.

If we wish to exercise our right to purchase the property at market value, then this needs to be intimated to the Landlord by 10 September 2024.

5.6 The Perth City office project has **12 properties** within scope. These are listed below and include Pullar House. Each of the specified properties provide office accommodation as either their primary function or as part of the building function. Other Perth properties are excluded such as schools and ALEO accommodation as these do not offer clear options to relocate office accommodation. Similarly, the property at 1-5 High Street was considered as part of the previous Perth Office Programme and discounted as being unsuitable for conversion given the nature of the building, the listed elements and the significant capital cost associated with bringing it up to required specifications in terms of efficient, open plan and accessible working spaces.

5.7 The 12 properties currently provide office accommodation capacity of **12,636 m2**. The table below shows the current usage of office accommodation only. This analysis specifically excludes public counters and records storage across the properties as well as circulation and other non-operational space. Eight of the properties are owned by the Council, one is owned by the NHS and three are leased by the Council, including Pullar House, at a combined annual lease cost of £3.45 million. The current annual cost of Pullar House is £3.2 million.

Key:

properties with significant specialist accommodation

* Leased properties

Space only used for office accommodation	Capacity (m2)
Pullar House*	6,631
2 High Street	2,961
Carpenter House	505
Scott Street*#	263
St Martin's House*#	404
NAVIGATE (George Inn Lane) #	17
Almondbank House#	378
Beechgrove House	34
Colonsay Resource Centre#	269
Friarton Depot	572
Inveralmond Depot	556
Drumhar Health Centre (NHS)#	46
TOTAL	12,636

5.8 The office accommodation capacity provides open plan, cellular offices and meeting spaces. In some properties, the office space forms part of accommodation that is designated and designed to offer direct support and care to some of our priority vulnerable groups through easily accessible, flexible, non-stigmatised, therapeutic and trauma-informed environments. Those groups include young people including those disengaged from school or referred through the justice system, child/adult support and protection, services for people in the justice system and the management of offenders, people with learning disabilities and people who are experiencing drug or alcohol addictions and/or who require health treatment. Any reconfiguration of the estate requires careful consideration to ensure that these services can continue to be delivered effectively.

6. PERTH CITY ACCOMMODATION ANALYSIS

6.1 In light of the March 2023 decision of Council to mothball Pullar House, work undertaken to date includes:

- Assessment of city centre property portfolio to identify properties in scope
- Assessment of work styles of different office-based teams
- Audit of IT provision
- Mapping exercise of meeting/collaborative space availability and demand
- Assessment of relevant number of full time equivalent (FTE- Full Time Equivalent) employees within scope
- Assessment of current occupancy levels
- Forecast of future service and organisational needs
- Valuation and dilapidations assessment of Pullar House
- Assessment of HSCP requirements as per current occupation
- Phase 1 assessment of storage capacity and requirements
- Assessment of co-located team requirements

6.2 Whilst the decision to mothball Pullar House has provided a focus for the review of office accommodation, it has created a hiatus in other projects looking at future operating models for more integrated working with public and third sector partners. Uncertainty as to future accommodation capacity, type and location has stalled discussions with potential partners. Managers have also felt unable to reassess and give stronger messaging as to the required balance between home and office working needed to support more collaborative ways of working to deliver services.

6.3 Consequently, most service teams have been operating hybrid working to suit current working practices as opposed to implementing new ways of working. As a result, current desk usage figures for our main office accommodation (i.e., 2 High Street, Pullar House and Carpenter House – 30% average) do not reflect the space needed for an operating model designed to facilitate closer and more effective internal and external collaboration. If it was known that Pullar House was to be retained then as an organisation we could move to implement more integrated working around public protection and the delivery of our shared priorities around poverty, net zero and growing our city economy.

- 6.4 Implementing the March 2023 decision requires an understanding of emerging work practice as well as future office accommodation requirements. To assess this, managers provided data in relation to their current operating model and the estimated future space requirements to meet the business needs of services going forward, aligned to the ambition for more partnership working and integrated service delivery models. It is noted that the organisation is presently undergoing significant structural change. The leadership review has established fresh operational portfolios to be underpinned by closer internal and external collaboration. The estimated operating requirements reflect where we are at present in terms of known organisational structure and anticipated new ways of working. A new hybrid working policy is currently being developed. This will form part of the work to inform the business case.
- 6.5 In accordance with guidance from Scottish Futures Trust, a 10m² metric to cover individual working, collaboration, mentoring and secure/private working space is applied to establish the aggregate demand for net internal area office space. The metric does not include other spaces that form part of the overall spatial demand as outlined in paragraph 6.7 below. Based on the 799.5 FTE assessment of future need and the SFT metric above the Council will require 8000m² of office space. Any future operating model will be less desk driven and have more of a focus on collaborative spaces to facilitate work across new service teams and groupings.
- 6.6 This projected minimum need for approximately **8,000 m²** of desk space across Perth City is a significant 36% reduction from the Council's current 12,000sqm plus "office" accommodation, across all 12 sites in scope. This is in line with where other large organisations are in this post-covid environment. This requirement is based on a current working assumption of an equitable home/office split. This will be developed further for the business case and will be influenced by the hybrid working policy.
- 6.7 This 8,000 m² of assessed office accommodation required, **excludes** significant space requirements for other provision within these buildings including:
- receptions
 - public counters
 - accommodation for corporate records storage
 - Council chamber located in 2 High Street
 - health and social care services
 - specialist requirements currently provided for within Pullar House such as CCTV (Closed Circuit Television)
 - parking attendants
 - PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) storage health & social care needs

6.8 In developing options, buildings were categorised as follows:

Retain: anchor / strategically important	Release	Potentially Surplus
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 High Street, • Friarton Depot, • Inveralmond Depot, • Carpenter House, • Almondbank House, • Navigate (George Inn Lane) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colonsay Resource Centre • Beechgrove, • Drumhar (NHS) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pullar House • St Martins House • 68-86 Scott Street

6.9 Leaving aside the requirements excluded from the net space area calculation set out in 6.7, a high-level assessment of the data indicated that exiting Pullar House would leave the Council with an accommodation deficit of **2,000m²** in terms of office space plus a further deficit of **1,000 m²** for storage and archiving capacity to comply with statutory requirements of the Public Records (S) Act 2011. At present, corporate records are secured in a dedicated space within Pullar House but a project is currently underway to collate and appraise several thousand additional boxes of records which are presently dispersed and uncategorised across the wider council estate and to bring these into the central corporate records store and meet our information management obligations. This could potentially see an increase in demand for centralised records storage capacity. It is noted that the corporate records management requirement is not simply for storage/containment – many of the documents need to be accessible for ongoing use by officers.

6.10 To enable the Council to mothball and exit from Pullar House as directed, further recurring expenditure (over and above the ordinary costs associated with removal and relocation etc) will require to be incurred to secure sufficient accommodation and infrastructure to meet future business needs. This is considered by officers to be a material factor which requires further consideration by Council prior to implementation.

6.11 That being the case, given the Council's statutory duty to secure best value, a high level SWOT analysis has been carried out on the basis of both: -

- (A) - exiting Pullar House and
- (B) - retaining Pullar House

6.12 The purpose of the SWOT analysis is to identify the most cost-effective model to meet business needs whilst delivering on the Council decision to secure savings from consolidating the city centre property estate. A summary of this SWOT analysis is set out below. A more detailed analysis will be undertaken as part of the business case.

HIGH LEVEL SWOT ANALYSIS (A) - Exit Pullar House

<p>Strengths *</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction in fixed property costs • Potentially less direct carbon emissions • Less reliance on partners subsidising surplus accommodation • Maximises use of Council owned properties <p><i>*These are potential as the cost/impact of securing the required additional space is unknown as are the carbon costs of alternative accommodation solutions</i></p>	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requirement to rent 2000m2 for office space and 1000m2 for storage space • Exposure to greater financial risk with lease / adaptation costs, savings less certain including costs of change • Reduced public sector presence in Perth city centre. • Loss of control of a quality strategic site within city centre / cultural quarter and the ability to influence longer term city regeneration and economic growth. •
<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • relocation costs for additional office /storage/public reception space may significantly reduce/negate deliverable savings. • impact on city centre economic regeneration • operational inefficiency • undermines One Public Estate policy ambitions and opportunities for co-location currently in development 	<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mixed/flexible office property portfolio through leasing as opposed to ownership. • redesign operating model • repurpose existing surplus properties. • Potential market interest in the site, though other office accommodation available in the city centre

SWOT ANALYSIS (B) - Retain Pullar House

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meets all assessed business needs. • Ownership and control of strategic site within City Centre / Cultural Quarter • Purchase price within the current lease agreement significantly reduced in comparison to construction costs of required office space. • Reinforces public service presence. • Contribution to city centre economy 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surplus PKC office accommodation • Potentially reduced deliverable saving as compared with exiting PH if unable to secure partner commitment to shared location • Unknown net zero costs if the building is owned by the Council.
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Threats	Opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future net zero costs • Inability to sub-lease to partners and generate income. • Lack of interest in creating public sector and 3rd sector hub 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential to generate income from sub leasing surplus space. • Deliver on one public estate ambition with public partners • Capacity to accommodate the corporate Archives/Museum collection overspill. • Establish 3rd sector Fair City Hub • Asset resale or repurpose in line with long term ambition

7. OPTIONS

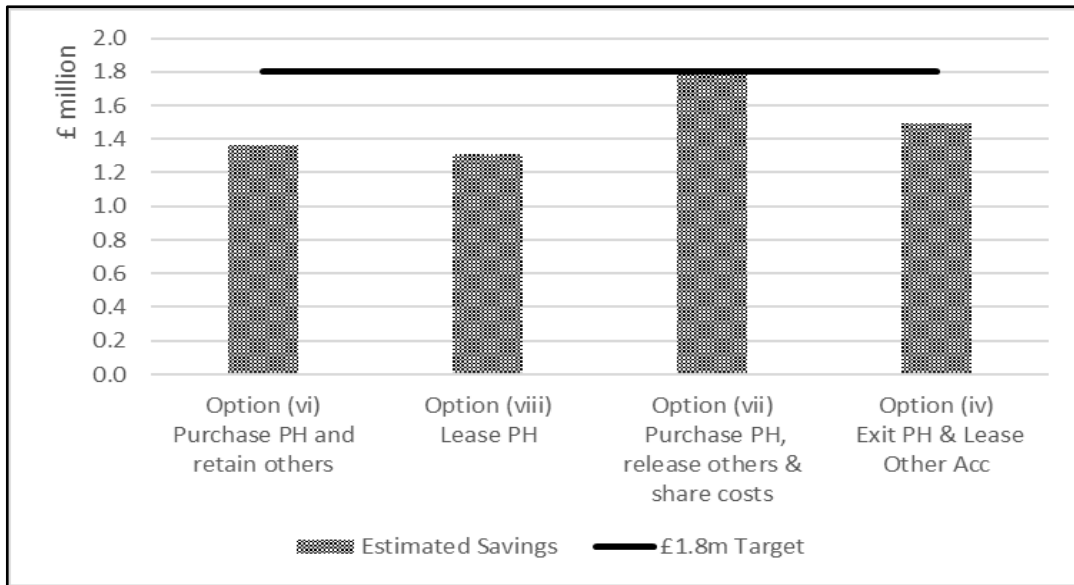
7.1 The SWOT analysis has been used to identify scenarios upon which an initial high-level options appraisal has been undertaken. These are set out below: -

- i. Exit Pullar House and retain all other potentially surplus office accommodation.
- ii. Exit Pullar House, retain all other potentially surplus offices and utilise vacant Council owned property such as Balhousie PS, Rodney Centre, 1-5 High Street, currently under option with developers.
- iii. Exit Pullar House, retain all other potentially surplus and utilise un-used capacity in appropriate Council locality properties (e.g., Town Halls, Community Halls, Area offices, locality depots) and community learning campuses surplus.
- iv. Exit Pullar House, retain all other potentially surplus accommodation and purchase or lease new premises which offer whatever shortfall in capacity is needed to meet the assessed office/storage/archive requirements.
- v. Exit Pullar House and all other potentially surplus properties.
- vi. Purchase Pullar House and retain all other potentially surplus properties.
- vii. Purchase Pullar House and release specific potentially surplus (Colonsay, Beechgrove, Drumhar, St Martins House & Scott Street)
- viii. Renegotiate a new lease for Pullar House

- 7.2 Options (i), (iii) and (v) are excluded on the basis that they cannot meet the assessed office accommodation needs.
- 7.3 Option (ii) is excluded due to the anticipated level of capital investment required to meet the assessed office accommodation need, meet building efficiency requirements and ensure accessibility compliance, significantly reducing the deliverable savings.
- 7.4 This leaves options (iv), (vi), (vii) and (viii) as potential viable scenarios requiring further consideration.
- 7.5 On basis of the risks and potential opportunities as identified by the SWOT analysis exercises, these four options compare as follows (** Option (viii) would be dependent upon the Council securing favourable lease terms): -

Known/Potential Benefits	Option (iv) Exit PH	Option (vi) Buy PH	Option (vii) Buy PH	Option (viii) Lease PH **
Accommodates/aligns with current operating model (hybrid)	x	x	x	x
Delivers Savings	x	x	x	x
One Public Sector Estate Ambition		x	x	x
Consolidation of City Centre Estate/ further potential savings			x	
Income generation opportunity		x	x	x
3 rd sector hub opportunity		x	x	x
Mitigate risk re museum collection store		x	x	x
Mitigate risk re AK Bell Archive overspill		x	x	x
Ownership/control over key strategic site		x	x	

- 7.6 High level financial modelling has also been undertaken for the four options identified above that merit further consideration. This modelling includes assumptions on future running costs, borrowing costs, potential income generation and cost of change. The estimated savings attached to each option are set out in the following graph and measured against the Council decision to achieve **£1.8 million** of recurring savings from 1 April 2025.



7.7 The high-level options appraisal indicates that retaining Pullar House potentially represents the best opportunity to not only deliver savings but to enable wider policy ambitions in terms of integrated service delivery, closer collaboration with the 3rd sector and optimising both commercial opportunities and the use of public sector assets through the “one public estate” approach. Retaining Pullar House also provides a potential solution to known or emerging risks in relation to storage of the wider museum collection (given the Council decision to defer investment in a new collection store) and the Council’s archive (which now exceeds the archive capacity at AK Bell).

8. ONE PUBLIC ESTATE – DEVELOPING AN INTEGRATED PUBLIC SERVICE HUB

8.1 Prior to this exercise, the Council’s Asset Management Team, in accordance with our approved Investment Blueprint, has been working with partners to develop a more strategic approach to the design of the future public sector property estate to support more integrated service delivery in line with key national drivers for more integration of public services and accommodation. This approach has already been implemented successfully, with the co-location of services with Police Scotland in James Square, Crieff and the Community Safety and Community Alarm Teams sharing Scottish Fire & Rescue accommodation at Perth Fire station.

8.2 The benefits of a one public estate approach are widely documented and include:

- delivering more cohesive and integrated services to better meet the needs of our communities;
- generate efficiencies and savings;
- create and promote growth in the local economy;
- reducing the carbon footprint of the public sector estate;
- opportunities to make further climate change adaptations to this smaller estate; reducing energy need and associated emissions; and
- releasing or repurposing surplus public service sites for potential affordable housing, community adoption or economic development.

- 8.3 As part of that work, there has been an ongoing project to consider the viability of developing an integrated public service hub in Perth City which brings services and agencies together in a single location to provide more cohesive service provision and an improved customer experience. Discussions have been ongoing with internal services, the Health & Social Care Partnership, Police Scotland, Scottish Government and 3rd sector organisations. These have been positive. However, the uncertainty around the Council's continuing occupation of Pullar House has impacted on progress.
- 8.4 The model being adopted is consistent with the principles of the recent Verity House agreement between Scottish Government and Local Government. Officers have had encouraging discussions with senior Scottish Government civil servants to explore opportunities.
- 8.5 Should the Council be minded to support the recommendations within this report, this will provide assurance to potential partners and enable the Council to enter into more formal discussions regarding the co-location of these services/agencies to Pullar House and the respective lease terms.

9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1 It is however recognised that the proposal is not without risk. Success is dependent upon several factors some of which are outwith our control (e.g., decisions of partners or an unexpected shift in anticipated market value of the property etc.) More detailed assessment and analysis is required to determine the viability of any potential business case for the purchase/retention of Pullar House. To ensure business continuity and mitigate risk however concurrent work will continue to identify suitable alternative office provision, public access points, storage and other specialist accommodation to ensure that the Council can proceed to mothball and exit Pullar House should the business case fail.
- 9.2 In preparing the outline business case, we will review the city centre property portfolio and undertake a more in-depth assessment of future business needs, availability and costs of external office / storage, alternative public counter accommodation, corporate records storage and costs of change.
- 9.3 Concurrent work will also be undertaken to determine the detailed costs associated with implementing the original decision to mothball and exit if a viable business case cannot be made to retain Pullar House.
- 9.4 Regardless of whether we decide to retain or exit Pullar House as an operational building, more detailed space planning work needs to be carried out alongside a review and development of the Council's hybrid working policy to ensure that our future operating model is effective and that our office property estate is fit for purpose. This exercise will move teams into smaller accommodation footprints over the next 9 months – 12 months either in readiness for public sector hub aspirations or to exit Pullar House in 2025.

- 9.5 Approval is sought to draw down £179,000 from the Working Smarter earmarked reserve to take this work forward. This funding will support project management, space planning and design costs, the cost of advice on any potential building remodelling, updated independent valuation advice and property marketing material which would be used to engage potential partners. It also includes funding towards a plan to exit Pullar House in the absence of a viable business case.
- 9.6 In terms of the current legal agreement in relation to Pullar House, if the Council wishes to exercise its right to purchase the property, it must commit to this by 10 September 2024. It is recommended that Council will agree the future of Pullar House at a Special meeting on 19 August 2024.
- 9.7 This report provides members with an update on the work undertaken to date to implement the decision of March 2023 to mothball Pullar House with a view to exit in 2025.
- 9.8 The work has identified a number of operational, financial, partnership and strategic implications which officers consider to be material and requiring further consideration by Council.

Name	Designation	Contact Details
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Approved

Name	Designation	Date
Thomas Glen	Chief Executive	26 September 2023

1. IMPLICATIONS, ASSESSMENTS, CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Strategic Implications	Yes / None
Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement	None
Corporate Plan	Yes
Resource Implications	
Financial	Yes
Workforce	Yes
Asset Management (land, property, IST)	Yes
Assessments	
Equality Impact Assessment	Yes
Strategic Environmental Assessment	Yes
Sustainability (community, economic, environmental)	Yes
Legal and Governance	None
Risk	None
Consultation	
Internal	Yes
External	None
Communication	
Communications Plan	None

1. Strategic Implications

Corporate Plan

1.1 The Council's Corporate Plan 2022 – 2027 lays out seven outcome focussed strategic objectives which provide clear strategic direction, inform decisions at a corporate and service level and shape resources allocation. They are as follows:

- Tackling poverty
- Tackling climate change and supporting sustainable places
- Growing a sustainable and inclusive local economy
- Enabling our children and young people to achieve their full potential.
- Protecting and caring for our most vulnerable people
- Supporting and promoting physical and mental wellbeing
- Placing communities at the heart of how we work

1.2 This report relates to all these objectives.

2. Resource Implications

Financial

2.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report other than those reported within the body of the main report.

Workforce

- 2.2 There are no direct workforce implications arising from this report other than those reported within the body of the main report.

Asset Management (land, property, IT)

- 2.3 There are no direct asset management implications arising from this report other than those reported within the body of the main report.

3. Assessments

Equality Impact Assessment

- 2.4 Under the Equality Act 2010, the Council is required to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between equality groups. Carrying out Equality Impact Assessments for plans and policies allows the Council to demonstrate that it is meeting these duties.
- 2.5 The information contained within this report has been considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment process (EqIA) and has been assessed as **not relevant** for the purposes of EqIA.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 3.3 The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 places a duty on the Council to identify and assess the environmental consequences of its proposals.
- 3.4 The information contained within this report has been considered under the Act. However, no action is required as the Act does not apply to the matters presented in this report.

Sustainability

- 3.5 Under the provisions of the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003 the Council must discharge its duties in a way which contributes to the achievement of sustainable development. In terms of the Climate Change Act, the Council has a general duty to demonstrate its commitment to sustainability and the community, environmental and economic impacts of its actions.
- 3.6 The information contained within this report has been considered under the Act. However, no action is required as the Act does not apply to the matters presented in this report.

4. Consultation

Internal

- 4.1 The Executive Leadership Team have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

2. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 2.1 No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above report.

3. APPENDICES

- None

Appoitment to Committees/Outside Bodies

Councillor Bob Brawn to replace Councillor Chris Ahern on the Licensing Committee

Councillor Andy Chan to replace Councillor David Illingworth on the Licensing Committee

Councillor David Illingworth to replace Councillor Angus Forbes on the Finance and Resources Committee

Baillie Chris Ahern to replace Councillor Angus Forbes on the Property Sub Committee

Baillie Chris Ahern to replace Councillor Noah Khogali on the Executive Sub-Committee of Learning and Families

Councillor John Duff to replace Baillie Chris Ahern on the Licensing Board

Councillor Hugh Anderson to replace Councillor Keith Allan on the Environment, Infrastructure and Economic Development Committee

Councillor Keith Allan to replace Councillor Hugh Anderson on the Planning and Placemaking Committee

Councillor Angus Forbes to replace Councillor Noah Khogali on the Housing and Social Wellbeing Committee

Councillor Frank Smith to replace Councillor Noah Khogali on the Perthshire Tourism Board

Councillor John Duff to replace Councillor Ian James on the Tayside Support Team – Children’s Hearings

Councillor Hugh Anderson to replace Baillie Chris Ahern on the Tayside Valuation Joint Board

