

AGENDA

Page Nos.

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** - In terms of Section 5 of the Code of Conduct Members of the Committee are asked to declare any interest(s) in particular items on the agenda and the nature of the interest(s) at this stage.
3. **MINUTE OF MEETING OF PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE OF 27TH SEPTEMBER, 2022** 3 – 4
4. **SCOTTISH FIRE & RESCUE (SFRS) LOCAL PLAN 12 MONTHS PERFORMANCE REPORT** – Report by the Local Senior Officer, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service 5 – 25
5. **HOUSING SERVICE PERFORMANCE REPORT AND PATHWAY TO IMPROVEMENT 2019-22** – Report by the Head of Housing Services 26 – 43
6. **ANNUAL ASSURANCE STATEMENT 2022** – Report by the Head of Housing Services 44 – 56
7. **MAXIMISING HOUSING OPTIONS** – Report by the Head of Housing Services 57 – 62
8. **TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION PRESSURES: 2022 KIRKCALDY SHERIFF COURT JUDGEMENT** – Report by the Head of Housing Services 63 – 67
9. **CITIZENS ADVICE & RIGHTS FIFE – PERFORMANCE REPORT** – Report by the Head of Communities and Corporate Development 68 – 85
10. **2022-23 REVENUE BUDGET PROJECTED OUTTURN – COMMUNITIES** – Joint Report by the Executive Director Finance & Corporate Services and the Executive Director - Communities 86 - 91
11. **2022-23 CAPITAL PLAN PROJECTED OUTTURN – COMMUNITIES** – Joint Report by the Executive Director Finance & Corporate Services and the Executive Director - Communities 92 – 98
12. **2022-23 REVENUE BUDGET & CAPITAL PLAN PROJECTED OUTTURN - CHILDREN & FAMILIES AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE SERVICES** – Joint Report by the Executive Director - Education and Children and the Executive Director Finance & Corporate Services 99 - 103
13. **2022-23 REVENUE BUDGET PROJECTED OUT-TURN – HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE** – Report by the Executive Director Finance & Corporate Services 104 - 109

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| 14. | 2022-23 CAPITAL PLAN PROJECTED OUTTURN – HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE – Report by the Executive Director Finance & Corporate Services | 110 - 115 |
| 16. | PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME | 116 - 119 |

Members are reminded that should they have queries on the detail of a report they should, where possible, contact the report authors in advance of the meeting to seek clarification.

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20 October, 2022

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2022 PCS 7

THE FIFE COUNCIL - PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – REMOTE MEETING

27th September, 2022

2.00 p.m. – 3.30 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillors Eugene Clarke (Convener), Naz Anis-Miah (Substitute for Ken Caldwell), Alistair Cameron, Alex Campbell, Brian Goodall, Kathleen Leslie (Substitute for Peter Gulline), Allan Knox, Julie MacDougall, Lynn Mowatt, Sarah Neal (Substitute for Bailey-Lee Robb), Sam Steele, Ann Verner, Darren Watt, Jan Wincott

ALSO PRESENT: Councillors Linda Erskine and Judy Hamilton

ATTENDING: Michael Enston, Executive Director, Communities; Paul Vaughan, Head of Communities and Corporate Development, Communities and Neighbourhoods, John Mills, Head of Housing Services, Gavin Smith, Service Manager, Housing Services; Tariq Ditta, Senior Manager - Catering & Cleaning, Shirley McKie, Service Manager - Hospitality, Facilities Management; Lindsay Thomson, Head of Legal and Democratic Services, Helena Couperwhite, Service Manager - Committee Services and Michelle Hyslop, Committee Officer, Legal and Democratic Services.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillors Blair Allan and Donald Lothian.

12. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were submitted in terms of Standing Order No. 7.1.

13. MINUTE OF MEETING OF PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Committee considered the minute of the People and Communities Scrutiny Committee meeting of 16th August, 2022.

Decision

The Committee agreed to approve the minute.

14. COST OF LIVING CRISIS

The Committee considered a report by the Executive Director, Communities providing members with an update on the Council's response to the current cost of living challenges facing people in Fife.

Decision

The Committee noted and commented on the current and proposed measures following a review of the Council's response to the cost of living crisis.

15./

15. CURRENT HOUSING ACCESS PRESSURES

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Housing Services, which highlighted the range of current and anticipated pressures on the overall housing stock and the impacts this would have on housing allocations. The report outlined the proposed approach in managing housing allocations and noted the actions taken to improve access to housing.

Decision

The Committee: -

- (1) considered the current pressures on the housing system, and the growing demands on housing access and homelessness services;
- (2) considered the proposed allocations approach taken to mitigate the current pressures on the housing access system and noted the option to make recommendations to the Cabinet Committee on any adjustments that would need to be made to maximise opportunities for people in need of housing within Fife.
- (3) recognised the need for an increased focus on homelessness allocations to reduce pressures on temporary accommodations, and reduce the backlog of need within a severely constrained environment;
- (4) supported the approach to increase options to grow the housing stock, through the agreed approach to property acquisitions as approved by the Cabinet Committee on 25th August, 2022, and
- (5) agreed that a report on Maximising Housing Options would be brought back to the next meeting of the People and Communities Scrutiny Committee on 27th October, 2022.

16. CAFE INC

The Committee considered a report by the Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods, providing members with an update on the Cafe Inc. holiday provision.

Decision

The Committee:

- (1) considered and commented on the performance of Cafe Inc over Summer 2022,
- (2) noted the issues and options detailed in the report, and
- (3) reinforced the importance of hot food provision on a 5 day a week basis and recognised the importance of having dialogue at area level to shape and finalise provision.

27 October 2022
Agenda Item No. 04

Scottish Fire and Rescue Service - Local Plan 12 Months Performance Report

Report by: Mark Bryce - Local Senior Officer - Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

Wards Affected: All

Purpose

This report provides the Committee with incident information for the period 1st April 2021 – 31st March 2022. The incident information enables the Committee to scrutinise the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) Fife - Local Senior Officer (LSO) Area - against its key performance indicators (KPIs)

Recommendation(s)

The committee is asked to:

- (1) Consider and comment on the progress across a range of KPI's within this report.

Resource Implications

Not applicable

Legal & Risk Implications

The Police and Fire Reform (Scotland) Act 2012 provides the statutory basis for fire reform, including the responsibility to:

- Put in place statutory planning and reporting requirements including providing facilities for consultation;
- Make new arrangements for strengthening local engagement and partnership working, including a new statutory role in the LSO and development of local fire and rescue plans linked to community planning, along with clear powers for local authorities in relation to the provision of fire and rescue services in their area.

Impact Assessment

An Equality Impact Assessment checklist is not required as this report does not have any immediate implications for service delivery and policy.

Consultation

This document is circulated amongst SFRS Fife LSO managers to enable areas of high incidence to be scrutinised for reduction strategies.



ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT

April 2021 – March 2022

Covering the activities and performance in support of the Local Fire and Rescue Plan for Fife 2021



SCOTTISH
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE
Working together for a safer Scotland

**Working together
for a safer Scotland**

ABOUT THE STATISTICS IN THIS REPORT

The activity totals and other statistics quoted in this report are provisional in nature and subject to change because of ongoing quality assurance and review.

Because all statistics quoted are provisional there may be differences in the period totals quoted in our reports after original publication which result from revisions or additions to the data on our systems.

From 2015-16 onwards responsibility for the publication of end-year statistical data transferred from the Scottish Government to the SFRS. This change of responsibility does not change the status of the figures quoted in this and other SFRS reports reported to the Committee.

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DEFINITIONS

Accidental Dwelling Fire

Building occupied by households, excluding hotels, hostels and residential institutions. In 2000, the definition of a dwelling was widened to include any non-permanent structure used solely as a dwelling, such as caravans, houseboats etc. Caravans, boats etc. not used as a permanent dwelling are shown according to the type of property. Accidental includes fires where the cause was not known or unspecified.

Fire Fatality

A person whose death is attributed to a fire is counted as a fatality even if the death occurred weeks or months later.

Fire Casualty

Non-fatal casualties consist of persons requiring medical treatment including first aid given at the scene of the fire, but not those sent to hospital or advised to see a doctor for a check-up or observation (whether or not they actually do). People sent to hospital or advised to see a doctor as a precaution, having no obvious injury are recorded as precautionary 'check-ups'.

Deliberate Fire

Includes fires where deliberate ignition is merely suspected, and recorded by the FRS as "doubtful".

Non-Domestic Fires

These are fires identified as deliberate other building fires or accidental other building fires.

False Alarms

Where the FRS attends a location believing there to be a fire incident, but on arrival discovers that no such incident exists, or existed.

Unwanted Fire Alarm Signal

Where the FRS attends a non-domestic location believing there to be a fire incident, but on arrival discovers that no such incident exists, or existed.

Primary Fires:

- Buildings (including mobile homes) fit for occupation (i.e. not wholly derelict) and those under construction.
- Caravans, trailers etc.
- Vehicles and other methods of transport (not derelict unless associated with business e.g. scrap metal).
- Outdoor storage (including materials for recycling), plant and machinery.
- Agricultural and forestry premises and property.
- Other outdoor structures including post-boxes, tunnels, bridges, etc.

Secondary Fires

- Single derelict buildings.
- Grassland etc., including heath, hedges, railway embankments and single trees.
- Intentional straw or stubble burning.
- Outdoor structures, including: lamp-posts, traffic signs and other road furniture, private outdoor furniture, playground furniture, scaffolding, signs and hoarding etc.
- Refuse and refuse containers.
- Derelict vehicles (a vehicle without a registered keeper).

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This annual performance report for the period April 1st 2021 to March 31st 2022 inclusive provides comparative data across the previous 3 years for the same period. The KPI's detailed below are drawn from the SFRS Fife Local Fire and Rescue Plan 2021 priorities and are shown in bold text;

- **Domestic Fire Safety**

Continuously monitor the number of accidental dwelling fires

Continuously monitor the severity and cause of accidental dwelling fires

Continuously monitor the number and severity of fire related injuries

- **Deliberate Fire Setting**

Monitor the number, type and cause of deliberate fire setting incidents in Fife

- **Built Environment**

Monitor the number and severity of fire related incidents in our relevant premises

- **Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals**

Monitor and challenge each Unwanted Fire Alarm Signal (UFAS) incident across Fife

- **Transport and Environment**













Monitor the amount of water related incidents

Monitor the frequency of attendances at Road Traffic Collisions (RTCs), as well as the number and severity of injuries. These will be monitored alongside Police Scotland RTC incidence information

2. PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

2.1 The table below provides an annual summary of activity 2021-2022 compared with 2020-2021

It aims to provide – at a glance – our direction of travel during the current reporting period.

<p>Accident Dwelling Fires</p>  <p>2021/2022: 212 2020/2021: 227</p>	<p>ADF Fatal Casualties</p>  <p>2021/2022: 2 2020/2021: 2</p>	<p>ADF Non-Fatal Casualties</p>  <p>2021/2022: 33 2020/2021: 22</p>
<p>Deliberate Primary Fires</p>  <p>2021/2022: 173 2020/2021: 165</p>	<p>Deliberate Secondary Fires</p>  <p>2021/2022: 891 2020/2021: 826</p>	<p>Non-domestic Building Fires</p>  <p>2021/2022: 104 2020/2021: 98</p>
<p>Fatal Casualties in Non-Domestic Building Fires</p>  <p>2021/2022: 0 2020/2021: 0</p>	<p>Non-Fatal Casualties in Non-Domestic Building Fires</p>  <p>2021/2022: 2 2020/2021: 4</p>	<p>Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals</p>  <p>2021/2022: 1,631 2020/2021: 1,305</p>
<p>Road Traffic Collision (RTC) Incidents</p>  <p>2021/2022: 145 2020/2021: 100</p>	<p>Fatal RTC Casualties</p>  <p>2021/2022: 0 2020/2021: 5</p>	<p>Non-Fatal RTC Casualties</p>  <p>2021/2022: 115 2020/2021: 58</p>

PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

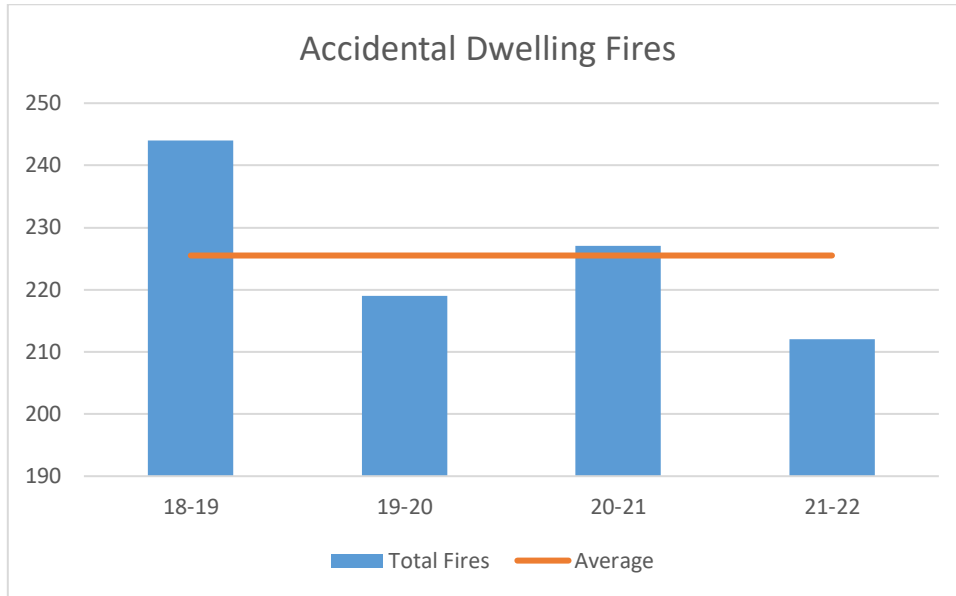
Of the indicators, the following performance should be noted for the annual period April 1st 2021 to March 31st 2022 inclusive comparing data across the previous 3 years for the same period;

- The number of **Accidental Dwelling Fires*** has seen a 3% decrease from the same period the previous year, this is a 6% reduction from the previous four-year average.
- There was 2 **Accidental Dwelling Fire Fatal Casualty** during this period. The number of **Accidental Dwelling Fires Non-Fatal Casualties*** was 33. This is a 6% reduction from the previous four-year average.
- The number of **Deliberate Primary Fires** during this period one was 173. This is an 9% increase in the four years average and a 22% increase compared to the same period last year.
- The number of **Deliberate Secondary Fires*** during this period was 891. This is 3% increase in the four years average and a 8% increase compared to the same period last year.
- The number of **Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (UFAS) caused by automatic fire alarms (AFAs) in non-domestic buildings** during this period was 1631. This is a 4% increase in the four years average and a 25% increase for the same period the previous year.
- The number of **Road Traffic Collisions*** during this period was 145. This is an 45% increase from the same period 2021, however it is only a 4% increase in the four-year average.
- The number of **Fatal RTC Casualties** during this period was 0, the four years average is 3. The number of **Non-Fatal RTC Casualties*** was 115. This is an increase of 98% compared to the same period last year and 21% more than the four-year average.

*Further detail around this is captured within Sections 3 and 4

3. Domestic Fire Safety

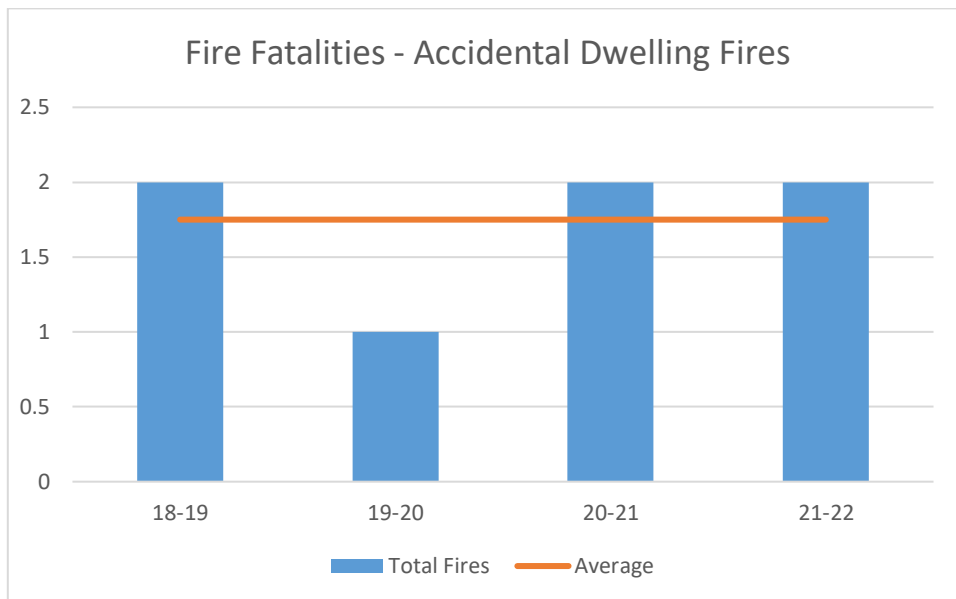
3.1 Accidental Dwelling Fires have decreased by ten incidents when compared to the previous year figures.



Graph 3.1 Accidental Dwelling Fires: 1st April – 31st March 2021 – 2022

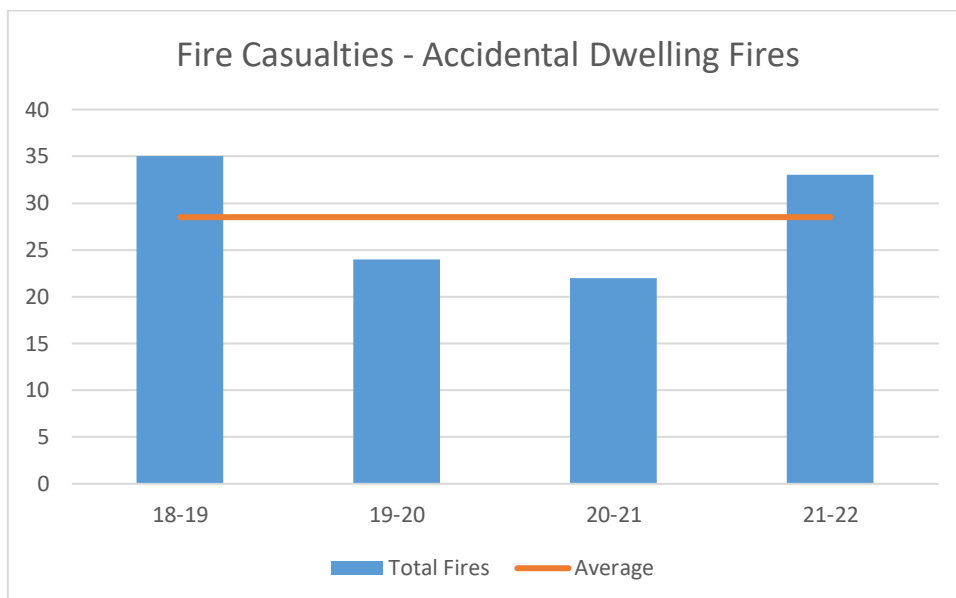
- 3.2 This reporting period has seen a 6% reduction in Accidental Dwelling Fires from the previous four-year average of 226. Fire casualties have increased from 22 to 33.
- 3.3 The vast majority of Accidental Dwelling Fires were caused within the kitchen by cooking. With 72% being restricted to either no fire damage or limited to the item first ignited.
- 3.4 It is pleasing to note that 70% of those addresses had a detection system and that 65% of those operated and raised the alarm (on a number of occasions there was insufficient products of combustion to activate alarm, fire discovered by person.)
- 3.5 67% of the incidents were resolved either without SFRS intervention, or by removal. 28% required the use of a Hose Reel Jet.
- 3.6 The information above describes a continued trend of reduction in severity. This can be attributed to the high number of detection systems being fitted by SFRS and partners, which give an early warning of fire.

3.7 Fire Fatalities – Accidental Dwelling Fires



Graph 3.7 Accidental Dwelling Fire Fatal Casualties: 1st April – 31st March 2021 – 2022

3.8 Fire Casualties – Accidental Dwelling Fires



Graph 3.8 Accidental Dwelling Fire Casualties: 1st April – 31st March 2021 – 2022

- 3.9 Tragically there was one fire fatality recorded for the reporting period. This was a male aged between 40 and 49, an alarm was present and it operated.
- 3.10 Non-fatal fire casualties have reduced by 13 this period compared to 2020 to 2021.
- 3.11 Of the non-fatal casualties recorded, 23 had to be transferred to hospital for treatment. 59 incidents involved properties with no detection systems. 62% of the incidents resulted in no damage to the building, with five incidents affecting an area contained to the room of origin.

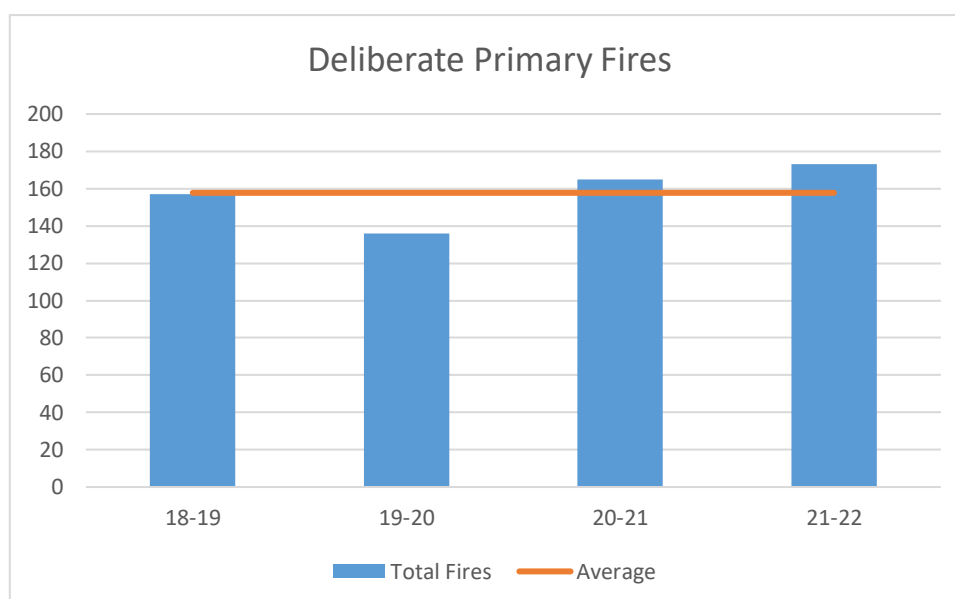
3.12 Domestic Fire Reduction Strategy

Home Fire Safety Visits (HFSV) play a vital part in our strategy to reduce the number of Accidental Dwelling Fires. This involves a comprehensive assessment, carried out by a trained assessor, which examines the levels of fire risk within the home. It provides a means to mitigate the risk through the provision of guidance, advice and, if required, the installation of long life battery operated smoke and heat alarm(s)'.

HFSV performance is no longer based on the number visits achieved within a year. Performance is now targeted on how many HFSV referrals remain outstanding within SFRS databases. Referrals are made from house occupants and partner agencies daily therefore this number constantly fluctuates.

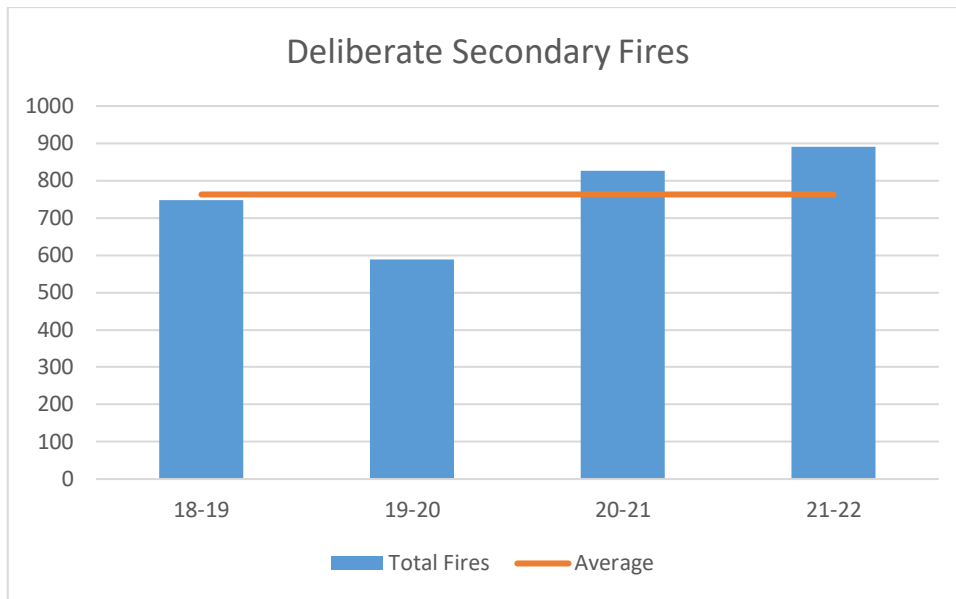
4. Deliberate Fire Setting

4.1 Deliberate Primary Fires



Graph 4.1 Deliberate Primary Fires: 1st April – 31st March 2021 – 2022

4.2 Deliberate Secondary Fires



Graph 4.2 Deliberate Secondary Fires: 1st April – 1st April – 31st March 2021 – 2022

4.1 Deliberate Secondary Fires

4.2 Deliberate fires can be broken down into two categories, primary and secondary.

Primary fires generally involve property and include buildings, caravans, motor vehicles and plant and machinery. Secondary fires are often minor and include the burning of rubbish, grass and derelict properties.

4.3 Graph 4.2 above shows that Secondary Deliberate fires have increased by 5% from the same period last year.

4.4 Deliberate Fire Reduction Strategy

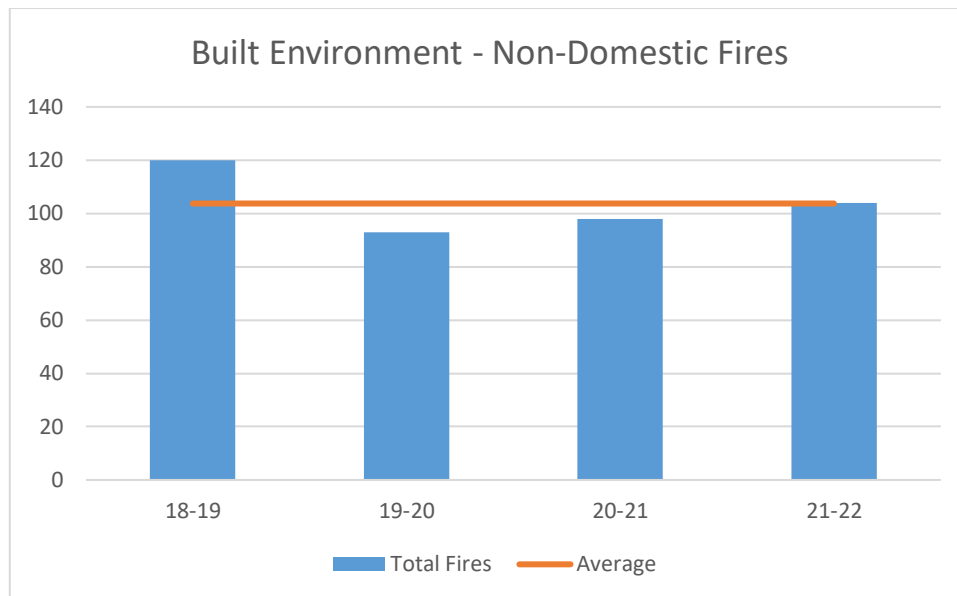
We continue to target schools in high activity areas to deliver talks regarding the dangers and consequences of deliberate fire setting. These talks take place normally in April and October, which are the peak periods of activity. This was not possible in Quarter One of the reporting period due to COVID19 Restrictions, this may have contributed to this increase.

As COVID19 restrictions ease we will continue to work with our Police and Local Authority partners to identify deliberate fire setting incidents early to ensure that solutions are implemented to prevent further incidents.

We will also liaise with premises occupiers, particularly in town centres, to give advice on refuse storage and security which can be a cause of deliberate fires.

5. Built Environment

5.1 Built Environment – Non- Domestic Fires



Graph 5.1 Built Environment Non - Domestic Fires: 1st April – 31st March 2021 – 2022

5.2 The table above shows that Non-Domestic Fires had previously shown a modest but consistent increase over the previous 4 years across Fife.

5.3 There have been zero casualties resulting from incidents within Built Environment Non-Domestic Fires for this period.

5.4 Built Environment Fire Reduction Strategy

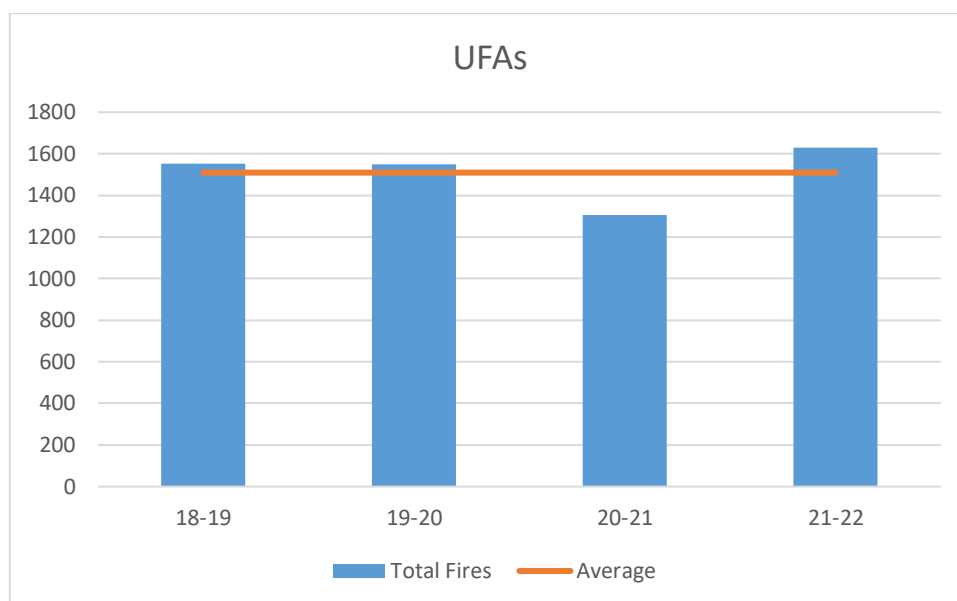
We continue to deliver a programme of fire safety audits in relevant premises - as detailed within section 78 of the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005 - identified as high risk on an

ongoing basis. We also complete thematic audit programmes where patterns emerge of incidents in a particular risk group.

As well as the audit programmes described above, we also deliver 'post fire audits' which take place as soon as possible after a fire has occurred in premises. The purpose of these audits is to deliver further fire safety advice to the premises occupier, and to identify any issues which could be used to inform other similar premises types in order to prevent further incidents of a similar nature.

6. Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals

6.1 An Unwanted Fire Alarm Signal (UFAS) can be defined as 'any alarm activation which is not the result of a fire or a test'. UFAS incidents have fluctuated in Fife over the four-year period. The table and graph below details the incident numbers over four years.



Graph 6.1 Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals: 1st April – 31st March 2021 – 2022

6.2 This period has seen a 4% increase from the four-year average.

6.3 Reduction in Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals Strategy

Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (UFAS) Reduction Strategies continue to be managed and monitored by a 'UFAS Champion' who contacts premises occupiers after each UFAS

incident, to discuss the activation, as well as strategies to reduce or eliminate. This strategy, along with a number of others had seen the numbers of UFAS decrease significantly for the first time in a considerable period. The UFAS Champion will continue to engage robustly with Fife Council Education and NHS in order to address this recent spike and drive these types of incidence down.

7. Transport and Environment

7.1 These will be monitored alongside Police Scotland RTC incidence information

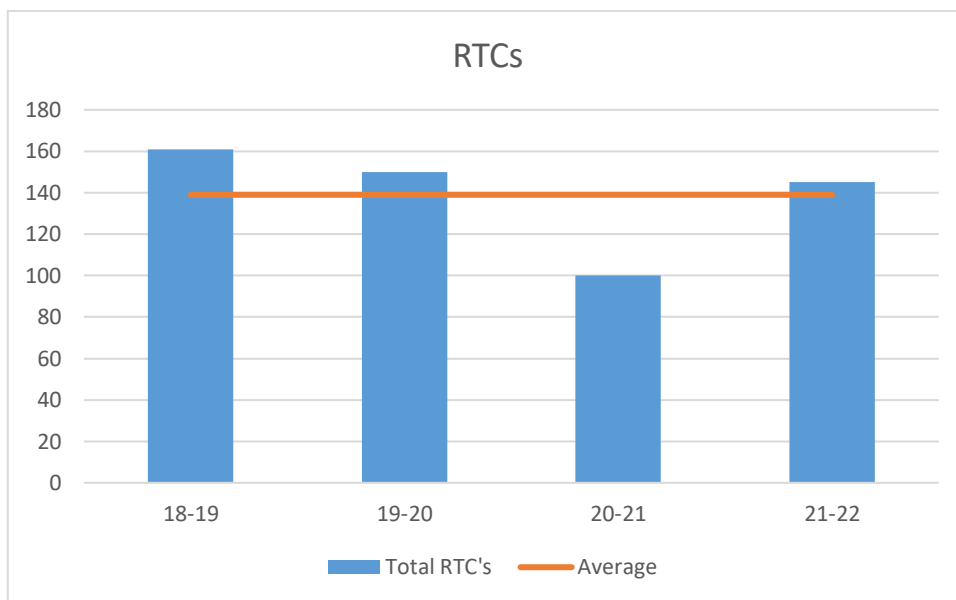
7.2 Water Related Incidents

Water related incidents caused by environmental factors are thankfully rare. 87 flooding incidents were attended during this period. 5% related to pumping out following localised pluvial flooding.

There were 4 reported incidents which required trained SFRS Water Rescue personnel to enter waterways to perform rescues.

7.3 Road Traffic Collisions

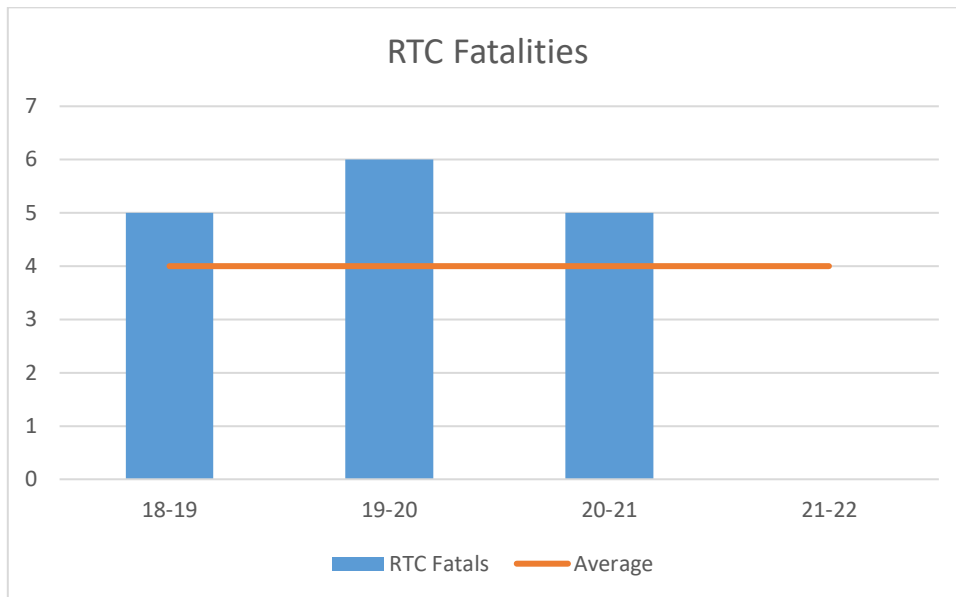
As SFRS generally only attend RTC's of a serious nature, where persons are trapped, the figures below do not capture every RTC which occurs within Fife.



Graph 7.3 Road Traffic Collisions: 1st April – 31st March 2021 – 2022

7.4 RTC's have seen an 45 % increase from the same period 2021 to 2022 and 9% above the four years average. This can be attributed to the COVID19 Lockdown/Restrictions during this period in 2021.

7.5 RTC Fatal Casualties

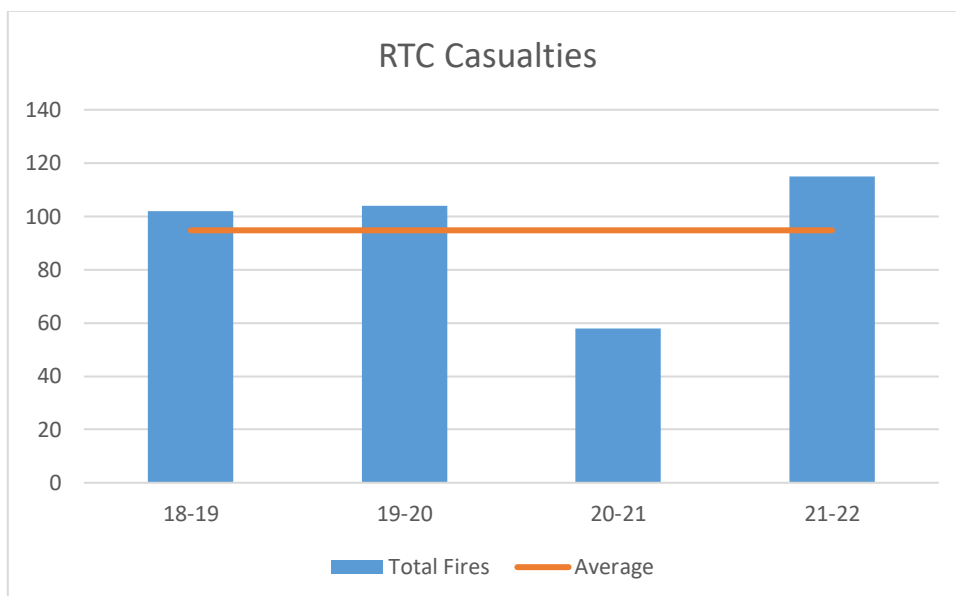


Graph 7.5 Road Traffic Collision Fatal Casualties: 1st April – 31st March 2021 – 2022

7.6 RTC Fatalities

There were zero RTC fatalities recorded during the reporting period.

7.7 RTC Casualties



7.8 RTC Casualties

The reporting period has seen an increase of 47 casualties when compared to 2020 to 2021, with this year's casualty figures 32% more than the four-year average. Again, this can be attributed to the COVID19 Lockdown/Restrictions during the same period in 2021.

7.9 Transport and Environment Related Incident Reduction Strategy

SFRS Stirling, Clackmannanshire and Fife LSO area, along with our partners, out with COVID19 restrictions deliver valuable educational projects including 'Safe Drive Stay Alive', 'Drive Wise', 'Child Car Seat Safety Checks', 'Cut It Out', 'Biker Down' and the 'Fife Water Safety Initiative'. This will continue when COVID19 restrictions are eased.

8. Conclusions

Specific indicators, including Accidental Dwelling Fires and Fire Casualties have decreased and the severity of those accidental dwelling fires has also decreased significantly. The number of Deliberate Primary and Secondary fires, Non- Domestic fires, RTC's and RTC casualties have all increased, new innovate ways to educate within COVID restrictions are being explored with key partners and some of these are now being delivered.

We will continue to manage demand reduction strategies linking in with key partner agencies to create a safer place to live, work and visit.

Community Safety – Community Safety Action Team

Activities April 1 2021 – 31 March 2022

Education

- 16 Public Group Talks around home fire safety and the new smoke alarm legislation.
- Road Safety – Drive wise 65+ held within Glenrothes , Tulliallan Police College a young driver event for the Police Scotland Youth Volunteer Scheme.

- Corporate Parenting events supporting the Methil area supporting Fife Council.
- 30 fire setter interventions programmes were complete regarding specific fire setting incidents within the Fife area.
- Youth Volunteer Scheme has commenced at Methil station young persons from the Levenmouth area.

Anti-Social Behaviour

- Involvement with Kirkcaldy and Templehall ASB group
- All Fife secondary schools engaged with and offered face to face intervention or presentations for the school to deliver.

Bonfire Night

- High School and Primary schools across Fife have received Bonfire night safety material

After public consultation SFRS are implementing a new UFAS policy as of 1st April 2023, Option A

Option A

Call challenge all AFAs from non-domestic premises, unless exempt.

- No response is mobilised, if questioning confirms there is no fire, or signs of fire.
- Automatic exemption applied to hospitals, is increased to a PDA of two appliances regardless time of day and shall be subject to periodic review.
- Sleeping risk premises are exempt from call challenging and will receive the following immediate response:
 - Residential Care Homes receive a PDA of two fire appliances regardless time of day.
 - All other sleeping risks receive a PDA of one fire appliance between 0700-1800hrs and two fire appliances out-with these hours.
- Implementation of the preferred option is postponed by 12-months until April 2023, and
- The COVID-19 interim response to AFAs, will remain in place until go live of the preferred option.

Background Papers

SFRS Local Fire and Rescue Plan for Fife Local Authority Area 2021. Link - <https://www.firescotland.gov.uk/your-area/east/east-local-plans.aspx>

Report Contact

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Group Commander

Stirling – Clackmannanshire and Fife

Scottish Fire and Rescue Service

Email – Alistair.jupp@firescotland.gov.uk

27th October 2022

Agenda Item No. 05

Housing Service Performance Report and 'Pathway to Improvement' 2019-22

Report by: John Mills, Head of Housing Services

Wards Affected: All

Purpose

The report presents the performance scorecard for Housing Services and details the outcomes of the annual update of the 'Pathway to Improvement' 2019-22.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

1. Consider the Housing Services performance information detailed in the report (Appendix 1)
2. Consider performance in year three of the Pathway to Improvement for 2019-22 (Section 2.0 and Appendix 1)
3. Highlight areas of performance that should be prioritised in the new Pathway to Improvement 2023-26.

Resource Implications

Continuing pressure on the Housing Revenue Account and the General Fund Housing Account due to high inflation and cost of living crisis will impact on performance in the coming 1-2 years. Council decisions on rent freeze of partial rent freeze for 2023/24 will impact on the ability of the council to drive improvement in certain key functions.

Legal & Risk Implications

There are legal requirements highlighted within this report, linked to a risk of regulatory intervention if the Council does not adhere to the standards and expectations set by Audit Scotland and the Scottish Housing Regulator.

Impact Assessment

An EqIA has not been completed and is not necessary as the report does not propose a change to existing housing policies or programmes.

Annual performance information will be reported to Council tenants by the end of October 2022, as per the requirements of the Scottish Housing Regulator.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 In recognition of the similarities between the Pathway to Improvement and Housing Services Performance reports submitted to Committee annually, the decision was taken by the former Community & Housing Services Committee to combine both reports to remove duplication in performance reporting.
- 1.2 Audit Scotland published the Statutory Performance Direction in December 2018 and 2021-22 is the third and final year to which that direction applies. The Council is required to report a range of information setting out:
 - i. Its performance in improving local public services, provided by both (i) the council itself and (ii) by the council in conjunction with its partners and communities.
 - ii. Its progress against the desired outcomes agreed with its partners and communities.
 - iii. Its performance in comparison to (i) over time and (ii) with other similar bodies including information drawn down from LGBF in particular and from other benchmarking activities.
 - iv. Its assessment of how it is performing against its duty of Best Value, and how it plans to improve against this assessment.
- 1.3 The Scottish Housing Regulator published a revised regulatory framework based on powers available through the Housing (Scotland) Act 2010. This focused on key regulatory priorities to meet the standards and outcomes of the Scottish Social Housing Charter, which specifies outcomes for tenants and other customers in the delivery of housing and homelessness services. Progress is assessed annually through the 'Annual Return on the Charter' indicators submitted to the Regulator in May for publication in August each year.
- 1.4 A housing performance approach was first introduced through the 'Pathway to Improvement 2015-18'. The 'pathway' provided three-year targets for improvement based on the Council's ambition for top quartile performance, as measured in comparison to other Local Authorities' performance. This was monitored annually through Committee with almost two-thirds of indicators improving over three years. In November 2018, the Community and Housing Services Committee agreed to the production of a new 'Pathway to Improvement' for 2019-22 following publication of the revised regulatory framework.
- 1.5 The Pathway is a performance improvement plan based on the Annual Return on the Charter and now focuses on 32 key charter indicators and 11 contextual and EESSH indicators. The third-year performance figures and improvement actions in the Pathway to Improvement 2019-22 are provided in Appendix 1.

- 1.6 Members should be aware, a new Housing Management Information System (Cx) was implemented during June 2022 to replace Genero. Although this does not impact the reporting of third-year performance figures within the Pathway to Improvement 2019-22, some of the quarter 1 2022-23 figures reported in Appendix 1 have been delayed due to the development of the system reporting function. It is anticipated this will be rectified for quarter 2 reporting. This is noted in Appendix 1 where relevant.

2.0 General Performance

- 2.1 The Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent restrictions continued to have an impact on the delivery of housing services during 2021-22. To add to this, the difficulty obtaining labour and construction supplies have also impacted service delivery. Our Annual Return on the Charter has shown a decline in performance, or an improvement in services but not to pre-pandemic levels over several key indicators. A summary is included below.
- 2.2 During 2021, lockdown restrictions prevented Housing Services from carrying out face-to-face satisfaction surveys with tenants, resulting in a telephone survey, which typically yields lower satisfaction results. For this reason, the 2022 survey was delayed to ensure a return to the face-to-face method. Satisfaction levels for overall performance, opportunities to participate in decision-making, keeping tenants informed about services and decisions, rent providing good value for money, quality of the home, management of the neighbourhood and owners satisfaction levels with the factoring service have remained static over the last year due to the same results being submitted as the previous year.

A face-to-face survey was concluded with Gypsy/Travellers to determine satisfaction with the landlord's management of sites. This demonstrated a significant increase in satisfaction (+38.33%), primarily due to site improvements.

- 2.3 The adaptations service has seen an increase in the number of households waiting for adaptations to be completed from 487 to 564 and the average time to complete adaptations from 28.71 days to 35.98 days. These have both been impacted by an increase in demand for adaptations, work being completed more slowly due to Covid-19 restrictions and difficulty obtaining labour and materials to carry out required works.
- 2.4 The overall number of anti-social behaviour cases being resolved timeously has marginally declined from 98.51% to 97.51%. Following a review of the Anti-social Behaviour policy during 2020-21, a major change exercise was carried out to create a single point of contact for customers which involved the recruitment of a new team and extensive training. This effort has temporarily resulted in several cases being resolved below locally agreed targets.
- 2.5 Despite a reduction of performance in the areas highlighted above, Housing Services has seen several improvements in other areas of the Charter. The percentage of housing list tenancies sustained for more than a year increased which contributed to an increase in the overall level of new tenancies sustained. Although the number of abandoned properties increased slightly (+2 units), the abandonments as a percentage of lettable stock reduced from 0.37% to 0.36%. Fife Council's average weekly rent (£79.08) continues to remain below the average for Scotland's local authorities (£79.71).
- 2.6 The percentage of gross rent arrears reduced by 0.91%. Housing Services took a supportive approach to tenants and financial assistance was made available to tenants whose income was impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic as well as tenants

transitioning to Universal Credit. The RentSense software introduced during November 2019 continues to allow early identification of rent arrears and direct tenant contact as quickly as possible.

- 2.7 Landlord Report “heat maps” produced by the Scottish Housing Network are provided in Appendix 3 which show comparative performance against a group of peers, for the period 2018/19 and 2021/22. While some figures have reduced from the position seen in 2018/19, this has been the trend across the sector as a whole. Performance relative to other comparator organisations has remained strong throughout the pandemic period and into recovery.

3.0 Repairs Performance

- 3.1 Housing Services must meet the statutory requirement to carry out an annual gas safety check in all Council dwellings within the 12-month anniversary date. During 2021-22, there were 32 properties that did not receive the annual gas safety check within this timeframe. The majority of these failures were related to system issues. To reduce these failures, a new process has been put in place and weekly gas governance meetings are held to review gas safety cases. Integrated working has been established with Area Teams to arrange inspections and eliminate no access issues. Aside this, Business Support have worked to eradicate system issues. Due to these improvement actions, there has been no non-compliance cases reported in relation to gas safety checks for the past 34 weeks.
- 3.2 Suspensions to the repairs/voids service impacted the average length of time taken to re-let properties during the Covid-19 pandemic. Although services have improved this year, issues with labour and supplies along with other housing pressures (such as the re-provision of temporary accommodation, introduction of a new Housing Management Information System and the implementation of a revised Housing Options Frontline Structure) have continued to impact the length of time to relet properties (46.78 days) as well as the rent lost through empty properties (1.44%).
- 3.3 The average time (days) taken to complete non-emergency repairs has increased by 1.9 days and the percentage of reactive repairs completed right first time decreased by 0.58%. Despite the increase in time to complete repairs and the decrease in the repairs completed right first time, the overall satisfaction with repairs and maintenance increased by 7.63%.
- 3.4 The long -standing partnership working arrangement between Housing, Property and Building Services supports the effective delivery of a comprehensive maintenance and repairs, gas servicing and voids management service. Performance and delivery of services is monitored, explored, and managed through a robust integrated management reporting structure. Discussions take place at an operational level, with issues and potential risks being reported to the Repairs and Investment Management Group (RIMG). The RIMG reports directly to the HRA Capital Board which formulates policy and strategies to ensure effective budget management and achievement of targets and legislative compliance.

4.0 Risk

- 4.1 Housing Services takes a proactive approach to the management of risk, through the Local Housing Strategy, engagement with the Scottish Housing Regulator and through

our performance management systems. As agreed by the Risk Management Strategy Group, Housing Services is committed to reporting risk. All risks are identified in red in appendix 1. The principal risks that are being managed at present are:

a. Homelessness

The Scottish Housing Regulator continues maintain regular contact with the Service around Homelessness. Concerns have been raised in relation to the assessment of homelessness applications, offers of temporary / emergency accommodation and the outcomes for people who are homeless. Temporary accommodation continues to operate under significant pressure, and this led to formal escalation processes within the Council and to the Scottish Housing Regulator in August 2022 due to the risk of breaching the Council's statutory duties towards homeless households. The Service is closely monitoring offers of temporary accommodation in an environment of significant pressure on service with appropriate action being taken where there is a risk of breach.

b. Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESH)

Performance for 2021-22 highlights that 89.06% of the Council's housing stock currently meet EESH standards, highlighting the Council's inability to deliver EESH by the original deadline of December 2020.

c. Gas Safety

The Scottish Housing Regulator has previously highlighted concerns to Fife Council around its failure to carry out annual gas safety checks in 100% of homes. The Council recognises there was non-compliance in 32 cases where gas safety checks were not carried out within timescale, thus breaching a statutory duty. Improvement actions to resolve these issues are contained in appendix 1 under Action Points.

d. Cost-of-living crisis

The cost-of-living crisis including the energy price cap pose a risk to homelessness levels, rent collection and gross rent arrears in Fife.

e. Staff recruitment and vacancy levels

The current difficulty of recruiting and retaining staff by Fife Council and partner services pose a risk to the delivery of some services and performance across Housing.

- 4.2 Further details, including Improvement actions to resolve these issues are contained in appendix 1 to the Annual Assurance Statement Report.

5.0 Conclusions

- 5.0 The report has highlighted the performance position in 2021-22, and the areas continuing to suffer from the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic as well as performance impacted by a shortage of labour and materials in the construction industry. Whilst there are clear areas for improvement, there has also been some positive results reported during the year.

John Mills
Head of Housing Services

List of Appendices

Appendix 1: Housing Performance Report

Appendix 2: Housing & Community Safety – Workforce Profile 2021/22

Appendix 3: Landlord Report Heat Maps

Background Papers

The following papers were relied on in the preparation of this report in terms of the Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1973:

Scottish Housing Regulator (2019) Regulation of Social Housing in Scotland

<https://scottishhousingregulator.gov.uk/publications/regulatory-framework-1-april-2019>

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Appendix 1 Housing Performance Report







PI Status	
	Alert
	Warning
	OK
	Unknown
	Data Only











Indicator	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22				Q1 2022/23	Pathway to Improvement	
	Value	Value	Value	Target	Status	Note	LA average	Value/Note	Action Points
Tenants satisfied with overall service provided by landlord(%)	81.64%	80.88%	80.88%	87%		Data collated via telephone survey in May 2021. Due to the ongoing covid restrictions, the Service wasn't fully in a position to carry out face to face surveys, therefore it was agreed that we would use the same figures as last year. Going forward next year we will move to face-to-face surveys which provide a better result and response rate.	82.50% 	Not measured for Quarters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Return to face-to-face survey methodology for 2022/23 now all restrictions have been lifted. Continue to work with tenants through the Tenant Forum and local tenant and resident associations to deliver high-quality services.
Tenants whose landlord keeps them informed (%)	79.94%	84.17%	84.17%	90%		Data collated via telephone survey in May 2021. Due to the ongoing covid restrictions, the Service wasn't fully in a position to carry out face to face surveys, therefore it was agreed that we would use the same figures as last year. Going forward next year we will move to face-to-face surveys which provide a better result and response rate.	85.33% 	Not measured for Quarters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Return to face-to-face survey methodology for 2022/23 now all restrictions have been lifted. Continue to provide up-to-date and relevant information to tenants through our tenant magazine, social media, websites, Tenant Forum and local tenant and resident associations. Continue to seek innovative ways to keep our tenants informed of services and performance.
The percentage of all complaints responded to in full at stage 1	99.73%	98.06%	97.23%	98.50%		Although there was a slight decline in performance in-year, the long-term trend indicates a high level of housing complaints being responded at stage 1, supported by corporate approaches that provide independent verification of performance.	94.57% 	Not measured for Quarters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure access to complaints procedures, and training on processes











The percentage of all complaints responded to in full at stage 2	97.44%	95.06%	96.04%	97.00%		There was an increase in performance in-year, although this fell slightly short of target. A more realistic target has been set for 2022/23.	91.50% 	Not measured for Quarters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure access to complaints procedures, and training on processes Review target for 2022/23 period to ensure this is realistic.
Satisfied with opportunities to participate in landlord's decisions(%)	83.19%	66.62%	66.62%	87%		Data collated via telephone survey in May 2021. Due to the ongoing covid restrictions, the Service wasn't fully in a position to carry out face to face surveys, therefore it was agreed that we would use the same figures as last year. Going forward next year we will move to face-to-face surveys which provide a better result and response rate.	80.46% 	Not measured for Quarters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Return to face-to-face survey methodology for 2022/23 now all restrictions have been lifted. During Covid-19 restrictions, there were fewer opportunities for face-to-face interaction with tenants. New and innovative ways to give tenants opportunities to participate in decisions will be explored (e.g. online meetings, webinars, etc) and face-to-face interaction will return where possible.
Council dwellings that meet the SHQS (%)	93.01%	84.93%	88.09%	100%		Through working with the supplier of our Asset Management system to undertake improvements to our system and the uploading of the backlog of completed works we have been able to improve the accuracy of our figures. From assessment of the current figures, a large number of failures relate to common areas - with properties failing to meet the adequate lighting and secure common entrance doors elements. Failures in these areas tend to relate to common areas where there is no majority ownership enabling works to progress - these failures are logged against the properties affected within the block and not the common area.	69.70% 	Not measured for Quarters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase number of surveys carried out to improve accuracy of data. Implement more capital programme updates. Continue work to convert stock database to cloud based system to increase efficiencies in on-site surveys.
Existing tenants satisfied with quality of home (%)	85.88%	79.6%	79.6%	84%		Data collated via telephone survey in May 2021. Due to the ongoing covid restrictions, the Service wasn't fully in a position to carry out face to face surveys, therefore it was agreed that we would use the same figures as last year. Going forward next year we will move to face-to-face surveys which provide a better result and response rate.	80.95% 	Not measured for Quarters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Return to face-to-face survey methodology for 2022/23 now all restrictions have been lifted. Work with partner services to improve the quality of repairs and homes. Continue to monitor performance and highlight issues through the Repairs & Investment Management Group.
Average length of time taken to complete emergency repairs (hours)	4.01	4.19	4.26	3.5		An issue has been identified with our reporting system. This has caused a higher average completion time (we are reporting approximately 3hrs from our partner services). The system is due to be replaced this month and tests will be carried out to ensure this will produce accurate figures.	4.77 	Q1 delayed due to the implementation of Cx system. Expected by Q2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to monitor performance and highlight issues through the Repairs & Investment Management Group. Implement new system to improve accuracy and ease of reporting performance levels.

Avg time taken to complete non-emergency repairs (days)	6	5.1	7	6	 <p>Supply and haulage issues have affected this years performance. Regular meeting are being held with the suppliers to discuss these issues.</p> <p>COVID-19 has also continued to cause disruptions to the service throughout the year</p> <p>In line with guidance issued by the Scottish Government; to ensure the health and safety of both residents and staff Fife Council suspended non-emergency repairs during the period 20/21. With the move to less strict lockdowns and return to "normal" the repair requests which had been stored up by tenants were then reported. This resulted in a sharp increase in the level of non-emergency repairs for 21/22. We are still working well below the level of repairs activity seen in 2019/20.</p>	9.87 	Q1 delayed due to the implementation of Cx system. Expected by Q2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to monitor performance and highlight issues through the Repairs & Investment Management Group. Continue to meet with suppliers to discuss and rectify any issues around the supply of material.
Reactive repairs completed right first time in the last year (%)	97.79%	97.5%	96.92%	98.17%	 <p>Staff shortages due to Covid19 and supply issues have caused a slight reduction for the percentage of repairs completed right first time. Weekly maintenance meetings are held to monitor and review the performance.</p>	78.79% 	Q1 delayed due to the implementation of Cx system. Expected by Q2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to monitor performance and highlight issues through the Repairs & Investment Management Group. Continue weekly meetings to monitor and review performance, dealing with any issues as they arise.
No. of failures to complete statutory gas safety checks in last year	35	197	32	0	 <p>Of the 32 failures in 2021/22, 29 occurred in the first half of the year, and only 3 occurred in the second half of the year. Our gas governance group has consolidated closer integrated working during the year, which gives a high level of confidence that we are close to sustaining zero failures in 2022/23.</p> <p><u>Reasons for failures</u></p> <p>7 Access issues - condition of property</p> <p>4 Access issues - COVID19</p> <p>17 System Issues - order not raised on time</p> <p>4 Other issues (Appliance missed in error/ownership error)</p> <p>The gas governance group have introduced new procedures throughout the year to assist gaining access. Previously enforced access visits were postponed where tenants have tested positive for COVID19. These now go ahead, tenants are advised to isolate in a separate room.</p> <p>All properties with historic access issues are monitored. The HMO is asked 1 month before 1st appointment to check condition of the property. They then advise the tenant of the upcoming service and access is required.</p>	70 	Q1 delayed due to the implementation of Cx system. Expected by Q2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue work through the gas governance group to maintain new procedures put in place for gaining access. Maintain integrated working methods where HMOs carry out inspections 1 month prior to visit where there is a history of access issues. Continue working with Business Support to eliminate any system issues.

						Stricter checks are carried out by Business Support to identify properties excluded from the scheduled appointments, Weekly gas governance meetings are held, all services which are due 7 weeks or less are discussed and monitored.			
Satisfied with repairs and maintenance (%)	82.72%	84.05%	91.68%	90%	✔	Agreement was made to use the Building Services satisfaction figures, and these figures reflect a different methodology recording satisfaction on handhelds on completion of repair works.	87.15% ✔	Not measured for Quarters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to use Building Services satisfaction data for reporting as this information is collected at completion of repair. Continue to monitor performance and highlight issues through the Repairs & Investment Management Group.
Satisfied with management of neighbourhood (%)	81.21%	78.6%	78.6%	80%	⚠	Data collated via telephone survey in May 2021. Due to the ongoing covid restrictions, the Service wasn't fully in a position to carry out face to face surveys, therefore it was agreed that we would use the same figures as last year. Going forward next year we will move to face-to-face surveys which provide a better result and response rate.	81.49% ●	Not measured for Quarters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Return to face-to-face survey methodology for 2022/23 now all restrictions have been lifted. Work with partner services to improve neighbourhoods/estates through local area budgets. The introduction of the revised housing estates approach in 2022 is intended to improve the condition of council housing estates and instil a sense of ownership and belonging. Area Housing and Safer Communities Managers have been empowered to improve local places. £1.5million of HRA reserves have been earmarked for projects that will make a difference in local neighbourhoods.
Tenancy offers refused (%)	22.01%	23.79%	22.78%	22%	●	Tenancy offer refusals remain well below the Local Authority and Scottish National average. Allocations performance continues to be monitored for trends across different housing needs groups and other areas for potential improvement.	40.11% ✔	19.16%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allocations performance continues to be monitored but no specific actions are proposed as Fife remains in the top quartile.
Anti-social behaviour cases reported in the last year resolved timeously (%)	99.55%	98.51%	97.51%	99.6%	⚠	Following a review of the Antisocial Behaviour policy during 2020-21, a major change exercise was carried out during Q3 & 4 of 2021-22 with a view to creating a single point of contact for customers. The transition to the new ASB process has involved the recruitment of a new team and extensive training. This effort has resulted in a number of cases being resolved out with the locally agreed targets. Of the 2406 ASB cases opened during 2021-22, 2346 were resolved within locally agreed	93.25% ✔	Not measured for Quarters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to build on the 'single point of contact' for customers when dealing with antisocial behavioural complaints. Review current procedures to identify gaps and areas for improvement.







						targets, whilst the remaining 60 were resolved out with the relevant timescales (2.5%).			
New tenancies sustained for more than a year (%)	91.4%	92.6%	92.68%	94%		<p>Staff are now back out working in their patches and are able to interact more with tenants. This resulting in more Tenancy Assistance when required and helping tenants to sustain their tenancies.</p> <p>Analysis has shown that of the 68 tenancies that ended within 12 months, 21 of these resulted in the tenant successfully transferring to another Fife Council tenancy. 11 of the tenancies that ended within 12 months was the result of the tenants abandoning the property. 6 of the tenancies that ended was due to the tenant buying their own property. 9 of the tenancies that ended was a result of the tenant completing a mutual exchange.</p> <p>There is still an issue of under recording of tenancy assistance hours and managers have been reminded of the importance of this. Training for all staff old and new has been successfully completed. The result of the training is there is a small rise in the amount of Tenancy Assistance being given to tenants. More monitoring is taking place to ensure that Tenancy Assistance is being recorded.</p>	90.99%	92.74%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue localised working with housing management and smaller patches to work directly with tenants. Undertake intensive support and patch work directly with tenants to sustain and maintain the tenancy, more face-to-face contact, and identification of any issues at an early stage. Ensure all staff are recording tenancy assistance hours delivered.
% of existing tenant tenancies sustained for more than a year	95.47%	96.65%	95.54%	92.00%		<p>Staff are now back out working in their patches and are able to interact more with tenants. This resulting in more Tenancy Assistance when required and helping tenants to sustain their tenancies.</p>	94.62%	96.30%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue localised working with housing management and smaller patches to work directly with tenants. Undertake intensive support and patch work directly with tenants to sustain and maintain the tenancy, more face-to-face contact, and identification of any issues at an early stage.
% of homeless tenant tenancies sustained for more than a year	90.13%	90.94%	90.67%	92%		<p>Staff are now back out working in their patches and are able to interact more with tenants. This is resulting in more Tenancy Assistance when required and helping tenants to sustain their tenancies.</p> <p>Figure is slightly lower than last year at Q4 and it is hoped that now staff are back working in the areas they will be able to carry out more face to face visits with tenants and offer assistance when required</p>	89.94%	91.67%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue localised working with housing management and smaller patches to work directly with tenants. Undertake intensive support and patch work directly with tenants to sustain and maintain the tenancy, more face-to-face contact, and identification of any issues at an early stage. Use the 4DX homeless project to target single under 35-year-olds and put in place any required intensive support.
% of housing list tenant tenancies sustained for more than a year	90.37%	91.24%	93.91%	94%		<p>Staff are now back out working in their patches and are able to interact more with tenants. This resulting in more Tenancy Assistance when required and helping tenants to sustain their tenancies.</p>	90.51%	90.24%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue localised working with housing management and smaller patches to work directly with tenants. Undertake intensive support and patch work directly with tenants to sustain and maintain

									the tenancy, more face-to-face contact, and identification of any issues at an early stage.
Lettable houses that became vacant in the last year (%)	8.18%	6.46%	6.38%	7%	 Tenancy turnover has been consistently lower during the Covid period due to the interruption in new build supply and generally lower levels of tenancy terminations. The Council continues to operate a transfer led approach to housing allocations to maximise housing opportunities but this has had to be balanced with allocations to priority needs groups during 2021/22.	7.60% 	Not measured for Quarters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aim to complete the tenancy normalisation process in response to the Kirkcaldy Sheriff Court Legal Judgement by June 2023. Continue to promote a transfer led approach to allocations to generate turnover to meet a range of needs. Promote the use of the Transfer Incentive Scheme to make best use of housing stock. 	
Rent lost through empty properties (%)	1.09%	1.53%	1.44%	1%	 Voids continue to be a corporate priority and delivered in partnership with Building Services and a number of external contractors. Different working practices, labour and supply issues, together with significant issues around utilities, continue to have a negative impact on performance. The Partnership arrangements were refreshed during 2021/22 to deliver some improvement and this is planned to continue into 2022/23.	1.63% 	Q1 delayed due to the implementation of Cx system. Expected by Q2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specialise the Voids Management function and review commissioned works to reduce void timescales. Continue to improve voids co-ordination and coding to accurately reflect void property status. Continue to improve access case management to ensure the efficient use of properties for a range of needs. 	
Number of households currently waiting for adaptations to be completed at the end of the reporting year	113	487	564	400	 Increase in number waiting due to availability of materials and staff groups being hit by covid. Teams of plumbers, joiners and electricians etc work together to complete the jobs quickly and efficiently, however Covid in the teams meant that each adaptation took longer than normal to complete. Going forward this year, with the end of covid restrictions we aim to bring the number waiting back in line with target.	103 	Not measured for Quarters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and increase the adaptations budget to allow waiting list to be cleared. Work with Partners and Contractors to increase the capacity to undertake additional work. OT Teams to provide additional advice to individuals on the waiting list. 	
The cost of adaptations completed in the year by source of funding	£1,701,551	£1,200,692	£1,073,027	£1,200,000	 The number of jobs have increased to (1729) compared to last year (1342) while the total spend appears to have reduced, however the spend figure last year was obtained from financial reports that included jobs carried over from the previous year. The figures pulled this year from Genero are accurate and comply with the indicators technical guidance. Last years reported completed jobs was 1342 with a cost of £1,200,692.	£555,339 	Not measured for Quarters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the Adaptations Budget. Work with key partners / contractors to manage price rises in adaptations work due to increased material costs. Ensure reporting is consistent moving forward. 	
The average time to complete adaptations (days)	18.76	28.71	35.98	18	 The average time taken to complete adaptations has increased significantly due to Covid-19 protocols, and Covid-19 related absence. In addition, some service users did not wish to progress with adaptations due to the risk of catching Covid-19. Going forward we hope to	53.60 	Not measured for Quarters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with Partners and Contractors to increase the capacity to undertake additional work. Review the Adaptations process to ensure efficient flow of work. 	

						see the waiting time reduce as Covid-19 restrictions ease bringing it back in line with the target.			
Court actions that resulted in eviction and their reasons (%)	19.38%	0%	100%	0%		Due to the pandemic, the Scottish Government temporarily suspended evictions for rent arrears. Fife Council then took a decision to continue with this suspension until the end of March 2022. Permission to restart full Court work was only granted from the start of April 2022. As a result of this all stats around Court Actions raised and evictions are slightly confusing. Special dispensation was given by the Leaders of the Administration to evict one particular tenant for rent arrears. This tenant's court action was not raised this financial year. One court action was raised for Anti-Social Behaviour in financial year 2021-22 which didn't result in eviction	16.26% 	Not measured for Quarters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evictions remain a last resort, and since April 2022 only one eviction has taken place. In September 2022 the Scottish Government have announced a moratorium on evictions for all tenants until the end of March 2023.
Homeless households referred to RSLs (%)	38%	4.31%	3.31%	5%		Allocations to homeless households is largely managed within Fife Housing Register with partners making direct allocations to statutory homeless households achieving close to 40% of all RSL allocations during 2021/22. Non FHR Partners are generally specialist providers which is highlighted in the very low percentages.	11.91% 	Not measured for Quarters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve Housing Options advice to ensure homeless households are considering non-FHR partners. Increase the range of FHR Partnership options to non-FHR partners to increase the number of properties accessible through FHR.
Rent represents good value for money (%)	80.65%	82.43%	82.43%	83%		Data collated via telephone survey in May 2021. Due to the ongoing covid restrictions, the Service wasn't fully in a position to carry out face to face surveys, therefore it was agreed that we would use the same figures as last year. Going forward next year we will move to face-to-face surveys which provide a better result and response rate.	81.25% 	Not measured for Quarters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Return to face-to-face survey methodology for 2022/23 now all restrictions have been lifted. Communicate with tenants around the need for rent income to support investment in services. Benchmark FC rents with other Scottish LAs.
Rent collected as % of total due in the reporting year	99.96%	99.48%	98.05%	95%		Rent Collection rate of 98.05% shows a decrease on last financial year, figures have dropped from 99.48%. On the face of it this drop of 1.43% appears fairly significant, but with the lingering affects of the pandemic and the Scottish Governments suspension of Evictions and Court Action work, this performance is good. This figure will hold up well to other Local Authorities within Scotland, once their returns become available.	98.63% 	Q1 delayed due to the implementation of Cx system. Expected by Q2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to provide specialist UC advice and support to tenants. Continue to use the RentSense debt system to prioritise tenants in arrears. Provide £1.5million support to tenants struggling with managing their Universal Credit claims and to tenants significantly impacted by the cost-of-living crisis.
Gross rent arrears (%) Fife (LGBF)	7.8%	6.9%	5.99%	9%		Gross Rent Arrears have shown a reduction over the course of the financial year of a fraction over £1million, and has lowered from 6.9% last financial year. This is an excellent performance, and is a testament to the	8.67% 	Q1 delayed due to the implementation of Cx	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to provide specialist UC advice and support to tenants.

						continual good work and focus on rent arrears. Gross Rent Arrears figures have benefited from the Scottish Government's Tenant Grant Fund as well as our own internal Covid and Universal Credit mitigation funds		system. Expected by Q2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to use the Rentsense debt system to prioritise tenants in arrears Provide £1.5million support to tenants struggling with managing their Universal Credit claims and to tenants significantly impacted by the cost-of-living crisis.
Average annual management fee per factored property	£46.3	£80.84	£97.18	£97.95		Fife Council management fee is currently £97.95, the return value of £97.18 reflects a short period of lower rate fee for several properties within the reporting year.	£55.70 	Not measured for Quarters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review management fee annually to ensure recovery of service costs.
Factored owners satisfied with the factoring service they receive (%)	57.66%	52.69%	52.69%	65%		Data collated via telephone survey in May 2021. Due to the ongoing covid restrictions, the Service wasn't fully in a position to carry out face to face surveys, therefore it was agreed that we would use the same figures as last year. Going forward next year we will move to face-to-face surveys which provide a better result and response rate.	51.03% 	Not measured for Quarters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review survey methodology for 2022/23 now all restrictions have been lifted. Utilise the CPL factoring information system to provide owners with detail cost breakdowns of factored works and to improve the efficiency of services.
Average time taken to re-let properties in the last year (days)	28.61	53.79	46.78			Voids continue to be a corporate priority and delivered in partnership with Building Services and a number of external contractors. Different working practices, labour and supply issues, together with significant issues around utilities, continue to have a negative impact on performance. The Partnership arrangements were refreshed during 2021/22 to deliver some improvement and this is planned to continue into 2022/23.	59.42 	Q1 delayed due to the implementation of Cx system. Expected by Q2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specialise the Voids Management function and review commissioned works to reduce void timescales. Continue to improve voids co-ordination and coding to accurately reflect void property status. Continue to improve access case management to ensure the efficient use of properties for a range of needs.
Gypsies/travellers - Average weekly rent per pitch	£64.96	£66.24	£67.22	£70		Gypsy Traveller site rents have been increased in line with the HRA rent increase. Rents will be reviewed further as sites are improved with Chalets being installed etc.	£78.94 	Not measured for Quarters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review rents once site improvements have concluded.
Gypsies/travellers satisfied with the landlord's management of the site (%)	31.58%	16.67%	55%	40%		This year the customer satisfaction survey for Gypsy Travellers was carried out face to face. The satisfaction figure reflects the fact that work is now underway to install chalets at Tarvit Mill site and the other two sites are aware of potential planned improvements on these two sites. This has led to increased satisfaction levels across the sites.	73.63% 	Not measured for Quarters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete site improvements at Tarvit Mill. Implement improvements at other two public sites in Fife (Heatherywood and Thornton Wood). Continue engagement with Gypsy Travellers on site to address any issues and provide opportunities for Gypsy Travellers to input ideas for site improvements.
Anticipated Exemptions from EESSH	2,710	2,495	2,097			Gas Flats=471 Four in a block = 551 Houses (other than detached) = 1016 Detached houses =18	n/a	Not measured for Quarters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carry out assessment of non-traditional housing stock to determine if it is feasible to bring these up to standard.

					Electric Flats = 38 Four in a block = 1 Houses (other than detached) = 2 Data based on full EPCs and comparison to similar architypes for properties requiring additional surveys.			
The reasons you anticipate properties will require an exemption	2,710	2,495	2,097		More technically challenging and expensive non-traditional properties remaining to be improved.	n/a	Not measured for Quarters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carry out assessment of non-traditional housing stock to determine if it is feasible to bring these up to standard.
The number of lets during the reporting year by source of let	2,555	1,971	2,042		Housing allocations continue to be depressed by lower levels of turnover compared to 2019/20 and disruptions to new build housing supply and property acquisitions. There will be a continued focus on transfer-led allocations to generate turnover and create the best deal for tenants and other applicants including homeless households in 2022/23.	849 	364	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to promote a transfer led approach to allocations to generate turnover to meet a range of needs. Increase the number of property acquisitions in response to local needs.
Total number of lets during the reporting year by source of let	2,555	1,971	2,042		While the number of lets has increased in comparison to 2020/21, turnover remains well below pre-pandemic levels. There have been lower level of new build completions and property acquisitions which has impacted supply but also less turnover of mainstream tenancies. A reduction in around 1,100 potential allocations over the last two years has also had a significant impact on the backlog of need within homelessness and other priority needs groups.	849 	Not measured for Quarters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to promote a transfer led approach to allocations to generate turnover to meet a range of needs. Increase the number of property acquisitions in response to local needs.
Number of abandoned properties	142	109	111		Slight increase in number of abandonments this year but only by 2 abandonments. Staff are now back working in their patches therefore are now picking up any abandonments quicker.	53 	Not measured for Quarters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue localised working with housing management and smaller patches to work directly with tenants. Undertake intensive support and patch work directly with tenants to sustain and maintain the tenancy, more face-to-face contact, and identification of any issues at an early stage.
Average weekly rent increase to be applied in the next reporting year (%)	3%	1.5%	2.5%		2.5% increase agreed by Members after consultation with tenants through the annual tenant survey	1.46% 	Not measured for Quarters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultation is due to start with TRF's in October 2022, before a final decision is made at committee in February.
Number of households the landlord received housing costs directly for during the reporting year.	22,297	20,191	20,651		Figures have increased slightly from last year and are really out with Fife Council's control. Approx. 2/3 of our tenants are on or have been on some form of benefit over the last financial year.	n/a	Not measured for Quarters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will continue to be monitored moving forward.

Former tenant rent arrears written off at the year end (%)	26.35%	45.93%	29.24%			£637,821.61 was written off this financial year for Former Tenant Arrears out of total FTA of £2.18 Million. This equates to a 29.24% this year.	24.13%		Not measured for Quarters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement the write off policy that targets uncollectable former tenant arrear debt.
SHQS - Stock assessed fully for SHQS compliance since 1 April 2011 until end of current year (%)	80%	80%	91.35%			<p>A total of 3487 additional properties have been surveyed since April 2018. Our ability to survey has been impacted by COVID with staff not carrying out surveys for a large spell of this time period.</p> <p>The figure of 91.35% is correct due to a couple of years of no surveys being undertaken. The 91.35% is the total undertaken over the 5-year period.</p>	n/a		Not measured for Quarters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase number of surveys carried out to improve accuracy of data. Implement more capital programme updates. Continue work to convert stock database to cloud based system to increase efficiencies in on-site surveys.
SHQS - Stock to be fully assessed in the next survey for SHQS compliance (%)	10%	8%	10%			Stock database to be converted to cloud based system to increase efficiencies in on-site surveys.	n/a		Not measured for Quarters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue work to convert stock database to cloud based system to increase efficiencies in on-site surveys.
Properties meeting the EESSH (%)	80%	84.74%	89.06%	100%		<p>The EESSH compliance rate increased over the last 12 months due to an increase in upgraded gas boilers and heating controls, additional external wall insulation & additional new build included in the stock which have been specified to a higher standard of the compliance rate over the next year.</p> <p>EESSH2 delivery board has been established to share best practice and monitor the delivery programme and draft a 10-year delivery plan by April 2023 utilising the Energy Savings Trust's Portfolio Energy Assessment Tool (PEAT).</p> <p>Remaining non-traditional properties currently in abeyance due to technical exemption being assessed with consultancy support to create a 10-year programme for improvement. Selected properties being assessed for "value for money" and may form part of a demolition strategy.</p>	82.66%		Not measured for Quarters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to provide financial investment to bring properties up to EESSH standard. Continue to work with partner services to increase the number of properties meeting EESSH. Carry out assessment of non-traditional housing stock to determine if it is feasible to bring these up to standard.

Appendix 2:

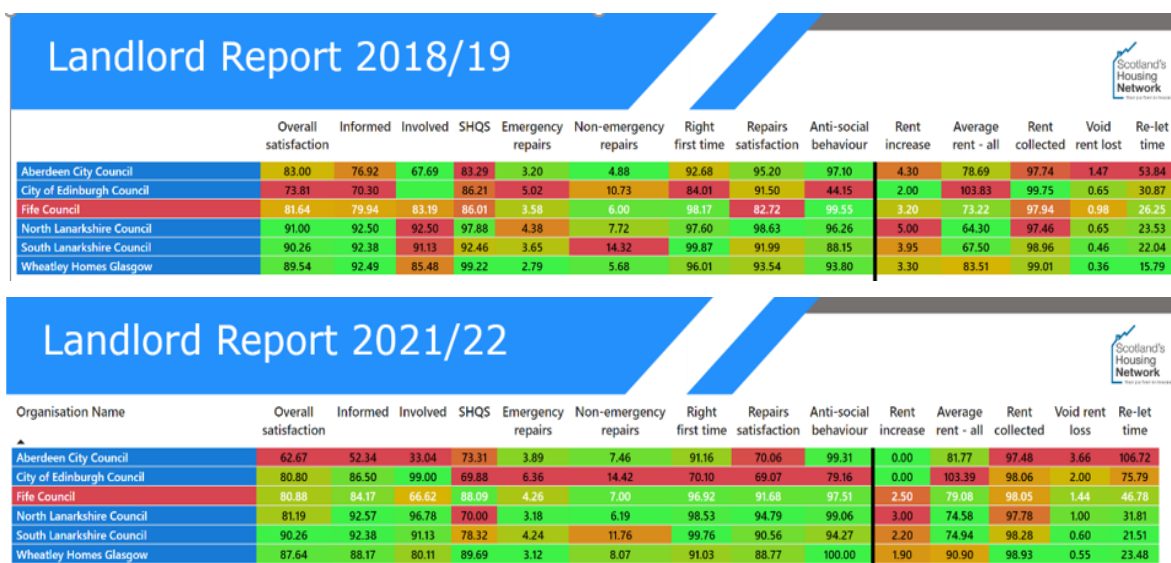
HOUSING & SAFER COMMUNITIES – WORKFORCE PROFILE 2021/2022 FINANCIAL YEAR (01 APRIL 2021 – 31 MARCH 2022)

Service	Budgeted (FTE) April 2019	Budgeted (FTE) April 2020	Budgeted (FTE) April 2021	Budgeted (FTE) April 2022	Difference in FTE 2021-2022
Housing & Safer Communities	406	500	468.63	629.23	160.6

Note: The increase from 2019 to 2020 is due to the transfer of Safer Communities staff to Housing Services, and the increase from 2021 to 2022 includes the GFA expenditure which was not previously reported on.

Appendix 3:

Scottish Housing Network - Landlord Report Heat Maps



Produced by the Scottish Housing Network as part of Performance Analysis Visit Information

27th October 2022

Agenda Item No. 06

Annual Assurance Statement 2022

Report by: John Mills, Head of Housing Services

Wards Affected: All

Purpose

The report presents recommendations for submission of the Annual Assurance Statement to the Scottish Housing Regulator, based on regulatory guidance established in 2019. The risks are assessed against the Council's Annual Return on the Charter for 2021/22.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

1. Note the revisions to the housing regulatory framework in 2019, requiring the preparation of an Annual Assurance Statement (Section 2.0 and 3.0)
2. Agree the wording of the draft Annual Assurance Statement 2022 based on the compliance position at 31st March 2022 (Section 4.0 and Appendix 1).
3. Authorise the Scrutiny Committee Chair and the Housing & Building Services Spokesperson to sign the Annual Assurance Statement.
4. Agree submission of the final draft Annual Assurance Statement 2022 to the Scottish Housing Regulator by the deadline of the 31st October 2022.

Resource Implications

There are no additional resource implications identified through this report as Committee has previously agreed to support the preparation of an Annual Assurance Statement for submission to the Scottish Housing Regulator.

Legal & Risk Implications

There are on-going legal requirements for Committee highlighted within this report, linked to a significant risk of regulatory intervention if the Council does not adhere to the standards and expectations set through the Scottish housing regulatory framework.

Impact Assessment

An EqIA has not been completed and is not necessary as the report does not propose a change to existing housing policies or programmes.

Consultation

The report outlines consultation requirements set within the housing regulatory framework.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 **Regulatory review** - in February 2019 the Scottish Housing Regulator published a revised regulatory framework for social landlords based on powers available through the Housing (Scotland) Act 2010. This focuses on key regulatory priorities to meet the standards and outcomes of the Scottish Social Housing Charter, including to help people who are homeless, ensure safety within tenants' homes, and promote equality and human rights.
- 1.2 **Scottish Social Housing Charter** – the Scottish Social Housing Charter specifies outcomes for tenants and other customers in the delivery of housing and homelessness services. Progress is assessed annually through 'Annual Return on the Charter' indicators submitted to the Regulator in May for publication in August each year.
- 1.3 **Member / tenant scrutiny** – local developments in member / tenant scrutiny over the last seven years have renewed focus on housing performance. For example, tenant representatives have been regularly involved in housing discussions at Committee; a Tenants' Scrutiny Panel has been established; tenants have been trained in scrutiny; and local scrutiny activities have been promoted (e.g. neighbourhood walkabouts). Scrutiny activities were suspended due to Covid-19 lockdown restrictions; however, these have now resumed following the ease of restrictions.
- 1.4 **Pathway to Improvement** – a housing performance approach was introduced through the 'Pathway to Improvement 2015-18'. The 'pathway' provided three-year targets for improvement based on the Council's ambition for top quartile performance. This was monitored annually through Committee with almost two-thirds of indicators improving over three years. In November 2018, the Community and Housing Services Committee agreed to the production of a new a 'Pathway to Improvement' for 2019-22 following publication of the revised regulatory framework.
- 1.5 **Fife Engagement Plan** – in March 2019 the Scottish Housing Regulator outlined its proposals for engaging with social landlords based on performance outcomes for 2017-18. The proposals for Fife Council included a requirement to demonstrate compliance with homelessness duties, specifically in relation to offers of temporary or emergency accommodation linked to the preparation of the Fife Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (2019-24). The Regulator has continued to identify concerns with homelessness duties, specifically in relation to the assessment of homeless applications and offers of temporary or emergency accommodation.

2.0 Regulatory Requirements

- 2.1 Section 3 of the regulatory requirements introduced in February 2019 reinforces social landlords' responsibilities to meet legal duties and adhere to statutory guidance, including to:
 - **Annual Assurance Statement** – provide an annual assurance statement (discussed in Section 3.0).

- **Annual Return on the Charter** – agree an approach with tenants and service users to give them real and demonstrable involvement in the preparation and scrutiny of performance information; and report annually on progress in achieving outcomes and standards to the Regulator, tenants and service users.
- **Performance failures** - provide information for tenants and service users on significant performance failures; their rights to complain and seek redress in accordance with the standards expected by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman; and develop mechanisms for the Council to learn / improve from such complaints.
- **Whistleblowing** - establish effective arrangements and promote a policy for whistleblowing by staff, governing bodies and/or elected members.
- **Equalities and human rights** - collect data on the protected characteristics of existing tenants, new tenants, homeless people, people on waiting lists, Gypsy Travellers and staff, and be able to evidence that equalities and human rights issues are considered when making policy and service delivery decisions.

3.0 Annual Assurance Statements & Approach

- 3.1 From 2019, social landlords must submit between April and October of each year an Annual Assurance Statement providing assurance that their organisation complies with all parts of the regulatory framework. In terms of local authorities, the statement must be submitted by the relevant committee, in the context of Fife Council this being the People & Communities Scrutiny Committee. The Council's first Annual Assurance Statement was submitted to the Scottish Housing Regulator in October 2019, after being agreed by the Community and Housing Services Sub-Committee (C&HSS-C) Committee.
- 3.2 Where the Council does not fully comply, the People & Communities Scrutiny Committee should set out how and when it will make the necessary improvements to achieve compliance. A judgement is to be taken on the materiality and significance of any issues of non-compliance, including whether it would affect the interests and safety of tenants and service users, threaten service delivery, or bring the Council into disrepute.
- 3.3 The People & Communities Scrutiny Committee must determine the assurance approach and provide an objective and evidence-based judgement on compliance, where necessary including independent assurance. Importantly, feedback from tenants and other service users must be considered as part of the assurance approach.
- 3.4 The Annual Assurance Statement is expected to be succinct, confirm compliance/non-compliance with the regulatory requirements, Scottish Social Housing Charter and any relevant legislative duties. In situations of non-compliance, improvements must be identified with relevant timescales. The statement must be agreed by the People & Communities Scrutiny Committee with confirmation that appropriate evidence has been considered as part of the assurance approach. All statements will be published and will form part of the regulatory view of the organisation.
- 3.5 In September 2019, the former Community Housing Services Committee agreed to an assurance approach involving an annual cycle of review with annual reporting of housing performance to members through the established Pathway to Improvement. Key stages throughout the year include the collation of customer satisfaction

information, the Annual Return on the Charter submission to the Scottish Housing Regulator, benchmarking against other local authorities, external scrutiny by tenants and the Scottish Housing Network, and annual performance reporting.

4.0 Annual Assurance Statement 2022/23

- 4.1 The Scottish Housing Regulator has indicated that issues of non-compliance with the regulatory standards need only to be reported if they are material and significant, a judgement to be made by this Committee. Based on the outturns of the Annual Return on the Charter and concerns expressed by the Scottish Housing Regulator, wording for the draft Annual Assurance Statement 2022 is proposed in Appendix 1 for Committee consideration.
- 4.2 The Council's Annual Return on the Charter suggests material non-compliance with the regulatory standards in 2021-22 through *Indicator 11: Number of times in the reporting year statutory obligations to complete a gas safety check have not been met*. The outturn for 2021-22 was 32 properties, which means the Council did not meet the statutory requirement to carry out gas safety checks in all Council dwellings within 12 months. The Scottish Housing Regulator has previously highlighted concerns regarding performance relating to gas safety. Improvement actions have been put in place and due to this there has been no non-compliance cases reported in relation to gas safety checks for the past 34 weeks.
- 4.3 Non-compliance was also recorded against the delivery *Indicator C10: Percentage of properties meeting the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (ESSH)*. Performance for 2021-22 highlights that 89.06% of the Council's housing stock currently meets ESSH standards which highlights the Council's inability to deliver ESSH by the original deadline of December 2020. Improvement actions have been identified to improve on this during 2022-23.
- 4.4 The Scottish Housing Regulator continues to maintain regular contact with the Service around Homelessness. Concerns have been raised in relation to the assessment of homelessness applications, offers of temporary / emergency accommodation and the outcomes for people who are homeless. These issues are not unique to Fife, with the direct and indirect effects of the Covid-19 pandemic increasing pressure on Fife's housing access and homelessness system that was already experiencing significant challenges. Various improvement actions have been identified for delivery during 2022-23 as well as continuing delivery of the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan priorities and commitments.
- 4.5 In terms of significant risk areas exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic;
- The demand for Adaptations has significantly increased with 564 households on the waiting list at the end of 2021-22. The average time to complete adaptations has increased to 35.98 days from 18.76 days pre-pandemic during 2019-20. Covid-19 restrictions slowed down the delivery of adaptations through lockdown restrictions and the responsibility of protecting vulnerable households. The increase in number of days to deliver adaptations has had a negative impact on waiting list numbers.
 - Following a period of significant and sustained improvement, the direct and indirect impacts of the pandemic and wider environmental factors have had a negative impact on Void Turnover. The average time taken to re-let properties has increased from 28.61 days in 2019-20 to 46.78 days in 2021-22. A combination of factors which include revised arrangements for working in homes, labour and supplies issues and

a range of housing management pressures have combined to extend the time properties are empty and negatively impact void rent loss. The rent lost through empty properties has increased from 1.09% in 2019-20 to 1.44% in 2021-22.

- 4.6 During 2021 lockdown restrictions prevented Housing Services from carrying out face-to-face satisfaction surveys with tenants, resulting in a telephone survey, which typically yields lower satisfaction results. For this reason, the 2022 survey was delayed ensuring a return of the face-to-face survey method. Customer satisfaction levels for overall performance, opportunities to participate in decision-making, keeping tenants informed about services and decisions, rent providing good value for money, quality of the home, management of the neighbourhood and owners satisfaction levels with the factoring service have remained static over the last year due to the same results being submitted as the previous year.

A face-to-face survey was concluded with Gypsy/Travellers to determine satisfaction with the landlord's management of sites. This demonstrated a significant increase in satisfaction (from 16.67% in 2020-21 to 55% in 2021-22), primarily due to site improvements.

An increase in satisfaction levels is also demonstrated in the repairs and maintenance service (from 84.05% in 2020-21 to 91.68% in 2021-22) where a new survey method has been employed through Building Services to collect results.

- 4.7 Other areas of risk reflecting some decline in performance over the last year, include repairs completed right first time, tenancy sustainment for existing and homeless tenant tenancies and anti-social behaviour cases resolved timeously. The areas highlighted are considered immaterial for the purposes of the Annual Assurance Statement although will also be subject to on-going monitoring and review.

5.0 Conclusions

- 5.1 The report has outlined the revised housing regulatory framework from April 2019, including a specific requirement for Committee to submit an Annual Assurance Statement to the Scottish Housing Regulator. Wording for the draft Annual Assurance Statement 2022 is proposed based on the 2021-22 performance position.

John Mills
Head of Housing Services

List of Appendices

Appendix 1: Draft Annual Assurance Statement

Background Papers

The following papers were relied on in the preparation of this report in terms of the Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1973:

[Scottish Housing Regulator \(2019\) Regulation of Social Housing in Scotland Regulatory Framework | Scottish Housing Regulator](#)

[Scottish Housing Regulator \(2019\) Annual Assurance Statement – Statutory Guidance Annual Assurance Statement | Scottish Housing Regulator](#)

Report Contact

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Appendix 1: Fife Council Draft Assurance Statement 2022

The People & Communities Scrutiny Committee at a meeting on the 27th October 2022 sought appropriate assurance that Fife Council Housing Service comply with all relevant requirements of the Scottish Housing Regulatory Framework; all relevant standards and outcomes in the Scottish Social Housing Charter; and all relevant legislative duties. Evidence has been considered through a regular cycle of performance reporting and liaison with tenant organisations to support the required level of assurance.

On review of the evidence provided principally through the Annual Return on the Charter 2021-22, it can be confirmed the Council recognises material non-compliance in the following standards and outcomes of the Scottish Social Housing Charter for tenants, people who are homeless and other service users. These areas are a focus for performance improvement throughout 2022-23:

Areas of Non-Compliance: General Reasons

Homelessness

The Scottish Housing Regulator has maintained regular contact and a positive working relationship with the Service for some time. This relationship has highlighted concerns around access to homelessness services, the assessment of homelessness applications, offers of temporary / emergency accommodation and the outcomes for people who are homeless.

The direct and indirect effects of the Covid-19 pandemic have increased pressure on a housing access and homelessness system that was already experiencing significant challenges creating unprecedented demand for crisis response services and temporary accommodation specifically. These issues are not unique to Fife and the Service has taken a positive decision to work with the Chartered Institute of Housing and other stakeholders to commission research examining local authority progress in implementing Rapid Rehousing Transition Plans across Scotland which is expected to report later in the year.

In 2022-23 there will be a further focus on accommodation that is deemed as unsuitable, which includes most of the Council's hostel type accommodation and the use of B&B / hotel type accommodation. The Regulator is also likely to be interested in the Council's approach to reducing the number of families with children in temporary accommodation with a particular focus on the Kirkcaldy Sheriff Court Judgement relating to Temporary Accommodation Occupancy Agreements received in March 2022.

Temporary accommodation continues to operate under significant pressure, and this led to formal escalation processes within the Council and to the Scottish Housing Regulator in August 2022 due to the risk of breaching the Council's statutory duties towards homeless households. The Service has continued to make all homeless households an offer of temporary accommodation where this is required.

The improvement actions identified for delivery in 2022-23 are to:

- Continue enhanced monitoring, reporting and escalation arrangements for temporary accommodation allocations to ensure 100% compliance.

- Continue to implement the Temporary to Permanent Accommodation Plan to re-provision temporary accommodation converted to mainstream tenancies and focus allocations towards statutory homeless households.
- Implement an Unsuitable Accommodation Mitigation Plan to drive faster transitions through emergency accommodation, decommissioning buildings which are no longer fit for purpose and developing different models of accommodation with support.
- Continue to develop, enhance and mature a revised frontline housing options service focussed on homelessness prevention and move forward organisational change within temporary and supported accommodation services.
- Learn from and mainstream the '4 Disciplines of Execution (4DX)' approach to the prevention of homelessness to embed culture change throughout the organisation.
- Proactively redevelop the housing advice framework to focus on housing options and homelessness prevention to promote informed housing choices and pathways.
- Modernise our TurnKey approach to managing the change of tenancy process for mainstream and temporary tenancies.
- Deliver 2022-23 Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan commitments to:
 - Modernise temporary accommodation and enhance the range of accommodation with support options.
 - Scale Up the number of Housing First tenancies in partnership with the Rock Trust and develop further Housing First pathways with the Health and Social Care Partnership and specialist providers to support those with complex needs.
 - Continue to 'flip' 100 temporary tenancies to permanent homes per year to reduce transitions and improve outcomes for those experiencing homelessness in addition to the 12-month programme to convert tenancies affected by the legal judgement.
 - Review and recommission homelessness and housing support services as part of a revised and collaborative approach to service commissioning.
 - Increase allocations to statutory homeless households across the Fife Housing Register Partnership.
 - Re-design temporary and supported accommodation staff structures linked to a modernised temporary accommodation service.
 - Enhance private and private rented sector interventions to raise standards and prevent homelessness.

Energy Efficiency Standard for Scottish Social Housing (ESSH)

Performance for 2021-22 highlights that 89.06% of the Council's housing stock currently meets ESSH standards, highlighting the Council's inability to deliver ESSH by the original deadline of December 2020.

The improvement actions identified for delivery in 2022-23 are to:

- Frequently monitor and update the MRI Asset system (formerly Promaster)
- Conduct additional property surveys and additional Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs).
- Continue to ensure that staff are dedicated to work to address non-access issues supported by area staff with localised knowledge.

- Increase the volume of heating upgrades to improve the EESSH compliance rate.
- Target the capital investment programme to maximise EESSH compliance rates.
- Progress investigation into options for achieving higher EESSH2 standards.
- Undertake costed options appraisal with support from the Energy Savings Trust modelling software to ensure most cost-effective improvements to achieve the required standards. Report will produce draft investment programme and prioritise measures which will be reported to the Council's Cabinet Committee in April 2023.
- Agree a technical solution with costed delivery model for remaining non-traditional properties requiring improvement.

Gas Safety

The Scottish Housing Regulator has previously highlighted concerns to Fife Council around its failure to carry out annual gas safety checks in 100% of homes. The Council recognises there was non-compliance in 32 cases where gas safety checks were not carried out within timescale, thus breaching a statutory duty.

In terms of preventing future failures, the improvement actions identified for delivery in 2022-23 are to:

- Maintain weekly meetings of the Gas Safety Governance Group with representation from area teams, including weekly monitoring and reporting of gas safety cases below 12 weeks.
- Continue the role of Area Teams to communicate to, and support tenants, in arranging gas safety inspections, to maintain integrated working.
- Continue working with Business Support to eliminate any system issues which prevent properties from being included in scheduled appointments.

Due to these improvement actions, there have been no non-compliance cases reported in relation to gas safety checks for the past 34 weeks.

Areas of Non-Compliance: Exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic

Adaptations

Performance for 2021-22 demonstrates 564 households were waiting for adaptations which has been impacted by the increase in average time to complete adaptations. During 2021-22 the average completion time was 35.98 days (an increase from 18.76 days in 2019-20). Covid-19 restrictions had an immediate and widespread impact on the ability to deliver adaptations across Fife. Health & Safety Executive and Scottish Government guidance set parameters for safe working and identified categories of work which could still go ahead. Restrictions on close working along with protecting vulnerable households had an impact on the ability to carry out necessary works. This slowed down the delivery of adaptations, creating an increase in the waiting list although the number of adaptations completed during 2021-22 returned to pre-Covid levels. Improvement actions are identified for 2022-23 to speed up delivery, reduce the waiting list and enhance independent living. These actions are to:

- Review and increase the adaptations budget to allow the waiting list to be cleared.
- Work with Kingdom Housing Association to increase the capacity of contractors to undertake more jobs. This will improve Private Sector adaptations delivered via Kingdom Care & Repair Service and their contractors.

- Work with Building Services to increase their capacity to undertake more jobs to improve adaptation delivery in Fife Council owned properties.

Voids Turnover

Following a period of significant and sustained improvement, the direct and indirect impacts of the pandemic and wider environmental factors have had a negative impact on voids. During 2021-22 the average time taken to relet properties was 46.78 days. Prior to the pandemic, Fife was achieving top quartile performance (28.61 days in 2019-20), and this was a focus during the lockdown phases with the a cross-service partnership being awarded Housing Team of the Year at the Chartered Institute of Housing Scotland Awards.

The teams worked collaboratively to ensure all properties remained available for allocation or were directed to meet other priority needs, including an ongoing programme to re-provision temporary accommodation. A combination of factors which include revised arrangements for working in homes, labour and supplies issues and a range of housing management pressures have combined to extend the time properties are empty and negatively impact void rent loss. Performance over the last year has also been affected by a range of contextual factors:

- the need to re-provision temporary accommodation and divert a significant number of properties to meet statutory homelessness duties.
- Decommissioning the legacy Housing Management Information System and replacing this with a new CX system during 2022.
- the implementation of a revised Housing Options Frontline Structure replacing Housing Access Officer and Homelessness Officer roles.

Return to top quartile performance is an organisational priority to maximise use of the housing stock and support the HRA Business Plan. This is particularly important in a post pandemic environment where turnover is significantly reduced. Current forecasts are suggesting that around 2,000 housing opportunities have been lost between March 2020 and March 2023 due to the changing operation of the housing market and systems.

The improvement actions identified for delivery in 2022-23 are to:

- Specialise the Voids Management Team within Housing Services with a direct line of accountability to the Head of Service.
- Refocus housing allocations to reduce pressures on allocating officers and improve outcomes for priority groups.
- Harmonise the change of tenancy process for mainstream and temporary tenancies linked to the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan.
- Further develop the new CX Housing Management Information System to improve workflows, performance reporting and accountability within the change of tenancy process.
- Review the Letting Standard with a revised focus on customer engagement and programmed post-let works.

Future Risks

The Committee also considered future risk areas for 2022-23 and the improvement actions put in place to mitigate these.

Cost-of-living crisis

The cost-of-living crisis including the energy price cap pose a risk to homelessness levels, rent collection and gross rent arrears in Fife. With inflation currently sitting at 10.1% and a UK recession forecasted for later this year, actions have been identified to mitigate the impact of the cost-of-living crisis:

The improvement actions identified for delivery in 2022-23 are to:

- Provide £1.5million support to tenants struggling to manage their Universal Credit claims and tenants significantly impacted by the cost-of-living crisis.
- Provide £500,000 to support tenants in fuel poverty
- Increase the number of people receiving income maximisation advice and continue to offer a range of financial assistance as poverty interventions.

Housing Revenue Account & Future Financial Viability

In line with the current Cost of Living Crisis and hardship felt by many of our council tenants, the Council will be sensitive to the level of rent increases rents over the next year. At a time of high CPI inflation and other inflationary pressures on housing workstreams, the financial viability of the HRA, expressed through the 30-year HRA Business Plan will be put under increased risk.

The Scottish Government announced in the Programme for Government that they would bring forward emergency legislation, effective from 6th September to freeze rents in the social rented sector. The rent freeze, or a rent cap could be considered by Scottish Ministers for 2023/24. This would further increase risk to the HRA Business Plan potentially restricting the Council's borrowing to fund the new build programme and stock improvement to meet SHQS and EESSH. Mitigating actions would need to be considered by the Council to ensure that the viability of the HRA was secured for future years.

Staff recruitment and vacancy levels

The current difficulty of recruiting and retaining staff by Fife Council and partner services pose a risk to the delivery of all services and performance across Housing.

The improvement actions identified for delivery in 2022-23 are to:

- Ensure essential services are delivered by regularly reviewing staff and vacancies, and redeploying staff on a short-term basis to assist with pressures where necessary.
- Closely monitoring staff absence and offer support where possible to reduce absence levels across the service.
- Work closely with partner services to understand workforce capacity and implement integrated working where possible.

Equalities / Human Rights

Fife Council recognises that it has responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and the Human Rights Act 1998. It is committed to promoting equality, addressing discrimination and providing housing as a human right. Examples of how we achieve this are through:

- Promoting customer and tenant participation in decision making working collaboratively with our Tenant and Resident Associations and Tenant Forum, achieving Gold Accreditation by the Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS) for excellence in tenant participation.
- Collecting equalities data on our staff, tenants, service users and being clear on how we use that data.
- Completing equality impact assessments for all new strategies, policies and programmes prior to approval through Committee.
- Providing accessible information on performance through our website, dedicated publications, and the tenant magazine, Down Your Street.
- Understanding the needs of tenants and service users through housing need and demand assessments, customer surveys, workshops, etc.
- Safeguarding people with protected characteristics – through the provision of gypsy travellers' sites, temporary accommodation, older persons housing and refuge provision.
- Providing housing as a human right through our work in the resettlement schemes.
- Eliminating discrimination and promoting diversity through an extensive staff training programme, including equality and diversity, equality in recruitment, mental health, gender equality, etc.

People & Communities Scrutiny Committee Date: 27th October 2022

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Councillor Judy Hamilton
Spokesperson Housing and Building Services

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Councillor Eugene Clarke
Convenor People & Communities Scrutiny Committee

27th October 2022
Agenda Item No. 07

Maximising Housing Options

Report by: John Mills, Head of Housing Services

Wards Affected: All

Purpose

This report has been prepared for Scrutiny Committee following the last meeting's consideration of the report highlighting pressures on the housing system. The Committee is seeking to ensure all available options are being considered to maximise access to, and make best use of, all available housing options.

Recommendation(s)

It is recommended that Committee:

1. Supports the measures being taken to ensure the time tenancies are empty is minimised and appropriate steps are taken to increase stock through property acquisitions
2. Notes that the Private Sector Leasing / Partnership has been explored and is unlikely to generate any additional capacity
3. Accepts that a full review of all potential residential accommodation resources across the Council has been undertaken to maximise housing options.

Resource Implications

Improving access to housing will require additional investment in Council policies and approaches to meeting housing need subject to HRA resources and policy commitments.

Legal & Risk Implications

Pressure on temporary accommodation and other crisis response services is currently exposing the Service to significant risk of failure to comply with legal duties and breaches of the Unsuitable Accommodation Order. An enhanced approach to homelessness prevention is part of a plan to reduce risk in the longer term

Impact Assessment

An EqlA has not been completed as the report proposes no change to Council Policy.

Consultation

Housing, Building Services and Estates colleagues have been consulted in the compilation of this report.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Previous reports to the Cabinet Committee and People and Communities Scrutiny Committee have set out the background and given some analysis of the current pressures on the housing system in Fife. These reports highlighted the significant and enduring pressures leading this Committee to require confirmation and re-assurance that all available options and measures are being taken to maximise housing options across the Council and sector.

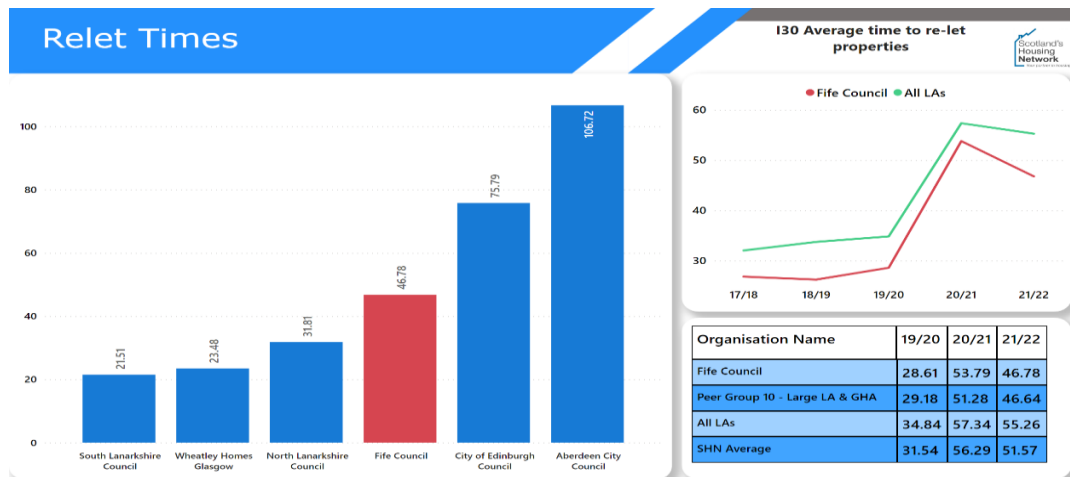
2.0 Current Voids Management Context & Performance

- 2.1 The initial priority is to ensure that the Council is making the best use of all available Council tenancies with a specific focus on managing empty properties and properties moving through the change of tenancy process. Prior to the Pandemic, Fife achieved top quartile performance status for Void Management (change of tenancy). The Voids Partnership of Building and Housing Services established and developed, the Turnkey Model of property management with a clear focus on minimising the time properties were empty to improve customer service and maximise income to the Council. Covid presented specific challenges, but void management was considered business critical activity and processes were adjusted throughout the restriction period. Fife won Team of the Year at the Chartered Institute of Housing Awards for the service provided during the pandemic.
- 2.2 Fife's Annual Feedback Session with Scotland's Housing Network on 30th September 2022 confirmed that performance, locally and nationally across landlord organisations has slipped since March 2020 due to a range of factors. These include the required changes in working practices for Building Services working in properties, global labour and material supply issues, energy market and utility issues, contractual management issues, as well as several housing management factors.

The Partnership have continued to focus on void management as a key feature of housing systems recovery and it is expected that progress will be made during the remainder of 2022/23. Housing Services have improved the co-ordination of the staffing resource managing empty properties and enhanced partnership arrangements with Building Services with a joint ambition to achieve best performing Council status. There is a clear performance

management framework in place and applying the principles of a previous 4DX approach. The management of empty properties has a critical HRA budget and business plan impact, ensuring that it retains a cross organisational priority.

Figure 1 – Relet time for Fife compared to benchmarking family



The current average turnaround time across Fife is 48.8 days (26 days in 2019/20). There is a degree of confidence that this can be significantly reduced over the next few months due to a significantly reduced void pool and the impact of implementing the legal decision affecting temporary accommodation. Housing Services are working to make the best use of the stock through improved workflow and performance management arrangements across mainstream and temporary accommodation stock.

2.3 As a measure to increase supply, Housing Services have reviewed and redeveloped the Property Acquisitions policy and approach. During the pandemic, on-line viewing & purchases of properties from the open market continued. Whilst this prevented a pause in the acquisition of properties it did rely on desk top assessments of condition etc. through Home Reports, photographs & information from seller agents. As Covid restrictions lifted, on-site viewings were resumed.

All of the properties being offered on the open market require to be brought up to SHQS standard, with the majority requiring rewire & new boilers to ensure energy efficient heating. More extensive work has been necessary in some properties to convert them to Fife Council standard. A greater number also require asbestos checks which are carried out by an external contractor.

2.4 It was recognised that covid working practices, scarcity of materials & labour & the range of works required in some of the properties had impacted turnaround times for properties. As outlined above, the focus of available resources was on Fife Council existing stock. Fife Council voids are considered mainstream and in the main require a standard set of repairs to be carried out.

To reduce void times on acquisition properties, a revised end to end process was developed with partners & a separate specialised team was set up to

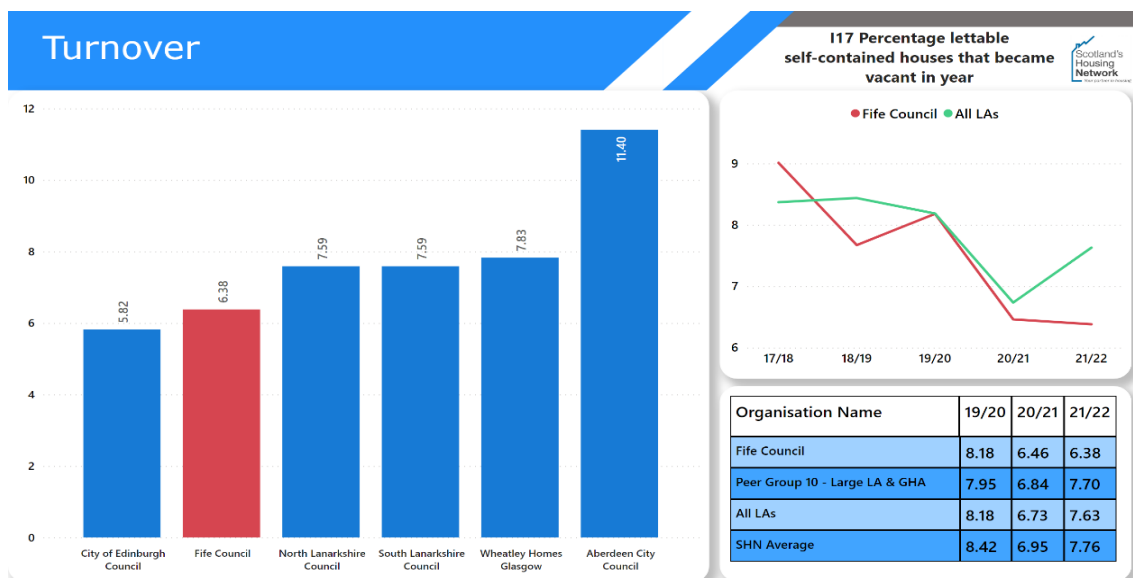
work on the properties. Agreement on timescales & regular update meetings has resulted in a reduction from seven months (for pandemic purchases) to four months for the current larger scale “mini renovation” properties. Discussions are continuing with delivery partners to enhance the resources allocated to acquisition voids & to further streamline processes.

Purchases from the open market still represent good value for the Council & this remains an advantageous source of additional properties.

- 2.5 The diversion of mainstream stock to re-provision temporary accommodation stock is a significant local factor affecting access to housing. This is positive in reducing transitions for homeless and vulnerable households, creating a catalyst for accelerating the implementation of Fife’s Rapid Rehousing Plan (RRTP). The RRTP aims to transform homelessness services and change housing journeys for people that are homeless or potentially homeless but requires significant organisational and systemic change of approach to housing across sectors.

While the overall aim is to reduce temporary accommodation, the Council must meet statutory duties towards homeless households, including an offer of suitable temporary accommodation. While homelessness presentations have not increased significantly during Covid, demand for temporary accommodation has risen dramatically with resources increased accordingly although there is an ongoing risk to the Council’s statutory duty. This need has largely been met by diverting mainstream tenancies to temporary accommodation with an enhanced contribution from our Fife Housing Register partners. This is having a direct impact on rehousing opportunities for all customer groups and a contributing factor to the overall reduction in housing allocations since March 2020.

Figure 2 - Turnover of Council Housing Stock



- 2.6 In March 2021, the Communities and Housing Services Committee approved a proposal to re-develop a Private Sector Leasing Scheme with a view to procuring 50 additional properties into the temporary accommodation pool. The Scheme was developed in partnership with a reputable landlord / agent and intended to reduce the pressure on Council and Registered Social Landlords by bringing additional resources into use.

Since that time there have been significant changes within the Private Rented Sector and the Scheme has not been able to add any additional resources into the Service. Industry bodies are now reporting a significant reduction in the availability of properties in the PRS due to the number of landlords leaving the sector and wider market conditions. Staff within the Service continue to survey the sector with a view to identifying properties but there is very little confidence this will have any material impact or generate any additional capacity.

- 2.7 Demand and pressure on the Private Rented Sector is likely to continue as Council's across the UK work to support humanitarian and resettlement work with the PRS being identified as an option for resettling arrivals from Afghanistan, Ukraine and other schemes.

3.0 General Fund Housing Stock

- 3.1 The Committee also requested an update on residential properties still sitting on the Council's General Fund and why there were not on the HRA and available for let.
- 3.2 As part of the Council's strategic approach to Resettlement, a full review of all residential properties (including properties that could be re-purposed as residential accommodation) has been undertaken in August 2022 in response to a Scottish Government request for accommodation options. This follows an extended exercise which concluded in 2016 following a Council decision to ensure all residential properties are managed by Housing. The Council reviewed all properties and this resulted in a number of properties being re-provided as mainstream Scottish Secure Tenancies managed by Housing Services. On this basis, Committee can be assured that all steps have been taken to increase housing stock from internal resources across the organisation.

4.0 Conclusion

- 4.1 Brining empty properties back into occupation is a priority for the Council. The Housing Function Services are focused on improving our performance in voids management back to pre-pandemic level, which was top quartile Local Authority performance in Scotland.

- 4.2 All internal resources have been recently reviewed as part of the Resettlement Scheme in Fife. Maximising housing options needs to be underpinned by an ambition to build housing at scale and by property acquisitions.

John Mills
Head of Housing Services

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27th October 2022
Agenda Item No. 08

Temporary Accommodation Pressures: 2022 Kirkcaldy Sheriff Court Judgement

Report by: John Mills, Head of Housing Services

Wards Affected: All

Purpose

This report provides the Scrutiny Committee with the background to the legal decision affecting statutory temporary accommodation and a position statement covering the progress that has been made to date. The report highlights the impact assessment and the plans to complete the mitigation work programme by June 2023.

Recommendation(s)

It is recommended that Scrutiny Committee:

- Notes the focus on Fife's Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan as the strategic direction for the transformation of homelessness and housing support services.
- Discusses the approach to ensure the Council's discharges statutory duty to people in temporary accommodation and a housing options-based approach that is proposed.
- Notes the progress made to date and support provided to vulnerable people and the further delivery of the programme

Resource Implications

Improving access to housing will require additional investment in Council policies and approaches to meeting housing need subject to HRA resources and policy commitments. Reprovisioning temporary accommodation and enhancing commissioned services is being managed with support of temporary external homelessness funding but may require additional support through the General Fund to support the reprovision of homelessness services.

Legal & Risk Implications

Pressure on temporary accommodation and other crisis response services is currently exposing the Service to significant risk of failure to comply with legal

duties to provide temporary accommodation and breaches of the Unsuitable Accommodation Order. Appropriate measures have been taken to escalate this risk within the Council and with the Scottish Housing Regulator

Impact Assessment

An impact assessment has not been carried out as there is no change to Council Policy proposed in this report.

Consultation

A range of organisations have been consulted, including the Fife Housing Partnership, the RRTP Programme Board and the Heads of Service Task Group. The Housing & Building Services Spokesperson is regularly apprised of progress in implementing the Sheriff Court Judgement.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The strategic focus for the transformation of homelessness services is provided through Fife's Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan as approved by Committee in February 2019. The RRTP aims to reduce the reliance on, and time spent in, temporary accommodation where homelessness is unavoidable. Prior to Covid, positive progress was being made but the Pandemic created different challenges for housing access and homelessness services.
- 1.2 Since March 2020, demand for statutory homeless accommodation has increased dramatically and the number of households occupying temporary accommodation has increased. A weekly census confirms that there are over 950 households and over 500 children in temporary accommodation, the majority of which is provided as furnished properties in the community based on an Occupancy Agreement. The security of tenure provided within furnished tenancies was challenged by SHELTER, Scotland and, in March 2022, a Sheriff ruled that the Occupancy Agreement was flawed. The implication is that occupants of temporary accommodation have a legal entitlement to a secure tenancy at their current address. The Occupancy Agreement was amended in April 2022 to ensure all new temporary tenancies created after the 24th April did not confer the right to a secure tenancy. Enhanced tenancy management processes and procedures have also been put in place in recognition of the issues identified within the legal debate.
- 1.3 This decision has significant local and national implications and steps have been taken to inform the relevant government, local authorities and the regulatory body. Demands on the Service make it impossible to reduce temporary accommodation resources and work to re-provision temporary accommodation is ongoing through the diversion of mainstream tenancies. The impact of this decision is a contributing factor to the current pressures on temporary accommodation although there are wider systemic circumstances

which are also impacting. The range of issues has been presented within the Housing Access Pressures Report considered by Scrutiny Committee in September.

- 1.4 The decision has been received positively by Officers, providing impetus and momentum to increase the focus on Fife's Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan. While early operational decisions were taken to interrupt housing allocations and empty property management processes, normal practice resumed in early June with a view to increasing allocations to homelessness through a transfer led approach to housing allocations. There have been a series of Briefings to staff, stakeholders and Members as the impact of the decision has become clearer and this is planned to continue as we work through each Phase.

2.0 Options and Issues

- 2.1 The right to temporary accommodation pending an assessment of statutory duty is enshrined in legislation and the statutory Code of Guidance. This does not extend to a statutory human right, but it is an area that has attracted regulatory interest for an extended period of time at a national level. Temporary accommodation provision in Fife is largely properties located within communities diverted from Council, Registered Social Landlord and, potentially, private rented stock. There are a number of small-scale accommodation units, shared accommodation and other forms of provision. The use of B&B / hotel type accommodation was largely eradicated pre-pandemic but has come into mainstream use again since March 2020.
- 2.2 The legal decision affected all housing customers occupying sole occupancy properties within the community that had signed the Occupancy Agreement. This was assessed as potentially impacting around 600 households across Fife and a range of household profiles and circumstances. A phased work programme was developed and has been overseen by a Heads of Service Task Group, Chaired by the Head of Housing with representation from Customer Services, Revenue and Commercial Services, Building Services, Finance, Legal and FHR Partners. The number of households reduced with legal advice confirming that certain customer groups (for example, those living in shared tenancies, hostels etc.) were exempt from the ruling.
- 2.3 The Programme recognised that a significant number of households were temporarily occupied in properties that did not meet their needs in terms of size, area, health conditions or other factors. The first phase targeted around 180 households occupying properties that met their needs and allowed the Council to discharge homelessness duty. This phase is now largely complete with a customer / person centred approach being adopted through the Area Housing Teams. These tenants have now signed up to standard Scottish Secure Tenancies and have been offered help and support, including all items associated with a furnished tenancy, to give the best chance of a sustainable, long-term tenancy.
- 2.4 The next phase will focus on customers who are in the right size / type of property but not in the geographical area they have selected through normal housing processes. Due to staffing pressures, a project approach is being

adopted by aligning key staff to lead communications with tenants directly affected by the Ruling. This approach will look to 'normalise' a further 130 tenancies over the next 3 months with customers offered high quality housing advice and options. In this phase, customers are likely to require to compromise their rehousing expectations and accept the Council needs to discharge duty in a pragmatic and practical way due to the constrained housing options.

- 2.5 The last phase will focus on a more complex customer group requiring larger properties and / or with more specific housing and wider needs. This will require a more bespoke housing response linking to procuring properties or making properties available through the wider Fife Housing Register partnership. All households are still open for housing allocation at this time as the Council has not discharged homelessness duty although they are occupying a secure tenancy. It is likely that this will involve an individual case management approach to meet the needs of these customers and may extend beyond the June 2023 timeline estimated to complete the programme.
- 2.6 The effect of the decision is that temporary accommodation has become 'bottlenecked' with arrangements for discharging statutory duty or requiring households to leave temporary accommodation have been substantially affected. This has led to 'throughflow' reducing dramatically and creating a significant risk to the ability to meet statutory duty to all households assessed as homeless or in very vulnerable housing circumstances.

3.0 Conclusions

- 3.1 Housing Services are working with partner services to use the legal judgement as a platform to accelerate the Fife Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan approach to reduce transitions for homeless households and reduce the backlog of households waiting for a permanent tenancy. Diverting tenancies to replace temporary accommodation is a contributing factor to the pressures on the housing access system but it is vital that a balanced approach is taken between re-provisioning temporary accommodation and housing allocations. The process is being project managed through the leadership of the Heads of Service Task Group to support customers affected by the decision with a view to ensuring appropriate housing pathways for vulnerable people.

John Mills
Head of

Housing Services

List of Appendices

Appendix 1:

Appendix 2:

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27th October 2022
Agenda Item No. 09

Citizens Advice & Rights Fife – Performance Report

Report by: Paul Vaughan, Head of Communities & Neighbourhoods

Wards Affected: All Wards

Purpose

This paper and its appendices provide information on the performance of Citizens Advice & Rights Fife (CARF) during 2021/22.

Recommendation(s)

It is recommended that the People & Communities Scrutiny Committee:

- (a) Consider this paper and its appendices and comment as necessary;
- (b) Comment on the performance and development of the organisation, as appropriate;
- (c) Recognise the role CARF plays in the wider cost of living crisis.

Resource Implication(s)

No resource implications at this stage.

Legal & Risk Implications

CARF is monitored in line with the Council's Monitoring & Evaluation Framework therefore legal and risk implications are minimal.

Impact Assessment

An EqIA has not been completed and is not necessary as this report does not propose any change or revision to existing policies and practices.

Consultation

No formal consultation was carried out or is required, however the report has been developed alongside CARF's Chief Executive Officer David Redpath, who will be in attendance at Committee alongside CARF's Business Development Manager, Sarah Somerville.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 CARF is a voluntary organisation with charitable status providing advice and support across a wide spectrum of advice areas including welfare benefits, money advice and tribunal representation, amongst many others. CARF has completed its first full year of the new Service Level Agreement 2021-24.
- 1.2 CARF was evaluated after year 1 of the Service Level Agreement and found to be meeting its agreed performance in full.
- 1.3 CARF was awarded £1,862,087 core grant support in 2021/22.

2.0 A CARF perspective

- 2.1 Over the last 12 months, CARF has embarked on what can be described as an “enablement agenda”. Recognising the resources at their disposal, and the demand placed on them, it is becoming more and more difficult for CARF to always be the first point of contact for those with difficulties and it may be better for clients with less complex issues to be dealt with in other ways, prior to CARF involvement. With that in mind, CARF is working locally to provide training to various organisations on basic advice areas, including benefit checks, enabling practitioners in other agencies to deliver first point support, with the middle to long term goal of CARF being able to shift its resource to dealing with more complex enquiries.
- 2.2 In keeping with the “No Wrong Door Approach”, CARF has been quick to realise that it has a role to play in upskilling and enabling staff in other organisations, including Fife Council, to ensure that clients get appropriate wrap-around support regardless of where they present. CARF has given a commitment to supporting “No Wrong Door” and is involved in this workstream as part of the Fife Leadership Summits.
- 2.3 As part of this enablement, CARF is further strengthening its self-help offering, with a view to ensuring that those capable of helping themselves have accurate information and support to do so. In terms of debt advice, CARF has launched a self-service portal, a first for a Citizens Advice Bureau in Scotland, removing a significant administrative burden.
- 2.4 The anticipated increase in debt cases has yet to materialise with creditor action continuing to be more sympathetic. From a CARF perspective, there is a concern that the number of those requiring assistance for debt will increase, as the cost of living crisis plays out, with the ability for CARF to put in place appropriate solutions being constrained. This is due to the fact that reducing disposable incomes, or indeed negative disposable incomes mean “unaffordable” debt relief options. This is particularly concerning for those who have assets to protect e.g. a home.
- 2.5 There is also a fear that existing clients who have been on statutory debt relief mechanisms find their situations deteriorate, meaning they can no longer afford contributions. CARF will continue its monitoring of such cases and raise via social policy to Citizens Advice Scotland and share locally where appropriate.

3.0 Covid and a new service model

- 3.1 At the beginning of the financial year, Scotland was still under significant Covid restrictions, with a system of local tiers in place. CARF continued to deliver a vast majority of services through telephone or, in some circumstances, video conferencing.
- 3.2 In April, CARF used its special dispensation for continuing face to face services where “alternative methods were unsuitable or not possible” and were able to re-open the Kirkcaldy office as well as their office in Glenrothes, on an appointment only basis for the more vulnerable groups or for those with complex needs.
- 3.3 CARF’s office in Leven opened for face to face appointments at the start of May 2021, as did Cupar and Dunfermline.
- 3.4 CARF’s Cowdenbeath office was unable to open for face to face appointments, due to its size and difficulty in mitigating against Covid. The office instead operated as a volunteer telephony hub.
- 3.5 CARF’s administrative office in Glenrothes, re-opened to staff on a limited basis in July 2021 with a wide variety of mitigation measures in place including protective screens and the building capacity significantly restricted. A new Hybrid Working Policy was adopted following discussions with both recognised unions at CARF: Unite and Unison.
- 3.6 As reported last year, CARF has moved to an appointment only system following the introduction of a triage telephone line resourced by a mix of staff and volunteers.
- 3.7 The triage line continues to allow for the identification of emergency situations with a duty adviser available to assist with foodbank vouchers, debt issues etc. The model also allows for more basic enquiries to be dealt with quickly. Non-emergency situations are assigned a call back and clients are given an indicative timescale.
- 3.8 The organisation has invested in an improved telephony service enabling better data recording and monitoring to ensure the organisation operates as efficiently as possible. See section 12.2 for further details.

4.0 Frontline Delivery

- 4.1 The organisation moved quickly during the initial lockdown stage in 2020/21 to ensure that subsequent lockdowns would have a more minimal impact on service delivery with all paid staff capable of working from home and a handful of volunteers taking the opportunity to volunteer from home as well.
- 4.2 During 2021/2022, over 42,000 issues were handled by CARF an increase of 7.6% on the previous year.
- 4.3 CARF had over 23,000 active clients. Active clients are defined as work associated with new *and* existing clients of the service.

- 4.4 Client Financial Gain (CFG) for the year was £8.7m which, while a reduction on last years reported figure, continues to demonstrate the significant value the service brings to Fife communities. It is highly likely that this reduced figure continues to be adversely affected by the changes in debt collection practices contributing to a lower demand on money advice with multiple debt cases (up 65% on the previous year) still only around 80% of the pre-pandemic levels (see section 6).
- 4.5 Over 87,000 visits to the website (www.cabfife.org.uk) from almost 56,000 unique visitors.
- 4.6 The website hosts the public facing “AdviceGuide”, a self-help advice database giving advice on a wide variety of areas including benefits and debt.
- 4.7 Although much of CARF’s services, like many other organisations, have a more telephony based delivery model, all offices, with the exception of Cowdenbeath, operated face to face appointment only sessions to ensure those most vulnerable or those with significantly complex cases were given the intensive support needed to resolve their enquiries.
- 4.8 Appendix 1 gives details of CARF’s telephone availability and appointment sessions across the offices. This data is correct as of September 2022.
- 4.9 As has historically been the case, CARF continues to utilise the services of Fife Community Interpreting Service, Fife Council and the Big Word to ensure accessibility while the textphone remains available for those who are hard of hearing to contact the organisation.
- 4.10 In 2021/22, CARF dealt with almost 42,000 issues on behalf of clients. The top 3 issues relate to benefits, debt and financial support accounting for 76% of the total issues raised to the service.
- 4.11 The top 3 issues dealt with by CARF are detailed below:

Analysis of Issues raised	2020/21 %	2021/22 %
Benefits, tax credits and NI	46	44
Debt	19	21
Financial products and services	10	11

- 4.12 In 2021/22 CARF completed over 1,300 forms on behalf of clients including 223 Mandatory Reconsiderations and 40 appeal papers for tribunal.
- 4.13 In order to ensure the most efficient use of resource, CARF wishes to enable those who can complete forms themselves to have the information to do so. As such the organisation is keen to evidence the impact that self-help guides may play in achieving this.
- 4.14 Universal Credit accounted for 3,759 issues raised in 2021/22, over 20% of the total benefits issues raised with CARF.
- 4.15 In early December 2021, CARF’s Board were appraised of a new funding model regarding the Help to Claim project. This project assisted those wishing to apply for

Universal Credit through application to receipt of first payment. The new model was not local in nature and on significantly less funding than before.

- 4.16 CARF's Board made the decision to withdraw from the project and one member of staff was successfully TUPE'd to Perth Citizens Advice Bureau to continue working on the project. Other members of the project secured employment elsewhere in CARF thus avoiding a potential redundancy exercise.
- 4.17 CARF's Client Representation Unit represented 126 individuals at tribunal during 2021/22 with a success rate of 76%. Given changes to the way in which tribunals are conducted, it is more unusual for a representative to be physically present with telephone or video conferencing more common.
- 4.18 CARF is careful when managing expectations relating to tribunal representation and will take forward only those cases where they believe there is a realistic chance of overturning the original decision.
- 4.19 CARF continues to use Mandatory Reconsiderations as its primary way of overturning decisions. As reported last year, advisers are now using these submissions to introduce medical evidence and new information. 43% of decisions are overturned at Mandatory Reconsideration stage.
- 4.20 The introduction of Scottish Social Security adult and child disability benefits brings several changes to the benefit dispute process, including the introduction of an advocacy service, delivered by Voiceability. This will assist claimants throughout the Scottish Social Security disability benefit claims process, right from application to representation at tribunal. CARF will work alongside all parties to gain further understanding of the process as it begins to roll out.
- 4.21 During 21/22, CARF delivered face to face appointments in all 7 localities with the exception of Cowdenbeath. The organisation sold premises in Dunfermline in May 2021, operating from the Dunfermline Advice Hub thereafter.
- 4.22 As of September 2022, CARF is looking to secure a more permanent base in Dunfermline following the closure of the Dunfermline Advice Hub in summer 2022. Short term premises may have been located at the Maygate Exchange and CARF continues to play a pivotal role in the Dunfermline Advice Hub Steering Group in looking for longer term premises, incorporating a Hub model.
- 4.23 CARF is aware that previous outreach offices in Buckhaven and St Andrews have not yet opened, primarily due to the reduced capacity in terms of volunteers (see section 10).

5.0 Specialist money advice in CARF

- 5.1 Money Advice accounted for 21% of all issues dealt with by CARF in 2021/22.
- 5.2 The table below shows the number of enquiries, cases handled and the level of debt when compared over the last 3 years allowing for a comparison between pre-Covid and the current environment.

Enquiries	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Number of new multiple debt cases	1,333	494	819
Number of new one-off enquiries	1,938	1,082	1,395
Number of DAS cases*	69	42	28
Total amount of debt involved	£13.2m	£5.4m	£8.4m

*Debt Arrangement Schemes (DAS) allow for debts to be rescheduled up to 10 years with no further interest added

- 5.3 Figures for 21/22 show a significant increase of 66% on the data provided last year but are still short of pre-Covid levels.
- 5.4 At the start of the 21/22 year, significant forbearance measures continued to remain in place protecting those in financial difficulty however, many of these protections are starting to come to an end, although to mitigate against a potential spike in demand, the credit industry have been instructed to implement tailored support for their customers in place of the blanket forbearance measures implemented early on during the pandemic.
- 5.5 Additionally, the temporary measures implemented by the Accountant in Bankruptcy which included the creditor petition debt levels increasing from £3,000 to £10,000 and the increased moratorium from 6 weeks to 6 months have continued to aid those in financial difficulty, in turn reducing those numbers seeking statutory debt relief.
- 5.6 In 2021/22, CARF rescheduled almost £3.7m of debt via the DAS Scheme and through approved bankruptcies.
- 5.7 In 2021/22, 28 DAS applications were made, and 158 bankruptcies were approved. The reduction in DAS cases, is reflective of the reduction in 'surplus' income that our clients have along with the 6 month moratorium that continues to provide clients with extended breathing space.
- 5.8 In order to ensure that clients in emergency situations are given immediate advice where an emergency situation has been identified, for example, eviction, CARF has a Duty Adviser available every day. In 2021/22, the Duty Adviser assisted with 413 calls.
- 5.9 With the continued impact of the coronavirus pandemic, the Money Advice Unit continued to work remotely, successfully delivering digital and telephone advice. Whilst telephone advice remains the primary means of conducting appointments, the Money Advice Unit conducted 98 Video Conference Calls/Interviews with clients amounting to 63 hours of advice by video conference. Office appointments are available for those unable to access the service through any other means.
- 5.10 Throughout 2021/22, the Money Advice Co-ordinator and Business Development Manager have been working closely with our developers on the Money Advice Client Self Service Portal (CSSP). The CSSP will allow clients to submit their information electronically via our website at their leisure with clients no longer being restricted to contacting us during normal working hours to start the Money Advice process. The CSSP will populate the money advice case management system thereby reducing manual input, improving efficiency and greatly improving our client's journey with the offer of an earlier appointment. Although the system has been delayed, the portal is now open on CARF's website and has generated significant praise from users.

- 5.11 Due to the delays on implementing the CSSP, the second phase (the pre-population of the Accountant in Bankruptcy system for DAS applications) has also been delayed. Developers are now working alongside the AiB in order to progress.
- 5.12 The Money Advice Co-ordinator and Service Delivery Manager jointly contributed to an article in Citizens Advice Scotland's Voice Newsletter on Council Tax and Working with the Local Authority. CARF and Fife Council continue to lead by example as a means of bureaux Money Advice and Local Authority debt collection working together to improve debt collection practices.
- 5.13 The introduction of the UK wide Standard Financial Statement continues to remain on hold with CFS trigger figures being uprated again for the new financial year. The Accountant in Bankruptcy's review of Scottish statutory debt solutions is ongoing with the team continuing to take part in the ongoing consultation and campaigning.
- 5.14 Money Advice continued to highlight and influence social policy by inputting to various consultations and calls for evidence during 2021/2022. This included a response to the Scottish Government's consultation on COVID Recovery along with input to the Low Income & Debt Problems Inquiry held by the Social Justice and Social Security Committee.
- 5.15 The Money Advice Co-ordinator continues to work with The Improvement Service, to review the Common Advice Performance Monitoring & Reporting Framework, which aims to capture key performance indicators in money advice.

6.0 CARF and the local economy

- 6.1 Financial gain for CARF is noted in the table below along with the corresponding 2020/21 figures for comparison.

Client Financial Gain (CFG)	2020/21 £ ,000	2021/22 £ ,000
Benefits, tax credits and NI	6,478	5,803
Debt Remedies (Bankruptcy, Trust Deeds etc.)	2,482	2,667
Financial products and services	91	107
Tax	124	68
Other	50	74
Total	9,225	8,719

- 6.2 In 2021/22, there was a 468% return on every £1 invested by Fife Council.
- 6.3 After taking into consideration the positive impact on health and wellbeing following CARF interventions, it is likely the financial contribution made by CARF to its community is far higher than reported.
- 6.4 Although the Client Financial Gain has decreased over the last 12 months this seems to be largely attributable to the reduction in debt collection activity as well as delays in tribunals.

7.0 Advice projects with specific health emphasis

- 7.1 In 2021/22 CARF attracted additional funding totalling £1,074,627. Additional funding comes from a variety of sources, both local and national, and is utilised to provide dedicated resource for the benefit of the more vulnerable groups in our communities. Details of all CARF's partnerships can be found in Appendix 2.
- 7.2 Throughout 2021/22, CARF had 19 individual projects complementing and providing additionality to their core work. Whilst it is true that all CARF activity is likely to have a positive impact on an individual's health, there are three specific projects working with, and within, health services.
- 7.3 Continued Money Talk Team funding has enabled the embedded income maximisation work within NHS Fife Maternity Service to continue. The project delivered over £618k in financial gain on behalf of almost 300 pregnant women and new mums.
- 7.4 The Macmillan Fife Welfare Benefits Partnership project continues to work very closely following the signing of last year's Data Sharing Agreement allowing the team to use the same system and improving the customer experience, particularly for those with a terminal illness. The closer alignment continues to inform best practice and the closer working relationship allows a greater flow of information across the team.

The real impact of CARF's work

Cancer diagnosis in 2017. Assisted with various benefits including PIP, Carers Allowance and a MacMillan Grant. Secondary cancer diagnosis early 2022. Terminal. Straight back in touch with CARF. Adviser secured high rate of Adult Disability Payment. Fast-tracked under special rules. Blue badge received inside 7 days. Improving Cancer Journey team contacted to provide practical and emotional support. Additional £156.90 per week until death. Client: "Once again you helped us when we needed it the most. Thank you."

- 7.5 In 2021/22, the Macmillan adviser had client financial gains totalling over £1m across 471 clients. The CARF Adviser assisted with almost 600 applications, providing advice on Attendance Allowance on over 200 occasions.
- 7.6 CARF's Carer Income Maximisation Project engaged with 332 Carers with 95% of Carers stating the support they received was a positive benefit to supporting their caring experience and decision making. In addition, 100% of those engaging with the project were likely to recommend the service to others.

The real impact of CARF's work

Carer. 2 children. One affected by autism. One affected by substance abuse during pregnancy and ADHD. Both have a hectic school life. Both need constant accompaniment. Schoolwork for both adversely affected. Assistance with online application for Child Disability Payment. Further benefit check reveals: Council Tax Reduction entitlement, Universal Credit entitlement, child benefit for other child, Carers Allowance as well as Carers Supplement. Estimated financial gain: over £17k.

- 7.7 In September 2021, CARF was pleased to launch an income maximisation project dedicated to NHS Fife staff members. The project has had a slow start and is undertaking a relaunch with increased support from NHS Fife colleagues.

8.0 Child poverty and CARF

- 8.1 In addition to the direct links that CARF has on health and wellbeing, it can also be argued that all CARF activity contributes in some way to the alleviation of child poverty, CARF also delivers projects in partnership with local and national partners dedicated to the alleviation of child poverty.
- 8.2 The Making it Work for Families project is delivered alongside Fife Gingerbread, Clued Up and Fife Intensive Rehabilitation and Substance Misuse Team providing intensive support to the whole family to improve relationships, money management and employment opportunities. 44 adults and 8 children engaged with CARF's caseworker, surpassing the original target of 30 individuals
- 8.3 The Making it Work for Lone Parents project is a long standing partnership project delivered with lead partner, Fife Gingerbread. This project again works intensively with a small number of lone parents with a view to eliminating debt as a barrier to progression into employment. 84 lone parents engaged with the CARF worker, with £82k gained on their behalf.
- 8.4 As detailed in Section 7.3, the Money Talk Worker continues to work within NHS Fife Maternity Services, ensuring expectant mothers have access to advice that helps give baby the best start in life.
- 8.5 Following discussions with Barnardo's, CARF began delivery of the Stronger Families project in late March 2021. In its first full year of delivery, CARF's worker has become embedded in the wider Barnardo's team, engaged with 15 families and secured £45k of client financial gain.
- 8.6 CARF's role in the Support and Connect programme through a Boosting Budgets worker continued to be delayed as a result of the pandemic. The project eventually launched on 1st April 2022. The project delivers a financial inclusion service within identified schools across Fife, providing personalised income maximisation advice and support, alongside financial education, to parents and carers of children engaging in Fife Council's Support and Connect project

9.0 Additional CARF projects and services

- 9.1 As reported last year, the Making Justice Work project, delivered alongside Frontline Fife and Fife Law Centre, has been in low demand as a result of the forbearance measures placed on creditors. It remains to be seen how the project will be impacted as creditor actions resume although cost of living mitigations may mean the continuance of low demand.
- 9.2 Alongside Greener Kirkcaldy and St Andrews Environmental Network, CARF continues to deliver income maximisation support, as part of the wider Cosy Kingdom Partnerships to those experiencing fuel poverty, gaining over £168k on behalf of 445 households.
- 9.3 The Pension Wise project, providing free, impartial guidance for people regarding their pensions has received continued funding and assisted over 800 individuals last year. The project also aims to educate against the growing practice of pension scams.
- 9.4 As a partner in the Fife Employability and Training Consortium, CARF delivers benefit and income maximisation advice to those looking to enter employment or progress within their existing employment, including better off calculations. In 2021/22, CARF's worker helped remove financial barriers to 155 individuals.
- 9.5 The Patient Advice and Support Service, delivered by CARF on behalf of Citizens Advice Scotland, assists patients and their families through the NHS complaints process. Over 150 individuals were assisted with complex complaints over the year.
- 9.6 In 2021/22, CARF continued delivery of the Help to Claim project, another national project delivered by CARF on behalf of Citizens Advice Scotland. The project helps clients apply for Universal Credit and provides ongoing support through to first payment. In 2021/22 the project assisted 630 individuals
- 9.7 In late 2021, a new funding stream was identified, and a tender process resulted in Citizens Advice Scotland being awarded a new contract. With a reduced amount of funding being made available and the removal of the local component of service delivery, CARF's Board of Directors made the difficult decision to stop delivery of the project.
- 9.8 The national project is now delivered by Perth Citizens Advice Bureau, with one CARF staff member TUPE'd to the new bureaux. The other members of CARF's Help to Claim team found alternative roles within CARF following successful recruitment exercises.
- 9.9 CARF has delivered the national Armed Services Advice Project on behalf of a variety of funders (including Poppy Scotland) supporting veterans and their families across a range of advice areas, including benefits, debt, employment, relationships, and housing. Despite uncertainty over future funding the project helped 383 veterans securing £844,563 in financial gain on their behalf.

The real impact of CARF's work

Elderly client. Suffering sight loss. Multiple health issues and poor mobility. Significant worry over their finances. Embarrassed by situation. Wary of support services. Adviser took time to build trust. Adviser identified eligibility for Attendance Allowance, Housing Benefit, Council Tax Reduction and Pension Credit. All applications were successful. Financial gain to client £9,558. Client felt they were being fraudulent. After long discussion, client accepted this was money they were entitled to. Client contributed to a relatives wedding. Bought new suit and wore on the day.

- 9.10 The Fife Online Referral and Tracking system (FORT) provides electronic referral access to a number of organisations in Fife. In 2021/22 over 1,600 referrals were made to CARF through the system representing an increase on the previous year of 68%.
- 9.11 An equal aim of the Citizens Advice service is to have a responsible influence on social policy both locally and nationally. CARF regularly records social policy issues to highlight unfair practices or injustices as a result of the implementation of existing policies or procedures. Over 350 social policy issues were raised, to Citizens Advice Scotland, last year by the organisation.
- 9.12 As reported in last year's paper, the most common social policy issues raised continue to relate to Universal Credit and Personal Independence Payment. Although only launched in 21/22, Child Disability Payment has already featured in some social policy feedback to Citizens Advice Scotland.
- 9.13 CARF continues to undertake significant social policy work including taking part in the national "Debt Happens" and "Money Advice Matters" in March 22 and May 2021 respectively. In June 2021, the organisation participated in a Scams Awareness campaign led by the National Cyber Security Centre "Mullet Over".
- 9.14 In addition to the above, CARF also played an active role in Challenge Poverty week, Big Energy Saving week, and responded to the Scottish Government consultation on ending the need for foodbanks.
- 9.15 CARF's Financial Inclusion Team delivered 32 presentations to over 560 members of partner agency staff and the public on 37 different topics, despite the pandemic.

10.0 Volunteering in CARF

- 10.1 As reported last year, the pandemic continued to have a detrimental impact on the number of volunteers within the organisation. As of 31st March 2021, there were 61 volunteers in CARF compared with 112 at the same point 12 months earlier, a reduction of 45%. It should be noted that the number of 112 was taken on 31st March 2020, one week into the initial lockdown period. As the pandemic progressed the number of volunteers fell dramatically.

- 10.2 Volunteer hours for the year increased from 1,872 to 8,196 as services started to re-open across the organisation and volunteers were able to continue their previous roles.
- 10.3 In 2021/22, CARF ran three Adviser Training Programmes resulting in 22 new volunteers joining the organisation. CARF is working with Citizens Advice Scotland to increase the number of training programmes available throughout the year.
- 10.4 The internal Staff and Volunteer Development Working Group continues to meet and organised CARF's first Staff and Volunteer Conference since Covid, held in May 2022.
- 10.5 CARF continues to maintain its "Volunteer Friendly" status.
- 10.6 Following on from last year's report, CARF has become the first Employability and Volunteering Champion with Fife College and is working with the college to identify how volunteering with CARF can contribute towards coursework in certain disciplines.
- 10.7 CARF is also in discussion with local schools in the Glenrothes area around volunteering for school leavers in fifth and sixth year.
- 10.8 As part of the annual risk assessment, the reduction in volunteers has been identified by the Board as a significant operational risk and CARF continue to work hard to increase volunteer numbers. The latest figures as of 31st August 2022 indicate there are now 67 volunteers in CARF.
- 10.9 CARF is currently operating at 85% of its pre-pandemic levels despite a reduction of over 20,000 volunteer hours, the equivalent of approximately 11 full time equivalent staff.

11.0 Internal achievements

- 11.1 The changes to the way in which CARF delivers its services continue to bed in. The service continues to operate a triage line which identifies emergency issues, with follow up calls for non-emergency issues scheduled. Complex cases and those deemed vulnerable are provided appointments in the nearest CARF office.
- 11.2 CARF has now mobilised its entire paid staff through the provision of laptops and access via the cloud to documents. This has enabled the organisation to adopt a blended working approach, an approach which has benefitted the organisation as it progressed through the various stages of the pandemic.
- 11.3 The organisation worked alongside Citizens Advice Scotland and SideLabs to develop a "local calls to local bureaux" approach providing an additional access point to CARF services. A national number can now be called, in addition to our local numbers, which will divert the caller to its "home" bureau. This new method replaces the previous arrangement where a national helpline was set up during the pandemic and resourced by a mixture of staff and volunteers "offered up" by bureaux across Scotland.

- 11.4 The introduction of FlexSpaces complements the hybrid working arrangement with staff able to book office space within the administrative office. A vast majority of staff have taken the opportunity to work from this office mitigating against the potential for unintended isolation.
- 11.5 Recent refurbishment work in the administrative office has enabled the organisation to relocate its Glenrothes office which now co-locates with the administrative office. This has the added benefit of reducing premises costs for the organisation and rationalised its office space in Glenrothes.
- 11.6 CARF continues to meet all the necessary criteria for full membership of Citizens Advice Scotland. In November 2022, the organisation will undertake its first full membership audit since the pandemic and internal changes were made in Citizens Advice Scotland's Learning Standards team.
- 11.7 In March 2021, CARF was informed that it had been deemed compliant in the peer review stage for Scottish National Standards for Information and Advice Providers (SNSIAP). This enables the organisation to move forward to the organisational assessment. In August 2022, CARF was awarded SNSIAP Accreditation at Type 2 and 3 for Welfare Benefits and Debt Advice, the highest accreditation the organisation can achieve.
- 11.8 After becoming a Career Ready employer, CARF provided a 4 week internship opportunity for a student to gain experience of an authentic workplace environment during July 2021. The experience has helped the student progress to University and CARF will be looking to host another placement in summer 2022.
- 11.9 CARF is a long-time holder of the Gold Award for Healthy Working Lives and, alongside the CEO's weekly Organisational Update, the internal group issues a weekly Healthy Working Lives update with information on healthy initiatives, mental health support and recreational activities.
- 11.10 As a full member of CAS, CARF has access to AbleFutures, an organisation who provide a mental health support service with staff given a dedicated Vocational Rehabilitation Consultant who will spend time to understand any mental health issues affecting time at work, before creating a tailored support plan.
- 11.11 CARF's value based framework now falls under the remit of the Business Development Manager who, working alongside an internal group of 10, continues to identify opportunities to promote the framework and embed within the organisation's HR function.
- 11.12 In January 2022, CARF finalised its first Community Engagement Strategy recognising the role communities play in organisational planning and delivery. The strategy sets out a variety of activities to be undertaken as part of its action plan.
- 11.13 As at 31st March 2022, CARF had 10 Directors with a wide and appropriate range of skills and expertise in line with good governance practice.
- 11.14 CARF's CEO has taken time to review its governance arrangements and continues to complete SCVO's Good Governance Check self-assessment framework on an annual basis.

11.15 The organisation continues to recognise two trade unions, Unite and Unison, and a recognition agreement exists between all parties. CARF continues its work to seek union comment on HR policies and practices, particularly around Covid.

11.16 CARF continues to support the Living Wage and remains a Living Wage employer.

11.17 CARF also continues to be recognised as a Carer Positive employer.

12.0 Future plans for CARF

12.1 CARF has been in a state of transition since the arrival of Covid and changes to the previous management team. The changes to service delivery and in its resource means the organisation continues to face significant challenge.

12.2 CARF is undertaking an exercise to accurately assess organisational capacity, using data at its disposal following the upgrades to its telephony systems detailed last year. The information provided by such an exercise will inform any necessary changes to delivery and also provide accurate information on the increase in resource needed to service the demand, particularly on volunteering numbers.

12.3 CARF recognises the need to embark on an upskilling agenda and is working with organisations locally to enable them to undertake basic income maximisation activity and, in some cases, basic benefit support. Over time, this work should enable local organisations to better support clients and allow CARF to focus on the more complex benefit issues. This will be key to the managing of demand on CARF services, as the organisation struggles to deal with the demand on its resources at present.

12.4 The Cost of Living crisis may mean that CARF comes under further demand which may in turn mean the ability of the organisation to service the demand is further limited by its current capacity.

12.5 CARF is working alongside other members as part of the Dunfermline Advice Hub Steering Group to identify an appropriate model for the Hub and its partners going forward. CARF has no permanent location in Dunfermline at present and is pursuing a short term opportunity within the Maygate Exchange although this has been subject to various delays.

12.6 CARF is in early discussions to see whether artificial intelligence can assist in transcribing conversations and populating CARF systems. This would have the effect of further reducing the administrative time on advisers. It is currently estimated that for every one minute of time advising, a paid adviser spends an average of two minutes writing up. This increases to an average of three minutes for volunteers.

12.7 As part of work identified with the Tackling Poverty and Preventing Crisis Board, the organisation will lead on upcoming benefit take-up campaigns, with a dedicated resource co-ordinating a dispersed team across various organisations with a view to increasing benefit take up in Fife.

12.8 CARF's website will undergo a facelift during 2022/23, with an increased emphasis on promoting self-help solutions, balanced against the need to ensure those who need further assistance receive it. CARF recognises digital exclusion and is keen to

highlight the many resources, digital and non-digital, at the disposal of those seeking advice.

12.9 CARF will undertake a data classification exercise in the next 12 months to better categorise data in line with expectations of GDPR.

List of Appendices

1. CARF Frontline Offices – Activities by location as at September 2022
2. Partnerships 21/22

Report Contact

Ashley Birrell

Policy Officer

Community Investment Team

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CARF Frontline Offices – Activities by location as at September 2022

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Dunfermline Office <i>Operating from Cowdenbeath temporarily</i> APPOINTMENTS AVAILABLE					
Cowdenbeath Office 322 High Street, Cowdenbeath, KY4 9NT APPOINTMENTS AVAILABLE	Triage line (all day). Callbacks (all day). Face to face appointments (all day)	Triage line (all day). Callbacks (all day). Face to face appointments (all day)	Callbacks (AM)	Callbacks (All day)	Triage line (AM) Face to face appointments (AM)
Glenrothes Office Units 7-8, Craig Mitchell House, Glenrothes KY7 5QF APPOINTMENTS AVAILABLE		Triage line (AM) Face To face appointments (all day) Callbacks (PM)		Triage line (all day) Callbacks (all day) Face to face appointments (AM)	Triage line (AM) Face to face appointments (AM)
Kirkcaldy Office New Volunteer House, 16 East Fergus Place, KY1 1XT APPOINTMENTS AVAILABLE	Face to face appointments (all day)		Face to face appointments (AM) Triage line (PM) Callbacks (PM)	Triage line (PM) Callbacks (PM)	Face to face appointments (all day) Callbacks (PM)
Cupar Office County Buildings, St Catherine Street, Cupar, KY15 4TA APPOINTMENTS AVAILABLE	Callbacks (PM)	Face to face appointments (AM) Triage line (AM) Callbacks (AM)	Face to face appointments (AM) Triage line (all day) Callbacks (all day)	Callbacks (PM)	Triage line (all day)
Leven Greig Institute, Forth Street, Leven, Fife KY8 4PF APPOINTMENTS AVAILABLE	Triage line (all day) Face to face appointments (PM)	Triage line (all day) Callbacks (all day) Face to face appointments (pm)			

Complementing face to face appointments on a daily basis are a team of staff and volunteers providing a triage telephony service between the hours of 1000-1500, Monday to Friday. The team can be reached on the following numbers:

General Advice	0345 1400 095	Macmillan Service, for people affected by Cancer	0345 1400 091
Debt and Money Advice	0345 1400 094	Welfare Benefits	0345 1400 092
Text Service for the Deaf Community	0787 2677 904		

Complementing the telephony triage, a team of advisers call back clients identified as in an emergency situation **the same day** between the hours of 0900 and 1700, Monday to Friday. Non-urgent call backs are placed on a call back list with advisers contacting clients between the hours of 0900 and 1700, Monday to Friday.

Full details of CARF locations as well as access to a large advice database for those able to self-help can be found at <http://www.CABFife.org.uk>

Partnerships 21/22

Pensionwise	Citizens Advice Scotland
Making it Work for Lone Parents	Fife Gingerbread
Transition 2 Employment	BRAG/Fife-ETC
Armed Services Advice Project	Citizens Advice Scotland (on behalf of Poppy Scotland & Partners)
MacMillan Welfare Benefits Project	Macmillan, Fife HSCP
Patient Advice and Support Service	Citizens Advice Scotland on behalf of NHS
Pop-Up Clinics	Citizens Advice Scotland & Fife Council
Cosy Kingdom	Greener Kirkcaldy & St Andrews Environmental Network
Making Justice Work	Frontline Fife/SLAB
Money Talk Team	Citizens Advice Scotland and NHS Fife
Carers Income Maximisation Project	Fife HSCP
Help to Claim	Citizens Advice Scotland
Making It Work for Families	Fife Gingerbread, Clued Up and FIRST
FHS4NHS	Fife Health Charity
Stronger Families	Barnardo's
Boosting Budgets	Fife Council
Food Insecurity	Fife Council
Tackling Inequalities	NHS Fife
Specialist Debt Advice Project	CAS/Scottish Government
No one Left Behind	BRAG/Scottish Government

For further information on the work of CARF please contact:

David Redpath, CARF Chief Executive on 01592 765401

email: dredpath@carfonline.org.uk

27 October 2022

Agenda Item No. 10

2022-23 Revenue Budget Projected Outturn – Communities

Report by: Eileen Rowand, Executive Director, Finance and Corporate Services
Michael Enston, Executive Director, Communities

Wards Affected: All

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to give members an update on the projected outturn position for the 2022/23 financial year for Communities & the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) which are areas in scope of the People & Communities Scrutiny Committee

Recommendations

Committee is asked to consider the current financial performance and activity for the 2022/23 Revenue Monitoring as detailed in this report.

Resource Implications

None.

Legal & Risk Implications

There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

Impact Assessment

An EqlA has not been completed and is not necessary as no change or revision to existing policies and practices is proposed.

Consultation

None.

1.0 Background

The report summarises the Projected outturn position for 2022/23, taking into account the actual expenditure incurred, and provides a forecast and an explanation of the main budget variances at section 3.

2.0 Projected Outturn

- 2.1 Based on current information for the areas falling under the scope of this Committee, of a net expenditure budget of £76.813m the position across all areas is a projected expenditure of £80.133m resulting in a projected net overspend of £3.320m (4.32%).
- 2.2 A summary of the 2022-23 projected out-turn is detailed in Appendices 1 & 2. This shows projected expenditure against budget across the service headings within the Directorate. There may be some minor rounding differences contained within the appendices, but these are immaterial values that do not impact on the overall financial position. The following paragraphs provide a brief explanation of the main areas where there are significant variances (+/-£0.250m) to budgets.
- 2.3 This report includes the projected ongoing cost of COVID-19 in relation to Communities Directorate and the mitigation available to the Directorate to absorb some of these costs. The continuing financial implications of COVID-19 in 2022-23 and the funding available, including carry forward of grant funding from 2020-21, to meet these costs will be assessed corporately and reported to the Cabinet Committee throughout the financial year.

3.0 Major Variances

Communities & Neighbourhoods: - Projected Overspend £3.287m

- 3.1 Fife Sports and Leisure Trust and Fife Cultural Trust both continue to suffer loss of income following the pandemic, and they are projecting a deficit in the region of £2.113m. Council officers continue to work closely with these organisations to understand the short-term financial support they need. Community Use is forecasting lost income in the region of £0.614m and Halls and Centres are anticipating a reduction of £0.224m in income due to the continuing impact of closures resulting from COVID-19. There are overspends of £0.295m within Community use for Public Private Partnership (PPP) charges.
- 3.2 Unachieved savings of £0.736m remain across the service which have been delayed following the pandemic. The overspends are partially offset by staff vacancies across the service.

Housing Revenue Account: - Breakeven Position

Repairs & Maintenance – Projected Overspend £2.429m

- 3.3 The projected overspend mainly relates to increased costs as a result of inflationary pressures increasing the cost of works carried out with Responsive Repairs and Change of Tenancy works expected to overspend in year.

Revenue Contribution (Including CFCR) – Underachievement £3.853m

- 3.4 To maintain the breakeven position and maintain current HRA reserves the CFCR is reduced to offset the overspends noted in this report. As the year progresses, the final CFCR and the associated impact on the level of borrowing required to fund the HRA Capital Programme will become clearer.

Voids – Overspend £0.489m

- 3.5 The overspend on Voids mainly relates to a recent court judgment on Temporary Accommodation meaning a large number of HRA rental properties are being reprovisioned as temporary accommodation increasing the number of void properties expected in year.

Other Expenditure – Overspend £1.546m

- 3.6 Hostels expenditure is projecting to overspend by £0.667m. The service is seeking to remove this pressure in year by implementing a revised model as part of wider reforms taking place across the Homelessness service which includes General Fund Housing Homelessness and HRA Hostels. Property Insurance is also estimated to overspend in year by £0.579m based on a projected 33% increase on last years spend. The remaining overspend mainly relates to increased gas and electricity costs in Sheltered Housing, High Rises and Laundrettes.

Dwelling Rents (Gross) Income – Overachievement £0.928m

- 3.7 Dwelling Rents income is higher than anticipated by £0.781m due an increase in housing stock as the Affordable Housing Programme and Property Acquisitions progress.

4.0 Conclusions

- 4.1 Based on current information for the areas falling under the scope of this Committee, of a net expenditure budget of £76.813m the position across all areas is a projected expenditure of £80.133m resulting in a projected net overspend of £3.320m (4.32%).

List of Appendices

1. Projected Outturn 2022/23 – Communities Directorate
2. Projected Outturn 2022/23 – Housing Revenue Account

Background Papers

None

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BUDGET MONITORING REPORT SUMMARY		Appendix 1	
2022-23			
PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES			
COMMUNITIES	CURRENT BUDGET 2022-23	FORECAST 2022-23	FORECAST VARIANCE
	£m	£m	£m
TOTAL COST OF SERVICES	99.149	102.469	3.320
LESS: CORPORATELY MANAGED ITEMS	22.336	22.336	0.000
SERVICE MANAGED NET BUDGET	76.813	80.133	3.320
<u>ANALYSIS OF SERVICE MANAGED BUDGET</u>			
COMMUNITIES & NEIGHBOURHOODS	51.017	54.316	3.299
GFH - HOUSING & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES	12.912	12.789	(0.123)
COMMUNITIES EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	0.199	0.187	(0.012)
CUSTOMER & ONLINE SERVICES	12.685	12.842	0.156
	76.813	80.133	3.320
SUBJECTIVE GROUPING			
SERVICE MANAGED NET BUDGET	76.813	80.133	3.320
INCOME	(23.354)	(24.906)	(1.551)
EXPENDITURE			
EMPLOYEE COSTS	39.035	38.856	(0.179)
PREMISES RELATED EXPENDITURE	12.671	13.165	0.494
TRANSPORT RELATED EXPENDITURE	0.479	0.542	0.064
SUPPLIES & SERVICES	15.372	16.253	0.881
THIRD PARTY PAYMENTS	29.619	33.286	3.666
TRANSFER PAYMENTS	0.255	0.255	0.001
SUPPORT SERVICES CHARGES	2.736	2.681	(0.055)
	100.168	105.038	4.871
TOTAL	76.813	80.133	3.320

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) 2022-23

Appendix 2

	CURRENT BUDGET 2022-23 £m	ACTUAL £m	FORECAST 2022-23 £m	FORECAST VARIANCE £m
Budgeted Expenditure				
Repairs & Maintenance	36.598	11.986	39.027	2.429
Supervision & Management	20.065	5.300	20.062	(0.002)
Funding Investment:				
Cost of Borrowing	29.925	0.000	30.055	0.130
Revenue Contribution (including CFCR)	29.327	0.194	25.474	(3.853)
	115.914	17.481	114.618	(1.296)
Voids	2.146	0.958	2.636	0.489
Housing Support Costs	(0.448)	0.000	(0.469)	(0.021)
Garden Care Scheme	0.395	0.260	0.395	0.000
Bad or Doubtful Debts	3.000	(4.829)	3.000	0.000
Other Expenditure	10.191	2.851	11.737	1.546
COVID Expenditure	0.000	0.005	0.000	0.000
	131.197	16.726	131.916	0.718
Financed By:				
Dwelling Rents (Gross)	(123.910)	(46.809)	(124.837)	(0.928)
Non Dwelling Rents (Gross)	(3.494)	(1.324)	(3.494)	0.000
Hostels - Accommodation Charges	(2.397)	(0.852)	(2.325)	0.072
Other Income	(1.397)	(0.173)	(1.259)	0.138
	(131.197)	(49.159)	(131.916)	(0.718)
Contribution From Balances	0.000	(32.433)	0.000	0.000

27 October 2022

Agenda Item No. 11

2022-23 Capital Plan Projected Outturn – Communities

Report by: Eileen Rowand, Executive Director, Finance and Corporate Services
Michael Enston, Executive Director, Communities Directorate

Wards Affected: All

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the Capital Investment Plan and advise on the projected financial position for the 2022/23 financial year.

Recommendation(s)

Committee is asked to consider the current performance and activity for the 2022/23 Capital Monitoring as detailed in this report.

Resource Implications

None.

Legal & Risk Implications

None.

Impact Assessment

An EqlA has not been completed and is not necessary as no change or revision to existing policies and practices is proposed.

Consultation

None.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Based on current information, this report summarises the projected capital outturn for the areas falling under the scope of this Committee for 2022/23. At this stage it is forecast that expenditure will be £96.649m, representing 97% of the approved capital programme for 2022/23.
- 1.2 Appendix 1 shows an analysis of specific projects in the current capital investment plan which have a budget greater than £1m and analyses total project cost rather than only in year spend.
- 1.3 Appendix 2 details the forecast expenditure and income against budget for each project. A brief explanation of any significant forecast variances is provided at section 3 within this report.

2.0 Governance

- 2.1 On 21 June 2016 the Executive Committee approved revised governance and scrutiny arrangements for major capital projects. At that meeting the Committee agreed an enhanced level of reporting on capital projects through the quarterly capital expenditure monitoring report.
- 2.2 Major projects are defined as projects with a value of £5m and over. Projects with a value of less than £5m may also be subject to enhanced governance and scrutiny arrangements where there may be greater risk of overspend against budget, a risk of overrun on timescales or where expected benefits may not be delivered. The Investment Strategy Group is currently working to identify these projects as part of a review of the Capital Plan. Elected members will also be able to suggest when a particular project should be scrutinised in more detail.

3.0 Issues, Achievements & Financial Performance

Key Issues / Risks

- 3.1 Appendix 1 details the total cost forecast position for all capital projects within the areas under the scope of the Committee with an overall value of £1m and over. The key risks associated with the major projects are noted below.
- 3.2 There is a risk across the Capital Investment Plan that both the timing and the costs of projects continue to be adversely affected as a result of the current economic climate following the response to COVID-19, EU-Exit and current geopolitical risks in Europe. Throughout the programme issues are continuing to be identified in relation to the supply of construction materials which are resulting in delays to projects, which in turn could lead to increased slippage and increased costs. However, the overall future impact of this is difficult to predict with any degree of certainty and the projected outturn in this report for 2022/23 relate to projects that are currently in progress with contracts that are already agreed. That said, monitoring of the impact of any additional costs, impact on timescales and associated risks is ongoing. The known impact on timing of delivery of projects has been built in to the rephased plan and the overall scale of any additional costs or further delays will be kept under review in future reports and also through the upcoming review of the Capital Investment Plan.

- 3.3 COVID-19 restrictions have eased, however, there remains a risk that new variants emerge which could impact on project delivery in future years. These potential risks cover all aspects of the capital plan including both General Fund and the HRA.

Major Projects – Potential Risks and Actions

- 3.4 There is a risk that the cost of completing the Phase 3 and Transitional Affordable Housing Programme will cost more than the current approved project budget of £160.886m which is phased across 2022/23 to 2024/25. This is due to the unit cost per property continuing to rise as inflationary pressures increase. The Affordable Housing Board will continue to monitor the cost of completing these phases and will report back to this Committee & Cabinet Committee on any mitigating actions or potential additional borrowing required. Any additional borrowing required will be fully tested for affordability as part of the HRA 2022 Business Plan.
- 3.5 Adam Smith Creative Hub £1.190m overspend. Budget has been identified and approved to fund this overspend and the budget is in the process of being realigned.

Financial Performance – 2022/23 Projected Outturn

- 3.6 Appendix 2 provides a summary of the projected outturn for each project for the financial year 2022/23. The appendix shows a projected outturn of £96.649m against a Capital Investment plan of £99.643m, a spending level of 97%.
- 3.7 The reasons for significant variances (+/-£0.500m) are detailed below.
- 3.8 Slippage is the term used to describe projects that are expected to spend less than the budget allocation in a particular year due to a delay in timing on the delivery of the project. This is not uncommon in the capital programme and the reasons for this can be wide and varied. Advancement is the term used to describe projects that are expected to spend more than the budget allocation in a particular year due to an acceleration of the budget from future years.

Significant Variances

Area Community & Corporate Development – Slippage £4.739m

- 3.9 There are a number of projects contributing to the expected levels of slippage, the main areas of slippage are as follows:

Area Community Facilities slippage of £1.8m relates to Abbeyview Integrated Hub, tenders are due to be received in November 2022. Sport & Leisure Facilities slippage of £0.632m relates to Lochore Meadows. The retendered project is being evaluated and a full consultation exercise will be undertaken before the contract is let. Fife Tourism infrastructure slippage of £0.506m, several projects have been identified for this funding, the detail of which is being finalised.

Sports Leisure and Community Assets is showing slippage of £1.025m, a number of projects have been allocated funding from this slippage, including rigging work in Theatres throughout Fife. The remaining slippage will be used to support projects in 2023/24.

Policy Options – Slippage £1.150m

- 3.10 There is slippage of £1.150m relating to Energy Efficiency projects which were delayed as a result of COVID-19. Work is expected to progress in this area in 2023-24 and will form part of the larger Energy Efficiency Standards for Social Housing (EESH 2) project which will run from 2023-32.

Specific Needs / Sheltered Housing Income - £8.622m advancement

- 3.11 There is an advancement of £5.622m for the Property Acquisitions programme. This is following the approval by Cabinet Committee on 25th August 2022 that the HRA work to acquire sufficient properties beyond the original target of 50. Additional properties are being acquired to mitigate against pressures on the current Fife housing Register waiting list. There is an advancement of £3m for Gypsy Travellers sites which relates to the regeneration project at the Tarvit Site. Work on this site was delayed in previous years due to COVID-19 but work is now underway and expected to complete this year.

Affordable Housing Programme - £5.633m slippage

- 3.12 Due to the timing of site delivery it is anticipated that there will be slippage of £5.633m in year for the Affordable Housing Programme. Despite the slippage rising unit costs may mean that additional borrowing is required in future years as detailed above in paragraph 3.4.

Specific Needs / Sheltered Housing Income - £3.205m advancement

- 3.13 The increase in Property Acquisitions in year has increased the level of Scottish Government subsidy expected in year by £2.571m. For each property purchased in year £0.040m Scottish Government Subsidy is received.
- 3.14 Travellers Sites has received £0.634m Scottish Government Grant income in year which will be used to fund the regeneration and improvement works at Tarvit Traveller Site.

4.0 Conclusions

- 4.1 The total 2022/23 approved programme for the areas in scope of the Community & Housing Services Committee is £99.643m. The projected level of expenditure is £96.649m, which represents 97% of the total programme, resulting in slippage of £2.994m.
- 4.2 The management of capital resources require us to look across financial years, as well as within individual years. The current year performance is only a snapshot of the existing plan and the Directorate will adjust expenditure levels within future years of the plan to accommodate the advancement or slippage of projects.

List of Appendices

1. Total Cost Monitor
2. Capital Monitoring Report by Service

Background Papers

None

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Project	Theme	Original Approved Budget £m	Current Project Budget £m	Total Projected Outturn £m	Variance £m	Variance %	Current Project Status	Expected Project Completion Date
Abbeyview Integrated Hub	Thriving Places	1.500	7.506	7.506	-	0.00%	Current Project	2023-24
Templehall Community Hub	Thriving Places	1.500	9.004	9.004	-	0.00%	Current Project	2025-26
Adam Smith Creative Hub	Thriving Places	2.000	6.221	7.411	1.190	19.13%	Current Project	2023-24
Affordable Housing	Housing Revenue Account	281.869	424.238	424.238	-	0.00%	Current Project	2024-25
Total Major Projects over £5.000m		286.869	446.969	448.159	1.190	0.27%		
Lyne Burn Corridor River Restoration	Thriving Places	1.534	1.554	1.554	-	0.00%	Current Project	2022-23
Silverburn	Thriving Places	1.000	2.000	2.000	-	0.00%	Current Project	2024-25
Glenwood Regeneration	Thriving Places	1.500	1.598	1.598	-	0.00%	Current Project	2023-24
Beacon Leisure Centre - Upgrade Enhancements	Thriving Places	1.000	1.000	1.000	-	0.00%	Future Project	2024-25
Carnegie Training & Junior Pool Enhancements	Thriving Places	0.200	1.212	1.212	-	0.00%	Complete	2021-22
Cowdenbeath Leisure Centre - Phase 2	Thriving Places	1.600	4.351	4.351	-	0.00%	Current Project	2024-25
Rockgelly	Thriving Places	0.800	1.186	1.186	-	0.00%	Complete	2021-22
Ravensraig Flats Kirkcaldy	Housing Revenue Account		1.192	1.192	-	0.00%	Current Project	2023-24
Total Major Projects over £1.000m		7.634	14.093	14.093	-	0.00%		
Total Major Projects		294.503	461.062	462.252	1.190	0.26%		

Expenditure	Current Budget £m	Actual to Date £m	Projected Outturn £m	Projected Variance £m	Projected Outturn as % of Plan
Community Facilities Programme	0.708	0.020	0.808	0.100	114%
Community Regeneration & Development	0.016	-	0.016	-	100%
Countryside Programme	1.055	0.160	0.735	(0.320)	70%
Libraries, Museums, Galleries & Theatres	5.589	1.157	5.841	0.252	105%
Plan & Machinery Replacement Programme	0.136	0.043	0.079	(0.057)	58%
Major Parks Programme	0.083	0.006	0.006	(0.077)	8%
Allotments Programme	0.133	0.039	0.133	-	100%
Parks Development Projects	1.839	0.468	1.529	(0.310)	83%
Future of Leisure	0.003	(0.268)	0.003	-	100%
Sports & Golf Programme	0.148	0.001	0.036	(0.112)	24%
Improving Health Through Leisure & Sport	0.998	0.089	0.701	(0.297)	70%
Area Community Facilities	3.023	0.196	1.223	(1.800)	40%
Area Capital Investment	0.603	0.061	0.650	0.047	108%
Sport and Leisure Facilities	2.013	0.439	1.381	(0.632)	69%
Fife Tourism Infrastructure Programme	0.602	0.004	0.096	(0.506)	0%
Sports, Leisure and Community Assets	1.134	0.028	0.109	(1.025)	10%
TOTAL AREA COMMUNITY & CORPORATE DEVELOPMENT	18.084	2.441	13.346	(4.739)	74%
Disability Adaptations	1.364	0.595	1.364	-	0%
TOTAL GENERAL FUND HOUSING	1.364	0.595	1.364	-	100%
Minor Works	0.650	0.093	0.650	-	100%
Policy Options	3.250	0.316	2.100	(1.150)	65%
Regeneration/Estates Action	3.806	0.843	3.525	(0.281)	93%
Component Replacement	34.060	12.088	34.060	-	100%
Specific Needs/Sheltered Housing	8.380	5.379	17.002	8.622	203%
Structural Works (Specialist)	0.650	0.081	0.650	-	100%
Affordable Housing	27.943	10.350	22.310	(5.633)	80%
Major Projects	1.456	0.001	1.643	0.187	0%
TOTAL HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT	80.195	29.152	81.939	1.745	102%
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	99.643	32.188	96.649	(2.994)	97%

Income	Current Budget £m	Actual to Date £m	Projected Outturn £m	Projected Variance £m	Projected Outturn as % of Plan
Parks Development Projects	(0.830)	(0.303)	(0.865)	(0.035)	104%
Improving Health Through Leisure & Sport	(0.073)	-	(0.073)	-	100%
Area Capital Investment	(0.098)	(0.023)	(0.098)	-	100%
TOTAL AREA COMMUNITY & CORPORATE DEVELOPMENT	(1.000)	(0.325)	(1.035)	(0.035)	103%
Policy Options	-	0.011	0.011	0.011	0%
Regeneration/Estates Action	-	0.007	0.007	0.007	0%
Component Replacement	-	0.015	0.015	0.015	0%
Specific Needs/Sheltered Housing	(1.429)	(2.104)	(4.634)	(3.205)	324%
Affordable Housing	(10.095)	(5.577)	(10.095)	-	100%
TOTAL HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT	(11.523)	(7.648)	(14.695)	(3.172)	128%
TOTAL INCOME	(12.523)	(7.973)	(15.730)	(3.207)	126%

27th October 2022

Agenda Item No. 12

2022-23 Revenue Budget & Capital Plan Projected Outturn - Children & Families and Criminal Justice Services

Report by: Carrie Lindsay, Executive Director Education and Children's Services
Eileen Rowand, Executive Director Finance & Corporate Services

Wards Affected: All

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide members with an update on the forecast financial position for the 2022-23 financial year, for the areas in scope of the People & Communities Scrutiny Committee in relation to Children & Families and Criminal Justice Services.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- (1) consider the current financial performance and activity as detailed in this report in relation to both the revenue budget and capital plan;
- (2) note the projected outturn position and the relevant areas of projected over and under spend within the service.

Resource Implications

The Service is committed to managing the spend within the overall level of resource available and in continuing to promote the aims of the Children and Families Strategy in terms of addressing the balance of care.

Legal & Risk Implications

There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

Impact Assessment

An EqIA has not been completed and is not necessary as no change or revision to existing policies and practices is proposed.

Consultation

None

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise Members of the projected outturn for the Children & Families and Criminal Justice Services, for the 2022-23 Revenue Budget and Capital Plan, and to highlight the major variances as at August 2022. This is the first monitoring report to the Scrutiny Committee for the 2022-23 financial year.

2.0 Revenue Budget - Projected Outturn

2.1 Projected Outturn – Children and Families and Criminal Justice Services

- 2.1.1 The projected underspend, for this financial year, for Children & Families and Criminal Justice Services is £5.427m. A summary of the 2022-23 projected outturn is detailed in Appendix 1. This shows projected expenditure against budget across the service headings within the Service. It should be noted that the balances are extracted from the ledger system and are shown as rounded thousands. This may mean that there are some rounding differences contained within the appendices, but these are immaterial values that do not impact on the overall financial position. The following paragraphs provide a brief explanation of the main areas where there are significant variances (+/-£0.250m) to budgets.

3.0 Revenue Budget - Major Variances

3.1 Children & Families / Criminal Justice: - projected outturn - £ 5.427m underspend

- 3.1.1 The position for the service reflects a projected underspend for Children and Families / Criminal Justice Service, mainly due to the continued reduction in the number of children in purchased care arrangements. This reflects the service's Belonging to Fife Strategy which has sought to address the balance of care and support children to remain safely at home rather than in purchased care arrangements.
- 3.1.2 Projected underspends are included within the projection under employee costs of £0.616m due to staff turnover and recruitment lead in times, third party payments of £5.169m reflecting the reduced number of purchased placements and £1.199m on foster care payments. In addition, there is a projected increase in income, reflecting anticipated income for the education element of secure placements of £0.285m, and also income relating to the Promise and Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers.
- 3.1.3 Offsetting this underspend are projected overspends in Continuing Care of £1.039m, respite care for children of £0.344m and supported lodgings of £0.305m, as some of the children previously in purchased care arrangements have moved into kinship care.

4.0 Capital Plan – Projected Outturn

4.1 Children & Families / Criminal Justice: - projected outturn - £ 0.056m

4.1.1 The projects planned under the heading of Looked After Children are relatively small in nature and are to improve and maintain the Council’s residential house provision. Needs are assessed and prioritised to ensure the budget is deployed effectively.

4.1.2 The projected outturn for the service Capital Plan is on budget at £0.056m for the current financial year. The monitoring of the impact of any additional costs, impact on timescales and associated risks with capital projects is ongoing. The known impact on timing of delivery of projects has been built in to the rephrasing of the plan and the overall scale of any additional costs or further delays will be kept under review in future reports, and also through the upcoming review of the Capital Investment Plan. Appendix 2 details the projected outturn for 2022-23 against the Looked After Children theme.

5.0 Conclusions

5.1 The projected outturn for Children & Families and Criminal Justice Services Revenue Budget for 2022-23 is a projected underspend of £5.427m.

5.2 The Capital Plan for the Service for 2022-23 is projected to spend on budget, with a projected outturn of £0.056m.

List of Appendices

1. Children & Families and Criminal Justice Services Revenue Monitor 2022-23
2. Children & Families and Criminal Justice Services Capital Plan 2022-23

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**BUDGET MONITORING REPORT SUMMARY
2022-23
PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES**

Appendix 1

	CURRENT BUDGET 2022-23 £m	COVID PROJECTION 2022-23 £m	NON-COVID PROJECTION 2022-23 £m	FORECAST 2022-23 £m	FORECAST VARIANCE £m	FORECAST VARIANCE %
CHILDREN & FAMILIES/CRIMINAL JUSTICE						
TOTAL COST OF SERVICES	65.908	0.238	60.243	60.481	(5.427)	-8.23%
LESS: CORPORATELY MANAGED ITEMS	0.211	0.000	0.211	0.211	0.000	0.00%
SERVICE MANAGED NET BUDGET	65.698	0.238	60.032	60.271	(5.427)	-8.23%
ANALYSIS OF SERVICE MANAGED BUDGET						
CHILDREN & FAMILIES/CJS	65.698	0.238	60.032	60.271	(5.427)	-8.26%

SUBJECTIVE GROUPING	CURRENT BUDGET 2022-23 £m	COVID PROJECTION 2022-23 £m	NON-COVID PROJECTION 2022-23 £m	FORECAST 2022-23 £m	FORECAST VARIANCE £m	FORECAST VARIANCE %
SERVICE MANAGED NET BUDGET	65.698	0.238	60.032	60.271	(5.427)	-8.23%
INCOME	(9.649)	0.189	(10.460)	(10.271)	(0.622)	6.45%
EXPENDITURE						
EMPLOYEE COSTS	35.612	0.000	34.929	34.929	(0.683)	-1.92%
PREMISES RELATED EXPENDITURE	0.451	0.000	0.581	0.581	0.131	28.99%
TRANSPORT RELATED EXPENDITURE	1.642	0.001	1.609	1.610	(0.031)	-1.90%
SUPPLIES & SERVICES	2.982	0.001	3.279	3.280	0.298	9.99%
THIRD PARTY PAYMENTS	29.497	0.000	25.422	25.422	(4.075)	-13.82%
TRANSFER PAYMENTS	5.164	0.046	4.661	4.707	(0.456)	-8.84%
SUPPORT SERVICES CHARGES	0.001	0.000	0.012	0.012	0.012	1830.05%
	75.347	0.049	70.493	70.542	(4.805)	-6.38%
TOTAL	65.698	0.238	60.032	60.271	(5.427)	-8.26%

**FIFE COUNCIL
 PEOPLE & COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
 EDUCATION & CHILDRENS SERVICES
 CAPITAL INVESTMENT PLAN 2021-31
 MONITORING REPORT 2022-23**

Expenditure	Current Budget £m	Actual to Date £m	Projected Outturn £m	Projected Variance £m	Projected Outturn as % of Plan
Looked After Children	0.056	0.001	0.056	-	100%
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	0.056	0.001	0.056	-	100%

27 October 2022
Agenda Item No. 13

2022-23 Revenue Budget Projected Out-turn – Health & Social Care

Report by: Nicky Connor, Director of Health and Social Care
Eileen Rowand, Executive Director, Finance & Corporate Services

Wards Affected: All

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to give members an update on the 2022-23 projected out-turn for Fife Council Social Care Services for Adults and Older People.

Recommendation(s)

Committee is asked to consider the current financial performance and activity as detailed in the report.

Resource Implications

None

Legal & Risk Implications

The Service requires to manage the risk to individual clients and the community in Fife whilst undertaking its statutory duties within the budget approved by the Council for 2022-23.

Impact Assessment

An EqIA has not been completed and is not necessary as no change or revision to existing policies and practices is proposed

Consultation

None

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The report summarises the projected outturn position for 2022-23, taking into account the actual expenditure incurred and provides an explanation of the main budget variances at section 3.
- 1.2 Section 4 of the report summarises the progress on delivery of approved budget savings and provides an explanation of any variances to the delivery of the savings target.

2.0 IJB Budget

- 2.1 The Health & Social Care Partnership (H&SCP) consists of parts of NHS, Social Care for Adults and Older People and an element of Fife Council Housing, specifically adaptations to houses. It does not include any social care expenditure incurred through Education & Children's Services. The budget is managed by the Integration Joint Board (IJB).
 - 2.1.1 The IJB budget was approved on 25 March. The cost to deliver services at existing levels requires more funding than is currently available from both partner organisations and therefore a savings plan to close the funding gap was presented and approved at that meeting. Additional allocations are awarded in year through Health budget allocations and the current budget for 2022-23 as at August is £428.356m.
 - 2.1.2 The August submission for Covid-19 expenditure suggests a full year projection of £4.070m. Reserves totalling £79.711m are held by Fife Council on behalf of the IJB, of which £35.993m is related to Covid-19 and a further £30.282m is ear-marked for specific use. Expenditure on Covid-19 is expected to be funded in the first instance from the Covid-19 reserve.
- 2.2 IJB Integration Scheme
 - 2.2.1 To reflect the partnership working between the NHS and Fife Council through the Health & Social Care Partnership, an agreement has been reached on how any overspends should be shared between the partners. This is known as the risk share agreement. Following the review in 21-22 the new share is Fife Council funds 38% and NHS funds 62% of any overall H&SCP overspend, regardless of where the overspend is incurred.
 - 2.2.2 The H&SC Partnership is managed by the Integration Joint Board (IJB). The 2022-23 IJB budget was approved on the basis of break-even. Included in the budget was the recognition that resources would transfer as more care is moved from a hospital setting to a home or homely setting. The budget and forecast includes income from NHS of £2.407m for this transfer of resources.
 - 2.2.3 Expenditure of £1.837m on adaptations to houses by Fife Council Housing Services is included in the overall budget for IJB. However, Housing expenditure is reported to the Community and Housing Services Committee and is therefore outwith the scope of this report.
 - 2.2.4 Part of the budget within Fife Council Social Care is excluded from the overall budget managed by IJB. The excluded element is the Contracts team, who manage

the commissioning of services. The budget for this area is £1.629m. As this is not part of the budget managed by IJB, 100% of any over- or under-spend is funded by Fife Council.

3.0 Major Variances for Social Care

- 3.1 The budget allocated to Fife Council for Social Care for Adults and Older People is £208.844m which includes the budget for Contracts Team of £1.629m.
- 3.1.1 The underspend for Social Care for Adults and Older People within Fife Council is forecasted to be £1.741m or 0.83% of the net service managed budget. A summary is detailed in Appendix 1.
- 3.1.2 There is no variance forecast for Fife Council due to the assumption that any underspend will contribute towards IJB reserves at year end.
- 3.1.3 The risk share agreement is unlikely to be activated this year due to the overall forecast underspend for the IJB.
- 3.2 **Integrated Complex and Critical Care** has an overspend of £0.191m, the main variances are detailed as follows:
- 3.2.1 Adults Placements – overspend £5.252m,
- The overspend in adult placements mainly relates to a greater number of adult packages having been commissioned than the budget available. The service closely monitors the commissioning of these packages and reduces packages where possible.
- Progress towards some of the saving's targets has been delayed due to Covid-19 and these are expected to underachieve by £0.532m. Procurement saving and re-provision of care have been substituted by delays in filling vacancies in other areas of the Service.
- 3.2.2 Adults Supported Living – underspend (£3.423m)
- Within the Community Support Services vacancies are being held whilst the future design of the service is established. This is resulting in an underspend on staffing of (£2.233m). Difficulties in recruiting staff are leading to a projected underspend of (£1.080m) within the group homes.
- 3.2.3 Adults Fifewide – underspend (£1.203m)
- This underspend is mainly due to a reduced provision for new packages for service users where their current requirements are being considered.
- 3.2.4 Social Care Fieldwork Teams – underspend (£0.436m)
- This underspend is mainly due to vacancies caused by difficulties recruiting staff.
- 3.3 **Integrated Community Care Services** has an underspend of (£1.102m), the main variances are detailed as follows:

3.3.1 Homecare – underspend (£0.625m)

This underspend is primarily as a result of vacancies across the service due to difficulties recruiting staff. Funding was provided to expand Homecare Services in the Community e.g., establish an emergency peripatetic team within Homecare, these posts have been difficult to recruit to. Recruitment campaigns are underway in the hope to attract potential employees.

3.3.2 Older People Residential and DayCare – underspend (£0.405m)

This underspend is predominantly due to vacancies across Care Homes as there are difficulties recruiting staff. The underspend includes held vacancies within Day Care Services that will not be filled until the service is fully recommenced after the impact of Covid which prevented the Service from operating.

3.4 **Integrated Professional & Business Enabling** has an underspend of (£0.829m), the main variance is detailed as follows:

3.4.1 Integrated Professional & Business Enabling – underspend (£0.829m)

There is an underspend of (£0.689m) on the budget allocated to pay weekend enhancements where the original provision was higher than required.

4.0 Progress on Budget Savings

4.1 This section usually details revenue budget savings for Social Care for Adults and Older People, detailing achievements against the current year approved budget savings as at August.

4.2 No new savings were approved for 2022-23. Previously approved savings which were unmet at 31 March 2022 require to be made in 2022-23 to balance the budget. These total £2.594m and the service is expecting to deliver savings of £2.463m (95% of target), leaving unachieved savings of £0.131m (5% of target). The implementation of approved savings has not been possible due to the demands on staff time from the Covid-19 pandemic.

5.0 COVID-19

5.1 In addition to the core financial position, there is a requirement to report spend in relation to Covid-19 and remobilisation costs. Currently the actual expenditure reported in the Local Mobilisation Plan (LMP) to August is £4.070m. Reserves for Covid-19 brought forward from 2021-22 are to be used in the first instance to fund any 2022-23 Covid-19 related expenditure.

6.0 Conclusions

6.1 The projected outturn for Social Care for Adults and Older People for the 2022-23 financial year is an underspend of (£1.741m), which will be transferred to IJB reserves at the end of the Financial year resulting in a nil variance for Fife Council.

List of Appendices

Appendix 1: Social Care – Revenue Budget 2022-23

Report Contact:

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BUDGET MONITORING REPORT SUMMARY 2022-23 PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES								Appendix 1	
HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE	CURRENT BUDGET 2022-23 £m	COVID PROJECTION 2022-23 £m	NON-COVID PROJECTION 2022-23 £m	FORECAST 2022-23 £m	FORECAST VARIANCE £m	FORECAST VARIANCE %	PREVIOUS REPORTED VARIANCE £m	MOVEMENT FROM PREVIOUS REPORTED VARIANCE £m	
TOTAL COST OF SERVICES	229.023	0.060	227.222	227.282	(1.741)	-0.76%	(0.711)	(1.030)	
LESS: CORPORATELY MANAGED ITEMS	20.179	0.000	20.179	20.179	0.000	0.00%	0.000	0.000	
SERVICE MANAGED NET BUDGET	208.844	0.060	207.042	207.103	(1.741)	-0.76%	(0.711)	(1.030)	
ANALYSIS OF SERVICE MANAGED BUDGET									
INTEGRATED COMMUNITY CARE SERVICES	101.118	0.005	100.011	100.015	(1.102)	-1.09%	(0.578)	(0.524)	
INTEGRATED COMPLEX AND CRITICAL SERVICES	103.452	0.056	103.587	103.643	0.191	0.18%	0.057	0.133	
H&SC PROFESSIONAL AND BUSINESS ENABLING	4.274	0.000	3.444	3.444	(0.829)	-19.40%	(0.190)	(0.639)	
HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE	208.844	0.060	207.042	207.103	(1.741)	-0.83%	(0.711)	(1.030)	
SUBJECTIVE GROUPING									
SERVICE MANAGED NET BUDGET	208.844	0.060	207.042	207.103	(1.741)	-0.76%	(0.711)	(1.030)	
INCOME	(93.700)	0.000	(92.277)	(92.277)	1.423	-1.52%	1.681	(0.258)	
EXPENDITURE									
EMPLOYEE COSTS	95.969	0.058	89.804	89.862	(6.107)	-6.36%	(5.347)	(0.760)	
PREMISES RELATED EXPENDITURE	3.955	0.000	3.911	3.911	(0.044)	-1.11%	(0.033)	(0.010)	
TRANSPORT RELATED EXPENDITURE	2.815	0.000	2.690	2.690	(0.124)	-4.41%	(0.175)	0.051	
SUPPLIES & SERVICES	16.245	0.002	14.707	14.709	(1.536)	-9.45%	(0.196)	(1.340)	
THIRD PARTY PAYMENTS	176.721	0.000	178.531	178.531	1.809	1.02%	1.331	0.479	
TRANSFER PAYMENTS	6.827	0.000	9.661	9.661	2.833	41.50%	2.028	0.805	
SUPPORT SERVICES CHARGES	0.012	0.000	0.016	0.016	0.004	38.37%	0.000	0.004	
	302.544	0.060	299.320	299.380	(3.164)	-1.05%	(2.393)	(0.771)	
HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE	208.844	0.060	207.042	207.103	(1.741)	-0.83%	(0.711)	(1.030)	

27 October 2022

Agenda Item No.14

2022-23 Capital Plan Projected Outturn – Health & Social Care

Report by: Eileen Rowand, Executive Director, Finance and Corporate Services
Nicky Connor, Director of Health and Social Care

Wards Affected: All

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the Health and Social Care Capital Investment Plan and advise on the projected out-turn for the 2022-23 financial year for People and Communities Scrutiny Committee.

Recommendation(s)

The Committee is asked to consider the current performance and activity across the 2022-23 Financial Monitoring as detailed in this report.

Resource Implications

None.

Legal & Risk Implications

None.

Impact Assessment

An EqlA has not been completed and is not necessary as no change or revision to existing policies and practices is proposed.

Consultation

None.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Based on current information, this report summarises the projected capital outturn as at 31 August 2022 for the areas falling under the scope of this Committee for 2022-23. At this stage projected expenditure is £5.389m. Representing 121% of the approved capital programme for 2022/23.
- 1.2 Appendix 1 shows an analysis of specific projects in the current capital investment plan which have a budget greater than £1m and analyses total project cost rather than only in year spend.
- 1.3 Appendix 2 details the forecast expenditure against budget for each project. A brief explanation of any significant forecast variances is provided at section 2.3 within this report.

2.0 Issues, Achievements & Financial Performance

2.1 Key Issues / Risks

- 2.1.1 Appendix 1 details the total cost forecast position for all capital projects within the areas under the scope of the Committee with an overall value of £1m and over. The key risks associated with the major projects are noted below.

2.2 Major Projects – Potential Risks and Actions

- 2.2.1 There is a risk across the Capital Investment Plan that both the timing and the costs of projects continue to be adversely affected as a result of the current economic climate following the response to COVID-19, EU-Exit and current geopolitical risks in Europe. Throughout the programme issues are continuing to be identified in relation to the supply of construction materials which are resulting in delays to projects, which in turn could lead to increased slippage and increased costs. However, the overall future impact of this is difficult to predict with any degree of certainty and the projected outturn in this report for 2022-23 relate to projects that are currently in progress with contracts that are already agreed. That said, monitoring of the impact of any additional costs, impact on timescales and associated risks is ongoing. The known impact on timing of delivery of projects has been built in to the rephased plan and the overall scale of any additional costs or further delays will be kept under review in future reports and also through the upcoming review of the Capital Investment Plan.
- 2.2.2 COVID-19 restrictions have eased, however, there remains a risk that new variants emerge which could impact on project delivery in future years. These potential risks cover all aspects of the capital plan including both General Fund and the HRA.
- 2.2.3 There is an anticipated overspend of £1m for the new Methil Care Home. This is due to the extended time the project is taking to complete (March 2023), attributed to material/supply delays, leading to additional contractor claims for extended periods on site. In addition, there has been increases in sub-contractor labour costs as well as material costs.

- 2.2.4 A refreshed Stage 4 Cost Plan issued for the new Cupar Care Home has indicated that additional budget of £1.3m is required due to construction and materials cost increases. Construction is due to start in May 2023 with completion expected in November 2024.
- 2.2.5 There is a future risk that the budget allocated for Anstruther Care Home (Construction to start 2025-26) will not be adequate and that further budget will be required due to increased costs in line with Methil and Cupar Care Homes.
- 2.2.6 The additional costs have been captured as an unavoidable pressure in the Capital Plan Review.

2.3 Financial Performance – 2022-23 Provisional Outturn

- 2.3.1 Appendix 2 provides a summary of the provisional outturn for each project for the financial year 2022-23. The appendix shows a projected outturn of £5.389m, a spending level of 121%.
- 2.3.2 There is no capital income budget for 2022-23 for the areas under the scope of this committee.
- 2.3.3 Slippage is the term used to describe projects that are expected to spend less than the budget allocation in a particular year due to a delay in timing on the delivery of the project. This is not uncommon in the capital programme and the reasons for this can be wide and varied. Advancement is the term used to describe projects that are expected to spend more than the budget allocation in a particular year due to an acceleration of the budget from future years.
- 2.3.4 The reasons for significant variances (+/- £0.500m) are detailed below.

Re-provision of Care for Older People - there has been significant supply chain disruption which has led to delays in sourcing materials for the Methil Care home replacement project. This has led to an expected completion date of March 2023, which is a 1-year delay. There is an anticipated overspend of £1m for this Care Home. attributed to material/supply delays, leading to additional contractor claims for extended periods on site. In addition, there has been increases in sub-contractor labour costs as well as material costs.

3.0 Conclusions

- 3.1 The total 2022-23 approved programme for the areas in scope of the Health & Social Care Scrutiny Committee is £4.466m. The level of projected expenditure is £5.389m, which represents 121% of the total programme, resulting in an overspend of £0.923m.
- 3.2 The management of capital resources require us to look across financial years, as well as within individual years. The current year performance is only a snapshot of the existing plan, and the Directorate will adjust expenditure levels within future years of the plan to accommodate the advancement or slippage of projects.

List of Appendices

1. Total Cost Monitor
2. Capital Monitoring Report

Report Contact

Ashleigh Allan

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Finance Service

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FIFE COUNCIL
 PEOPLE & COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
 HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE
 CAPITAL INVESTMENT PLAN 2021-31
 TOTAL COST MONITOR - MAJOR CAPITAL PROJECTS

Project	Service	Original Approved Budget	Current Project Budget	Total Projected Outturn	Variance	Variance	Current Project Status	Expected Project Completion Date
		£m	£m	£m	£m	%		
Methil Care Home	Opportunities for All	6.620	7.277	8.277	1.000	13.74%	Current Project	2021-22
Cupar Care Home	Opportunities for All	5.580	7.879	9.220	1.341	17.02%	Current Project	2022-23
Anstruther Care Home	Opportunities for All	6.145	6.595	6.595	-	0.00%	Feasibility	2023-24
Total Major Projects over £5.000m		18.345	21.751	24.092	2.341	10.76%		
Total Major Projects		18.345	21.751	24.092	2.341	10.76%		

Expenditure	Current Budget £m	Actual to Date £m	Projected Outturn £m	Projected Variance £m	Projected Outturn as % of Plan
Capital Minor Works	0.292	-	0.077	(0.216)	26%
Adult Services (Resources)	0.107	0.000	0.140	0.033	131%
Older People's Residential/Day Care	0.125	0.032	0.231	0.106	184%
Re-Provision Of Care For Older People	3.635	2.237	4.635	1.000	128%
Telehealth Care	0.306	-	0.306	0.000	100%
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	4.466	2.269	5.389	0.923	121%

People and Communities Scrutiny Committee of 19 January 2023			
Title	Service(s)	Contact(s)	Comments
Armed Forces Covenant Report	Legal & Democratic Services	Lindsay Thomson	
Customer and Online Services Performance Report	Customer Services Improvement Service	Diarmuid Cotter, Iain Duncan	
Communities and Neighbourhoods Service Performance Report	Communities and Neighbourhoods Service	Paul Vaughan	
Workforce Planning	Education and Children's Services	Shelagh McLean, Kevin Funnell	
Trusts Annual Reports	Communities and Neighbourhoods Service	Andy Maclellan, Tim Kendrick	
Chief Social Work Annual Report	Education and Children's Services	Kathy Henwood, Fiona McKay	
Fife Violence Against Women Partnership Update	Communities and Neighbourhoods Service	Sheila Noble	
Police Scotland Performance Report	Police Scotland	Mark Bryce	
Adult Protection Annual Report	Health and Social Care	Kathy Henwood	
Child Protection Annual Report	Education and Children's Services	Kathy Henwood	
Fife Corporate Parenting Board - 6 monthly update/analysis	Education and Children's Services	Fiona Balloch, Kathy Henwood	
Justice Services Annual Report - 6 monthly performance Report	Education and Children's Services	Kathy Henwood	

People and Communities Scrutiny Committee of 19 January 2023			
Title	Service(s)	Contact(s)	Comments
Children and Families Social Work Strategy - 6 monthly performance report	Education and Children's Services	Kathy Henwood	
2022-23 Capital Plan Projected Outturn – Communities	Finance and Corporate Services, Communities	Lesley Kenworthy, Emma Lennon, Eleanor Hodgson	Oct '22 position
2022-23 Revenue Budget Projected Outturn – Communities	Finance and Corporate Services, Communities	Lesley Kenworthy, Emma Lennon, Eleanor Hodgson	Oct '22 position
2022-23 Revenue Budget & Capital Plan Projected Outturn – Children and Families & Criminal Justice Services	Finance and Corporate Services, Education and Children's Services	Alison Binnie, Jillian Lowe	Oct '22 position.
2022-23 Revenue Budget Projected Outturn – Health & Social Care	Finance and Corporate Services, Health and Social Care	Ashleigh Allan, Helen Guthrie, Christine Tuffy	Oct '22 position.
2022-23 Capital Plan Projected Outturn – Health & Social Care	Finance and Corporate Services, Health and Social Care	Ashleigh Allan, Helen Guthrie, Christine Tuffy	Oct '22 position.

People and Communities Scrutiny Committee of 23 March 2023			
Title	Service(s)	Contact(s)	Comments
Fife Community Safety Partnership Update	Housing Services	Patricia Spacey	

People and Communities Scrutiny Committee of 23 March 2023			
Title	Service(s)	Contact(s)	Comments
Police Scotland Local Policing Plan - Annual Report	Police Scotland	Derek McEwan, Adam Smith	
Fife Corporate Parenting Board - 6 monthly update/analysis	Education and Children's Services	Fiona Balloch	
Community Justice, Alcohol and Drugs Partnership Report	Health and Social Care	Nicky Connor, H&SC	
Children Services Inspection Update	Education and Children's Services	Kathy Henwood, Jackie Funnell	
Community Social Work	Education and Children's Services	Karen Pedder	
2022-23 Revenue Budget & Capital Plan Projected Outturn – Children and Families & Criminal Justice Services	Finance and Corporate Services, Education and Children's Services	Alison Binnie, Jillian Lowe	Dec '22 position.
2022-23 Revenue Budget Projected Outturn – Health & Social Care	Finance and Corporate Services, Health and Social Care	Ashleigh Allan, Helen Guthrie, Christine Tuffy	Dec '22 position.
2022-23 Capital Plan Projected Outturn – Health & Social Care	Finance and Corporate Services, Health and Social Care	Ashleigh Allan, Helen Guthrie, Christine Tuffy	Dec '22 position.
2022-23 Revenue Budget Projected Outturn – Communities	Finance and Corporate Services, Communities	Lesley Kenworthy, Emma Lennon, Eleanor Hodgson	Dec '22 position

People and Communities Scrutiny Committee of 23 March 2023			
Title	Service(s)	Contact(s)	Comments
2022-23 Capital Plan Projected Outturn – Communities	Finance and Corporate Services, Communities	Lesley Kenworthy, Emma Lennon, Eleanor Hodgson	Dec '22 position

Unallocated			
Title	Service(s)	Contact(s)	Comments
Annual Inspection Grades - FC Care Homes & Care Inspectorate Homes	Education and Children's Services	Christine Moir/ Fiona McKay, H&SC	June 2023.
Fife Council Duty of Candor Annual Report	Health and Social Care	Kathy Henwood	August 2023.
Children's Services Inspection Update	Education and Children's Services	Jackie Funnell	
Day Care Provision	Health and Social Care	Nicky Connor, H&SC	
Self-Directed Care Packages	Health and Social Care	Nicky Connor, H&SC	
Rockgelly	Communities and Neighbourhoods Service	Sarah Roxburgh, Paul Vaughan	
Update on the provision of sports facilities within Fife	Communities and Neighbourhoods Service		