

2021-22 DELIVERY PLAN

HOUSING & EMPLOYABILITY



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1. Overview

Housing and Employability comprises a wide range of services covering Communities, Housing Development and Homelessness, Housing Operations and Working 4U.

The gross general fund Housing and Employability budget is £10.455m with a net budget of £4.612m. The Housing Revenue Account has an expenditure and income revenue budget of £45.491m together with a Capital budget of £34.591m. It is one of 8 strategic areas with responsibility for delivering the Council's Strategic Plan.

This Plan sets out key actions to help deliver the Strategic Plan. It outlines the performance indicators we will monitor to measure our success, provides an overview of services and resources, including employees and budgets, and considers the relevant risks.

Progress will be monitored and managed on a regular basis at Housing & Employability management team meetings and reported twice yearly to Housing & Communities Committee, at mid-year and year end.

2. Performance Review

The H&E management team completed a detailed performance review of 2020/21, looking at:

Key Performance Indicators (Appendix 2)

Monitoring and analysing current and previous performance helps to identify trends and to understand where we need to implement improvement actions to meet both the service objectives and overall Council priorities.

Benchmarking (Appendix 3)

All 32 councils in Scotland measure a common set of performance indicators called the Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF). It comprises of service delivery, cost, and customer satisfaction indicators covering all major council service areas, including education, housing, social work, and leisure. Using the same indicators across all councils allows us to compare our performance so that we can identify best practice, learn from each other, and improve what we do.

User feedback including Complaints (Appendix 3)

It is important when developing the delivery plans that we capture learning from the range of mechanisms that provide feedback on our services. Central to this approach is ensuring we capture learning and make improvements to service delivery based on information from service user feedback and complaints.

Quality Standards (Appendix 4)

Quality standards help to define what users of our services can expect to receive, and remind both the organisation and our employees of the challenges and obligations they face in delivering best value services.

During 2020/21 H&E delivered a range of key achievements on behalf of the Council. In a challenging environment this service area has led exemplar statutory and strategic services within West Dunbartonshire; the following section contains some of the more notable achievements as well as a number of performance challenges to be addressed in 2021/22.

Key Achievements 2020/21

Communities Team

- In response to the COVID-19 pandemic the Communities Team designed and established the Volunteer Management team as part of the wider Crisis Support Service
- Established home-working procedures and moved appropriate services on-line
- Developed and launched a fully digital Community Budgeting Phase 5
- Continued to support community groups, extended and strengthened networks during the height of the pandemic
- Established a PB Mainstreaming Steering Group to lead the implementation of Participatory Budgeting across West Dunbartonshire

Housing Development and Homelessness

- Managed significant increase in Homeless presentation due to COVID-19 and provided full emergency response throughout pandemic
- New Housing developments continued including the first dementia designed development at Creveul Court
- Tenant participation strategy delivered
- Rapid rehousing/housing first scaled up
- Asset management stock assessment exercise carried out to inform regeneration plans

Housing Operations

- Comprehensive response to COVID-19 focused on tenant welfare
- Launch of new Neighbourhood and extended Anti-Social Behaviour service
- Development of tenant liaison service to assist vulnerable tenants
- Expansion of team delivering No Home for Domestic Abuse
- Revision of the Allocations Policy to strengthen rights for victims of domestic abuse
- Successful deployment of home based working

Working 4 U

- Designed and implemented a Covid-19 Rapid Response Crisis team
- Moved full team onto remote working
- Shift of services to online and introduction of new digital platforms including setting up a virtual employability hub
- Foundation apprenticeships

Challenges

As with other Council services the principle challenge over the last year has been the COVID-19 pandemic. Challenges faced were a mixture of being at the forefront of the Council's response to the pandemic through supporting both the Strategic and Organisational Resilience Groups through the volunteer programme and redeployment of staff. This period also brought challenges to delivery of front line services with increased demand for support particularly around the demand for Homeless services and temporary accommodation; support to residents who faced financial hardship due to poor economic activity including closure of businesses. The service has also faced challenges in adapting to new ways of engaging with residents and introduced changes to online /remote service deliver. However a challenge still remains to engage with residents who preferred face to face interaction and also to regain participation with established community groups. It is anticipated that this will continue to have far reaching implications for the service over the coming years as the impact of reduced levels of social interactions manifest in social isolation, loneliness and overall reduced social capital.

Adapting to ever changing legislation and guidance to ensure continued delivery of front line services has remained a challenge over the last year, particularly around the services statutory obligations. All of the services required to adapt quickly to these challenges whilst, in the main, working from home with minimal impact on the service provided both internally and externally.

Progression of key capital spend projects has also remained a challenge over the last year and in particular the Housing Investment Programme. During 2020/21 a significant period of time has been lost due to COVID-19 impacting upon the construction industry. Other financial challenges have also included reduced rental income due to the impact of lockdown relets and the cessation of lettings.

3. Strategic Assessment

The H&E management team completed a strategic assessment and performance review to determine the major influences on service delivery and strategic priorities going forward into 2021/22. As a result of this assessment the following factors were recognized as having a significant influence on the work of service in 2021/22:

Key Factors

Financial Challenges

The entire public sector is facing significant financial challenges. When the 2021/22 budget was set in March 2021, the Council was predicting cumulative funding gaps in 2022/23 and 2023/24 of £4.890m and £10.422m respectively. Funding pressures relating to COVID-19 continue into 2021/22, and with costs related to COVID-19 difficult to predict and some funding from the Scottish Government already announced, we will continue to monitor the overall financial position of the Council. The long term finance strategy is due to be reported to Council later in 2021, together with a draft 3-year detailed budget position.

This means that further action continues to be required to balance our budget and protect services for residents. This will undoubtedly mean that within our service area, available funding will be reduced and we will need to change how we do our jobs, what we do, where we work, and may reduce the number of people employed.

European Funding

Our employability pipeline service and family opportunity hub are part funded by European Social Funds. This, in effect, meets approximately 40% of the costs for services delivered by approximately 30 members of staff.

Britain's exit from the European Union throws considerable uncertainty on the availability of this funding. However, current indications are that the funding will continue until December 2022. Discussions are underway at a national level for a replacement programme: 'Future Prosperity Fund'. Full details of the scale and priorities for these replacement funds have yet to emerge.

While it is unclear what funding will be available beyond December 2022 to replace European Structural Funds we will mitigate associated risks to employability services by utilising alternative sources of funding such as 'No One Left Behind': and 'Parental Employability Support Funds' and the 'Young Persons Guarantee'. Planning for the development and delivery of these funds are underway to ensure that the benefits from them are maximised.

Welfare reform

Universal Credit

Universal Credit Full Service was rolled out in West Dunbartonshire on the 28th of November 2018. From that point forward all new claims have been administered within Universal Credit. While this is a national programme of benefits administered by DWP and represents a change in the way benefits are calculated, evidence suggests there may be implications for West Dunbartonshire residents and West Dunbartonshire Council.

While the initial shift to Full Service posed some issues, it was anticipated that the greatest challenge would occur when people in receipt of existing benefits are migrated to Universal Credit. It was unclear when this bulk migration of claimants was to take place. However, many of the risks and challenges were overtaken by events as a result of COVID-19. Claims were simplified, access was made easier and the benefits were made slightly more generous. Nonetheless we will continue to monitor changes in policy and its effect on Universal Credit in order to plan any required response from the Working 4U debt/money advice and employability services.

Rent collection following COVID-19 and Universal Credit rollout

Despite proactive efforts to engage with tenants following the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and targeted assistance drawing upon a number of support schemes, the economic and social impact has adversely affected rent collection. In addition to this the rollout of Universal Credit in the area has compounded the challenge, in

terms of tenants adjusting to the new process, direct payments to tenants not always being paid towards rent accounts and management of 'technical arrears' due to the payment terms. Housing Operations will continue to work in partnership with colleagues from Corporate Debt and Working4U to mitigate and minimise the impact, including appointment of a specialist Welfare Rights Officer dedicated to that purpose.

Employability/ Economic

Local Developments

The Scottish Government and COSLA have signed the 'No One Left behind' partnership agreement with an associated Delivery Plan that will create an opportunity for transformational change in employability services. This will promote a partnership approach where West Dunbartonshire Council will act as lead partners with private and third sector service providers to identify local needs and make informed decisions about how best to support employability.

This process will see the transfer of six funding programmes, currently delivered by a range of organisations, into a single, all age support service. This process will bring about a range of opportunities, but will require considerable planning to ensure the smooth transition to the new operating environment.

To date we have established a local employability partnership to ensure that we co-ordinate employability service provision in an effective way. In addition to No One Left Behind, Parental Employability Support and Modern Apprenticeship programme (and funds) funds additional funds have been made available as a direct result of COVID-19. This includes the 'Young Persons Guarantee'. We will integrate strategic management of the funds into the local employability partnership approach in order to maximize the benefits for young people in West Dunbartonshire.

Social Benefits

There is a range of emerging developments providing opportunities for people to secure employment. These include developments at the Golden Jubilee and the full re-opening of Cameron House. We have entered into dialogue with these organisations to make a contribution to their workforce development plans. This will include support for recruitment of employees and apprentices.

In addition, it is anticipated that there will be a range of employment opportunities in the care sector. This is due to the Scottish Government requirements for developing staff within the care sector and the provision of access to additional childcare. To capitalize on this, Working 4U is developing staff development processes in the care sector and will apply Parental Employment Support resources to ensure local residents secure access to employment and service provision opportunities.

In addition the team at Working 4U is working closely with colleagues from central procurement services to capitalise on social benefits that may be gained from a range of contracts currently being delivered or in the pipeline. We will be seeking access to work experience, training, employment and apprenticeships. Early efforts have netted us work experience, employment and apprentices from CCG through their house construction contracts. Further benefits will emerge through the

construction of the new health centre in Clydebank and the new Renton Primary School contracts.

Digital Enablement

During 2020/2021 W4U worked with SCVO through the Connecting Scotland Programme to provide local residents with access to equipment (ipads/chromebooks) and free Wi-Fi to enable full use of the equipment. In addition to equipment and Wi-Fi participants will receive 'digital champion' support in order to ensure that they make full use of the equipment and gain access to the full functionality of the devices.

The programme has focused efforts on those most likely to face digital exclusion with priority given to:

- Older people who were in the COVID-19 shielded group
- Families who are facing disadvantage
- Older people and disabled people.

It is anticipated that the scheme will be extended to those newly unemployed or seeking employment but face additional barriers which are heightened by the impact of COVID-19.

As services and projects are developed and moved on-line digital engagement and the removal of barriers must continue to be addressed to ensure everyone has the opportunity to participate.

As part of the development of our wider Better Homes West Dunbartonshire approach we will examine ways to strengthen digital enablement of those households within the social rented sector and those experiencing homelessness to address the perceived disadvantage which was further highlighted during the pandemic.

Legislative and Policy Drivers

Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015

The Act sets out clear requirements for public bodies in promoting a greater level of local decision making and empowerment of citizens. This includes, for example, Asset Transfers, Participation Requests and Community Planning. All services across WDC must be engaged in the process of empowering communities and work is underway to ensure awareness of the empowerment agenda is raised.

Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017

The intention of the Child Poverty Bill is to 'set targets relating to the eradication of child poverty' as well as making provision for plans and reporting relating to achievement of these targets. It requires the Scottish Government to meet four income based child poverty targets by 2030 as well as set out and report on the actions they will take to meet those targets. In addition the Act places a duty on local

authorities and health boards to report annually on what they are doing to contribute to reducing child poverty.

The local child poverty action report must set out a range of commitments to address the key drivers of poverty:

- Increasing income through employment;
- Maximise income from the social security system; and
- Reducing household costs.

Community Learning and Development

The Community Learning and Development (Scotland) Regulations 2013 place a statutory requirement on local authorities to publish a plan every three years. The plan should outline how the local authority will co-ordinate and secure 'adequate and efficient' Community Learning and Development (CLD) provision with other sector partners.

The CLD plan must specify:

- How the provision of community learning and development will be coordinated with other organisations and agencies that provide community learning and development within West Dunbartonshire;
- What action will be taken to deliver the community learning and development plan between September 2021 and September 2024;
- What action other organisations and agencies intend to take to provide community learning and development in West Dunbartonshire between September 2021 and August 2024; and
- Any needs for community learning and development that will not be met within the period of the plan.

The plan will be reviewed annually in line with Education Scotland expectations.

Rapid Rehousing/Housing First

Rapid Rehousing is about taking a housing led approach for people that have experienced homelessness, making sure they reach a settled housing option as quickly as possible rather than staying in temporary accommodation for too long.

Where homelessness cannot be prevented, Rapid Rehousing means:

- A settled, mainstream housing outcome as quickly as possible;
- Time spent in any form of temporary accommodation reduced to a minimum, with the fewer transitions the better; and
- When temporary accommodation is needed, the optimum type is mainstream, furnished and within a community.

And for people with multiple needs beyond housing:

- Housing First is the first response for people with complex needs and facing multiple disadvantages; and
- Highly specialist provision within small, shared, supported and trauma informed environments if mainstream housing, including Housing First, is not possible or preferable.

Each Local Authority is tasked with developing an updated Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan by 30 June 2021.

The need to continually improve the approach to homeless people with the most complex needs is recognised and Housing First initiatives form part of the wider approach to tackling homelessness and repeat homelessness in Scotland. Housing First West Dunbartonshire launched in April 2019 and the service is targeted at those with a history of issues such as repeat homelessness, multiple and complex support needs and previous engagements with support services which have not led to successful and / or sustainable outcomes.

Homelessness Prevention Duty

The Scotland Prevention Review Group was convened to take forward a recommendation in the Ending Homelessness Together High Level Action Plan published by the Scottish Government and Convention of Scotland Local Authorities (CoSLA) in November 2018: “We will work with public bodies, housing providers and other partners to develop a new duty on local authorities, wider public bodies and delivery partners for the prevention of homelessness.”

The Group has now reported and has provided recommendations which have been accepted by the Scottish Government for a legal duty or duties on Scottish local authorities and wider public bodies to prevent homelessness. Guidance is being formalised with the expectation the Council as strategic housing authority will ensure that these recommendations in full are successfully implemented in the context of wider reforms to homelessness provision in West Dunbartonshire.

New Housing Supply

West Dunbartonshire Council through the Strategic Housing Investment Plan is on track to deliver 1000 new homes for the West Dunbartonshire Communities; these properties will all meet the recently introduced affordable housing design standard which provides exemplar energy efficiency and space standards. We will continue to push the boundaries in terms of our housing building programme putting quality first and driving forward plans to tackle the current climate emergency.

Local Housing Strategy & Housing to 2040

The Local Housing Strategy (LHS) sets out how West Dunbartonshire Council and its partners plan to address the housing and housing related opportunities and challenges over the next five year period 2022/2023 – 2026/2027.

We will deliver this new strategy in 2021 and this new plan aims to build on the significant progress made on the issues identified in the previous LHS 2017-2022 and to address newly arising housing matters particularly in response to the COVID-19 crisis.

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 (‘the 2001 Act’) places a statutory requirement on local authorities to produce a LHS that sets out its strategy, priorities and plans for the delivery of housing and related services. It should demonstrate the local authority’s strategic approach to dealing with key housing related issues such as:

Delivering high quality housing and housing related services across all tenures;

Setting out its contribution to the effective integration of health and social care; and Showing how the LHS is supporting the Scottish Government National Outcomes and Targets, whilst reflecting the needs and priorities of the local authority area.

The development of the LHS is at an opportune moment with the publication of the Scottish Government Housing to 2040 Vision and Principles Route Map publication in March, at the time of writing we await the publishing of the full vision, however the draft vision established a number of key principles including:

A well-functioning housing system: people can find, and afford, the right home for their needs. This will involve making the best out of the housing stock we have, providing people with good investment options and ultimately ensuring the housing system is fair;

High-quality sustainable homes: all homes, regardless of the tenure or age of the home, should be well designed and high quality. They should be easily maintained, have clear running costs and be low-carbon. Further, all homes should be occupied;

Sustainable Communities: Places should be vibrant, well connected and well designed. They should include a variety of houses to enable people to move as their needs change and be designed to promote health and well-being including quality green space; and

Homes that meet people's needs: homes should support well-being and areas should offer a diverse range of homes to allow people to move. People should be able to easily access information about their housing rights alongside services to support their independence.

We will respond fully to Housing to 2040 within the wider development of the Local Housing Strategy, including the introduction of a wider national rented home strategy.

Community

ASB Strategy

A new Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy is being developed to consolidate and refocus the considerable partnership working and expanded service provision in West Dunbartonshire, through the Community Planning Safer WD Delivery Improvement Group. This will reflect recent changes and enhancements and will be published in the course of 2021.

Community Empowerment Strategy

The West Dunbartonshire Community Empowerment Strategy and Action Plan is far reaching and sets out what is required to promote empowered communities. The Strategy was developed by a partnership strategic group and with the Scottish Community Development Centre (SCDC) leading on the consultation with local residents.

Approved at the end of 2019, the Strategy requires partners to work collaboratively to support empowered communities. It is an ambitious Strategy looking to build more resilient and empowered communities across West Dunbartonshire, much of which will be delivered by collaborative working between WDC, Community Planning

partners and local residents. It will require a real change to service delivery to ensure it is responsive to local need, particularly as part of the COVID-19 recovery.

Progress will be driven and monitored by a Project Board that will report to CPWD via the Empowered DIG.

Community Choices 1% Framework agreement

This joint agreement between COSLA and Scottish Government sets out a framework for at least 1% of local government budgets to be decided by local residents through a participatory budgeting approach.

The framework is currently being refreshed in light of COVID-19 and is anticipated to include the need for greater deliberative and participatory processes that contribute to ensuring equality, inclusion and social renewal.

In doing so it is recognised that actively involving local people can make them less passive consumers of public services and more supportive of new models of delivery. It promotes active participation and increased levels of local decision making.

Climate Change

Scotland has set a legally binding target of net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2045. Around 14% of emissions in Scotland come from homes. Around 22% of homes in Scotland are social housing so as a strategic landlord we have a significant part to play.

The Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 places duties on all public bodies to contribute to emission reduction targets (Mitigation), deliver programmes to increase resilience against Climate Change (Adaptation), and to act in a 'Sustainable' way.

In response we intend to further develop our housing asset management strategic approach and commit to environmental sustainability which will allow us to build new homes and manage existing stock and assets in a way that will make them fit for generations to come.

Equality Outcomes Report 2021-25

The Council has set out a range of equality outcomes for 2021-25 in line with its statutory duty, each led by a relevant strategic service area. For Housing and Employability these include: Increase participation of BME people, disabled people and young people in Community Budgeting in West Dunbartonshire and Better meet accommodation needs of Gypsy/Travellers travelling through and staying in West Dunbartonshire. By focusing on outcomes, the Council aims to bring practical improvements to the life chances of those who experience discrimination and disadvantage.

Continuous Improvement

In 2020, to support continuous improvement, the Council embarked on a programme of Fit for Future service reviews. Using a range of tools that encapsulates service design, maturity assessments and employee engagement, information is gathered and reviewed to identify improvements and to ensure our services are efficient and

that we make best use of our resources. The output of the 10 step process is a set of recommendations.

Within Housing and Employability, Working 4U is participating in the programme in 2021/22.

Budget Sensitivity Analysis

In reviewing the service budget projections, consideration has been given to sensitivity of these budgets, in particular for higher risk/ higher value budgets which may have a significant impact on budgetary control and future budget projections. The analysis has considered sensitivity around demand, costs and charges, and income levels.

Within this service, budgets which have been identified as being more susceptible to fluctuations include:

- Homeless DWP income - 2021/22 budget £3.524m

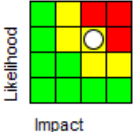
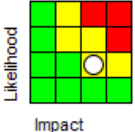
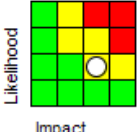
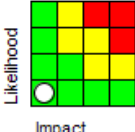
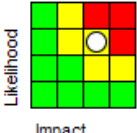
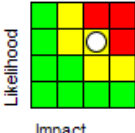
This income is dependent on occupancy levels in homeless units and assumptions around homeless tenants' eligibility for Housing Benefit / Universal credit. If the occupancy levels were to change by 5%, the income could range between £3.348m and £3.700m.

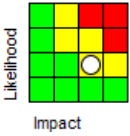
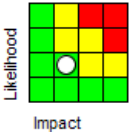
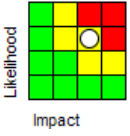
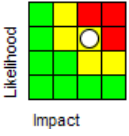
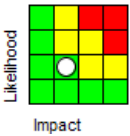
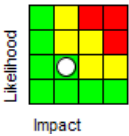
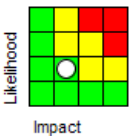
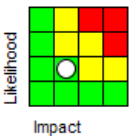
Action Plan & Risks

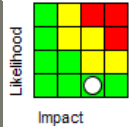
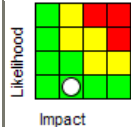
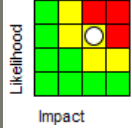
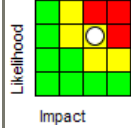
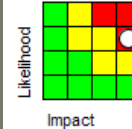
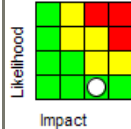
The challenges and issues identified in the performance review and strategic assessment sections as well as considerations from the budget sensitivity analysis have informed H&E priorities and outcomes for 2021/22. The management team has developed an action plan to address them (Appendix 2), supported by a range of performance indicators to enable progress to be monitored and reported to stakeholders. Progress will be monitored and managed on a regular basis and reported twice yearly to Committee, at mid-year and year end.

4. Risks

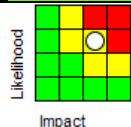
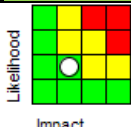
In planning for 2021/22, the H&E management team identified additional risks specific to the service (below). Actions to mitigate these risks are set out in our delivery plan at Appendix 2, with the aim of improving or maintaining the current position (i.e. the current risk score). The current risk scores reflect current actions taken to reduce the risks.

Title	Description	Current Risk Matrix	Target Risk Matrix	Managed By
Universal Credit Full Service changes breadth and depth of demand for services.	Migration of all claims to Universal Credit may lead to increased service demand from people who would not have used Working 4U service otherwise. Including those requiring assistance to meet the digital by default requirement; those seeking to maintain their claim through increased employability service requirement; and the need to improve IT skills.			Stephen Brooks
Failure to achieve the outcomes of the Scottish Social Housing Charter	The Scottish Social Housing Charter sets out the standards and outcomes that tenants and customers should expect from social landlords, in terms of the quality and value for the services they receive, Failure to continue to meet these could place the Council at risk of the intervention powers of the Scottish Housing regulator			John Kerr
Failure to deliver sufficient community capacity building / community development support to groups impacted by COVID-19.	COVID-19 has had a huge impact on communities across the authority. A focused approach is needed to understand the impact on community groups and to support them to re-start and re-build. Failure to do this would impact on the individual and community resilience of citizens.			Elaine Troup

Title	Description	Current Risk Matrix	Target Risk Matrix	Managed By
Failure to sufficiently engage with groups and citizens as part of the Review of the Scheme of Establishment for Community Councils.	The Review presents an opportunity to engage meaningfully in the Scheme in a move to generate increased interest in community councils and to review boundaries. It also provides an opportunity to review the Scheme in light of COVID-19 and to consider any opportunities that this might bring. The risk is heightened by the need to undertake the process on a digital basis.			Elaine Troup
Failure to deliver on the capacity building of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act	As communities emerge and begin to recover from the impact of Covid-19 there is an ever greater need to support and develop communities. Community capacity building and community development work continues within existing resources.			Elaine Troup
Failure to secure community and partner buy-in for the emerging Community Empowerment Strategy and Action Plan.	The risk level remains the same as work re-starts on the Delivery Plan and the establishment of a Project Board following the emergency response to Covid-19 in 2020.			Elaine Troup
Failure to secure funding to invest in WDC's CCTV infrastructure.	This work continues to evolve with measures taken at every opportunity to improve the existing infrastructure in an incremental manner.			Elaine Troup

Title	Description	Current Risk Matrix	Target Risk Matrix	Managed By
Failure to respond to child poverty legislation	Failure to respond to child poverty legislation will have a significant impact on the Council's reputation, more importantly an opportunity to raise issues and respond more effectively to child poverty issues will be lost			Stephen Brooks
Failure to secure alternative funds to replace European funding	Failure to identify alternative funds to replace European Structural funds will increase uncertainty and loss of staff to other services			Stephen Brooks
Failure to prepare for changes associated with No One Left Behind	No One Left Behind represents a transformational change in employability service provision, failing to prepare and reaching a state of readiness will lead to lost opportunities for investment in employability services.			Stephen Brooks

This table sets out the Council-wide risks associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. Over the coming months, we will consider the impact and likelihood of these risks for CCF services and mitigate them where possible.

Service Risk & Description	Note	Current Risk	Target Risk
Workforce The Council is faced with significant workforce demands in relation to	H&E employees are either at home or in work environments that have been risk assessed to maximise safety. In addition the vaccination programme is rolling out and so the exposure to infection will be greatly reduced going forward. Significant management focus on effective absence management		

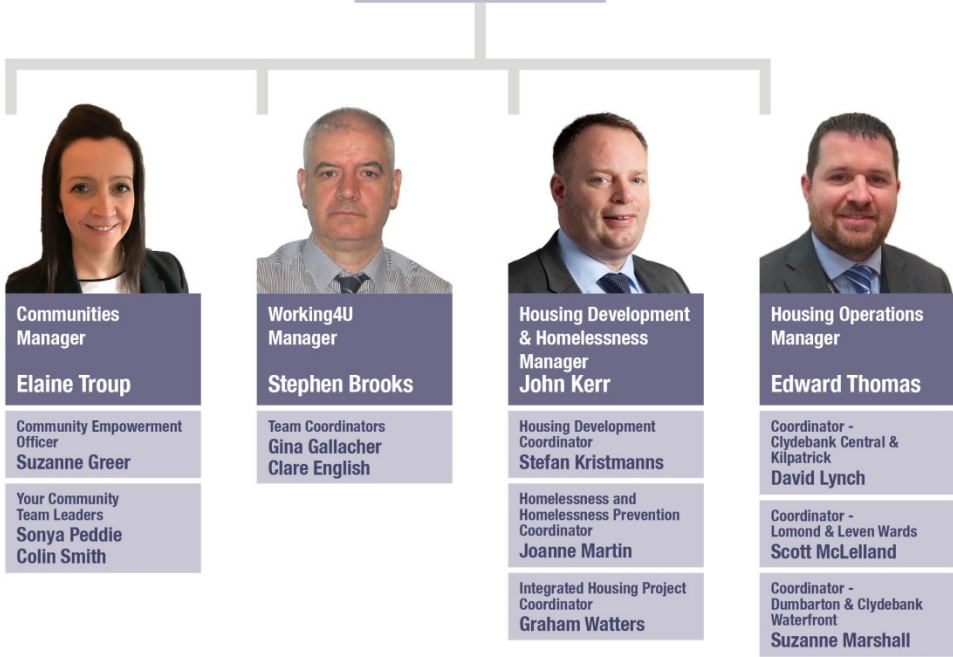
<p>absence, reduction, recruitment and wellbeing.</p>	<p>and employee well-being which is keeping absence levels low.</p>	<p>Managed by</p> <p>Peter Barry</p>
<p>Service delivery</p> <p>The Council is faced with significant delivery demands in relation to moving services online, disruption, reduction and quality.</p>	<p>H&E has continued to provide essential services throughout the pandemic, including leading the Crisis Team and Volunteer Management Team. There are no outstanding gaps that await urgent action. It is acknowledged that there are challenges for individual employees and teams in a sustained period of working from home, when services open to the public again. This will be mitigated by ensuring employees have the right equipment to work safely and sustainably at home, effective individual and team management including employee support, and by ensuring appropriate touchdown and welfare points are available to facilitate spending time working in communities. In addition new ways of working have been developed to allow for remote or online client services including virtual employability hub and PB online.</p>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <div data-bbox="1688 327 1850 475"> <p>Likelihood</p> <p>Impact</p> </div> <div data-bbox="1850 327 2011 475"> <p>Likelihood</p> <p>Impact</p> </div> </div> <p>Managed by</p> <p>Peter Barry</p>

Appendix 1- Profile & Structure Chart

HOUSING & EMPLOYABILITY
CHIEF OFFICER



CHIEF OFFICER - HOUSING & EMPLOYABILITY
Peter Barry
 Leadership Support
 Deirdre Muldoon



The Communities Team

is responsible for leading on the Community Empowerment agenda within the Council. This includes Participatory Budgeting (PB), Community Capacity Building (CCB), supporting Community Councils and the Community Alliance, The Your Community Neighbourhood Approach. It also includes managing and maintaining public space CCTV and managing the volunteer response to COVID-19 through the Volunteer Management Service.

The Housing Development and Homelessness Team

performs the strategic housing authority role within the local authority area, ensuring the provision of high quality, affordable housing. This includes development and implementation of the Local Housing Strategy and all housing policy areas and the Affordable Housing Supply Programme and the wider strategic More Homes Better Homes West Dunbartonshire approach. The service area also manages the delivery of homelessness and housing options service responsible for delivering a number of landlord functions and meeting the statutory tenant involvement roles and the promotion of tenant scrutiny of housing services.

The Housing Operations Team

is responsible for delivering key elements of the Housing Landlord function for West Dunbartonshire Council's c.10,000 social rented properties. It provides operational management of a range of integrated services encompassing tenancy and estates management, including Housing Management, Anti-Social Behaviour, Estate Caretaking and the newly formed Neighbourhood team.

The Working 4U Team

is responsible for leading on supporting customers and communities to improve their skills, learning and financial situations, assisting them on their journey into work and protecting the rights of our citizens. We will pursue these aims by supporting residents in West Dunbartonshire to *Maximise Their Income* from benefits and employment; support them to *Reduce The Cost of Living* by assisting them to manage debt. We will ensure that *No One is Left Behind*; supporting learners to overcome barriers to opportunity, improve life skills and develop work related skills. We will also support *Inclusive Growth* by supporting residents with access to apprenticeships and opportunities.

Appendix 2- Action Plan

P	A strong local economy and improved job opportunities				
Ob	Improve skills for life & learning				
Performance Indicator	2019/20 Value	2020/21 Value	2020/21 Target	2021/22 Target	Managed By
Employment rate	72.6%	Not yet available	72.5%	72.5%	Stephen Brooks
Proportion of people earning less than the living wage	17.6%	Not yet available	17.4%	17.4%	Stephen Brooks
Action				Due date	Managed By
Ensure no one left behind by supporting skills and learning for work, life and learning				31-Mar-2022	Stephen Brooks
Promote inclusive growth through access to opportunity				31-Mar-2022	Stephen Brooks
Ob	Increase employment and training opportunities				
Performance Indicator	2019/20 Value	2020/21 Value	2020/21 Target	2021/22 Target	Managed By
% of households that are workless	24.1%	Not yet available	21.8%	21.8%	Stephen Brooks
Percentage of local people with increased or sustained income through reduced debt liability/debt management	89%	Not yet available	87%	90%	Stephen Brooks
Action				Due date	Managed By
Support quality frameworks and partnership working to enhance work, learn, money service provision				31-Mar-2022	Stephen Brooks
P	Efficient and effective frontline services that improve the everyday lives of residents				
Ob	A continuously improving Council delivering best value				
Action				Due date	Managed By
Develop a Housing Academy to provide training and development for housing employees and				31-Mar-	John Kerr

P	A strong local economy and improved job opportunities					
tenant leaders				2022		
Digital inclusion – carry out review of provision of wi-fi inclusion into new build properties and priority areas of deprivation				31-Mar-2022	John Kerr; Edward Thomas	
Development and implementation of revised Anti-Social Behaviour strategy				31-Mar-2022	Edward Thomas	
Ob	Sustainable & attractive local communities					
Action				Due date	Managed By	
Continued improvement of the existing CCTV infrastructure				31-Mar-2022	Elaine Troup	
Develop and implement Housing regeneration approaches to improve our communities				31-Mar-2022	John Kerr	
Develop our Housing Asset Management to respond to Climate Change				31-Mar-2022	John Kerr	
Deliver new Local Housing Strategy				31- Dec-2021	John Kerr	
P	Meaningful engagement with active, empowered and informed citizens who feel safe and engaged					
Ob	Fully consulted and involved citizens who are able to make full use of the Community Empowerment Act					
Performance Indicator		2019/20 Value	2020/21 Value	2020/21 Target	2021/22 Target	Managed By
% of residents aware of the community empowerment 2015 Act		28%	34%	28%	34%	Elaine Troup
Action				Due Date	Managed By	
Develop a detailed Delivery Plan through consultation with CPWD and the local community to ensure the aims of the CE Strategy are deliverable.				31-Mar-2022	Elaine Troup	
Complete the Review of the Scheme for Establishment for Community Councils				31-March 2022	Elaine Troup	
Lead on the Council's approach to Participatory Budgeting Mainstreaming.				31-March 2022	Elaine Troup	

P	A strong local economy and improved job opportunities					
P	Open, accountable and accessible local government					
Ob	Equity of access for all residents					
Performance Indicator		2019/20 Value	2020/21 Value	2020/21 Target	2021/22 Target	Managed By
% of Youth Homelessness levels in West Dunbartonshire		273	310	275	264	John Kerr
Tenancy Sustainment Levels within Housing First		N/A	Not yet available	80	80	John Kerr
P	Supported individuals, families and carers living independently and with dignity					
Ob	Enhanced Life Chances					
Action					Due Date	Managed By
Scale up Housing First					31-Mar-2022	John Kerr
Develop new Young Persons housing options					31-Mar-2022	John Kerr
Maximise income from employment					31-Mar-2022	Stephen Brooks
Maximise income from benefits					31-Mar-2022	Stephen Brooks
Ensure no one left behind by addressing life challenges and reducing costs					31-Mar-2022	Stephen Brooks
Ob	More affordable and suitable housing options					
Action					Due Date	Managed By
Deliver New build Housing programme					31-Mar-2022	John Kerr
Performance Indicator		2019/20 Value	2020/21 Value	2020/21 Target	2021/22 Target	Managed By
Number of new supply social housing for rent		84	97	80	80	John Kerr
% of all homeless cases re-assessed within 12 months		4.3%	5.4%	4.3%	5%	John Kerr

P	A strong local economy and improved job opportunities				
(repeat homelessness)					
% of tenants satisfied with the overall service provided by their landlord	78.53%	78.35%	84%	84%	John Kerr
Performance Indicator	2019/20 Value	2020/21 Value	2020/21 Target	2021/22 Target	Managed By
Average length of time to re-let properties	26.85	56.14	25	25	Edward Thomas
% Unemployed People Assisted into work from Council operated / funded Employability Programmes	26.11%	Not yet available	14.5%	14.5%	Stephen Brooks
% of council rent that was lost due to houses remaining empty	0.85%	1.2%	0.88%	0.8%	Edward Thomas
Percentage of Households in Fuel Poverty	28%	Not yet available	23.5%	23%	Stephen Brooks
Percentage of Children living poverty (after housing costs)	25%	Not yet available	25.25%	25%	Stephen Brooks
% of residents who feel safe/very safe in their local community	95%	96%	98%	98%	Edward Thomas

Appendix 3 – Performance review

Benchmarking

The most recent comparative benchmarking data for all councils was published in February 2021 and relates to the period 2019/20. The service assumes organisational responsibility for three of the LGBF performance indicators, the results for 2019/20 were very positive and showed:

- One of the indicators improved in rank from the previous year and is ranked first across Scotland;
- Two of the indicators improved in performance from the previous year; and
- Two of the indicators are above the Scottish average

Performance indicator	2019/20	Rank 19/20	2018/19	Rank 18/19	Scotland 2019/20	Change in rank
Percentage of rent due in the year that was lost due to voids	0.85	13	0.73	6	1.07	↓
% Unemployed People Assisted into work from Council operated / funded Employability Programmes	26.11%	1	22.86%	7	12.66%	↑
Proportion of people earning less than the living wage	17.6%	11	18.4%	6	16.9%	↓

The [Scottish Housing Regulator](#) (SHR) uses 37 Charter Performance Indicators to monitor the performance of all social landlords against the Charter performance indicators to monitor the performance of all social landlords against the Charter outcomes and standards. Both the ARC submission and the annual submission of performance information to Scotland's Housing Network, provide opportunities to compare performance against other landlords (all Scottish local authorities and, where appropriate, Glasgow Housing Association). This benchmarking activity helps to identify areas for improvement and develop actions and targets for the following year and which are then monitored closely by the Housing Improvement Board. In the main, the performance improvement trend among housing services in West Dunbartonshire, shows there is an continued journey of improvement, with 89% of the key indicators either meeting or almost achieving target.

Service User Feedback

Citizens Panel & Telephone Survey

A telephone survey of 1200 residents is carried out every year to gauge satisfaction levels with a range of Council services. Within Housing & Employability we evaluate attitudes towards Community Safety. Overall the results showed:

The 2020-21 telephone survey highlighted a general increase, in citizens identifying West Dunbartonshire as a safe place to live, from the previous year. Analysis shows that in terms of ASB, the overall the reduction in satisfaction largely occurred around the latter part of the year. The 2021 Citizens Panel showed an increase in awareness of the Community Empowerment Act over the last 2 years although showed a decline in interest in specific aspects of it. This will continue to be monitored over the coming year.

	PI	2020/21	2019/20
Telephone survey	% of respondents who felt their local areas was a safe place to live in	96%	95%
	% of respondents who felt that ASB was an issue in their local area	44%	37%

	Question	2020/21	2019/20
Citizens Panel	% of respondents stated they had heard of the Community Empowerment Act	34%	28%
	% of respondents most interested in Participation requests	48%	74%
	% of respondents most interested in Community right to buy	40%	66%
	% of respondents most interested in Asset Transfer	38%	65%
	% of respondents most interested in Allotments	33%	60%

We will continue to review feedback from Citizens' Panel and the Telephone survey and identify how we can address the issues that emerge.

Rent Consultation

Our annual rent setting consultation asked tenants for their views about 3 rent options developed for 2021/22. With restrictions on any face to face meetings, a virtual public discussion was held in November and tenants then received information through the post

about the three options, with details about how each option would affect rent charges. Tenants were asked to share their views by returning their vote on a pre-paid voting card or by voting online, via email or using text messaging. More tenants than ever before took part in the consultation with a total of 1344 tenants casting their vote on their preferred option – an increase in votes of 63% compared to last year and representing 14% of all tenants. Online voting was far more popular this year with 64.8% of votes cast online compared to 19.3% last year. Of the 3 rent options available, the majority of tenants supported the option of a 1.5% rent increase, with the result as follows:

- Option 1 – 1.5% increase 54.9%
- Option 2 – 1.9% increase 31.8%
- Option 3 – 2.2% increase 13.3%

The views of tenants shaped the recommendation made to Council in March to approve the 1.5% rent increase.

Complaints

Between 1 April and 31 December 2020, the Housing & Employability service area received a total of 59 complaints representing a 26% reduction from the previous year. We will continue to review complaints on a regular basis to identify and address any issues that emerge.

Service Area	1 April 2020 - 31 December 2020			
	Total Received	Total closed Stage 1	Upheld Stage 1	Upheld Stage 2
Estate Management and Anti-social behaviour	29	15	5	3
Access to Housing	24	15	5	1
Housing Development & Homelessness	6	3	1	0
Total	59	33	11	4
Complaint Category				
Citizen expectation not met - quality of service	39		7	3

Citizen expectation not met – timescales	10		4	1
Employee behaviour	9			
Error in Service Delivery	1			
Total	59		11	4

Appendix 4- Quality Standards

West Dunbartonshire Council has a local Good Governance Code based on guidance from CIPFA. The Council's compliance with its Code is reviewed each year and a supporting action plan is developed to ensure improved compliance is achieved. The Code details a range of principles which should be adhered to by the Council, and details the behaviours and actions which demonstrate good governance in practice. The Good Governance Code requires that the organisation considers the approach to the use of quality standards.

These quality standards will be monitored and managed by the management team of each service at regular meetings, and reported annually to the relevant service committee along with the delivery plan.

Service area	Description	How it will be measured
Housing Operations	We will contact you within 7 working days of receiving a housing application to provide advice on housing options	% of applications followed up within 7 working days
	We will follow up reports of Anti-Social Behaviour within 1 working day.	% of ASB reports followed up within 1 working day.
Housing Development	We will aim to let you know about the outcome of your homeless application within 28 days of your first interview	% of application outcomes communicated within 28 days
	We will provide good quality temporary or emergency accommodation if you have nowhere to stay.	% satisfied with the quality of temporary or emergency accommodation
Communities	We will acknowledge all participation requests within 5 working days	% of participation request acknowledgements sent within 5 working days of notification
W4U	We will acknowledge receipt of referral within five working days of notification	% of referral acknowledgements sent within 5 working days of notification

Appendix 5- Resources

Finance

The 2021/22 revenue budget for the Housing & Employability strategic area is £4.612m. The resources to deliver on this in 2021/22 action plan for Housing and employability are:

Service	Gross Expend 2021/22 £m	Gross Income 2021/22 £m	Net expenditure/ (Income) 2021/22 £m
Homeless	4.639	4.318	0.321
Communities	0.991	0.124	0.867
W4U	4.339	1.400	2.939
Anti- Social Behaviour	0.447	0.001	0.446
Private sector Housing	0.039	0.000	0.039
Total	10.455	5.843	4.612

Housing and Employability also have responsibility for a considerable HRA, both revenue and capital.

	Gross Expenditure (Revenue) £m	Capital £m
HRA budget 2021/22	45.491	34.591

Workforce Planning

Workforce planning is integrated within the strategic planning process, highlighting the key workforce related activities for the year and reflecting the longer term strategic aims of the services. Each Chief Officer is responsible for the annual review of requirements for their respective service areas to ensure that any key actions are identified at an early stage.

Employees

The headcount and full time equivalent staff in each service area is as follows as at 31st March 2021:

Section	Headcount	FTE
Communities Team	16	15.34

Housing Development & Homelessness	91	80.36
Housing Operations	123	117.89
Working 4 U	98	84.57
Total	328	298.18

Absence in 2020/21

The quarterly absence statistics for H&E are shown below together with the Council average for the same periods for comparison. The service has reported the same level of absence in Quarter 1, slightly higher levels of sickness absence than the Council wide average in the second quarter and lower level of sickness absence than the Council wide in quarters three and four. The service annual FTE is significantly lower than the Council wide total.

	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Annual FTE days lost per FTE employee
Housing & Employability	2	2.22	2.89	1.62	6.05
Council Wide Total	2	2.12	3.25	2.61	7.58

SL Workforce Plan 2017-2022 – Annual Action Plan 2021/22

1. Addressing the gap between current workforce supply and predicted future demand

Strategy

Continue to implement the outputs of service reviews to address gap taking cognisance of opportunities to realise savings through voluntary turnover and consideration of management spans of control

Expected Outcome

Gap is addressed, whilst:

- . Protecting critical roles (and avoiding associated turnover)
- . Ensuring service priorities are met
- . Avoiding or minimising risk of voluntary or compulsory redundancy

. Enabling flexibility to address fluctuations in service demand through appropriate management of fixed-term contracts

Action Title	Resources needed	Measure of Outcome	Due Date	Assigned To
Continue to implement new funding model for homeless service to support service requirements including new appropriate sourced funding	Staff Resource/Budgetary commitment	Financial Controls	31-Mar-2022	John Kerr
Complete implementation and evaluate the effectiveness of new service delivery models for HD&H and identify any improvement and training development actions	Recruitment/Increased Staff Resource/Succession Planning	Benefits of new model are being realised. Evidence of CPD.	31-Mar-2022	John Kerr

Develop appropriate teams to deal with emerging service demands around poverty and social inclusion and Parental Employability Support to address child poverty	Staff Resource	Staff filling the PESF and PSI roles	31-Mar-2022	Stephen Brooks
Continue and expand Caretaker Apprenticeship programme	Staff Resources and current service budget	Number of Apprentices and Outcomes	31-Mar-2022	Edward Thomas

2. Addressing the gap between current and required additional workforce capabilities

Strategy

Continued review and implementation of associated training plans to enable capabilities to be developed within existing workforce

Expected Outcome

Gap is addressed, whilst:

. Ensuring value for money in terms of training solutions

- . Minimising requirement to recruit for new capabilities (and thereby avoiding or minimising risk of voluntary or compulsory redundancy)
- . Ensuring service priorities are met as a result of application of those new capabilities
- . Ensuring employees are encouraged to re-train and re-align to newer digital skills to allow the Council to reduce attrition while making jobs interesting

Action Title	Resources needed	Measure of Outcome	Due Date	Assigned To
Review and include any development needs to support new ways of delivering services to ensure employees are equipped to work effectively.	Time and Budgetary commitment	Ongoing review of implementation plan	31-Mar-2022	All managers
Continued upskilling staff and supporting implementation of Housing Options Training Toolkit	Time and Budgetary commitment	Ongoing review of implementation plan	31-Mar-2022	John Kerr
Continue to implement development plans for Community Learning & Development, welfare rights/debt and money advice employees equating to 30-35 hours of CPD.	Time commitment	Quality of service provided continues to meet required standards in line with regulatory/external body requirements	31-Mar-2022	Stephen Brooks
Establish a housing academy to enable employees and tenants to develop their skills knowledge and experience of housing through accredited training.	Time and commitment. Budget consideration	Dedicated training resource.	31-Mar-2022	John Kerr
Continue to develop staff skills to ensure they are confident with the various digital platforms required to provide digital access to services. For example MS Teams; Zoom; Google Classrooms; Near Me,	Staff resource	Number of staff capable of facilitating digital	31-Mar-2022	All managers

		service delivery sessions		
Comprehensive Assessment of Digital Needs and Skills within Housing Operations	Staff Resources	Output of assessment	31-Mar-2022	Edward Thomas
3. Improve resilience within teams				
Strategy Develop and implement training plan in relation to critical roles Expected Outcome Improved resilience across teams and retention of knowledge and skills associated with critical roles				
Action Title	Resources needed	Measure of Outcome	Due Date	Assigned To
Review and develop resilience plans across all service business critical areas	Time	Ongoing review at Management meetings	31-Mar-2022	All managers
Develop resilience plans that respond to ongoing and future challenges.	Time	Ongoing review at Management meetings	31-Mar-2022	All managers
4. Ensuring clear, effective and stable organisational design				
Strategy Planned service reviews within and across Chief Officer area. Supporting new ways of working and service delivery COVID specific actions Expected Outcome A systems-based approach is adopted to organisational design, ensuring that services satisfy the needs of our citizens				
Action Title	Resources needed	Measure of Outcome	Due Date	Assigned To

Continue supporting key staff to apply for and secure external funding – using National programmes proposal to develop these skills	Staff support	No of bids submitted	31-Mar-2022	Stephen Brooks; Clare English
Further upskill staff on project management and reporting, particularly on output based projects where progress targets have to be achieved and the need to provide funders with appropriate progress reports.	Time commitment	No of bids submitted	31-Mar-2022	Stephen Brooks
Establishing role for W4U compliance team in the development of service agreements with external organisations	Staff resources	Service agreements compiled	31-Mar-2022	Stephen Brooks
Review of Void Processes	Staff Resource	Output of review	31-Mar-2022	Edward Thomas
5. Addressing workforce diversity objectives				
<p>Strategy Develop and implement action plans in relation to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Increase diversity in the Council workforce . Reduce the disability pay gap . Decrease occupational segregation . Outcomes of the Equal Pay Audits <p>Expected Outcome Council workforce-related equality outcomes are met, as demonstrated by achievement of associated improvement targets.</p>				
Action Title	Resources needed	Measure of Outcome	Due Date	Assigned To
Continue to support implementation of Employee Wellbeing Strategy including providing representation on Employee Wellbeing Group.	Time	Improved employee engagement, lower sickness absence rates	31-Mar-2022	All managers

6. Improved use of technology and new ways of working

Strategy

- . Implement Workplace of the Future Strategy
- . Develop and implement workforce and organisational development solutions

Expected Outcome

Improved efficiency and effectiveness of service provision

Action Title	Resources needed	Measure of Outcome	Due Date	Assigned To
Ensure the team continues to be provided with training and development to enable them to fully utilize IHMS and other systems.	Time Commitment OD & Change	Process efficiencies achieved Confidence and capability of employees increases Improvement to front line service delivery.	31-Mar-2022	All managers
Continue to implement modules and development of system to enhance IHMS and service improvement for all areas of housing and support services with appropriate training	Time/Staff Resource (fully budgeted)	Project Board monitoring	31-Mar-2022	John Kerr; Edward Thomas; Graham Watters
Ensure teams have digital skills to effectively communicate with Citizens through various digital platforms.	Time and Commitment of OD & Change	Confidence and capability of employees increases Improvement to front line service delivery.	31-Mar-2022	All managers

