



**Our Council Plan
Six Monthly
Progress Report
1 October to 31 March 2024**



North Ayrshire Council
Comhairle Siorrachd Àir a Tuath

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Our Performance at a Glance

<p>248 adults engaged with our Multiply Projects between January and March</p>	<p>£160,000 awarded to nine projects under the Communities and Place Fund</p>	<p>£108,086 awarded to local community groups through our Community Investment Fund</p>
<p>245 referrals to our new Debt Advice Service exceeding the expected target as at <u>31st March 2024</u></p>	<p>£130,000 funding awarded to four community renewable projects through the Community Renewable Energy Generation Fund</p>	<p>Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy (LHEES) approved by Cabinet in January 2024</p>
<p>209 local businesses supported to help reduce their environmental impact</p>	<p>52 climate change and energy lessons delivered to 22 primary schools</p>	<p>36,366 trees have been planted as part of our 2030 Woodland: A Tree Planting Strategy</p>
<p>2,015 households assisted to furnish their homes via our bulky waste recycling partner</p>	<p>£79,181 funding secured from Scottish Government Child Poverty Accelerator Fund</p>	<p>£560,509 in financial gains delivered to parents through our School Welfare Rights Officer (over £1.6m since the project began)</p>

Welcome

Welcome to our Year End Progress Report on Our Council Plan 2023 to 28. We view Our Council Plan as our contract with our communities, ‘our’ plan. It is an active commitment to support our residents and deliver on our joint priorities. Our four priorities are Wellbeing, Communities and Local Democracy, Climate Change and A Sustainable Council.

Overall, our delivery of our Council Plan is making good progress. At year end 88.2% of our indicators with data and 100% of our actions are either on target or only slightly adrift. We benchmark with other local authorities through the Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF). This is detailed in our annual LGBF Report.

The cost of living crisis continues to impact the lives of our residents and communities as we strive to find ways to support those who are most vulnerable. For example, we have been working towards the extension of free school meals provision to ensure children have access to healthy and regular meals. We are addressing inequalities within our communities that can heighten the impact felt by the cost of living crisis by ensuring our young people have access to appropriate support such as the MCR mentoring programme and advice services when seeking further education. Our School Welfare Rights Officer has successfully supported families to access £560,509 of financial support during 2023 to 2024, with over £1.6 million since the project began.

We continue to build on strong existing relationships with our communities and partners by developing online resources that provide information on what support is available for our residents. If you are in need of cost of living support please visit www.north-ayrshire.gov.uk or call 01294 310000.

In order to address the ongoing climate crisis we have planted 36,366 trees through various projects and with community partners we continue to educate our young people on the impact of climate change and what they and their communities can do to help. We have continued our extensive recycling and reuse programme with items such as old mattresses and furniture being collected and prepared for potential future use.

Everything we do is achieved in the context of our environment. Moving forward we will demonstrate this through our ‘Inclusive Growth Dashboard’ which gives an overview of the status of North Ayrshire and is currently under review. Our key contextual indicators are shown below:

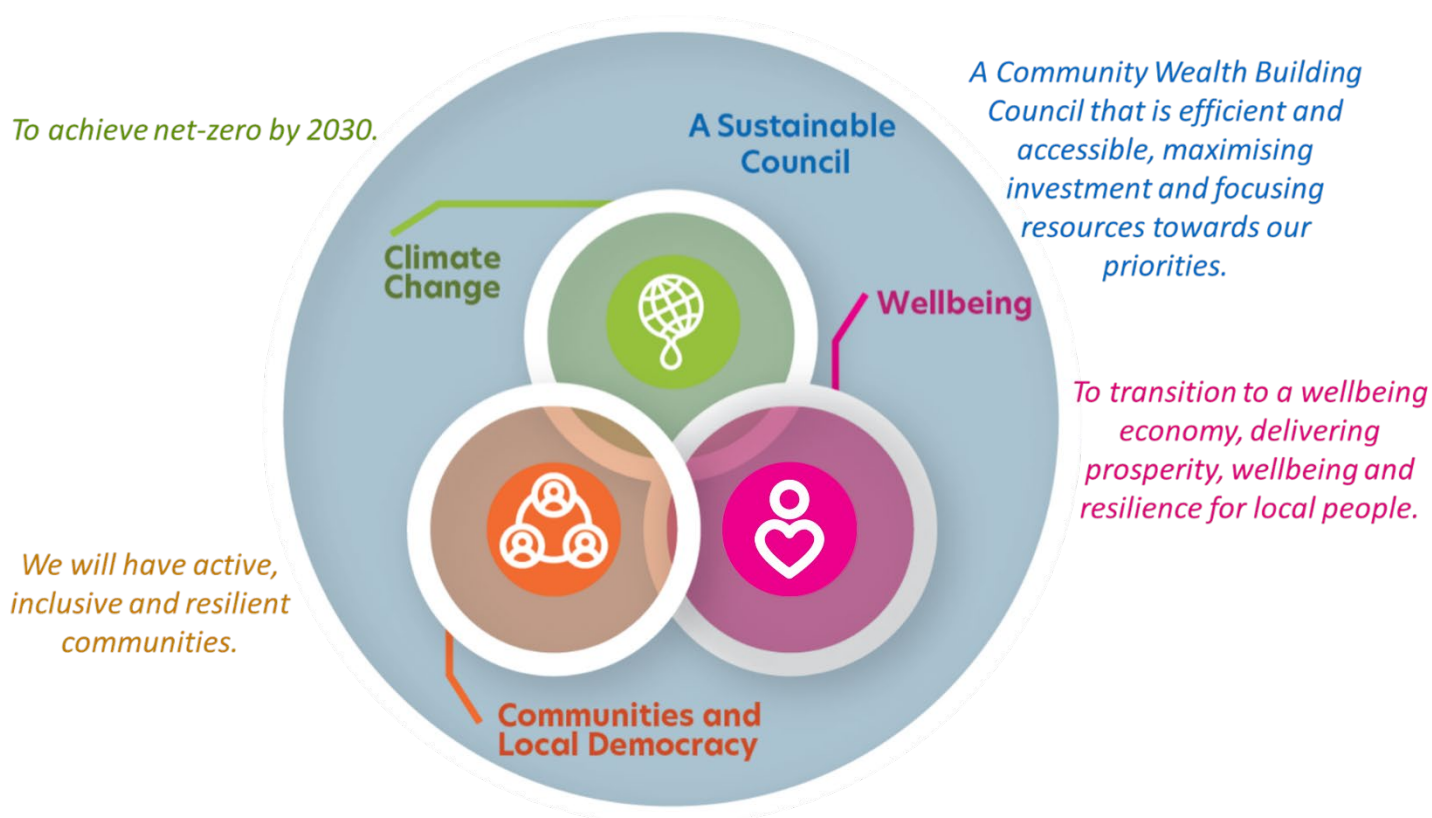
Population of North Ayrshire: 133,490 (June 2022)	29.2% of our children live in poverty after housing costs (2022/23)	28% of our households live in fuel poverty (2021/22)	70.3% of working age population are in employment (December 2023)
10.4% of people earn less than the living wage (2023)	Area wide CO ₂ emissions are 682kt CO ₂ (July 2023)	Employee Headcount 7,690 (March 2024)	Number of Full Time Equivalent Employees 6,561 (March 2024)

Together we will achieve a North Ayrshire that is fair for all.

Our Priorities

Our Vision – A North Ayrshire that is fair for all.

Our Mission – Working together to improve the lives of our people in North Ayrshire.



Wellbeing

Key Activities

Cost of Living

As part of our budget discussions, our Council approved £160,000 to fund two additional Welfare Rights Officers for two years. These Welfare Rights Officers will be based in schools and provide financial advice and assistance to parents and carers. Results from our current School Welfare Rights Officer show an impact is being made. 106 referrals to our Money Matters team have resulted in:

- £560,509 in financial gains for secondary school parents during 2023 to 2024. An average of £5,387 per referral.
- £1,067,328 gained by secondary school parents since the project began.

The Child Poverty and Cost of Living Board were successful in obtaining a grant from the Scottish Government's Child Poverty Practice Accelerator Fund (CPAF). £79,181 was awarded to the council to assist with the development of a streamlined process for residents to access support. The process will route the person to the appropriate service or team to gain access to all entitlements and support(s).

We met with parents of our young people accessing free school meals and clothing grants. The outcome of the discussions will inform the redesign process of accessing these benefits. This forms part of our No Wrong Door approach and aims to get consent from parents to automate

the availability of these essential services in the future.

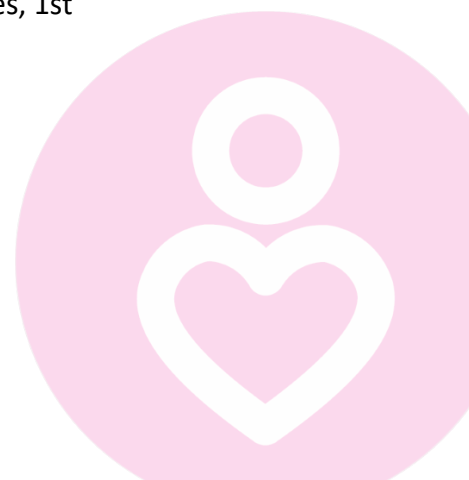
In March 2024, Cabinet approved the extension of our free school meals programme. This will provide a healthy mid-morning snack for all primary school children and ensure availability of ambient food on a temporary basis during 2024-2025. This covers the period up to the next phase of the national expansion of free school meals to those pupils in P6 and P7 who are eligible for the Scottish Child Payment (expected in February 2025). The Scottish Government's most recent Programme for Government stated that national universal expansion would then follow during 2026.

This approval also saw the extension of the Winter Warmer Breakfast initiative that provides breakfasts to all secondary school pupils. This will be available again between November 2024 and March 2025.

To further help with the cost of living crisis, we will provide a £50 clothing grant to all eligible three and four year-olds in Early Years during the 2024-2025 School Year.

Financial Inclusion

Our [North Ayrshire Financial Inclusion Strategy](#) is being implemented and is on target. The North Ayrshire Financial Inclusion Partnership includes representation from financial inclusions service providers and key stakeholders such as advice services, 1st Alliance Community Bank, fuel poverty advice services, employability, education and housing services,



housing associations, community link workers, the food bank and the Alcohol and Drugs Partnership. It was established in 2023 with an aim to improve referral pathways and promotion of services for our residents.

For example, our Debt Advice service which commenced in summer 2023, has exceeded its referral target of 245 as at 31st March 2024. Later this year a review of our Debt Advice service provision will be undertaken to inform decision making for the longer term.

We remain committed to ensuring advice services are available in communities through GP surgeries, schools, foodbanks and local housing offices. We are also expanding our services within Education to include primary schools and early years. To ensure people get access to the services they require we have established referral pathways between our Welfare Rights and Debt Advice Services and a range other services such as Housing and Employability.

A communications plan for our Financial Inclusion Partnership will be developed later in 2024.

Our Community Banking Hub in Kilwinning has been operational from 4th March 2024 and has been well-received by the local community, with 199 contacts including transactions from our residents and local businesses. Our Banking Hub provides residents and businesses with access to cash, banking facilities and in person services. This is vital for those who rely on face-to-face banking. A review will take place in May 2024 regarding extending the opening hours.

Through the Whole Family Wellbeing Fund, third sector organisations have been

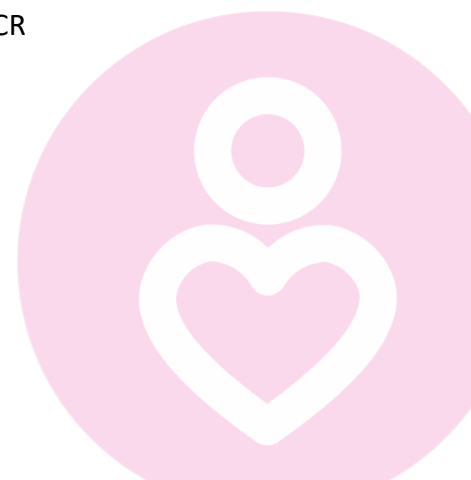
engaged in the transformational activity required to support holistic family support, shift focus to early intervention and prevention and work towards the aspirations of The Promise. More info can be found in our [North Ayrshire Children's Services Performance Update 2023 to 2024](#).

Tackling Inequalities

We have continued to work with partners, including the lead organisation KA Leisure, to develop our Wellbeing Alliance as we work together to ensure everyone is given an opportunity to enjoy life and cope with challenges. A successful pilot working with young people in the Garnock Valley area has helped shape thinking around how the Alliance operates to promote equality and reduce health inequalities.

Our council approved a definition for Care Experienced to be treated as a protected characteristic within our Equality and Children's Rights Impact Assessments (ECRIAs). These new assessments were used immediately for our council budget discussions in February to ensure the potential impact of any decisions relating to our care experienced young people were considered in full.

We have recruited additional Motivation, Commitment and Resilience (MCR) Pathways Coordinators to ensure mentors are available for our young people who may benefit from this extra support. Our young people continue to rate the programme highly and reports suggest the intervention of an MCR Mentor is having a positive impact on attainment. Our young people have requested access to



their mentor over the school holidays and discussions are progressing to ensure consistency of this support across North Ayrshire. Additional mentor recruitment campaigns are planned over the coming months.

Work has commenced on utilising the “One Good Adult” role profile. This profile focusses on providing kind and reliable relationships with “One Good Adult” offering support and mentoring to the young person. This work began after young people indicated that improved relationships support their learning.

To ensure sustained positive destinations for our young people leaving school, work is underway with our partners in Ayrshire College to identify those who are planning early entry to further education. This will allow more targeted transition meetings to take place and ensure young people have applied for a course which aligns well with their needs and aspirations.

Our young parents’ group was launched in January 2024 and has seen 15 young parents regularly engage in weekly activities. This group has been developed by and for young parents under the age of 25 to increase their confidence and support improvement in the physical, mental, emotional and relational wellbeing of them and their children.

On 23rd February 2024, at Ardeer Community Centre, we welcomed 70 young people from across secondary schools in North Ayrshire to take part in the first Alcohol and Drug Partnership (ADP) Young Person’s event. The event’s aim was to engage with our young people and listen to their experience of alcohol and drugs education and how it can be improved. The event was facilitated by

multi-agency partners and included speakers with lived experience as well as active workshops to develop knowledge and capture views.

Our New Scots community recently worked with other creative young people from across North Ayrshire to produce a short film. The film follows the character Stephen (played by Ukrainian, Oleksandr) as he makes his way to a university open day and demonstrates the various issues that are commonly experienced by New Scots. The project was a collaboration between North Ayrshire Council, The Ayrshire Community Trust and Vertex Visions and was filmed in parts of North Ayrshire and other locations in Scotland. The film was premiered at an event in January. You can view the [“Different Ways”](#) short film together with a behind the scenes style short documentary [‘The Making of Different Ways’](#).

The Little Free Library was launched at Lochshore Park, with environmental-themed books for children, young people and adults to use on site or borrow as part of the Out and About project in the Garnock Valley. As part of this project, families identified by our Family Care Workers have also benefited from KA Leisure memberships being provided and taking part in events to support them get active. This includes being gifted experience kits which include a range of items and activity ideas for families to enjoy both indoors and outdoors.

A pan Ayrshire British Sign Language (BSL) plan is currently being finalised alongside East and South Ayrshire Councils, East, South and



North Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnerships, NHS Ayrshire and Arran and Ayrshire College. This plan will ensure that people whose first or preferred language is BSL will be fully involved in daily and public life, as active, healthy residents and will be able to make informed choices about every aspect of their lives.

Life Long Learning Opportunities

The Discovery Award, which is delivered in Irvine, Kilwinning, Garnock Valley and Three Towns localities as well as with a New Scots group, has seen almost 60 adults participate in bronze and silver award activities. The Discovery Award is aimed at people over 50 years of age, to help promote an active and healthy lifestyle by offering challenges to both stimulate and motivate.

Our Multiply Projects have engaged with 248 adults between January and March. These projects provide numeracy support in the community including a partnership with Ayrshire College, and University of Highlands and Islands for Arran residents, allowing us to provide access to accreditation.

Housing

Our council recognises that access to good quality affordable housing and outdoor green space is a key asset in addressing child poverty, and poverty overall and has a positive and lasting impact on public health. All new build council family homes being built as part of our Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) have study space and private gardens built into their design. Despite the affordability challenges being faced, 136 new homes were delivered by our council and our partner Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) during 2023 to

2024. Our council delivery included 36 homes at Harbourside in Irvine; 6 amenity bungalows at Afton Court in Stevenston; and 12 amenity flats at the former police station in Largs. Riverside completed 31 homes at Tarryholme in Irvine. Cunninghame Housing Association delivered 27 homes at West Byrehill in Kilwinning and 24 amenity flats in Green Street, Saltcoats.

Our council bought five properties during 2023 to 2024 and have increased our programme to purchase 15 properties during 2024 to 2025. We also acquired 33 new homes across five localities between 1 October 2023 and 31 March 2024 to support Ukrainian displaced households.

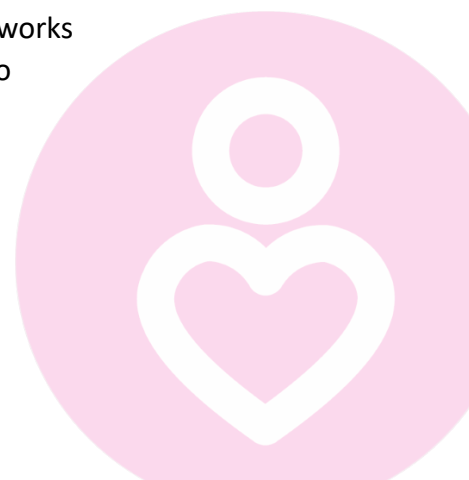
There were no new build completions by our council or our Registered Social Landlord (RSL) partners from 1 October 2023 to 31 March 2024. We are continuing to build new homes throughout North Ayrshire to address current demand for housing and a summary of new build site starts and ongoing development projects for the six months ending 31st March are noted below:

Arran

Trust Housing Association acquired two second-hand market homes on Arran for RSL rent. Construction work continues at Arran Development Trust's Rowarden site, which is supported by the Scottish Government's Rural and Islands Housing fund, providing 18 homes for private rent.

Garnock Valley

During January 2024 works commenced on site to deliver seven council homes at Laburnum Avenue, Beith and a further seven



council homes at Newhouse Drive in Kilbirnie. Both development sites formed part of our council's Estate Based Regeneration Programme. Low demand flatted accommodation was regenerated and will be replaced with general needs houses and amenity bungalows.

Irvine

Works commenced on the site of the former Stanecastle School in Irvine during March 2024. The site will deliver 31 units (29 homes) for council rent.

Kilwinning

There were no new site starts or completions in Kilwinning from 1 October 2023 to 31 March 2024.

North Coast

The site of the former St Mary's primary school in Largs is being redeveloped to provide 26 new homes for council rent. Works commenced on site during January 2024.

Three Towns

Works commenced on site at the former James McFarlane school in Ardrossan during March 2024. The site will provide 19 homes for council rent. Work continues at Cunninghame Housing Association's 20 unit Garven Road, Stevenston site. The works commenced during September 2023 and are anticipated to complete during late 2024.

Community Wealth Building

Our refreshed Community Wealth Building (CWB) Strategy, approved by Cabinet in February, aims to work towards achieving a wellbeing economy for North Ayrshire. We will progress the delivery of the actions in the refreshed strategy which includes commissioning research into

options for delivering a locality-based approach.

We have a lead role in delivering the Ayrshire Regional Economic Strategy. While all Ayrshire Regional Economic Strategy themes aim to develop infrastructure to support business growth, North Ayrshire Council also has the lead on the "Support for Enterprise" theme.

This focusses on creating a region where businesses can grow and entrepreneurship and creativity can flourish. The development of a Regional Economic Strategy website is underway to support this theme. Our Business Support team has concluded a series of mini enquiries with local businesses to help develop the website which will host information on support available.

We have made an investment of £300,000 in developing our approach to CWB with our communities. This will allow us to work with third sector and community partners to support new and innovative ownership models and income generation ideas that bring money into and keep it within our communities.

Commercial Estate Developments

Our new business pavilion within Annickbank Innovation Campus in Irvine is now complete. The building is low carbon and energy efficient with an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of A+. It is hoped that the pavilion will support the growth of local businesses. As part of our provisional award for the Levelling Up for Ayrshire: Commercial and Low Carbon Infrastructure project, we have appointed a design team to prepare



designs for new industrial space on the site.

Phase Two of our commercial space development on Kyle Road is currently awaiting the confirmation of funding, following which a tender will be issued.

Public Spaces

Our Streetscene service is responsible for ensuring the places we live, work and visit are well maintained and accessible. To support this the service has continued the roll out of street assets such as bins, seats and wheelchair-accessible picnic benches. For example, 25 new seats and benches have been installed in parts of Eglinton Country Park. Our Street Cleanliness Score has also showed a significant improvement this year rising from 84.6% to 89.1%.

Our employees are using digital technology to streamline the recording and reporting of assets that require maintenance, allowing a quicker response which provides a better experience for our residents. We have also begun the regeneration of all of our 95 play facilities.

We have improved bus stop infrastructure across North Ayrshire through the £146,000 capital award under the Community Bus Fund. The fund aims to enable local transport authorities to improve local public transport, with a focus on rural areas of deprivation where lower population density means bus services can be less commercially viable. These were delivered alongside the bus corridor improvements funded under SPT's Capital Programme.

We have implemented the Regeneration Delivery Plan Action programme for 2023 to 2024. This has been supported by over

£4m funding under the Place Based Investment Programme, Cycling Walking and Safer Routes, Vacant and Derelict Land Fund and SPT's Capital Programme.

We have continued work on our Community Transport study establishing where community transport is in demand and types of community transport within North Ayrshire. From this, public and stakeholder consultation exercises are underway to help identify the level of need for community transport across the area.

Next Steps

- We will progress our Single Shared Assessment approach which enables consent to be obtained from our residents which will allow us to actively assess the support available.
- We will continue to deliver our Multiply Projects providing numeracy support in the community including access to accreditation.
- We will publish our British Sign Language Plan.
- We will refresh our strategic approach to tackling poverty through the work of our Child Poverty and Cost of Living Board.
- We will develop a Pathfinder project with the Scottish Government which will focus on a place based, person centred approach to tackling child poverty.
- We will continue making our play areas more accessible and inclusive by extending regeneration works to 15 additional sites.
- We will undertake a review of our Debt Advice service.



Case Study – Welfare Rights Officers

School Welfare Rights Officers provide confidential advice and assistance to parents and carers to enable them to access all benefits they are entitled to. They also offer advice when circumstances change, provide support to challenge any sanctions and offer representation at appeals. Through being based in schools it is hoped any stigma is lessened and parents and carers feel more confident in approaching officers for assistance as it is a trusted space.

Key results from our current School Welfare Rights Officer show an impact is being made. From 106 referrals to our Money Matters team:

- £560,509 in financial gains for secondary school parents during 2023 to 2024. An average of £5,387 per referral.
- £1,067,328 gained by secondary school parents since the project began.

In addition to schools, we partner with the Food Bank and have a Welfare Rights Officer funded by the Trussell Trust taking referrals from all Food Banks and holding drop-in surgeries as required. We also have advisers in GP surgeries, Addiction Services, Justice Service and Children and Families Teams and get regular referrals to our services such as Financial Inclusion.

Next Steps

As at 2023-2024 we have one Welfare Rights Officer based in our Secondary schools, with funding met by the Education Service and the Financial Inclusion Partnership. In February as part of the budget discussions, Council agreed to fund £160,000 for School Welfare Rights Officers.

The agreed funding will enable recruitment of an additional two Welfare Rights Officers for two years, extending the current programme to March 2025. It is intended that the school clusters will be placed into three sections with one Welfare Rights Officer in each. This will keep the links between Early Years, Primary and Secondary, meaning that if a family has children of various ages, the family is still supported by the same officer.

Performance management of the School Welfare Rights Officers emphasises wellbeing as well as financial improvement. As a result, case studies will be used to manage performance in addition to quantitative information. Baselines will be taken to be able to show improvement.

With the additional funding we aim to replicate this across our schools. All three School Welfare Officers will be in position after the summer to help support our families during the 2024/25 academic year.

I just wanted to drop a wee email to say thank you so much for all the assistance in finding what we were entitled to... ..The gain isn't just about finances (which is a wonderful help and a huge weight off my mind) [I] no longer stress and panic over trying to cover school holidays, sick days etc. I am much happier and less stressed as I'm here fully for all three children now which has made the kids all feel happier.

The service you offer is wonderful and I'm very grateful to have been offered your assistance.

Communities and Local Democracy

Key Activities

Community Planning Partnership

Our Community and Locality Planning Conference was held in February 2024 and was supported by representatives from Scottish Government who are leading on Democracy Matters 2. Democracy Matters 2 is part of the Local Governance Review which looks at how power, responsibility and resources are shared with local government and different communities in Scotland. It was the main theme for the Conference. Over 60 delegates were in attendance from partner agencies, third sector organisations, council services and community members.

February also saw the launch of the [Community Directory tool](#) together with the new [Community Planning website](#). Our Community Directory tool allows residents to find services, groups and activities for health and wellbeing across Scotland. Our new Community Planning website provides all the important information about our Community Planning Partnership including community empowerment, advice on the Cost of Living crisis and community engagement. The Community Planning X account (formally called Twitter) continues to grow with over 860 followers and over 7,500 impressions since late 2023.

The first of two planned Community and Locality Planning training sessions took place online in March 2024 with 16 participants in attendance including community members, partner

organisations and internal colleagues. The next session is scheduled to take place in November 2024.

We continue to offer training and outreach sessions regularly to third sector and voluntary colleagues through the Community Engagement Network and attendance at Community Planning training. Links will be further strengthened through development of the Participation Strategy and new Community Planning Partnership website and Community Directory. We will be engaging with our Third Sector Interface colleagues at The Ayrshire Community Trust and Arran CVS to support and finalise the new strategy so we can be certain it meets the needs of our council and our partners.

We engaged with our Joint Youth Forum and Youth Council around our [Community Plan](#) (our Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (LOIP)). These results will be used to inform our inclusive approach with young people throughout the lifespan of the Community Plan.

Community Grant Funding

Our commitment to Community Investment Funding has supported three successful grant applications approved by Locality Partnerships and Cabinet resulting in a total of £108,086 being awarded to local community organisations. Our Communities and Place Fund as part of our Shared Prosperity Fund Investment Plan has provided £160,000 of funding to nine community projects.

Islands

On Arran, we continue to support the three theme groups that feed into the Island Plan Delivery Group. This has involved taking forward the findings of the North Ayrshire Island Skills Initiative to support and fund an Arran Skills Coordinator which will support individuals to remain on Arran. This is a direct result of responding to needs identified by research into island challenges through lived experience.

On Cumbrae, we have continued to support the Carbon Neutral Islands programme which, over the year to March 2024, has advanced key energy projects to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and tackle fuel poverty, again demonstrated through lived experiences. Over £0.95m of funding was secured through the Scottish Government's Islands Programme to support community led regeneration projects at Dyemill Bike Park, Lamblash and Garrison House, Millport.

Next Steps

- We will work with our third sector and other partners to ensure our Participation Strategy meets the needs of our communities.
- We will continue to develop our locality planning model as the central way for residents to be involved in local decision-making including working with communities to develop their six locality action plans for 2024-2025.
- We will continue to work with communities to co-design and deliver our participatory budgeting processes.
- We will develop streamlined ways for communities to find information about support, including funding available to them.
- We will continue to provide support for communities interested in making greater use of council assets, including through the Community Asset Transfer process, and use feedback to make processes as easy as possible for our residents.



Case Study – Over 50's Activity Group

Social isolation within the older community in North Ayrshire increased dramatically during the Covid-19 Pandemic and remains a significant challenge. Our Discovery Group has been successful in addressing the needs of those aged over 50 years within the Irvine Locality.

The Irvine Library Activity Group was created to address the social and wellbeing needs of the over 50's demographic within the Irvine Locality. The aims and objectives of the Over 50's Library Activity Group are to:

- Provide peer support and reduce social isolation in the over 50 age group in the Irvine Locality.
- Provide participants with the opportunity to try a wide variety of new activities, which will be guided by the needs and interests of the group members.
- To improve the health and wellbeing of participants by providing them with the opportunity to meet new people, share skills and experiences and try new activities.
- Provide a forum for informal information sharing and signposting for participants to access a variety of opportunities within the wider community.

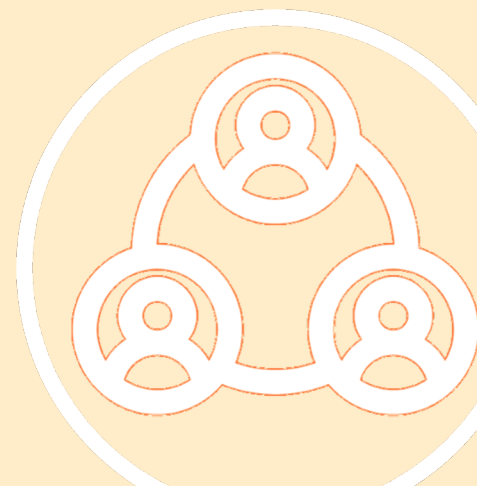
The group was advertised throughout the Irvine Locality via social media, local shops/venues and through posters, leaflets and conversations with regular customers. Weekly sessions of the Over 50's Activity Group are planned and developed in partnership with the participants. A vital part of every weekly session is the time built in for the participants to connect and build relationships through an informal coffee and chat. Weekly sessions also provide opportunities for participants to try new activities, share hobbies and interests, work with partner agencies and explore opportunities in the wider community.

At the beginning of the group participants highlighted the various reasons why individuals chose to join:

- 'To help my mental health and find new friends.'
- 'To keep active, to meet new people and have fun.'
- 'I have a lot of health problems and I want to meet new people and get help with my computer.'

Over the past few months, the group has been involved in a wide variety of activities including:

- Tai Chi Taster.
- Police and Trading Standards Talk and Information sharing.
- Board games afternoon.
- Group members sharing hobbies and interests.
- Halloween quiz and activities.
- Murder Mystery afternoon.
- Computer class with Input.
- Calligraphy taster session.



Climate Change

Key Activities

Energy

The Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy (LHEES) was approved by Cabinet on 23rd January 2024 and has been published alongside the Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy - Delivery Plan. As well as the forthcoming Pan Ayrshire Energy Masterplan, the creation of our Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy is an example of work that has been undertaken to better understand the current energy use status and opportunities for action. A revised Renewable Energy Strategy in 2024 and building asset decarbonisation model will provide further opportunities to support decision making for future actions.

Our Council's solar PV farm developments have progressed to construction stage. Both Nethermains and Shewalton site clearances have been completed, with fencing being installed and consideration given to provision of mammal gates to support biodiversity on the sites. We are developing a battery storage pilot scheme to maximise the use of existing roof mounted solar PV on non-domestic buildings to support local energy networks.

A feasibility study for wind and solar on the i3 site in Irvine has been completed and further works are being undertaken to understand the options available for low carbon energy generation schemes for the site.

Our council continues to support wider action on climate change beyond our own estate. Four community renewable projects have been awarded funding through the Community Renewable

Energy Generation Fund, totalling approximately £130,000. Additional awareness raising activity is underway to increase the uptake of the available funding.

Our Sustainability Team has delivered 52 climate change and energy lessons to 22 primary schools to date, with 10 schools visited between January and March 2024. The lessons support awareness of action on climate change and encourage action within schools through their climate action plans. A further 12 schools have signed up for lessons in the new term. We continue to work with Keep Scotland Beautiful to support free energy resources for Secondary Schools and are developing a community carbon literacy training pack for smaller community groups.

Our Business Development team has supported 209 businesses to help reduce their environmental impact. A large focus of this work has been through collaboration and delivery of support including Net Zero Accelerator programmes and financial aid to adopt new technology.

Biodiversity

36,366 trees have been planted to date across North Ayrshire through various projects and by community partners. [Our 2030 Woodland: A Tree Planting Strategy](#) continues to be a key driver, with support being provided to local community groups and the assessment of suitable planting sites continuing. A working group has been established to create a new 'Tree Planting Webapp' – a GIS system that overlays various relevant layers to help identify potential sites for tree planting.

All applications submitted to the council's Woodland Grant Fund (2023 to 2024 season) were assessed in early 2024 and

five local organisations and groups were successful in receiving a grant to enable them to deliver their community tree planting projects. A total of 3,344 trees will be planted during 2024 through the Woodland Grant Fund. Ongoing communication with all the groups is in place to ensure that the projects are progressing well.

The four successful applicants from last year's Woodland Grant Fund (2022 to 2023 season) submitted their evaluation reports for their projects for the trees they planted during 2023. These reports will now be reviewed, and the information provided will be used to improve future rounds of the Woodland Grant Fund. The 2024-2025 Woodland Grant Fund will be opened and advertised in the autumn. The fund will support local tree planting projects, including the creation of community orchards.

Our Streetscene team continues to work with the volunteer network and local schools to promote areas of wildflowers to support biodiversity in North Ayrshire. Funding opportunities are being explored to purchase equipment that will help the service deliver an improved wildflower meadow management plan.

Our Bourtreehill Park volunteers cleared around 225m of paths and removed approximately 181m² of Invasive species (Rhododendron Ponticum) to improve accessibility and enjoyment for residents in an area that had become inaccessible due to vegetation encroachment.

Three Junior Rangers sessions took place in early 2024. These sessions were attended by 30 young people and supported by six young leaders and four volunteers. During a session in January, a

trip to Haylie Brae Cairn took place to assist Archaeology Scotland to maintain the heritage asset and to contribute towards the creation of a new resource currently being developed by Forestry and Land Scotland. Their efforts were rewarded with 12 of our young people receiving a Heritage Hero Award.

Our Pupils at St John Ogilvie's primary school have been involved in a consultation to inform the creation of a public learning trail in Bourtreehill that will focus on Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) and local biodiversity. Schools are being supported to use a range of biodiversity monitoring equipment as part of the curriculum including wildlife cameras and sampling equipment such as quadrats, field identification guides, soil moisture and pH probes.

The Scottish Government Biodiversity Strategy to 2045 (SBS) states that local authorities will deliver a Scotland wide Nature Network. In response we are developing a Nature Network strategy to support a network that connects nature-rich sites, restoration areas and other environmental projects through a series of areas of suitable habitat, habitat corridors and stepping-stones. The North Ayrshire Nature Network will help to halt biodiversity loss by 2030 and achieve nature positivity by 2045.

Our statutory Biodiversity Duty report 2022 to 2023 was submitted to the Scottish Government in January 2024. It must be completed once every three years and all council services and arm's length bodies must submit returns to the report.

A working group has been established with other councils from across Scotland to develop the content of an e-learn module to increase awareness and understanding of our Biodiversity duties.

Our first North Ayrshire Learning for Sustainability (LfS) Partnership group met in November. It aims to provide council services and local STEM and biodiversity partners with opportunities to connect and identify projects that can be shared widely across schools and the community, or projects that will benefit from collaboration.

Transport

We have made significant progress on local travel and active transport including the adoption of our Local Transport and Active Travel Strategy. We have raised awareness of sustainable transport choices through our Travel Smart programme and the Trinity Active Travel Hub, our social media and working with workplaces, organisations and volunteers to provide active travel activities across the area.

We have helped people develop more positive attitudes towards sustainable transport choices by continuing with workplace engagement including creation of travel plans and bike maintenance classes.

As part of the Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Fund (EVIF) pathfinder project, we are working in partnership with East Ayrshire and South Ayrshire Council to seek funding to install an additional 307 electric vehicle charge points across Ayrshire, to support a just transition to electric vehicles.

We have continued the construction of the Links to Eglinton, Kilwinning Active Travel Route. We have also completed the construction of the B714 links at Sharpill, Saltcoats Active Travel Route.

The North Crescent Coastal Path Phase One in Ardrossan is now complete. Construction has commenced on the next phase of Fairlie Coastal Path and is programmed for completion in summer 2024. We have also completed construction of the Lover's Walk, Dalry Active Travel Route.

Waste and Recycling

Our council's bulky waste reuse partner Cunninghame Furniture Recycling Company (CFRC) collected 232 reusable mattresses (4.8 tonnes) from January to March 2024. 783 (18.8 tonnes) of mattresses were collected in total during the 2023 to 2024 financial year, as part of the initiative to promote opportunities for their reuse.

CFRC also collected and reused 58 tonnes of household furniture and assisted 497 households during January to March 2024. A total of 200 tonnes of household furniture was collected for reuse and 2,015 households were assisted to furnish their homes in North Ayrshire during the financial year 2023 to 2024.

Our council continues to be one of the highest performing for household waste recycling in Scotland with a recycling rate of 55.3% achieved in 2022, making the council the 4th highest performing in Scotland. The average recycling rate in Scotland for 2022 was 43.3%. The draft calculations for the 2023 recycling performance have been submitted to The Scottish Environment Protection Agency

(SEPA), which will now be subject to verification checks prior to publishing later in 2024. The estimated household waste recycling performance for the calendar year 2023 has improved to 56.1% (subject to verification).

SEPA published new guidance at the end of 2023 regarding the management of Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) in Waste Upholstered Domestic Seating (WUDS), which has required changes to be made to separate the material (for incineration only) at our council's Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs) and from fly tipped waste uplifted by the Streetscene Service. Work is ongoing to review the current bulky uplift service to align with the new SEPA guidance.

The Scottish Government published a draft Circular Economy Bill which is progressing through parliament and is expected to become law during 2024. Officers are working closely with COSLA, SOLACE and Scottish Government through a co-design process to develop the key

policy and actions to be taken forward within a new Waste Route Map for Scotland. The Circular Economy Bill and the Route Map once finalised will be used to inform the development of our council's new Zero Waste Strategy, which will explore the options for further improving performance in this area.

We support volunteering groups through the ongoing distribution of volunteering packs. Recently a new online process has been established for volunteers to request the uplift of litter picking bags. Streetscene in partnership with the volunteering community, has supported Keep Scotland Beautiful's Spring litter picking campaign through issuing litter pickers and collecting litter picked materials.

Adaptation

Our council undertook our second climate Adaptation Capability Assessment in February 2024, with a cross-service workshop. We utilised the Public Sector Adaptation Capability Framework and Benchmarking Tool. The framework has



four capabilities and four maturity levels for organisations to track their adaptation journey and how they can develop each capability. Progress of the five actions from the first assessment were reviewed. The second assessment identified five actions:

- Establish a formal Adaptation Working Group within the Council which will include key stakeholders.
- Ensure any adaptation self-assessments are captured within Procurement's Flexible Framework annual assessment and Financial Services annual Audit Scotland report.
- Launch the Introduction to Adaptation learning module for employees.
- Create local climate risk maps from existing publicly available GIS and national maps including, coastal erosion, rainfall, wind and heat in

partnership with our council's Analytics Team.

- Develop further the internal partnership working between the Sustainability and Flood Teams on council flooding initiatives and actions.

Our council has flood protection schemes to reduce the impact of climate change on our communities. The severity and frequency of flooding is expected to increase as a result of climate change. Ongoing protection schemes include the Millport Flood Protection Scheme, coastal erosion works on Cumbrae and the completion of the Upper Garnock Valley Flood Protection Scheme with the creation of a dam. Flooding scheme works have also been completed in Kilbirnie and Dalry.

North and South Ayrshire Councils are replacing the Ayrshire Shoreline



Management Plan with a Coastal Adaptation Plan during 2024. Two scoping reports have been produced for Irvine Bay and Stevenston Beach to identify methods to manage coastal erosion and safeguard access to the beach.

Net Zero Ambitions

A priority action within the Sustainable North Ayrshire Strategy is to develop Community Climate Action Plans for each locality, building on the Climate Action Town Stevenston project. Initial development of this programme by the Sustainability Team has progressed during early 2024 with support from our Connected Communities Service and APSE Energy. A community focused carbon literacy module is in development to be made available to community groups throughout North Ayrshire by the summer.

We are planning to arrange a second round of volunteering at Eglinton Park to support the ongoing biodiversity works. This activity was well received by members of the team last year and has helped to share the opportunities to volunteer first-hand within our local communities.

Next Steps

- We will revise our Renewable Energy Strategy and build an asset decarbonisation model.
- We will undertake additional awareness raising activity to increase the uptake of the Community Renewable Energy Generation Fund.
- We will increase capacity to support the actions associated within our LHEES strategy.
- We will continue to work with Keep Scotland Beautiful, to support free energy resources for Secondary Schools.
- We will implement our Local Transport and Active Travel Strategy.
- We will continue to deliver our Travel Smart programme.
- We will continue to review the current bulky uplift service to align with the new SEPA guidance.
- Our North Ayrshire Learning for Sustainability (LfS) Partnership will have its second meeting in May.
- We aim to complete the construction of our Fairlie Coastal Path.
- We will develop a community focussed carbon literacy module that will be made available to community groups

A Sustainable Council

Key Activities

Our Workforce

In March, Audit Scotland commenced our Best Value Thematic Audit – ‘Workforce Innovation’ on behalf of the Accounts Commission. The outcome of this audit is expected in the autumn.

The outcome of our Best Value Thematic Audit – ‘Leadership of the Development of the Council’s Strategic Priorities’ was presented to the Audit and Scrutiny Committee in November. More detail on these audits can be found in the “Audits, Inspections and Accreditations” section below.

A Voluntary Early Release (VER) programme provided an opportunity for employees to volunteer to leave the council. An assessment on the impact on service delivery and associated costs of exit were considered and 85 employees left the council at the end of March 2024. As a result of our VER programme, a number of service re-designs were approved. These will take effect from April 2024.

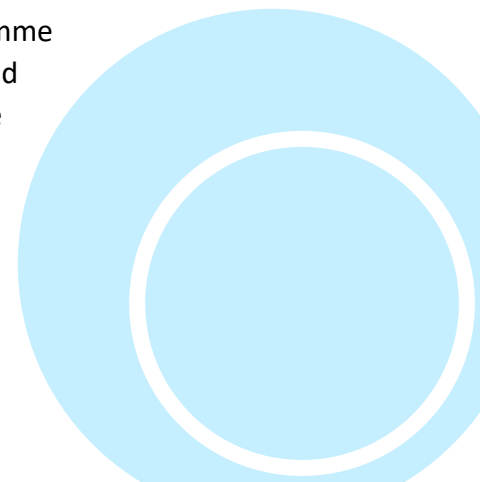
Our council is now in its 14th year of delivering a successful Modern Apprenticeship programme across our services. This supports our Apprenticeship Charter, confirms our ongoing commitment to our young people and provides a key element of our workforce planning approach. The Modern Apprenticeship programme creates a diverse range of opportunities with ringfenced places for young people with a disability and / or care experience.

It utilises over 20 different frameworks including Active Leisure, Business Administration, Civil Engineering, Horticulture, Housing, Social Sciences and youthwork. There have been many positive outcomes for our Modern Apprentices over the last five years with over 100 young people progressing into promoted posts within our council. Our programme is also highlighted as an example of good practice by Education Scotland who stated in their [Community Learning and Development Progress Visit Report](#) in October that “...the input from MAs [Modern Apprentices] is helping the service be innovative and remain responsive to learners’ changing needs, especially for children and young people.” and as a result is progress worth sharing more widely.

Our council’s Leadership Academy provides a series of development interventions to our leaders at all levels of their career. During 2023 and 2024, 896 delegates days have been delivered with 506 employees actively engaging in these development solutions to enhance their skills and knowledge.

1,274 referrals have been made to our Occupational Health Service to provide support in relation to areas such as health and fitness, Counselling, Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, Physiotherapy and health advice. This is also complimented with training for managers and online information.

Our Livewell programme which is designed and led by our workforce for our workforce, has hosted initiatives such as



healthy eating, weight management, mental health, financial wellbeing, health checks, mindfulness and mediation. This has led to 3,487 interactions from our employees across our council.

Effective use of resources

As part of our 'No Wrong Door' approach, our Transformation team has worked with key stakeholders to create a new streamlined customer referral process. This new process will ensure that customers only share their information with us once, before directing them to the most appropriate service provider. This includes both internal council services and external support services. It is hoped that this new process will ensure a dignified customer journey and allow the relevant service or partner to act as quickly and efficiently as possible.

Levelling Up Fund

As part of the Levelling Up Fund, we are anticipating further guidance on the recent £20 million allocation for Irvine under the Long-Term Plan for Towns. This will include advice on developing the Town Board required as part of the fund. The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities has advised that the Area Leads and the UK Government's Towns Unit and High Streets Taskforce will work with our council to develop the Town Plan and provide ongoing support as the funding is delivered.

On 20 November 2023 the UK Government announced that 55 projects had been provisionally selected to receive funding from the Levelling Up Fund Round Three. This includes £122 million for six projects in Scotland, including £17.54m towards the North Ayrshire element of

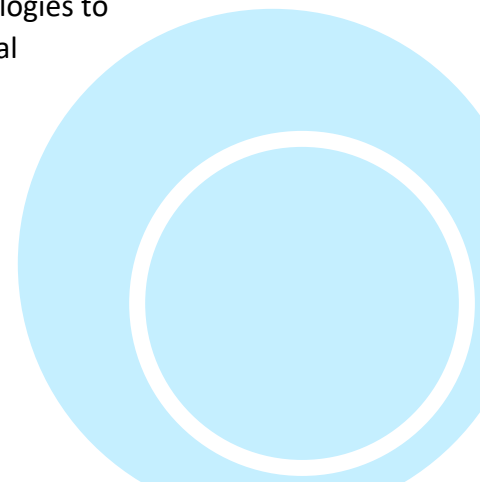
Levelling Up for Ayrshire: Commercial and Low Carbon Infrastructure proposal submitted by North and South Ayrshire Councils.

This project seeks to deliver new energy efficient commercial property and associated access, active travel and electric vehicle charging infrastructure at key employment locations across Ayrshire. This was comprised of two office pavilions and two speculative flexible industrial units at three sites in Irvine. The three Irvine sites proposed were Annickbank, Kyle Road and i3.

Digital Renewal

As previously noted in our mid-year report, North Ayrshire Council, in partnership with South and East Ayrshire Councils, submitted a regional bid to the Department for Science, Innovation, and Technology's (DSIT) £40 million 5G Innovation Regions (5GIR) programme. This initiative is designed to significantly enhance the deployment of 5G technology across the region, thereby boosting digital connectivity. Ayrshire has been successfully awarded funding through this initiative, marking a major advancement in our commitment to improving digital connectivity and fostering technological innovation throughout the area.

The funding will support five pivotal projects alongside ecosystem development, each tailored to harness advanced 5G technologies to meet specific regional needs and opportunities.



The five projects are:

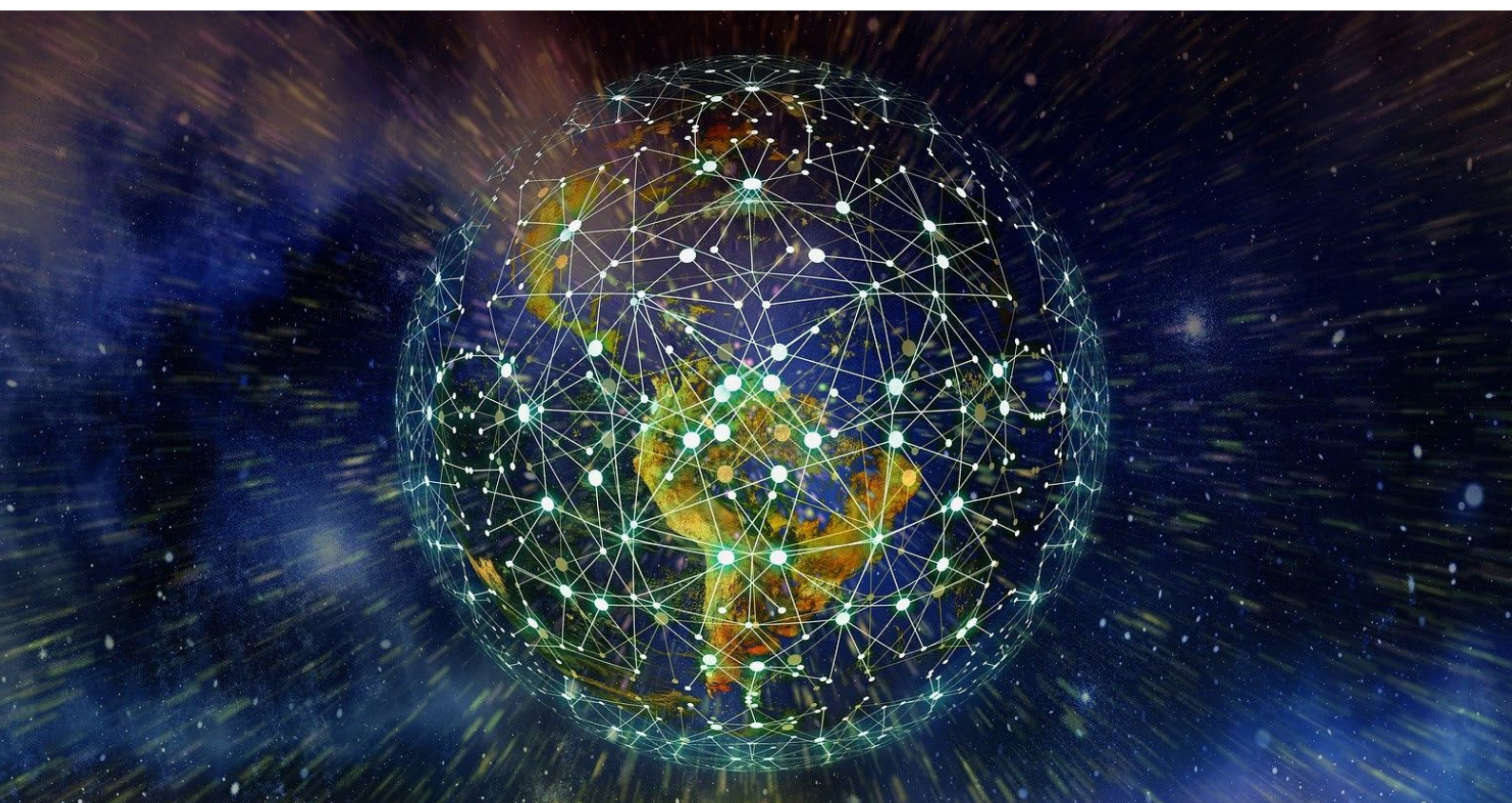
1. **Digital Processing Manufacturing Centre:** Utilising advanced manufacturing technologies to enhance efficiency and precision.
2. **Aerospace Innovation Hub:** Applying 5G solutions to transform aerospace design and manufacturing processes.
3. **Small to Medium Enterprise Internet of Things (SME IoT) Adoption Project at Moorfield:** Empowering SMEs in sectors such as food, drink, manufacturing, and engineering with IoT technologies for improved data management.
4. **Tourism Events Project:** Boosting visitor experiences at local events through reliable, high-speed 5G connectivity.
5. **Skills and Immersive Learning Project:** Employing virtual and augmented reality to improve educational outcomes and prepare students for future digital challenges.

Central to Ayrshire's digital strategy, the Ecosystem Development cross-cutting theme aims to foster a robust network of innovation through strategic partnerships. Key partners include the University of the West of Scotland, Ayrshire College, the National Manufacturing Institute Scotland (NMIS), and Scotland 5G Centre, all collaborating to integrate cutting-edge digital solutions across regional industries and educational institutions.

The project aligns with our strategic focus on innovation, skills development, and community engagement as outlined in the Regional Economic Strategy.

Digital Maturity Assessment Update

Following the successful funding acquisition, the Digital Connectivity Maturity Assessment was conducted to gauge our current digital infrastructure and plan future enhancements effectively. This comprehensive evaluation, along with extensive stakeholder engagement, provided deep insights into our existing infrastructure, pinpointing areas needing improvement and identifying



opportunities to leverage both local and national government investments in digital connectivity, as well as private sector investments in full-fibre broadband.

This assessment has laid a solid foundation for North Ayrshire's progression towards becoming a digitally inclusive, economically vibrant and smart-connected community. By exploring the identified challenges and recommended strategies, we are poised to significantly enhance digital connectivity and readiness, paving the way for a flourishing future in North Ayrshire.

Robust Governance

Prior to our meeting of Council to discuss the 2024-2025 budget, Equalities and Children's Rights Impact Assessments (ECRIAs) screenings or assessments were completed for all budget proposals. A project is due to commence to develop these further and improve the quality of updates through training and revision of the templates. This is being informed by national Children's Rights Impact Assessments (CRIAs).

To ensure good governance and clear accountability for delivering the desired outcomes for service users and communities, we are updating our Code of Corporate Governance on an annual basis.

Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF)

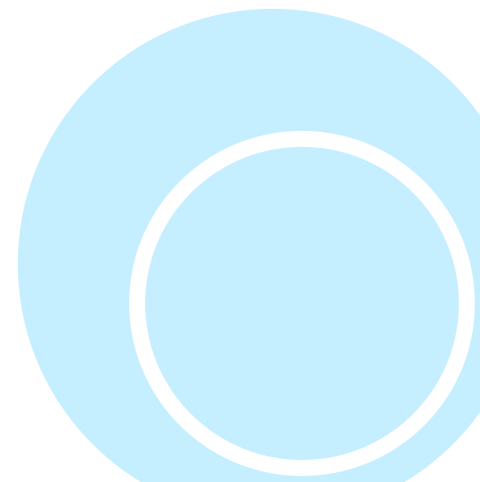
The second round of our Communities and Place Fund obtained Cabinet approval in February. The Fund is now closed with 53 applications under review. The People and Skills and Supporting Local Business Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) priority activities are ongoing, with UK SPF (UKSPF) replacing the European Social

Fund (ESF) funding for Employability and Skills.

The Participatory Budgeting funding through UKSPF will take place later in 2024, with a budget of £31,000 available.

Next Steps

- We will continue to embed and evolve our Workforce Planning approach meetings.
- We will continue to support the Audit Scotland Best Value Thematic Work.
- We will launch a project to develop and improve the quality of Children's Rights Impact Assessments.
- Awards will be made under the Communities and Place Fund.
- The Participatory Budgeting funding through UKSPF Communities and Place Fund will take place later in 2024, with a budget of £31,000 available.



Case Study – No Wrong Door

Historically, our services needed to rely on our residents to contact various services themselves and the services didn't have visibility of any other teams our residents were involved in.

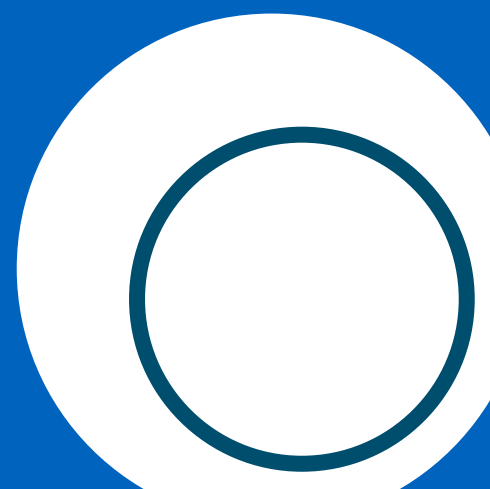
To tackle this our No Wrong Door initiative aims to ensure our residents can always access the information and support they need from our council and Community Planning Partners. It is strongly supported by the Child Poverty and Cost of Living Board and key to our Council Plan and Digital Strategy 2023 to 2028. It ensures people are at the centre of innovation and no one is left behind to prevent digital exclusion.

There are two main elements to our No Wrong Door approach, 'Corporate Referral' and 'Single Shared Assessment'.

Our new Corporate Referral process is now live. As a result of the review, our residents only need to provide their information once and will be directly routed to the services that best meet their needs. In addition, services are notified immediately when a request for support is submitted via the online form on our website. This form is also used by our Customer Services team when residents call or visit our offices, ensuring that those without internet access are not digitally excluded and still receive the same high level of support.

Following the notification, services contact the resident to complete an assessment of their needs allowing us to route the referral to the appropriate services or external partners to provide the best support. These services or partners then make direct contact with the resident, reducing cost and the potentially overwhelming task for residents to contact multiple services and partners.

Our emerging Single Shared Assessment approach will inform decision making and provide residents with assistance more quickly through a whole system approach offering immediate and longer-term support to lift people out of the cycle of poverty. This will be achieved by asking residents at the point of application for their consent to use their details to assess eligibility for all benefits, grants and support available across our council in one application. This ultimately will create a 'golden record' to proactively help residents access the support they are entitled to.



Audits, Inspections and Accreditations

Best Value Thematic Approach – Leadership of the Development of the Council’s Strategic Priorities

The [results of our Best Value Thematic Audit](#) on the leadership of the development of the council’s strategic priorities was presented to the Audit and Scrutiny Committee in November. The results were very positive, stating our council “continued to demonstrate a strong culture of continuous improvement”. The engagement with our communities in jointly creating our priorities within our Council Plan 2023 to 2028 was also highlighted. How we report to ensure effective scrutiny was positively received. Further good progress has been made since our Best Value Assurance Audit in June 2020.

The following recommendations were highlighted within the report with progress reported directly to our Audit and Scrutiny Committee.

Recommendation	Agreed Management Action
<p>The council should conclude its website review and make its improvements as soon as possible. This will bring many benefits to users, including raising more awareness of its vision and priorities.</p>	<p>The website redesign project is currently progressing at pace and the aim is to have a Beta version live by Summer 2024 and the full version live by Autumn 2024. To improve the visibility of the Council Plan and priorities, the home page will be revised to include reference to our Council Plan 2023 to 2028.</p>
<p>The council should ensure that all the performance information published on its website is up-to-date, performance reports are as timely as possible and audit and inspection information is easily accessible and includes how the council is responding to recommendations.</p>	<p>The website will be reviewed to remove or replace out of date information. Audits and inspections will be including in six monthly Council Plan Progress reports (these reports) published on our website.</p>
<p>The council should update all locality planning information and corresponding links as soon as possible.</p>	<p>The Community Planning Partnership (CPP) website will be reviewed to ensure all locality planning information and links are up to date. The CPP website will be refreshed with new Locality Partnership pages.</p>
<p>The council should consider including more information on its website about what it is doing to address climate change and the progress it is making.</p>	<p>The council’s website will be updated to include more information on what we are doing to address climate change and progress we are making, including publication of a dedicated public facing climate change webpage.</p> <p>Options for a social media page dedicated to climate change will be investigated.</p>

Source: Leadership of the development of the council’s strategic priorities. Best Value Thematic Work in North Ayrshire Council 2022 to 2023.

A further update on progress against these recommendations is due to be presented to the Audit and Scrutiny Committee in May 2024. Audit Scotland is expected to publish a national report on this specific theme in the summer which will enable benchmarking of approaches with other local authorities.

Best Value Thematic Approach – Workforce Innovation

In March, Audit Scotland commenced the Best Value Thematic Audit – Workforce Planning on behalf of the Accounts Commission.

This focused on the following areas:

- How effectively our council’s workforce plans are integrated with its strategic plans and priorities.
- How effectively digital technology has been used to support workforce productivity and improve service quality and outcomes.
- What innovative practice our council is using to develop its future workforce capacity and skills needs and manage staff reductions in line with its priorities.
- What progress our council has made with sharing roles or functions across its services and/or with other councils and partners.
- How effectively our council is measuring the impact of its workforce planning approach.

Next year Audit Scotland will release a national report on Workforce Innovation to share good practice.

The results of the audit will be presented to the Audit and Scrutiny Committee in the autumn and any resulting actions will be considered. Developments for Workforce Innovation include:

- Continuation of Workforce Planning meetings to further embed and evolve the approach.
- Continue support to Audit Scotland Best Value Thematic Work between April and June.
- Host Learning Events to increase knowledge in relation to the application of policies and procedures.
- Continue to evolve and increase our use of digital interventions.

Internal Audit – Council’s Workforce Planning

January 2024 - An Internal Audit report on Workforce Planning was completed and granted an assurance level of “Substantial”. This was prior to the Audit Scotland Best Value Thematic Audit detailed above. No actions were required as detailed in the report to our [Audit and Scrutiny Committee](#).

Cyber Security – Public Services Network

In January 2024, we received notification from the Scottish Government Cabinet Office that the council’s annual Code of Connection application successfully passed assessment.

The Public Services Network (PSN) was established to allow public service organisations to share information and services in a secure environment. Before an organisation can connect to the PSN there is a requirement to pass the PSN compliance process and demonstrate that our infrastructure is sufficiently secure. For the first time since the PSN was fully established over 10 years ago this was achieved without the requirement of further clarifications or remediations being sought.

HMIE – Community Learning and Development

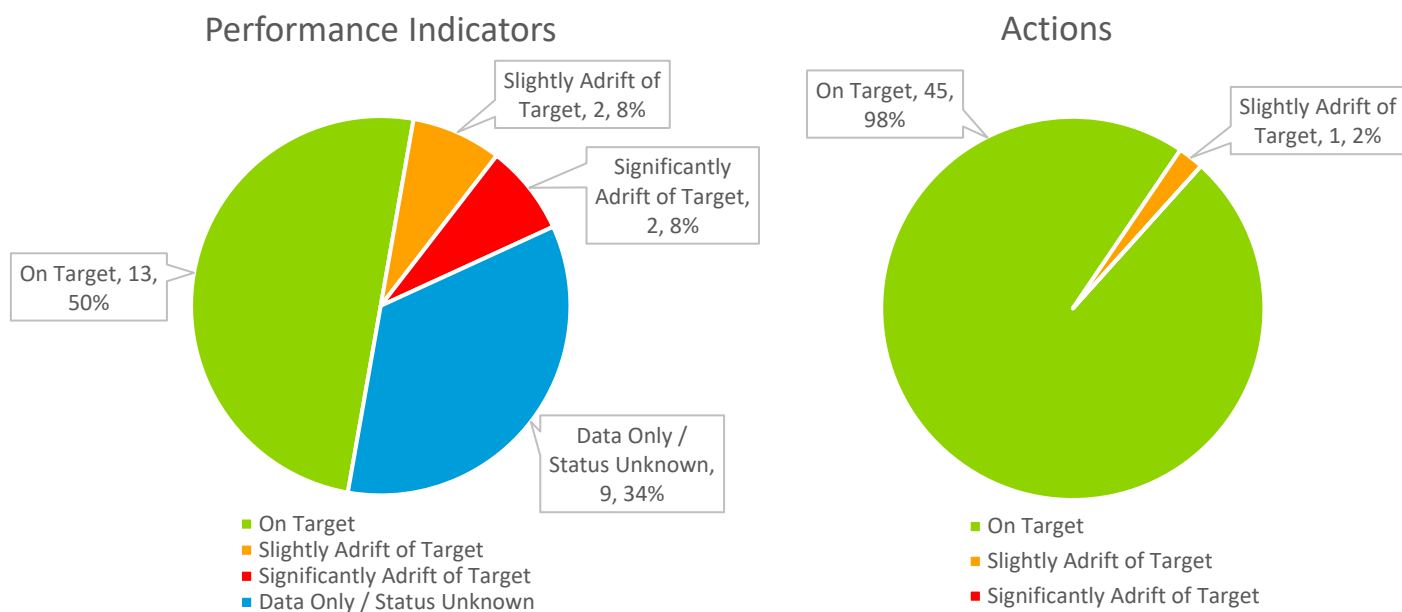
In a recent HMIE report our Community Learning and Development teams have been recognised as making a significant positive impact on our communities in terms of inclusion and reducing barriers.

Health and Social Care Partnership

Our Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) performance is reported separately through the HSCP. Our HSCP works closely with independent care providers to ensure that the care and support provided is being delivered in line with peoples' outcomes, offers best value, meets regulatory requirements and keeps people healthy and well.

Care services provided by our partnership teams undergo external inspections and are subject to rigorous review and inspection. Full details are available within the [Health and Social Care Partnerships Annual Performance Report](#).

Performance Summary



Measures Adrift of Target

This section details the performance indicators adrift of target and the action being taken to address performance. Due to expected data lags the most recent data may relate to previous time periods but may only now be available to report. To avoid duplication, only data that has not previously been reported to our Cabinet is included in this section.

CP_29 Overall carbon emissions (tonnes) (Non-domestic Council estate)- Significantly Adrift of Target

This is a provisional figure as not all data is available at the time of reporting, however estimates have been made where data is not available based on previous years. For 2023 and 2024 the estimated figure is 20,570, which is over the target of 19,500 but lower than in 2022 - 2023 (20,896). To improve performance a study has commenced to identify measures required to support continued reduction in carbon emissions across the non-domestic estate. This will consider the energy use and building fabric of various building types such as offices, schools, community centres and depots, and what measures can be put in place to reduce carbon emissions associated with the operation of these types of buildings. The council's fleet decarbonisation plan identifies actions to reduce carbon associated with transport by considering ways to avoid the need for travel, rationalising our current fleet, and switching to low carbon alternatives.

CP_46 Number of trees planted under the North Ayrshire 2030 Tree Planting Strategy- Significantly Adrift of Target

The total number of trees planted at the end of 2023-2024 was 36,366, which is slightly lower than the projected target of 40,000, however the total number of trees planted within the first three years of the strategy is on track to achieve the overall target of 108,000 trees to be planted by 2030, with six years of the strategy remaining. We have made a conscious decision to defer planting one of our larger key planting sites to allow for the regrading of soil from another area of the same development site, which will reduce the associated development costs to the council. The planting at the site will commence after the soil regrading works are complete.

The level of response from the Woodland Grant Fund applications in 2023-2024 was not as high as expected, so we will be looking to do more publicity around the grant funding this year to hopefully improve the level of uptake in the next round. The 2024-2025 Woodland Grant Fund will be opened and widely advertised in the autumn, which will support local tree planting projects including the creation of new community orchards. The Streetscene Service is also currently reviewing several potential planting sites for developing new tree planting proposals for the 2024-2025 tree planting season.

CP_43 Number of council assets under community management (cumulative)- Slightly Adrift of Target

The number of council assets under community management for 2023-2024 was 53. This is one fewer than the 54 target. A Community Asset Transfer was due to conclude prior to the year end, unfortunately external factors caused a delay in the final stages of the process. However, this is expected to be resolved by April 2024.

CP_31 Percentage of total household waste that is recycled (calendar year as per SEPA) (LGBF)- Slightly Adrift of Target

This is a provisional figure as the draft calculations for the 2023 recycling performance have been submitted to SEPA and will now be subjected to verification checks. As a result, they may change prior to issuing in September or October 2024. The estimated household waste recycling performance for the calendar year 2023 is estimated to be 56.1%. This is under the 57% target but an improvement on last year's performance (55.3%).

A new Zero Waste Strategy is being developed during 2024 to explore the potential opportunities for improving reuse and recycling performance.

Actions Adrift of Target

CP_29 Promoting new woodland creation and protecting our green spaces to provide a natural resource for carbon sequestration - Slightly Adrift of Target

Our tree planting work contributes to this action and as detailed above (CP_46), we didn't meet our tree planting target for 2023 and 2024. We will look to increase publicity around the Woodland Grant Fund this year to hopefully improve the level of uptake in the next round. The 2024-2025 Woodland Grant Fund will be opened and widely advertised in the autumn, which will support local tree planting projects, including the creation of new community orchards. The Streetscene Service is also currently reviewing several potential

planting sites for developing new tree planting proposals for the 2024 to 2025 tree planting season.

Indicator Amendments and Recommendations

CP_06 Average tariff score: All Leavers

Following a refresh of data within the national Insight system, the 2020 to 2021 annual figure has changed from 912 to 908.5 and the 2021 to 2022 figure has changed from 905.6 to 899.5. These changes do not impact on the status of this time periods.

CP_38 Average total tariff for Care Experienced Young People

Following a refresh of data within the national Insight system, the 2021 to 2022 annual figure has changed from 457 to 413.8 and the 2022 to 2023 figure has also changed from 430 to 413.8. This change did not impact on the status of these time periods.

CP_39 Number of unemployed people progressing into employment (since 1st April)






The Quarter Two figure of 652 has been amended to 215. A cumulative figure combining the Quarter Four 2022 to 2023 and Quarter One 2023 to 2024 figures was used in error. This indicator is cumulative from the beginning of each financial year, but not across years. Appropriate changes to the indicator description have been made on the performance management system to avoid this in future.
































However, to align with national reporting it is recommended that this performance indicator is replaced with the “Number of unemployed people that have progressed to employment as a result of participation in council funded or operated employability activities”. This figure is calculated for the official SLAED release and gives scope to include job outcomes which, under the current indicator, are not included until the subsidy ends.

CP_19 Proportion of operational buildings that are suitable for their current use (LGBF)

The Quarter Two figure of 91.5% was incorrect and has been corrected to 95.1%. This was due to a data entry error. As a result, the status of this indicator has changed to on target (green).

Performance Indicators

PI Status	
	Significantly Adrift of Target
	Slightly Adrift of Target
	On Target
	Data Not Available
	Data Only

PI Code and Description	2020/21 Value	2020/21 Target	2020/21 Status	2021/22 Value	2021/22 Target	2021/22 Status	2022/23 Value	2022/23 Target	2022/23 Status	2023/24 Value	2023/24 Target	2023/24 Status	2024/25 Target
CP_36 Number of residents participating in community learning and development activity including youth work				17,269			17,804			23,503	18,700		19,500
CP_04 Proportion of children meeting developmental milestones (LGBF)	82.2%			78.7%			79.5%			Data Available April 2025	79%		79%
CP_37 Average total tariff score of pupils living in SIMD 20% most deprived areas	724			711			670.2			Data Available March 2025	714		720
CP_06 Average tariff score: All Leavers*	908.5	900		899.5	880		847.2			Data Available March 2025	908		910
CP_38 Average total tariff for Care Experienced Young People	448			413.8			413.8			Data Available June 2025	465		470

PI Code and Description	2020/21 Value	2020/21 Target	2020/21 Status	2021/22 Value	2021/22 Target	2021/22 Status	2022/23 Value	2022/23 Target	2022/23 Status	2023/24 Value	2023/24 Target	2023/24 Status	2024/25 Target
CP_07 Percentage of school leavers entering positive destinations (LGBF)*	95.2%	96.2%		96%	93.5%		96.5%			Data Available April 2025	96.4%		96.8%
CP_39 Number of unemployed people progressing into employment (since 1 st April)	285	200		524	450		437			475	450		475
CP_10a Percentage of procurement spent on local enterprises	21.39%	23.5%		22.93%	24%		26.04%	25%		Data Pending	26%		27%
CP_40 Number of new build housing units reaching completion (all tenures) (Actual not cumulative)							562			384	295		396
CP_41 Number of empty homes brought back into use (Actual)	122			335			120			378	200		300
CP_28 Hectares of vacant & derelict land in North Ayrshire	1,204	1,194		1,198	1,144		1,130.43	1,094		951.51	1,094		925
CP_27 Street Cleanliness Index – Percentage Clean (LGBF)	91.34%	94%		86.7%	94%		84.6%	90		89.1%**	87%		87%
CP_20 Overall percentage of road network that should be considered for maintenance treatment	37.1%	38.1%		33.9%	37.5%		34.8%	33.8%		32.5%	34.8%		32.5%
CP_42 Provided floor space of commercial/industrial space within our Council portfolio (sq ft)							400,991			404,897	404,755		423,077
CP_02 Percentage of Council budget directed via participatory methods	1.13%	1.2%		2.32%	1.1%		2.74%	1%		2.05%	1.5%		1.5%
CP_43 Number of Council assets under community management (cumulative)							49			53	54		56

PI Code and Description	2020/21 Value	2020/21 Target	2020/21 Status	2021/22 Value	2021/22 Target	2021/22 Status	2022/23 Value	2022/23 Target	2022/23 Status	2023/24 Value	2023/24 Target	2023/24 Status	2024/25 Target
CP_30 Total installed capacity of low carbon heat and electricity generation across the Council's estate	10,720	9,800	✔	11,680	11,000	✔	12,104	11,800	✔	15,992	12,000	✔	28,499
CP_29 Overall carbon emissions (tonnes) (Non-domestic Council estate)	22,846	35,127	✔	21,791	21,247	⚠	20,896	21,000	✔	20,570** *	19,500	✘	19,953
CP_44 Percentage of council dwellings that are energy efficient (LGBF)*	97.6%			97.7%			Data Pending			Data Pending	98.1%		98.5%
CP_45 Length of new or improved active travel routes per annum (Metres)							1,090			3,900	2,000	✔	2,000
CP_46 Number of trees planted under the North Ayrshire 2030 Tree Planting Strategy							35,627			36,366	40,000	✘	47,000
CP_19 Proportion of operational buildings that are suitable for their current use (LGBF)	91.05%	93%	⚠	91.1%	93%	⚠	95.1%	93%	✔	Data Available Oct 2024	92.1%		93%
CP_31 Percentage of total household waste that is recycled (calendar year as per SEPA) (LGBF)	52.1%	52.1%	✔	56.3%	53.1%	✔	55.3%	56.9%	⚠	56.1%** *	57%	⚠	56%
CP_25 Percentage of Council dwellings that meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (LGBF)	98.83%	99.5%	✔	49.3%	99.5%	✘	63.2%			Data Available Oct 2024	72.5%		97.4%
CP_47 Gross rent arrears (all tenants) as at 31 March each year as a percentage of rent due for the reporting year (LGBF)	5.5%			6.6%			7.1%			5.88%**	6.5%	✔	TBC
CP_48 Percentage of income due from Council Tax received by the end of the year (LGBF)	92.1%			93.3%			94.7%			Data Available Oct 2024	94%		98%

*No target provided for 2022/23 as the reporting period was underway when the indicators were approved within the Performance Management Framework

**Annual figure is based on local data. This figure is subject to change after future data releases.

***This figure is provisional data.

Action Tracker

Priority	Ref #	Existing Overall Action	2023/24	2023/24	2023/24	2024/25	2024/25	2024/25	2024/25	2025/26	2025/26	2025/26	2025/26	2026/27	2026/27	2026/27	2026/27	2027/28	2027/28	2027/28	2027/28
			Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
	CP01	Ensuring that wellbeing is at the heart of local life and opportunities, with a focus on tackling inequalities.	✓	✓	✓																
	CP02	Developing a Community Wealth Building approach to a wellbeing economy.	✓	✓	✓																
	CP03	Improving educational attainment and achievement and closing the attainment gap.	✓	✓	✓																
	CP04	Improving outcomes for care experienced young people including implementation of The Promise.	✓	✓	✓																
	CP05	Developing the Young Workforce and ensuring positive destinations for school leavers.	✓	✓	✓																
	CP06	Providing lifelong learning opportunities for individuals and organisations, including digital literacy.	✓	✓	✓																
	CP07	Maximising access to and uptake of benefits, entitlements and financial advice.	✓	✓	✓																
	CP08	Ensuring that supports are available in communities to alleviate cost-of-living pressures through community hubs and networks.	✓	✓	✓																

Priority	Ref #	Existing Overall Action	2023/24	2023/24	2023/24	2024/25	2024/25	2024/25	2024/25	2025/26	2025/26	2025/26	2025/26	2026/27	2026/27	2026/27	2026/27	2027/28	2027/28	2027/28	2027/28
			Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
High	CP09	Through our housebuilding programme and wider Housing Investment provide homes for life that meet the needs of our residents.	✓	✓	✓																
	CP10	Increase the number of homes in the area through a mix of private and social developments and bringing empty buildings back in to use.	✓	✓	✓																
	CP11	Exploration of models and the development of pilot schemes to increase access to and use of public/community transport.	✓	✓	✓																
	CP12	Ensure our places and spaces where we live, work and visit are well maintained and accessible.	✓	✓	✓																
	CP13	Developing infrastructure to support business growth.	✓	✓	✓																
	CP14	Support KA Leisure’s leadership of North Ayrshire’s Health and Wellbeing Alliance.	✓	✓	✓																
	CP15	Through the Health and Social Care Partnership Strategic Plan we will protect and provide care and support for those in need.****																			
Medium	CP16	Developing strong relationships with communities and partners based on trust and shared aspirations using their experiences to inform service provision.	✓	✓	✓																
	CP17	Providing support for community organisations in achieving their goals, including as Community Wealth Building anchor organisations.	✓	✓	✓																

List of actions showing that all our actions at Quarter 4 2023 - 2024 are on target with the exception of one, CP_29 ' as detailed within the report

Priority	Ref #	Existing Overall Action	2023/24	2023/24	2023/24	2024/25	2024/25	2024/25	2024/25	2025/26	2025/26	2025/26	2025/26	2026/27	2026/27	2026/27	2026/27	2027/28	2027/28	2027/28	2027/28
			Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
High	CP18	Creating a participation and engagement framework which ensures opportunities and support for all residents to take part in influencing local democracy and council and partner strategies.	✓	✓	✓																
	CP19	Supporting participatory budgeting.	✓	✓	✓																
	CP20	Supporting community asset transfer and community owned and operated/managed assets.	✓	✓	✓																
	CP21	Supporting the Community Planning Partnership and the Community Plan (LOIP).	✓	✓	✓																
	CP22	Developing partnerships with the third and voluntary sector.	✓	✓	✓																
	CP23	Placemaking, including creation of locality action plans based on the Community Plan (LOIP) priorities and support the delivery of Islands Plans.	✓	✓	✓																
	CP24	Ensuring an inclusive, fair, rights-based and asset-based approach in our work.	✓	✓	✓																
	CP25	Accessible public services, both digitally and locally, ensuring a 'No Wrong Door' approach.	✓	✓	✓																
Medium	CP26	Embedding our net-zero ambition in all democratic decision-making.	✓	✓	✓																
	CP27	Reducing the carbon footprint of our estate through rationalisation utilising a locality-based approach and	✓	✓	✓																

Priority	Ref #	Existing Overall Action	2023/24	2023/24	2023/24	2024/25	2024/25	2024/25	2024/25	2025/26	2025/26	2025/26	2025/26	2026/27	2026/27	2026/27	2026/27	2027/28	2027/28	2027/28	2027/28
			Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
		taking a fabric first and low carbon energy generation approach to homes and buildings.																			
	CP28	Improving resilience and reducing carbon by developing and supporting supply chains where materials and goods are sourced locally.	✓	✓	✓																
	CP29	Promoting new woodland creation and protecting our green spaces to provide a natural resource for carbon sequestration.	✓	✓	⚠																
	CP30	Supporting local businesses as they meet their climate change obligations.	✓	✓	✓																
	CP31	Promoting a circular economy in North Ayrshire to reduce consumption of raw materials and promote reuse, repair and recycling, and generating energy from residual waste.	✓	✓	✓																
	CP32	Developing local low carbon energy generation schemes and networks.	✓	✓	✓																
	CP33	Unlocking the potential of community owned energy generation to bring new income streams into communities and help them take direct action to combat climate change.	✓	✓	✓																
	CP34	Learning for Sustainability, and work with communities to adopt low carbon behaviour change and encourage climate-based volunteering activities.	✓	✓	✓																
	CP35	Improving communities' preparedness to deal with the impacts of climate change already locked-in.	✓	✓	✓																

Priority	Ref #	Existing Overall Action	2023/24	2023/24	2023/24	2024/25	2024/25	2024/25	2024/25	2025/26	2025/26	2025/26	2025/26	2026/27	2026/27	2026/27	2026/27	2027/28	2027/28	2027/28	2027/28
			Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Green	CP36	Working with communities to adopt low carbon behaviour change and encourage climate-based volunteering activities.	✓	✓	✓																
	CP37	Taking a nature-based approach to protect our habitats and species.	✓	✓	✓																
	CP38	Developing and promoting active travel infrastructure.	✓	✓	✓																
	CP39	Transitioning to low and zero carbon travel.	✓	✓	✓																
Blue	CP40	Ensuring robust governance arrangements are in place to fulfil the council’s statutory duties, manage risk and support delivery of key priorities.	✓	✓	✓																
	CP41	Using dynamic data and lived experiences to inform decision-making.	✓	✓	✓																
	CP42	Working with partners nationally, regionally and locally to secure investment and target resources towards our priorities.	✓	✓	✓																
	CP43	Driving change and transformation, using technology where appropriate, to deliver efficient and effective services and support delivery of priorities.	✓	✓	✓																
	CP44	Maximising financial flexibilities to help support delivery of priorities.	✓	✓	✓																

Priority	Ref #	Existing Overall Action	2023/24	2023/24	2023/24	2024/25	2024/25	2024/25	2024/25	2025/26	2025/26	2025/26	2025/26	2026/27	2026/27	2026/27	2026/27	2027/28	2027/28	2027/28	2027/28
			Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
	CP45	Maximising value from the use of our assets.	✓	✓	✓																
	CP46	Focusing our investment on priorities.	✓	✓	✓																
	CP47	Effective workforce planning ensuring that we have the right skills/resources to deliver priorities.	✓	✓	✓																

****Delivery of this action is managed through the Health and Social Care Partnership Strategic Plan

We strive to make our reporting as accessible as possible. If you have any questions or require further information on our Council's performance please contact:

The Corporate Policy, Performance and Elections Team

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Reports can be viewed at www.north-ayrshire.gov.uk/Performance