

Business Operations and Partnerships Department

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TO: Councillors O O'Donnell (Chair); A Anderson (Vice Chair); D Devlin; D Macdonald; and K Pragnell.

CABINET

A meeting of the Cabinet will be held on **Thursday, 16 June 2022 at 10.00am.**

The agenda of business is as shown below.

Please note this is a hybrid meeting.

Louise Pringle

L PRINGLE

DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS OPERATIONS & PARTNERSHIPS

AGENDA

1. **Report apologies for absence.**
2. **Declarations of Interest.**
3. **Update on the Digital Transformation Programme - Report by Director of Business Operations and Partnerships (copy attached, pages 3 - 16).**
4. **Local Government Benchmarking Framework: 2020/21 Performance - Report by Chief Executive (copy attached, pages 17 - 72).**
5. **Allocations Policy Emergency Changes - Report by Director of Environment (copy attached, pages 73 - 78).**
6. **Place Based Investment Programme 2021/22 - Report by Director of Environment (copy attached, pages 79 - 82).**
7. **Regeneration Capital Grant Fund 2020/21 – Cowan Park Enterprise and Community Hub - Report by Director of Environment (copy attached, pages 83 - 86).**

This document can be explained to you in other languages and can be provided in alternative formats such as large print and Braille. For further information, please contact Customer First on 0141 577 3001 or email customerservices@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk

A recording of the meeting will also be available following the meeting on the Council's YouTube Channel <https://www.youtube.com/user/eastrenfrewshire/videos>

EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCILCABINET16 JUNE 2022Report by Director of Business Operations and PartnershipsUPDATE ON THE DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1. The purpose of this report is to provide Cabinet with an update on the achievements of the Digital Transformation Programme during 2021/22 and to give an overview of Programme plans for 2022/23.

RECOMMENDATION

2. It is recommended that Cabinet notes the achievements and future plans across the 3 areas of our Digital Transformation Programme: Customer Experience; Business Systems and Processes and Workforce Productivity.

BACKGROUND

3. East Renfrewshire Council has always been an ambitious council, aiming to be at the forefront of modernisation and digital transformation. In 2015 we introduced our 5 capabilities which set out the key areas we needed to focus on to effectively deliver our outcomes for local people and meet our ultimate vision of making lives better for the people of East Renfrewshire. The 5 capabilities are:



4. We operate these in line with our 3 Values, which were designed by our employees:



5. The Council's Digital Transformation Strategy for 2021-2024 was approved by Cabinet in June 2021 and focused on 3 areas (see summary at [Annex 1](#)):

- Customer Experience – providing a consistent, efficient customer experience, designed with the user at the heart.
- Business Systems & Processes - efficient and effective business systems and processes enabled by digital technology and optimised across the Council.

- Workforce Productivity - increasing the productivity and effectiveness of our workforce, enabled by Office 365 capabilities and better use of data.

6. This new Digital Transformation Strategy replaced our previous Modern Ambitious Programme (MAP) which was formally closed at 31 March 2022. A refreshed approach to governance and resources is now in place to take forward our 3 new programme areas. This is led by the Business Operations and Partnerships Department, with representation from each Council Department, the HSCP and the East Renfrewshire Culture and Leisure Trust as appropriate.

7. Overall governance of the Digital Transformation programme is through the Corporate Management Team (CMT). They are responsible for ensuring that savings and benefits are achieved and that programme and project priorities, dependencies and resources are well managed. The pandemic reduced the frequency of these programme meetings in 2021/22 and caused delays to some of our projects due to lack of capacity, but new Programme Boards for each of the 3 priority areas are now in place, with CMT meeting to discuss Digital Transformation on a quarterly basis, with update reports to Cabinet due at least annually.

PROGRESS UPDATE – DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

8. Despite a continued focus on pandemic response and recovery, and delays in some areas, our services have made substantial progress across 2021/22 to progress our digital transformation ambitions, make efficiencies, improve customer service and modernise the way we work. This section gives details of the key projects progressed in each of our 3 programme areas.

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

9. The vision for this programme is to provide a consistent, efficient customer experience, designed with the user at the heart.

10. This is driven by an organisation-wide Customer Experience Strategy. We are continually working towards improving our digital processes, including booking, scheduling and payments. We seek to design processes end-to-end, in an inclusive way, using the Scottish Approach to Service Design (SAAtSD). New technologies will be used to improve the customer journey, based on customer preference, with support available for those who need it.

11. The key focus of the Customer Experience Programme over the last year has been our digital customer experience project. Following introduction of a new Council website in 2020, we decommissioned our Customer Record Management System (Lagan) on 31 March 2022 and moved all existing customer forms and processes to our new customer platform. This gives us the capability to further develop our online services for customers and improve our response times for customer enquiries.

12. In February 2022, we worked with a small number of customers to test our new Customer Portal, My East Ren. Through a single sign-on, this will allow customers to access a range of Council services including viewing Council Tax bills and bin collection information and quicker access to the Education Parents' Portal site where they can pay for school meals and trips. Through the portal, customers will be able to see live updates on submitted requests and no longer need to phone or email for updates. More services will go online during the next year.

13. Linked to this, the Revenues Service has launched new online capability which will allow customers to self-serve and manage Council Tax business online using any device, anytime. Customers have access to their Council Tax account and some Council Tax services, such as paperless billing, applying for a single person discount and updating contact

details. We will be adding more online services over the coming months including access to Benefits online.

14. The Customer Experience Programme will seek to continually iterate and improve customer processes. Examples of developments over the last year include new online processes for:

- residents on low incomes to apply for Self-Isolation Support Grants (SISG) when self-isolating with COVID-19, enabling quicker payments;
- businesses to apply and submit evidence for the various COVID-19 related grant payments; and
- taxi and private hire drivers registered within East Renfrewshire to apply for replacement plates and purchase replacement documentation and vehicle fixtures, reducing face to face visits and calls to Council offices and improving processing times.

15. Following the deployment of widespread remote learning throughout the lockdown periods in both 2020 and 2021, schools and nurseries have continued to build on the digital progress through learning and teaching. Individual education Schools and nurseries have been providing a mix of in-person and digital opportunities, enhancing the accessibility for families to engage with their child's learning, e.g. through the wider use of video to support parents' evenings, parent councils and school trip meetings. Schools continue to consult with families on their preferred approaches as restrictions ease.

16. A key element of recovery from the pandemic in our Education Department has been the focus on continuing to transform customer facing services. East Renfrewshire's Parents' Portal digital service has the highest participation rates in Scotland, with 83% (16,000) of all pupils now linked to a Parents' Portal account. This is an increase of 4,000 children from the position in June 2021. Developed to improve the way in which schools engage with parents/carers and reduce the number of paper transactions, the portal gives parents and carers online access to a range of school services through their own personal device.

17. Following the launch of the national free transport eligibility for under-22s, families have been able to sign up for the scheme for primary aged children through Parents' Portal. The Education Department is continuing to work with Transport Scotland and YoungScot to extend this to secondary aged pupils in the coming months to improve the accessibility of the scheme.

18. In addition, parents and guardians applying for school or nursery applications for children aged 3 and older are now able to do this online, improving the service for families and improving efficiency within the Council. Families are now able to submit evidence digitally, removing the need for sensitive documents to be posted or brought direct to education establishments.

19. Over the last 2 years the focus of our Health & Social Care Partnership (HSCP) has been to keep life and limb services operating under the pressures of the pandemic, whilst also scaling up significant vaccination programmes. This has involved moving to greater digital communication, replacement of face-to-face appointments wherever possible and finding new and innovative ways to stay in touch with vulnerable clients and families during periods of isolation, lockdown or social distancing.

20. For our Environment Department, there has been significant progress across a range of system and process improvements to improve on digital customer service delivery. This has included:

- work to improve the online processes for missed bin pickups, bulky uplifts, replacement bins and requests for removal of graffiti and fly tipping;

- Implementing a new system (ESRI) to allow workers to receive and update tasks whilst out on jobs, making it easier for office staff to respond quicker to customer enquiries. Customers can also now log in and view the status of their requests.
- Redesign of all key customer-facing processes in Roads and Transportation, including reporting faults with street lighting, roads and winter maintenance issues.
- New digital processes for the new charging scheme for garden waste which was introduced in 2021, with 92% of permits applied for online.

21. In addition to these customer-facing process improvements, we've had a lot of work to do across the Council this year to make sure our payment system was updated for credit card payments, to ensure we keep pace with industry standards for security. This has involved replacing our chip and pin devices at points of sale, with the additional benefit that we can now take Apple Pay and android pay, which has been a welcomed development for our customers.

BUSINESS SYSTEMS & PROCESSES

22. The aim of this programme is to have efficient and effective business systems and processes enabled by digital technology and optimised across the Council.

23. As in recent years through our former Core Systems programme, the focus of our new Business Systems and Processes programme has continued to be dominated with the work around replacements, upgrades and integrations of major ICT systems, driven by contracts ending, new capabilities or changes in support provision from suppliers. There is a significant resource requirement both within Council services and ICT to implement such changes to systems, which can be a challenge to balance with transformational projects and the ongoing stability and security needs of our network.

24. The Core Systems Programme was one of the main programmes of change in recent years with significant workload and impact for Business Operations & Partnerships teams including HR/Payroll; ICT; Accounts Payable (formerly known as Creditors) and Accounts Receivable (formerly Debtors) and the Accountancy Team in the Chief Executive's Office.

25. Over the last year, the focus of work on our Finance and Procurement system has been focused on:

- Implementing a significant annual upgrade in 2021/22 to improve efficiency and implement new functionality.
- Working through a range of process improvements, called 'the backlog', prioritised by the Programme Board based on user need and the potential scale of benefits arising with resources then assigned accordingly.
- Developing further interfaces between the Finance/Procurement system and other departmental systems e.g. to make the invoice payments quicker and reduce double-keying between systems.
- Improving financial reporting to create better budgetary control and financial transaction reporting for services. Feedback from users suggests that these reports are helping to improve efficiency in services.
- Looking for opportunities to decommission supporting systems where the core system can undertake the tasks e.g. this year a report has been developed to identify potential duplicate payments prior to processing - this may let us stop using another separate ICT system for this process and thereby reduce cost.

26. After the implementation of the core HR & Payroll System in 2021, we have been continuing to introduce more functionality for the users. The focus over the last year has been around automation of sickness absence reporting with automatic information-flow to the payroll team, reducing manual rekeying and implementation of two large upgrades to enable more functions for future use.

27. Following on from the replacement of the legacy Council Tax and Benefits ICT system that went live in December 2020, the focus over 2021/22 has been to stabilise the new system and refine end-to-end processes whilst also implementing online customer processes for this high-volume area. Combining 3 previous revenues ICT systems into one is already providing benefits: customer accounts are updated in real time rather than applications passing between teams and taking time to show online and there is greater automation of processes which can save staff time but, more importantly, improve our service to customers. The new system is integrated with Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) systems and we are able to get some benefit information in real time without staff having to check separate systems or waiting for customers to provide the evidence.

28. In HSCP, whilst attention was principally diverted to the COVID-19 response, progress was reviewing digital transformation priorities and scoping of an important project to replace the service's case recording system. There were delays from December 2021 as the HSCP moved back to response mode as the new Omicron variant emerged and the focus turned once again ensuring that life and limb services continued to support those in our communities most in need. A major project to replace the existing CareFirst case recording system has now commenced. Funding has been secured for the procurement and implementation of a modern digital solution that will greatly enhance the interactions between staff and those who use HSCP services, and cut down on unnecessarily cumbersome manual data recording and management. This is a key priority of the 2022/23 programme.

29. The Environment Department benefitted from various server and system upgrades throughout the year to ensure systems are stable and secure with no risk of loss of functionality or productivity:

- NEC Housing, which is the replacement to Housing's current management system – OHMS progressed through 2021/22 with several phases including replacement of like-for-like system functions to support rents, repairs, homelessness, allocations, estates and factoring and the introduction of mobile working for critical staff, such as Housing Officers allowing them to raise repairs on visits to tenants using hand held devices and be more responsive to customer needs.
- There was work to transfer routine maintenance and street lighting modules in the current asset management system to cloud-hosted, allowing Roads and Transportation staff to access and update information on mobile devices whilst out in the area.
- Introduction of mobile working for officers within the Lighting and Routine Maintenance and Roads Contracting Unit (RCU) teams to enable 'in the field' working for officers. Officers can access data in the system, raise repairs, record inspection details, update jobs and close completed jobs whilst on site or working remotely thereby removing paperwork from the process and reducing time for officers returning to the office to update systems.
- Development and implementation of a new module within Planning and Building Standards' main system, IDOX Uniform to support enforcement of planning. Officers can log details of planning cases that require enforcement measures e.g. unauthorised works, which are in breach of planning legislation, allowing full electronic management of such cases.
- Progression of a project to digitise cemetery records including digital recording of condition and safety details of headstones. These can be a health and safety risk to the public and must be inspected. Digitising the records will help record statutory information and improve access to historic lair information. Mapping this information using the geospatial mapping system, ESRI Arc GIS allows the service to collect the precise locations of lair and interment details. Office-based and operational staff can easily access records and log details either in the office or via hand-held devices

working in the field. To date, key sections of the Cathcart Cemetery have been fully mapped and can be managed digitally.

30. The Environment Department also continues to work with the Scottish Local Government Digital Office and their partners around expanding opportunities for use of the Internet of Things Scotland (IoT) technology. The Council's ICT IoT expert co-chairs the national *Smart Infrastructure Group* fostering partnerships and collaboration on smart technology being deployed throughout Scotland.

31. In 2021/22 the Council continued to develop its IoT capability installing 1500 sensors throughout the school estate to provide real time monitoring of CO2, temperature and humidity levels. As a result of Covid-19, the Council requires to monitor the levels of CO2 within buildings and rooms to reduce the risk of virus spread within spaces with high levels of CO2. Schools can now access CO2 data in real-time and take measures to reduce CO2 by e.g. opening windows to let in fresh air. This work has been sector-leading in Scotland.

32. Additionally, 15 external air quality sensors were installed to supply data directly to Environmental Health, minimising the burden of taking manual readings and preparing statutory reports. In Housing, sensors were also installed as a trial within council housing allowing the team to predict the risk of dampness and fuel poverty.

33. There are more IoT opportunities in the pipeline, with engagement between suppliers and council service areas currently taking place to introduce smart grit bins and smart street lighting.

WORKFORCE PRODUCTIVITY

34. This last Programme is about increasing the productivity and effectiveness of our workforce by enabling, embedding and enhancing our use of digital tools, including Office 365, to create; communicate; collaborate; store; plan; automate; analyse and report. There are important information governance and technical considerations that form part of this programme to ensure ICT stability and sound approaches to handling of the, often sensitive, data and information that the Council holds.

35. The Office 365 project enabled the transition to homeworking during the pandemic, supported virtual training, employee engagement and social connection, mainly through the use of Teams, and continues to be a key priority area as we consider what the pandemic will mean for the way we work in the future.

36. In January an organisation-wide *Teams* site was introduced for employees and acts as a communications space for topics such as ICT announcements, Office 365 tips and HR updates.

37. Staff training and support on Office 365 apps was updated regularly throughout the year to reflect changing usage trends. A Teams meeting recording process and a meeting room booking feature directly within the Outlook calendar were all successfully trialled and began rolling out throughout the Council.

38. In terms of data and supporting workforce productivity, an Information Asset Register was developed and populated with details of the Council's major software systems holding sensitive information. The Register supports the Council on its GDPR requirements and provides a central view of the associated information risks and actions.

39. In January 2022 a project on mapping customer personal data began. This will improve the Council's ability to deal with enquiries on personal data and increase workforce productivity by reducing duplication in managing records.

40. Behind many reports the Council produces is an infrastructure of hard and software that enables the secure integration of data from various internal and external sources. Over the last year we have built up our capacity and capability in using new tools to enable key data, such as the ongoing impact of the pandemic, to be accessible to management at the right time to make operational decisions.

41. A substantial and successful migration of all email accounts to *Exchange Online* was completed in February 2022 bringing a more resilient email service and new features that remove manual tasks.

OUR FUTURE PROGRAMME

42. East Renfrewshire Council will continue to focus on digital transformation to become more efficient, accessible, modern and make improvements based on customer needs.

43. Whilst challenges continue to be faced in terms of capacity versus ambition and complexity of many of these programmes of work, we are more conscious than ever of the importance of prioritising this work to achieve best use of scarce resource. We will make more use of agile project methods to provide a more incremental way to manage change based on user needs and focused on chunking projects to get value to those who use the service as quickly as possible. This will require a shift in culture, new ways of working and skills development.

44. Departments are currently engaged in a process of project prioritisation looking at what the Council needs to do (e.g. contract changes and upgrades) and wants to deliver as part of its digital transformation journey over the next period. Looking at the projects in the round like this will help us assess the linkages and sequencing of projects; the scope for use of national platforms or solutions wherever possible; plan resources; identify gaps or challenges and ensure a balance of delivery and benefits realisation across the 3 fronts of our digital transformation strategy.

45. Subject to the detail of the project prioritisation exercise and resulting resourcing discussions, the section below gives detail on key projects we anticipate progressing over the next year.

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

46. The focus of the Customer Experience programme in 2022/23 will be to:

- Improve online self-service and customer experience by giving customers the ability to interact with a wide range of Council services (including Revenues/Benefits; Housing and Schools) from a single East Renfrewshire Customer Portal, including real time updates on service requests. Customers will also be able to book appointments for some services through an online appointment / booking system.
- Improve the functionality and resilience of our telephony system, with supporting communications including Live Chat.
- Ensure our vulnerable telecare customers will continue to benefit from their lifeline community alarm system despite the significant national transition from analogue to digital services.
- Build on the success of current online processes to explore the opportunities to extend the online application process for all nursery children, including those aged under 3 years, to provide greater consistency in the customer experience.

BUSINESS SYSTEMS & PROCESSES

47. The focus of the Business Systems & Processes programme in 2022/23 will be to:

- Enhance our Integra Finance and Procurement System and improve management use of the system through self-service.
- Bring more suppliers onto e-invoicing, making the payment process quicker for both staff and suppliers.
- Simplify and automate the recharge process between the Council and the Culture and Leisure Trust (ERCLT) by implementing the Intercompany Accounting module of Integra.
- Continue to interface with other systems in ERCLT and Environment to make the purchase to pay process more efficient.
- Move to a fully cloud hosted income management system to improve functionality in taking payments from customers.
- Investigate options for integrating annual leave and flexi into the iTrent HR and Payroll system and interface to other systems and digitise manual processes.
- Replace the primary management information service, SEEMiS education system for schools, subject to national timescales. The introduction of SEEMiS Next Generation, for primary, secondary and special schools, will begin following the rollout of the Early Years' product.
- Preparations for a new modern digital case management system for social work.
- Replacement of the Care at Home scheduling system to allow better functionality for us to schedule our visits to vulnerable customers.
- Launching the new housing system and implementing the next phase of the project to automate workflow and streamline processes.
- Continuing as a lead authority in the Scotland-wide programme for Internet of Things (IoT) technology, delivering pilots for roads temperature and grit bin sensors enabling effective allocation of resources and prioritisation of winter maintenance regimes. We will also install IoT sensors on street lighting in Barrhead Main Street to turn on/off or regulate the brightness of the lights and detect when a lighting column is faulty, potentially leading to savings in energy costs and allow for proactive maintenance to fix faults rather than waiting on residents reporting them.

WORKFORCE PRODUCTIVITY

48. The focus of the Workforce Productivity programme in 2022/23 will be to:
- Work with a strategic partner to drive further business benefits from our use of Office 365, including the shift to cloud in a way that is stable, secure and resilient.
 - Develop and enhance our use of Office 365, including OneDrive, Planner, Bookings and Lists and encourage and support new ways of working for our staff.
 - Modernise the way we handle performance management information for services for Best Value purposes, including reporting from source-systems in new service level dashboards whilst removing manual tasks and rekeying of information.
 - Establish an Information Governance delivery group to coordinate the maintenance of the Information Asset Register, shape the controls and policies for protecting

information held within Office 365, oversee improvements to Freedom of Information processes and implement commitments made within the Council's Record's Management Plan.

- Develop an electronic contract register to improve controls and reporting of the Council's procurement contracts.

IMPLICATIONS

49. There has been significant progress in recent years in delivery of the Council's digital transformation strategy. The pandemic did impact capacity significantly and caused some delays to projects. It has been a challenge for our services to navigate the demands of response, recovery and renewal concurrently, however, our aspirations to continue our ambitious modernisation journey remain as important as ever.

50. Change and digital transformation across an organisation as diverse as a council is a complex area, with a complicated system architecture and operational processes sitting behind the services that our residents interact with on a daily basis. We have to carefully plan to ensure that we are focusing on improving our high volume processes whilst undertaking the routine work to keep our systems up to date, secure and integrated.

51. The use of equality/fairness and data protection impact assessments is a routine part of projects.

52. Budget challenges mean we have to clearly prioritise our activities and resources to ensure we deliver benefits from projects, that they contribute to future savings opportunities and that they improve the experiences of local residents and reduce bureaucracy. Learning from others' successes (and failures) will also help transition quicker and save rework.

53. Recruiting and retaining the right skills and experience is essential to the success of our digital transformation journey. Digital, data, technology and service design skillsets are in significant demand nationally and it is a challenging marketplace. Programmes routinely have gaps in key skillsets which means the need to prioritise resource to achieve the best collective benefit – this is a key function of the 3 Programme Boards, which must work together to make decisions and recommendations. We have also developed close links with the Scottish Local Government Digital Office and Scottish Digital Academy to ensure we can develop and enhance our digital, data and technology skillsets.

FINANCE & EFFICIENCY

54. Whilst significant savings have already been achieved, the very difficult financial circumstances facing councils are expected to continue for the foreseeable future so the scale of change will need to be maintained. In June 2021, Cabinet considered an update report on our Modern, Ambitious Programme (MAP) and approved a new Digital Transformation Strategy for 2021-24. It was noted that a total of close to £11.8m (67%) of the 2018-21 agreed savings (including almost £4.4m (59%) for 2020/21) arose from efficiencies, through the Council's MAP programme or as a result of our focus on the Council's 5 capabilities.

55. Savings plans for future years will be developed by the Corporate Management Team on the basis of the Scottish and UK budgets and will be reviewed to take account of any multi-year settlement information subsequently published. Whilst it is recognised that it will become progressively more difficult to identify efficiencies in future, the Council will continue to seek efficiencies through reviews and transformation initiatives wherever possible.

56. East Renfrewshire Council has a policy of always taking a prudent approach to the calculation of savings. Savings are only included in formal budgets once we have a high

degree of confidence that they can be achieved (and in many cases are already in place through work in previous years).

57. The key principles behind the programme that will lead to budget savings are:

- Continue implementing our Digital Transformation Strategy, with a focus on customer experience, streamlined end to end systems and processes and greater use of Office365 capabilities for productivity
- An increased focus on user engagement in service design and more community empowerment to provide services which put customers at the heart of provision, improving services and potentially lowering costs
- Improving the sharing and management of data across the organisation.

58. Projects are funded through a Digital transformation budget, which will need reviewed year on year as part of the budget process. The funding comes from:

- a regular drawdown from modernisation fund (£1m plus any underspend from previous years);
- recharges to Capital;
- a small number of revenue-funded posts including Programme Management Office;
- drawdown from HRA, IJB and ERCLT reserves as required;
- departmental revenue budget “top slicing”, which may be required in future years as Modernisation Fund resources deplete.

59. The modernisation reserve was created in 2014 to fund change projects across the Council. In the early days the fund was topped up annually from underspend at year end. However in recent years, there has been little opportunity to top up so the fund has been declining in value.

60. A digital transformation team and budget has been established based on the above, with all digital transformation project work being managed and funded through the budget. New projects go through an intake process to determine how best they are delivered – this will include project prioritisation, with the budget and skills dictating how much can be achieved in a given year. Programme Boards are involved in this prioritisation to ensure best use of ‘shared resource’ e.g. ICT, HR and project staff.

61. These 3 programmes represent resource intensive areas of work but, given the right input and commitment, have real opportunity to transform our processes and deliver efficiencies for the future. It will be necessary for us to regularly prioritise this work to ensure a focus on benefit realisation and to rigorously manage the limited resources we have to support projects. This is especially relevant as we adopt new working practices in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

CONSULTATION & PARTNERSHIP WORKING

62. The progress and ambitions outlined in this paper relate not only to the Council but also to the wider ‘family’ organisations of the HSCP and the Culture and Leisure Trust. We will continue to work together to progress the key priority areas for digital transformation and to share lessons learned and plan resources.

63. We will continue to work in partnership with the Improvement Service and Scottish Local Government Digital Office to share knowledge and learn from other areas of best practice.

64. User engagement in service design, internal as well as external, is a key principle of our digital transformation journey. We will utilise the Scottish Approach to Service Design wherever possible to put users at the heart of change.

CONCLUSION

65. Today's report demonstrates the very broad range of areas being progressed and the commendable delivery, even in the wake of the significant workload of the pandemic, and development of the Council's digital transformation programme in challenging circumstances.

66. The pace and scale of change across the Council and HSCP remains significant. This is driven by pressures on budgets; statutory and contractual obligations and our own ambitions for digital modernisation and improved user experience. Prioritisation, resource management and good governance will continue to be key to the next stages of our digital transformation journey, with a focus on customer experience, our business systems and processes and capitalising on the use of Office 365 capabilities to enhance the productivity of our workforce.

RECOMMENDATION

67. It is recommended that Cabinet notes the achievements and future plans across the 3 areas of our Digital Transformation Programme: Customer Experience; Business Systems and Processes and Workforce Productivity.

Louise Pringle
Director of Business Operations & Partnerships
May 2022

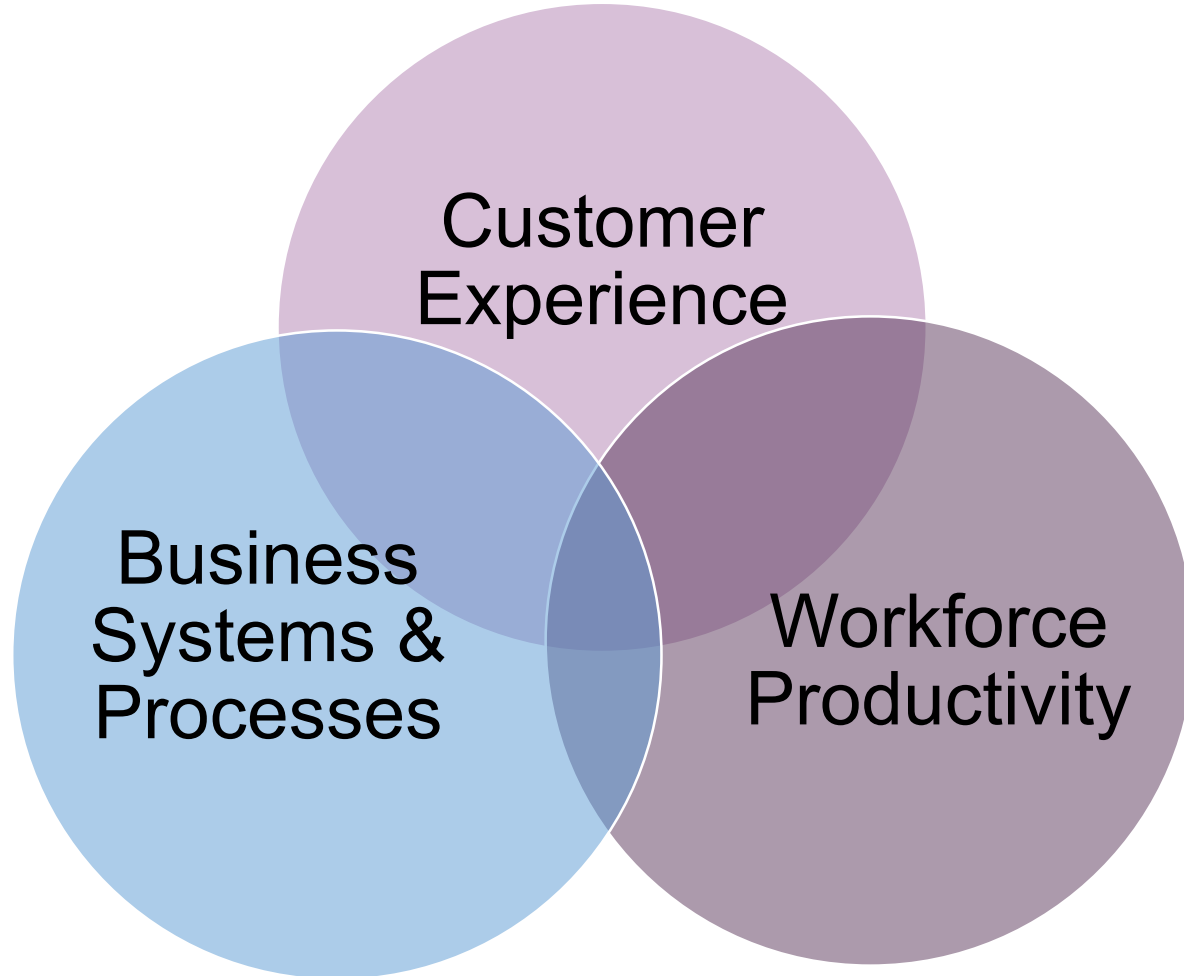
Report author: Lesley Anne Neill, Programme Management Office (PMO) Manager,
leslyanne.neill@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Financial Planning 2022-2028, Council 3 March 2022
- Update on Modern, Ambitious Programme (MAP) & Digital Strategy, Cabinet 3 June 2021
- Core Systems Implementation – Progress Report, Cabinet 3 December 2020

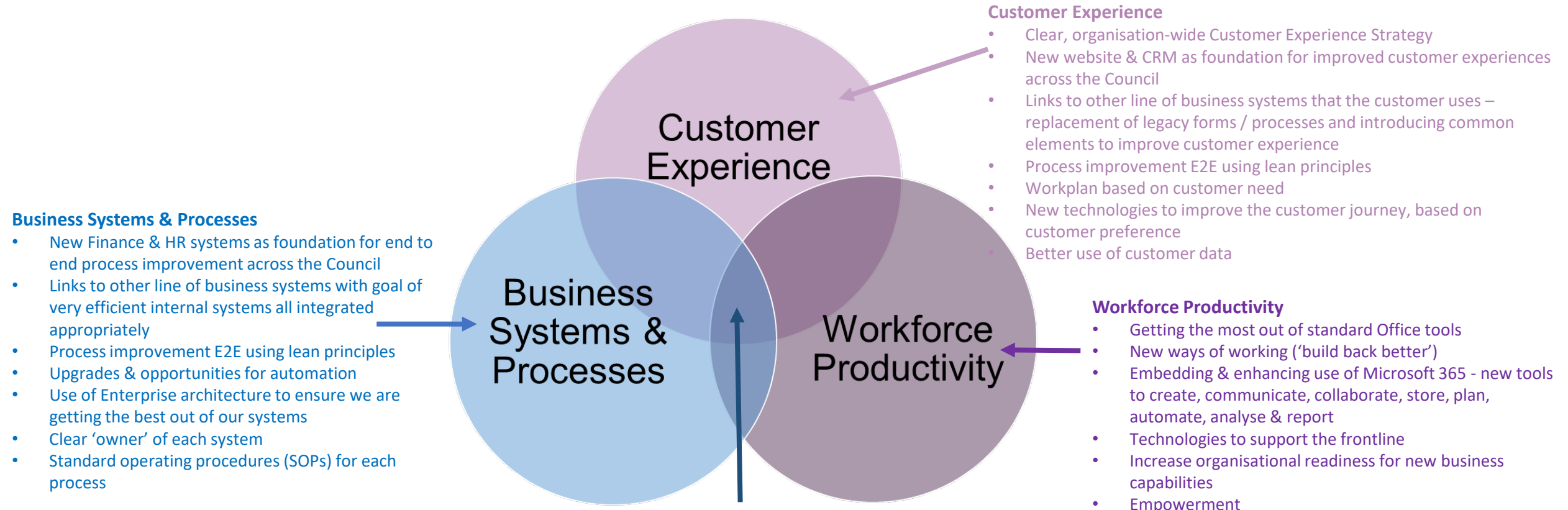
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Our Digital Transformation Strategy 2021-24 is based on moving forward on 3 fronts:



These 3 areas can be further explained:

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All 3 areas are underpinned by common methods, standards and skills

- Focus on benefits realisation, effort vs value
- Use of Scottish Approach to Service Design (SAAtSD)
- Use of national platforms/solutions where possible
- Focus on Agile project methods wherever suitable
- Small number of projects, with backlog prioritised regularly by leaders
- Organisation-wide ICT Strategy and focus on ICT security and stability
- Strategic analysis & insight
- Digital, Data & Technology (DDaT) skills
- Improved project communications & transferable lessons learned

EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCILCABINET16 June 2022Report by Chief ExecutiveLOCAL GOVERNMENT BENCHMARKING FRAMEWORK: 2020/21 PERFORMANCE**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1. The purpose of this report is to update Cabinet on the national Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) and present an overview of the Council's performance against the LGBF indicators for 2020/21. A summary of the Local Government Benchmarking Framework performance report is attached at Annex 1.

RECOMMENDATIONS

2. It is recommended that Cabinet:
- (a) Scrutinise the Council's performance against the LGBF indicators and the intended action taken by departments to address any performance issues.
 - (b) Consider whether any aspect of the Council's performance is in need of improvement or further investigation.

BACKGROUND

3. Since 2010, the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives (SOLACE)¹, and the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA)², have worked with the Improvement Service (IS)³ to develop and review a set of benchmarking indicators on behalf of Scottish councils. The key criterion of the indicators is that they are generally comparable across all 32 councils.

4. Benchmarking data from the LGBF has been recorded and publicly reported by all Scottish councils as a statutory requirement since 2010/11.

Four new measures have been included in the 2020/21 data set:

- % of children living in poverty (After Housing Costs)
- Gross Value Added (GVA) per capita
- Claimant Count as % of Working Age Population
- Claimant Count as % of 16-24 Population

¹ Solace is a members' network for local government and public sector professionals throughout the UK

² COSLA is a councillor-led, cross-party organisation who champions councils' work to secure the resources and powers they need

³ The Improvement Service (IS) was set up to deliver improvement support to help councils to provide effective community leadership, strong local governance and deliver high quality, efficient local services

Due to data availability issues, the data for the indicators below will not be available until July 2022:

- School attendance rate (Looked After Children)
- School exclusion rate (per 1,000 'looked after pupils')
- % of children living in poverty (After Housing Costs)
- Gross Value Added (GVA) per capita
- CO2 emissions area wide per capita
- CO2 emissions area wide: emissions within scope of LA per capita

Satisfaction data is also not yet available at local authority level. Methodological changes due to COVID introduced some comparability issues that need to be resolved before inclusion in the published data.

5. A total of 101 measures are included in the full LGBF dataset split across 10 key service areas including Children's Services; Corporate; Adult Social Care; Culture and Leisure; Environmental; Housing; Corporate Assets; Economic Development, Financial Sustainability, and Tackling Climate Change. One measure on cost of museums per visit is excluded for East Renfrewshire Council as it is not relevant.

6. The Improvement Service coordinates the collection and analysis of the indicator data for all 32 councils and publish a national overview report annually. The report covers broad themes and key messages at a national level. The national report and background data is available on the Improvement Service [website](#).

7. There is a time lag on the publication of the LGBF data and therefore the data in this report is for **financial year 2020/21**. The data is therefore not new, and some of the information will have been publicly reported at the East Renfrewshire level already as part of the Council's performance management arrangements, however the added value of this report is the comparative data insight provided.

OVERVIEW OF COUNCIL PERFORMANCE

8. The Improvement Service (IS) has provided detailed comparative analysis for each LGBF indicator at council level. East Renfrewshire's performance against these indicators is provided at Annex 1. The indicators are grouped and analysed within service headings. Within each service area the data is presented in line with East Renfrewshire Council's 'balanced scorecard' approach which covers our strategic delivery *Outcomes* and our organisational outcomes covering *Efficiency, Customer and People*. Local results are considered in the context of the national picture, including comparison of 2020/21 data with the Scottish and Family Group averages. Family groups bring together similar councils in terms of geography or deprivation.

9. The data-set can be regarded as a useful 'can opener' in flagging up issues worthy of further investigation (rather than viewing the data as a 'league table'). For example, high costs for one indicator may reflect investment to affect a policy change rather than inefficient spend and a trade-off between cost and performance can be expected. Considering related indicators together 'in the round' under service headings provides a more meaningful and accurate indication of performance in relation to other councils, and the balance between investment, efficiency and outcomes. When considering the data, it is also important to be aware of intended/expected levels of performance, rather than focusing on rank alone.

10. This 20/21 data very much reflects the position at the start of the outbreak of COVID-19. The pandemic has affected Local Government services and service delivery and as such the framework is useful to assist councils to learn lessons from its response and to strengthen and redesign services around future policy priorities to support recovery and

renewal. It is also valuable in helping to track progress against the National Performance Framework⁴. The full impact of COVID-19 will become more apparent in future reporting.

11. Comprehensive performance information for each of the service areas is listed in Annex 1. However, some key areas are highlighted below.

Children's Services: We have maintained our position as the top performing education authority as measured by national qualifications. For educational attainment, the Council maintained very high levels of performance across a wide range of excellence and equity measures whilst making further improvements at 5+ SCQF levels 5 and 6. Notably, the performance of our learners in the most deprived areas increased significantly at SCQF level 5 and remained highest in mainland Scotland for SCQF level 6. The attainment of young people, as measured by the average total tariff score, improved in 2020/21 to be the highest in Scotland across all deciles. The proportion of children in P1, P4 and P7 achieving the minimum expected Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) levels remained high in 2020/21 for literacy and numeracy measures. The gap in performance of the least and most deprived learners (P1, P4 and P7) achieving the minimum expected CfE levels increased slightly in 2020/21 in both literacy and numeracy. This performance has been achieved with relatively low costs in comparison to other Scottish councils; our cost per pupil in the primary and secondary sectors remains below the national averages. The cost for each pre-school place has increased over the past few years as a result of the additional funding provided by the Scottish Government to implement 1140 hours.

East Renfrewshire's Corporate Parenting plan aims to collaboratively provide and support caring homes that meet the needs of our children and young people. In 2020/2021 East Renfrewshire had no children re-registered within 18 months of de-registration which is positive. This is a decrease from 15.79% in 2019/2020 and lower than the national average of 6.95%. However, it should be noted that significant variances can occur year on year as a result of the very low numbers of children whose names are placed on the register, and the occurrence of larger sibling groups. Our performance indicators for looked after children show the effects of the pandemic, particularly for children with developmental difference.

Culture and Leisure Services: As a result of the pandemic ERCL's libraries were closed or operated at reduced service for most of 2020/21 and this is reflected in the use of libraries. Visitor numbers dropped by -86.1% (857,771 in 2019/20 down to 119,129 in 2020/21). 2020/21 net expenditure increased by 16% (£1,764K in 2019/20 up to £2,046K in 2020/21) in part as a result of an update in the allocation of costs across ERCL services which increased expenditure attributed to libraries. As a result the "Cost per Visit" increased from £2.06 to £17.17 (up 733%) and ranking dropped from 11th to 28th. Leisure centres were closed completely from April to August 2020. Two key factors impacted on the leisure centre "Cost per Visit" indicator: restrictions on centre operations in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, leading to a drop in attendances of -95.8% (799,624 in 2019/20 down to 33,689 in 2020/21); and refinement of the allocation of costs across ERCL services to better reflect, for example, the share of community halls costs associated with sports which decreased leisure centre expenditure. This coupled with an element of reduced spending driven mainly by COVID-19 restrictions, decreased net expenditure by -31.6% (£4,777K down to £3,265K in 2020/21). Combined, the "Cost per Visit" increased from £5.60 to £96.92 (up 1,522.4%) but with an improvement in ranking from 32nd to 28th. In perspective, across Scotland "Cost per Visit" rose by 1,282.2%, "Net Expenditure" increased by 20.9%, and "Attendances" decreased by 91.3%. There is ongoing work with the Improvement Service to improve consistency in these measures across councils. The pandemic has exacerbated the variability in reporting as many councils were impacted differently by the pandemic in terms of building closures and duration of service reduction.

⁴ The framework that measures progress against Scotland's national outcomes

For the year ending 2021/22, leisure centre attendances recovered to 50% of pre-COVID levels and library visits increased to 22% of 2019/20 numbers, with virtual visits accounting for 61% of these visits.

Economic Development and Planning: 2020-21 data shows that 7.29% of unemployed people were assisted into employment by East Renfrewshire Council operated/funded employability programmes, which was down from 13.36% for the previous year, again reflecting the impact of COVID-19. The pandemic has had a negative impact on the amount of people being referred to the employability team as well as seeing a dramatic decrease in the number of jobs available. In 2020-21 the number of clients being referred to employability services required much more intensive support to get them "job ready". In East Renfrewshire the number of Business Gateway supported start-ups has increased from rank 25 in 2019-20 to 4 in 2020-21- 192 businesses in total. There has been a significant increase in the amount of people looking to start their own businesses which is largely as a result of people looking for other viable employment options as a result of the pandemic.

Housing services: Housing Services has made steady progress in improving the standard of our homes, including delivery of new homes and raising energy efficiency in line with national targets. The dip in performance against Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) reflects enhancement of the energy efficiency standard within SHQS and our focus is on continued progress in meeting the enhanced energy efficiency targets set nationally. Rent arrears recovery and reduction in rent lost through voids continues to be a priority focus for our service development. COVID restrictions severely impacted these areas and were only able to be addressed once restrictions were lifted. Social landlords have faced increasing rent arrears in 2020/21, with a larger proportion of tenants facing financial difficulty or going on to claim Universal Credit. With national directive being to minimise legal action on rent arrears through the pandemic, our focus has been on providing direct support and advice to tenants on maximising income and making arrangements for recovery.

Environmental services: Our Street Cleanliness Score for 2020/21 has showed improvement from the previous year and remains above the national average at 95.39% (ERC)/90.1% (National). East Renfrewshire's cost of street cleaning per 1000 of population is lower than the national average (£14,845) at £9,380 (ERC 2020/21) and has reduced from 19/20 levels (ERC £10,116). Reductions in cost are attributable to the COVID-19 pandemic and the need for service delivery to be realigned.

During 2020/21, East Renfrewshire Council's household recycling performance continued to remain strong despite the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Council delivered a recycling performance of 56.6% compared to the national average of 42%. Recycling rates did reduce compared to the year before, however, this reduction was experienced nationally, where an overall 2.9% reduction is noted. Costs of collection and disposal also increased with the prime factor being the impact of COVID-19 on increases in costs being experienced in people resources and transportation costs.

There has been a slight decrease in the percentage of A, B, C and unclassified roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment in 2020/21 compared with 2019/20. Additional capital funding has been targeted to improve the condition of our unclassified network and overall our network has improved.

Adult Social Care: Despite the ongoing challenges of the pandemic the HSCP are committed to shifting provision away from institutional care and the acute sector and continue to see very good performance in relation to minimising delayed discharges and hospital readmissions. For 2020-21 we were the 3rd ranked best performing HSCP in Scotland for hospital bed days lost to delayed discharge (189 days per

1,000 population) and are ranked 6th best (from 4th last year) for the rate of readmissions to hospital within 28 days.

We continue to support the expansion of choice and control by encouraging the uptake of Self-Directed Support (SDS)⁵ options. The LGBF measure shows continued growth in the proportion of spend through SDS Options 1 and 2, and we are currently ranked 7th across Scotland. Despite additional demand pressures on services as more people sought support at home and levels of frailty and complexity increased, our services have continued to support older people and people with long-term conditions to live independently and well during the pandemic. In 2020/21 our ranking move from 23rd up to 16th this year. Residential costs per week per resident (65 or over) have increased this year to £273 (from £182 in 2019/20) and this has resulted in our ranking falling to 3rd from 1st in the previous three years (nationally the average is £439). Our homecare costs per hour for people aged 65 or over have also increased with our ranking decreasing from 20 to 29. During the pandemic we have seen non-residential care costs increasing due to changing patterns of demand.

Corporate Services: The gender pay gap figure for 2020/21 increased slightly from the previous year to 6.48% this was unexpected given the Council had consolidated the living wage. Further work in 2021/22 has resulted in reducing the gap and it is now 5.71%, the lowest figure reported to date. As a result of system error absence data submitted in 20/21 was incorrect. This has been rectified which means for 2020/21 the LGE absence is now 10.16 days per FTE which would have ranked at 21st instead of 24th. The teaching absence is 3.61 days per FTE and would have ranked at 10th instead of 15th. As agreed nationally, this data excludes COVID-19 related absence.

Council Tax collection rate continues to be significantly above the Scottish average. Despite the reduction of 1.05% in cash collected, the net billed figure increased to £56.5m (prior year £53.4m) with an additional £2.2m of cash collected. The reduction in collections is in line with the experience of other Scottish councils due to the impact of COVID-19, where typical reductions are 1-2%. This indicator is above the Scottish average in 6th position. It is anticipated that these costs will continue to be elevated as we seek to modernise and improve Council Tax and Benefits processes. Invoice payments performance has improved by 4.48% with 79.82% of invoices paid within 30 days (note that 58% of invoices are paid within 10 day targets to local suppliers and this is 17th in Scotland). This has been achieved against a backdrop of significant process and compliance demands due to COVID-19, with local businesses and residents supported through the payment of grants.

Financial Sustainability: Overall performance reflects a short term improvement and is mainly due to late receipt of COVID-19 related government funding. There still remains an ongoing challenging financial situation.

Climate Change: The Council has been steadily decreasing its emissions for 10 years in real terms and on a per-capita basis. On the 'emissions within scope of LA per capita', which is more likely a fairer assessment of the emissions that a Council can control, the Council is ranked 2nd in Scotland and has consistently ranked number 1 or 2 for the last 10 years.

⁵ Self-Directed Support enables individuals to choose how their support is provided and gives them as much control as they want over their personal budget

PERFORMANCE REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS

12. Within the Council, performance against the indicators is monitored as part of our performance management arrangements and published on our website. LGBF performance data for each Council is also published by the Improvement Service on their *Mylocalcouncil* website, accessible [here](#).

FINANCE AND EFFICIENCY

13. There is a small annual charge paid by all councils of £2,766 to participate in the LGBF which is covered within existing budgets. Participation in the framework is mandatory.

CONSULTATION

14. There is an ongoing review and development of the LGBF in consultation with councils and partners. We continue to work closely with the IS on the validation of the LGBF data and have contributed feedback as part of reviews of the dataset. The Chief Executive of East Renfrewshire Council sits on the national LGBF Board which leads the overall development of the framework.

PARTNERSHIP WORKING

15. All 32 councils participate in a range of LGBF Benchmarking events, where colleagues from services come together to collaborate to share practice and learn together. Councils are grouped together in Family Groups at these events, to bring together similar councils in terms of geography or deprivation. A national learning event was held in January 2022 where national emerging trends were discussed.

16. Benchmarking activity helps the Council to identify and learn from good practice in other local authorities. The use of the LGBF and other benchmarking data to support service improvement is ongoing within the Council.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSALS

17. As this report is primarily a progress and performance update, there are no particular implications in terms of staffing, property, legal, IT, equalities and sustainability.

CONCLUSION

18. The 2021/21 data very much provides an insight on comparative performance in the first year of the pandemic where the operating context was exceptional. Despite the extreme challenges faced by the Council, with employees pulling together and overcoming and dealing with backlogs while still delivering core services, 2020/21 data shows that we continue to perform strongly in key outcome areas where we are making differences to people's lives. Where our costs are above the national average we have clear policy intentions explaining what we aim to achieve as a result of our investment.

19. The LGBF indicator set is only one means of recording and measuring the Council's performance. There is a wide range of performance information scrutinised and reported by the Council providing detailed information on performance throughout the year. To achieve a balanced picture, the outcomes we report on through our Community Plan, incorporating Fairer East Ren, Outcome Delivery Plan and through various audits and inspections should be noted. It is also important to remember the data reported is for 2020/21 and as such the effects and impact of COVID-19 on service performance are still becoming apparent.

RECOMMENDATIONS

20. It is recommended that Cabinet:

- (a) Scrutinise the Council's performance against the LGBF indicators and the intended action taken by departments to address any performance issues.
- (b) Consider whether any aspect of the Council's performance is in need of improvement or further investigation.

Lorraine McMillan, Chief Executive
31 May 2022

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BACKGROUND PAPERS

Local Government Benchmarking Framework: 2019-20 Performance, Cabinet, 1 June 2021

KEY WORDS

SOLACE, LGBF, benchmarking, Improvement Service, performance, indicators, SPIs, family groups

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Summary of LGBF performance 2020/21

This annex provides a summary of East Renfrewshire's performance between 2019/20 and 2020/21. Indicators are arranged under thematic service areas and aligned to the delivery outcomes they support. Performance in 2020/21 is shown alongside the national average and the family group average. Graphs are provided to place a spotlight on significant performance changes or other notable trends (graphs do not necessarily have comparable scales). Each service area includes a national overview, the strategic policy intention, commentary on East Renfrewshire Council's performance, and information on what the Council is doing to improve services where relevant.

[Children's Services](#)
[Culture & Leisure Services](#)
[Parks & Open Spaces](#)
[Economic Development & Planning](#)
[Housing Services](#)
[Roads Services](#)
[Waste, Cleanliness & Recycling Services](#)
[Tackling Climate Change](#)
[Trading Standards, Money Advice & Environmental Health Services](#)
[Adult Social Care Services](#)
[Corporate Costs & Processes](#)
[Corporate Assets](#)
[Employees](#)
[Financial Sustainability](#)

Delivery Outcomes

All children in East Renfrewshire experience a stable and secure childhood and succeed

Residents are healthy and active and have the skills for learning, life and work

Children's Services

Alignment	Indicator	East Renfrewshire values			2020/21 Scotland	2020/21 Family Group	East Renfrewshire ranks		
		2018/19	2019/20	2020/21			2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Delivery Outcome	Attainment of all children (% of pupils achieving 5+ awards at SCQF level 5)	86%	88%	90%	67%	75%	1	1	1
	Attainment of all children (% of pupils gaining 5+ awards at SCQF level 6)	65%	69%	70%	41%	48.4%	1	1	1
	Attainment of children who live in deprived areas (% pupils in 20% most deprived areas achieving 5+ awards at SCQF level 5)	69%	61%	79%	49%	54%	2	2	1
	Attainment of children who live in deprived areas (% pupils in 20% most deprived areas achieving 5+ awards at SCQF level 6)	42%	42%	43%	23%	27.8%	1	2	1
	% Average Total Tariff	1355	1402	1482	972	1101	1	1	1
	% Average Total Tariff SIMD Quintile 1 ¹	1039	971	1069	688	730	1	2	1

¹ A measure of the average attainment of pupils according to the relative deprivation of the area they live. Quintile 1 = most deprived and quintile 5 = least deprived.

Alignment	Indicator	East Renfrewshire values				East Renfrewshire ranks			
		2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2020/21 Scotland	2020/21 Family Group	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Delivery Outcome	% Average Total Tariff SIMD Quintile 2	1090	1128	1151	817	933	1	1	2
	% Average Total Tariff SIMD Quintile 3	1276	1330	1337	975	998	1	1	1
	% Average Total Tariff SIMD Quintile 4	1298	1389	1517	1108	1131	2	1	1
	% Average Total Tariff SIMD Quintile 5	1479	1531	1626	1320	1328	1	1	1
	% of P1, P4 and P7 pupils combined achieving expected CFE Level in Literacy	87%	-	86%	67%	70.3%	1	-	1
	% of P1, P4 and P7 pupils combined achieving expected CFE Level in Numeracy	90.7%	-	90%	75%	77.6%	1	-	1
	Literacy Attainment Gap (P1,4,7 Combined) - percentage point gap between the least deprived and most deprived pupils	20	-	21.3	25	25.5	13	-	17
	Numeracy Attainment Gap (P1,4,7 Combined) - percentage point gap between the least deprived and most deprived pupils	13.07	-	17	21	20.8	1	-	5
	% of funded early years provision which is graded good/better	96.9%	97%	93.9%	90.9%	91.4%	5	7	12
	School attendance of all children	95.3%	95.2%	94.6%	92%	94%	1	-	4
	School attendance of looked after children ²	85.7%	-	-	-	-	21	-	-
	School exclusion rates (per 1000) of all children	3.1	-	1.2	11.9	9.7	2	-	1
	School exclusion rates (per 1000) of looked after children ³	51.6	-	-	-	-	2	-	-

² Due to data availability issues, the LGBF data for this indicator will not be available until July 2022.

³ As above.

	% of children meeting developmental milestones	85.3%	84.3%	85.3%	85.1%	89.1%	17	21	15
	% of children being looked after in the community	98.0%	94.9%	91.1%	90.3%	85.9%	1	3	11
	% of child protection re-registrations within 18 months	7.7%	15.8%	0%	6.9%	3.7%	22	30	1
	% looked after children with more than 1 placement in the last year (Aug-July)	24.5%	18.8%	20%	16.8%	20.4%	22	18	20
	% of pupils entering positive destinations	97.5%	96.2%	97.4%	95.5%	96.5%	2	5	3
	Participation rate for 16-19 year olds	96.9%	96.8%	97.2%	92.2%	94%	2	2	1
	% of children living in poverty (After Housing Costs) ⁴	14.6%	15.8%	-	-	-	2	1	-
Efficiency Outcome	Cost per primary school pupil	£4,881	£5,264	£5,552	£5,916	£6,594	7	7	4
	Cost per secondary school pupil	£7,004	£7,314	£7,601	£7,657	£8,745	14	14	16
	Cost per pre-school place	£5,994	£7,004	£8,659	£9,273	£9,303	24	20	13
	Gross cost of 'children looked after' in a community setting per child per week	£216.54	£223.15	£357.18	£382.20	£455.70	3	4	16
	Gross cost of 'children looked after' in residential based services per child per week	£12,308	£4,109	£4,791	£4,380	£4,569	32	20	24
	Customer Outcome	% of adults satisfied with local schools ⁵	82%	84%	-	-	-	6	4
	<i>Citizens' Panel - Primary education % of service users rating service as very good or good*</i>	98%	98%	*	*		*		
	<i>Citizens' Panel - Secondary education % of service users rating service as very good or good*</i>	96%	97%	*	*				

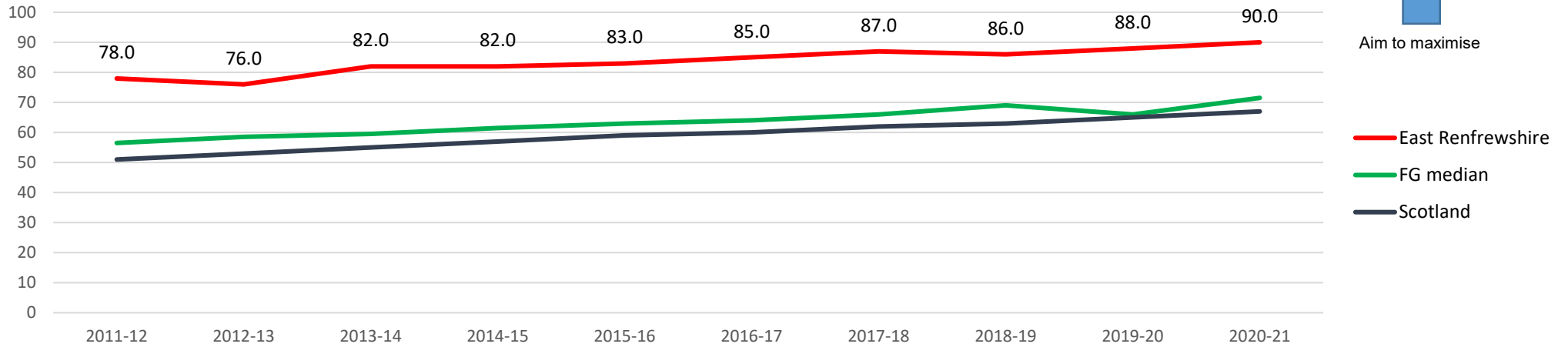
⁴ As above.

⁵ Data represents three-year average for each period (e.g. 2019/20 = average for 2017-20). Satisfaction data is not yet available for 2020/21 at local authority level. Methodological changes due to COVID-19-19 introduced some comparability issues that need to be resolved before inclusion in the published data.

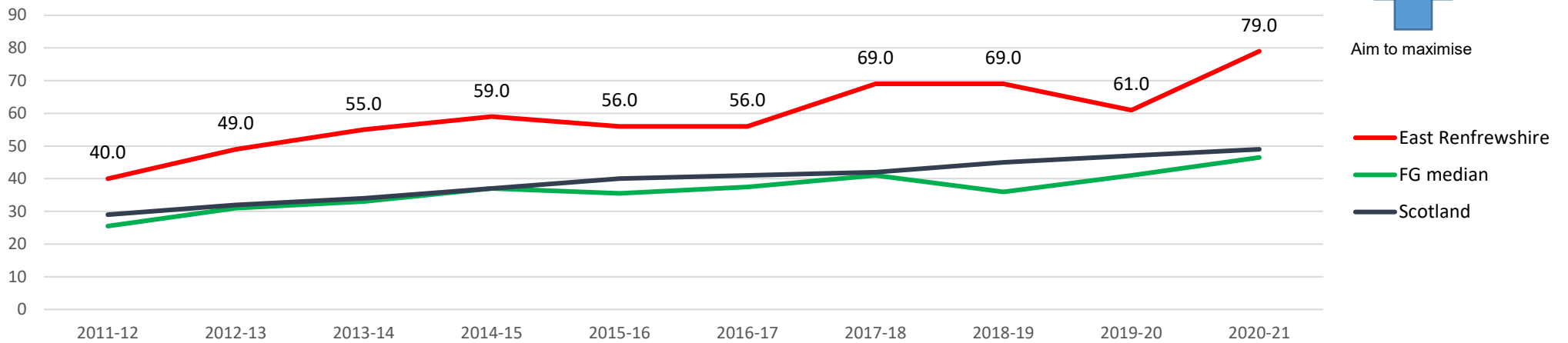
* This is from East Renfrewshire Council's Citizens' Panel surveys in 2019 and 2020, and therefore is not comparable with the LGBF. Data has been provided for additional context. There was no Citizens' Panel survey carried out in 2020/21.

Children's Services: Spotlights

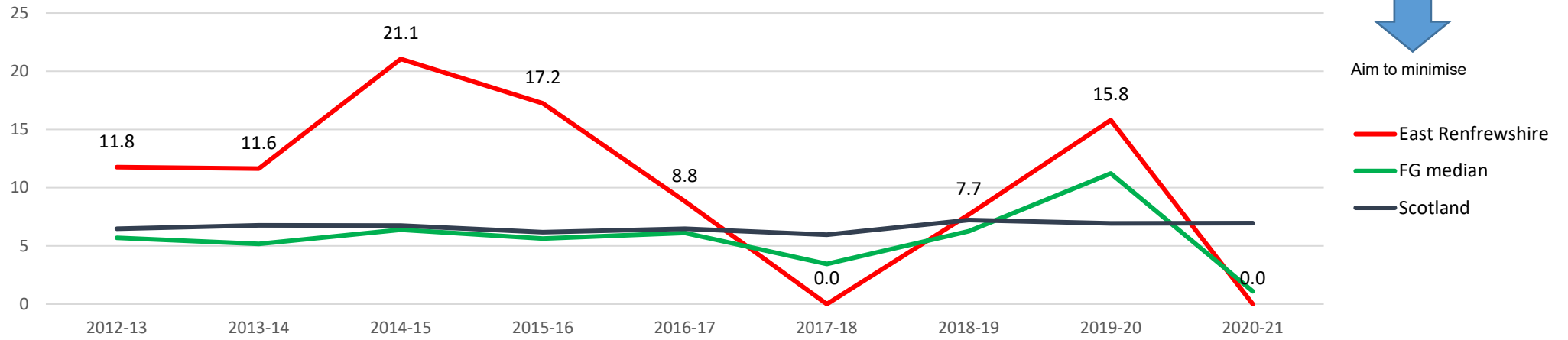
CHN4 - % of Pupils Gaining 5+ Awards at Level 5



CHN6 - % of Pupils from Deprived Areas Gaining 5+ Awards at Level 5 (SIMD)



CHN22 - % of child protection re-registrations within 18 months



Children's Services: Information

National overview

Real terms spend on Education has grown by 9.5% since 2010/11. In 2020/21, growth in education spend has increased by 0.6%. This reflects increased costs associated with the teachers' pay award and additional monies received from central government via the Attainment Scotland Fund. Recently, measures of educational outcome have shown substantial positive progress since 2011/12 with the scale of changes seen reflecting improvements equating to both better grades and more awards at higher SCQF levels. However, the impact of COVID-19 on children and young people in the last two years, particularly on the most vulnerable, is an area of significant concern going forward. The percentage of funded early years provision graded 'good or better' has improved slightly in 2020/21, from 90.2% to 90.9%. Senior phase attainment levels across are also higher in 2020/21 than in previous years, and at their highest levels since 2011/12. However, the assessment approaches were different in 2020 and 2021, due to the cancellation of exams and external assessment of coursework in 2020, and the use of the Alternative Certification Model in 2021. These results are not directly comparable with previous and future years, and any change in attainment levels during this time should not be seen as an indication that performance has improved or worsened without further evidence.

Expenditure on looked after children has grown by 14.5% since 2010/11, but has fallen by 5.2% in 2020/21. The reduction in real terms expenditure in 2020/21 is influenced partly by the COVID-19 related inflation experienced during this period, which was significantly higher than in previous years. Adjusting for this exceptional inflation rate, expenditure on looked after children would have reduced by 1.2% in 2020/21. Another important factor driving the recent reduction in expenditure is the recent shift away from the use of more expensive external placements by a number of authorities.

The number of children looked after in Scotland has reduced by 11% since 2010/11, from 16,231 to 14,458. This reflects a 12% reduction in the numbers of children looked after in a community setting, and a 2% reduction in the numbers in a residential setting. For the first time in 8 years, in 2019/20 the overall number of children looked after rose slightly, by 1.4%.

Strategic Policy Intention

East Renfrewshire's vision for education is Everyone Attaining, Everyone Achieving through Excellent Experiences. Underpinning our vision is a clear focus on raising the bar for all groups of learners whilst closing the attainment gap between our most disadvantaged and most affluent young people. In striving for this vision we also seek to ensure that all available financial resources are well directed and efficiently used to meet needs and to improve learning experiences.

East Renfrewshire's Corporate Parenting plan aims to collaboratively provide and support caring homes that meet the needs of our children and young people whether they are with parents, kin, foster carers or supported carers, and to work in partnership to ensure assessment and planning for children and young people includes their views and those of everyone who has a role in caring for them in order to support the best possible decisions being made by Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (SCRA), Children's Hearings and Looked After Reviews. These aims keep our focus on making the best decisions to provide children and young people with long term safety and support aligning with the goals of the Promise.

Council performance

We have maintained our position as the top performing education authority as measured by national qualifications. For educational attainment, the Council maintained very high levels of performance across a wide range of excellence and equity measures whilst making further improvements at 5+ SCQF levels 5 and 6. Notably, the performance of our learners in the most deprived areas increased significantly at SCQF level 5 and remained highest in mainland Scotland for SCQF level 6. The attainment of young people, as measured by the average total tariff score, improved in 2020-21 to be the highest in Scotland across all deciles. The proportion of children in P1, P4 and P7 achieving the minimum expected Curriculum for Excellence levels remained high in 2020-21 for literacy and numeracy measures. The gap in performance of the least and most deprived learners (P1, P4 and P7) achieving the minimum expected CfE levels increased slightly in 2020-21 in both literacy and numeracy. The number of school learners undertaking and successfully completing a wide range of vocational qualifications with our further and higher education partners remained high in 2020/21 with 348 young people enrolled in a broad range of courses. Recruitment of Foundation Apprenticeships (FAs) continued to remain strong throughout the pandemic. This performance has been achieved with relatively low costs in comparison to other Scottish councils; our cost per pupil in the primary and secondary sectors remains below the national averages. The cost for each pre-school place has increased over the past few years as a result of the additional funding provided by the Scottish Government to implement 1140 hours target.

In terms of keeping our children and young people safe, in 2020/2021 East Renfrewshire had no children re-registered on the Child Protection Register within 18 months of de-registration. This is a decrease from 15.79% in 2019/2020 and lower than the national average of 6.95%. However, it should be noted that significant variances can occur year on year as a result of the very low numbers of children whose names are placed on the register, and the occurrence of larger sibling groups. Our performance indicators for looked after children for 2021 show the effects of the pandemic, particularly for children with neurodevelopmental difference. During the pandemic there was an increase in children who needed to be looked after away from home in a specialist provision. These are children who would not normally have become looked after however pressure on parents/carers due to lockdown and reduced third sector provision resulted in children needing to be safely looked after for a period of time. Due to our small numbers of looked after children in comparison to national figures these small differences have affected our ranking but it is important to note that we continue to have a higher percentage of children looked after in the community than the national average. Despite the pandemic we have also had less children who have experience more than one placement which means we have provided more stability for children in challenging times.

What the Council is doing to improve services

We will continue to challenge and support schools to improve performance further for all children and young people. Key activities focus on targeting the allocation of resources to ensure additionality is deployed to support prevention and support early intervention and address the impact caused by COVID-19; developing a framework to deliver improved opportunities in relation to children's rights; continuing to support staff to embed the principles of Getting It Right For Every Child in all schools and classrooms and continuing to work with partners to increase parenting capacity. Our schools will promote and sustain a sense of equality and equity throughout the curriculum and service delivery. Benchmarking data including the LGBF is used as a results-driven process to increase effectiveness, set future targets and improve outcomes for all learners. Best practice is also disseminated to improve outcomes for all children and young people. We will continue to take a proactive approach to managing future budget reductions by maximising efficiency opportunities and taking action to minimise the impact of savings ultimately approved.

Our future objectives remain focused on supporting families to remain together safely wherever possible aligned with The Promise⁷. We will continue to embed our Signs of Safety⁸ approach, working alongside families and their networks to promote strengths and increase safety. Development of the neurodevelopmental pathway for children combined with whole family support will strengthen how we support our families who need it the most. Our child protection data is reported quarterly through the National Minimum Child Protection Committees Dataset and any emerging trends or patterns will be highlighted timeously to allow for multi-agency partnership discussions to address any policy and practice improvements required.

⁷ The Promise is a report published by Scotland's Independent Care Review. The aim is that the children that Scotland cares for must be actively supported to develop relationships with people in the workforce and wider community, who in turn must be supported to listen and be compassionate in their decision-making and care.

⁸ The Signs of Safety approach is a relationship-grounded, safety-organised approach to child protection practice, created by researching what works for professionals and families in building meaningful safety for vulnerable and at-risk children.

Culture & Leisure Services

Alignment	Indicator	East Renfrewshire values				East Renfrewshire ranks				
		2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2020/21 Scotland	2020/21 Family Group	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	
Efficiency Outcome	Cost per visit to libraries	£1.44	£1.93	£17.17	£2.88	£5.90	8	11	28	
	Cost per attendance of sport and leisure facilities (including swimming pools)	£4.14	£5.60	£96.92	£40.36	£55.10	30	32	28	
Customer Outcome	Percentage of adults satisfied with libraries ⁹	71.3%	75.3%	-	-	-	22	13	-	
	<i>Citizens' Panel - Libraries % of service users rating service as very good or good*</i>	93%	91%	-	*			*		
	Percentage of adults satisfied with leisure facilities ¹⁰	64.3%	67.3%	-	-	-	30	23	-	
	<i>Citizens' Panel - Sport and Leisure facilities % of service users rating service as very good or good*</i>	74%	79%	*	*			*		

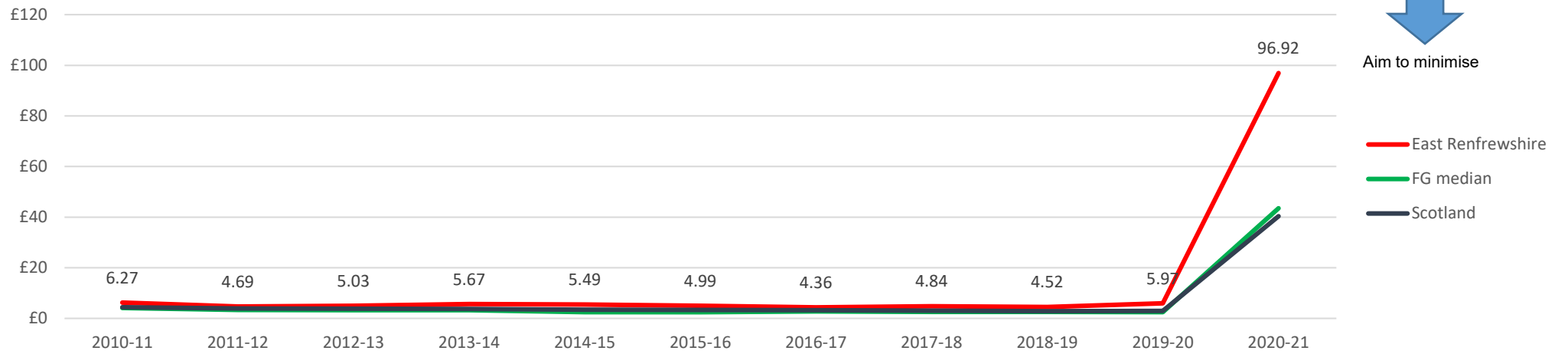
⁹ Data represents three-year average for each period (e.g. 2019/20 = average for 2017-20). Satisfaction data for 2020/21 is not yet available at local authority level. Methodological changes due to COVID-19 introduced some comparability issues that need to be resolved before inclusion in the published data.

* This is from East Renfrewshire Council's Citizens' Panel surveys in 2019 and 2020, and therefore is not comparable with the LGBF. Data has been provided for additional context. There was no Citizens' Panel survey carried out in 2020/21.

¹⁰ As note 7 above

Culture & Leisure: Spotlight

C&L1 - Cost per attendance at Sports facilities



Culture & Leisure: Information

National overview

Despite a real reduction in spend of 29.6% since 2010/11, leisure and cultural services have sharply increased their usage rates, partly driven by the expansion in digital provision. In 2020/21, there has been a further 6% real reduction in spend, marking 9 years of reducing spend on culture and leisure services. Prior to COVID-19, during the ten-year period from 2010/11 to 2019/20, the average unit cost for sports facilities had reduced year on year from £4.43 to £2.92 in real terms. In percentage terms, this represents a 34% reduction. This was driven by a 25% reduction in expenditure in parallel with a 14% growth in visits. In 2020/21, the number of attendances reduced by 91.2%, from 50 million to 4.6 million. During this period, expenditure increased by 20.9% as councils moved to compensate ALEOs/Trusts for loss of income as a result of COVID-19 restrictions. This has resulted in unit costs increasing from £2.92 to £40.36 (an increase of over 1000%). Pre COVID-19, there was a significant 50.1% reduction in unit costs for libraries since 2010/11, from £425 to £212. As with sports, this was driven by a 29% reduction in spend across the period, in parallel with a 42% growth in visit numbers. As a result of COVID-19, library visit numbers in 2020/21 fell by 33.8%, while expenditure fell by 10.3%. This had the result of increasing unit costs from £2.12 to £2.88, an increase of 35% in the most recent year, counter to the previous reducing trend. Work is ongoing with the Improvement Service to improve consistency across councils in reporting of these measures.

East Renfrewshire Culture and Leisure's Strategic Policy Intention

A new Sports and Physical Activity Strategy was developed with ERC through a Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sports Working Group in 2021. Its aim is to further develop sport and leisure programmes and facilities to grow participation in ways which balances ambitions for both commercial performance and community participation. As set out in the ERCL annual Business Plan, aims for 2020/21 were to;

- Create a financially sustainable business model, balancing strong ambitions with commercial viability.
- Develop an understanding of our customers and an offer that attracts them, working in partnership to remove barriers to participation.
- Develop a strong, diverse, resilient and committed workforce, building on our commitment to growing people and ideas.
- Establish our role at the heart of vibrant communities through the services we deliver, the opportunities we provide and the support we offer.
- Develop resilient, dynamic and productive partnerships that are developed and nurtured to grow our business and maximise the impact we have in our communities.

East Renfrewshire Culture and Leisure (ERCL) Performance

ERCL's libraries were closed or operated a reduced service for most of 2020/21. There was no public access from April to July 2020, although online borrowing remained available. A "click and collect" service was introduced at Giffnock Library in July, followed by Mearns in August. Limited "in person" browsing was introduced in September – December at Giffnock, Mearns, Busby, Eaglesham, Neilston and Thornliebank, but locked down again from January for the remainder of the year. Visitor numbers dropped by -86.1% (857,771 in 2019/20 down to 119,129 in 2020/21). Online visits made up some of the difference. However, since the change of supplier, the e-Book platform we use only provides statistics on eBook issues. The ability to count virtual visits through this platform has been promised but has not yet been provided. We are therefore missing out on legitimate virtual visits that other authorities using different platforms are able to report. The number of virtual visits is now increasingly dependent on the ongoing creation of website content. With large numbers of staff on furlough during this time there was often no one to create fresh content for customers to interact with.

2020/21 net expenditure increased by 16.0% (£1,764K in 2019/20 up to £2,046K in 20/21) in part as a result of an update in the allocation of costs across ERCL services which increased expenditure attributed to Libraries. As a result the “Cost per Visit” increased from £2.06 to £17.17 (up 733%). Ranking dropped from 11th to 28th. In perspective, across Scotland “Cost per Visit” rose by 35.5%, “Net Expenditure” decreased by -10.3%, and “Attendances” decreased by -33.8%. The culture and sport sector has not yet had an opportunity to come together to review and understand the COVID-19 pandemic experience.

Leisure centres were closed completely from April to August 2020. Two key factors impacted on the leisure centre “Cost per Visit” indicator: restrictions on centre operations in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, leading to a drop in attendances of -95.8% (799,624 in 2019/20 down to 33,689 in 2020/21); and refinement of the allocation of costs across ERCL services to better reflect, for example, the share of community halls costs associated with sports which decreased leisure centre expenditure. This coupled with an element of reduced spending driven mainly by COVID-19 restrictions, decreased net expenditure by -31.6% (£4,777K down to £3,265K in 2020/21). Combined, the “Cost per Visit” increased from £5.60 to £96.92 (up 1,522.4%) but with an improvement in ranking from 32nd to 28th. In perspective, across Scotland “Cost per Visit” rose by 1,282.2%, “Net Expenditure” increased by 20.9%, and “Attendances” decreased by 91.3%. Some services were open to members by advance booking on a socially distanced basis from September to December, after which centres were again locked down for the remainder of the year. The culture and sport sector has not yet had an opportunity to come together to review and understand the COVID-19 pandemic experience although there will have been relative differences in COVID impact which will lead to variation in reporting of these measures during this period.

What East Renfrewshire Culture and Leisure is doing to improve services

Going forward, ERCL intends to improve services by:

- Focusing on the recovery of our key activities and programmes in conjunction with staff and our customers.
- Continuing to improve our management information and the ability of our staff to use and work with it to inform decision making.
- Working in partnership with ERC on the updated Local Development Plan, in particular developments in Eastwood Park and Neilston.
- Continuing to improve our digital capability to deliver a smoother customer journey and further efficiencies in how we work.
- Building on existing initiatives which address inequality and improve people’s life chances such as Corporate Parenting, For Your Entertainment, support for Veterans, support for people with chronic conditions (Vitality, GP Referral, MacMillan Cancer Support, etc.) and the Holiday Hunger Programme.

Parks & Open Spaces

Alignment	Indicator	East Renfrewshire values			2020/21 Scotland	2020/21 Family Group	East Renfrewshire ranks		
		2018/19	2019/20	2020/21			2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Efficiency Outcome	Cost of parks and open spaces per 1,000 population	£23,957	£16,309	£13,512	£19,112	£19,446	23	9	8
Customer Outcome	Percentage of adults satisfied with parks and open spaces ¹¹	87.2%	90.5%	-	-	-	11	2	-
	<i>Citizens' Panel - % rating public parks and open spaces as very good or good*</i>	94%	90%	*	*		*		

¹¹ Data represents three-year average for each period (e.g. 2019/20 = average for 2017-20). Satisfaction data for 2020/21 is not yet available at local authority level. Methodological changes due to COVID-19 introduced some comparability issues that need to be resolved before inclusion in the published data.

* This is from East Renfrewshire Council's Citizens' Panel surveys in 2019 and 2020, and therefore is not comparable with the LGBF. Data has been provided for additional context. There was no Citizens' Panel survey carried out in 2020/21.

Parks & Open Spaces: Information

National overview

Spend on parks and open spaces is reflected as spend per 1,000 population. Over the 11-year period from 2010/11 to 2020/21 spend has reduced in real terms by 41.0%, from £32,377 to £19,112. There has been a year on year reduction across the period, including a 10.9% reduction in 2020/21.

Strategic Policy Intention

East Renfrewshire Council is committed to investing in our Parks and Open Spaces in order to provide excellent quality greenspace for our residents and visitors throughout the authority. This investment will enable the Parks service to contribute to a range of national and local priorities including; promoting sustainability by providing excellent natural resources which can be used for recreation and leisure and providing services that attracts inward investment into the area.

Council performance

Our costs per 1000 of population in running our parks and open spaces has reduced from £17,397 (2019-20) to £13,512 (2020-21) and improving ranking from 9 to 8 from the previous year. In 2020/21 investments have included the purchase of outdoor gym equipment at Crookfur Road and Aurs Drive. The tennis courts at Cowan Park were upgraded and a new all-inclusive roundabout was installed at Broomburn Playpark. A contributing factor in the level of spend reduction was attributable to the pandemic and its impact on our people resource. The service had to divert resource to critical essential service areas which has impacted overall cost spend. Despite this satisfaction from our Citizens' Panel in 2021/22 indicated a slight rise in satisfaction with parks from 90% in 2019/20 to 91% in 2021/22.

What the Council is doing to improve service

The Council's Open Spaces Asset Management Plan supports the management of our open space assets which includes parks, cemeteries, open space areas and sports pitches. We continue to seek funding in order to improve those assets by means of Capital, Revenue and other contributions e.g. Developer Contributions. Opportunities for income generation from our Parks and Open Spaces have been more limited during the period concerned again as a result of the pandemic with the Playground Festival having to be postponed. Our future aspirations are to review how the Council manages its open space assets and to make best use of the funding sources available in order to derive improvements. Ensuring our assets are safe, accessible, regularly maintained and support the Council's Get to Zero agenda, are key priorities.

Delivery Outcome

East Renfrewshire is a thriving, attractive and sustainable place for businesses and residents

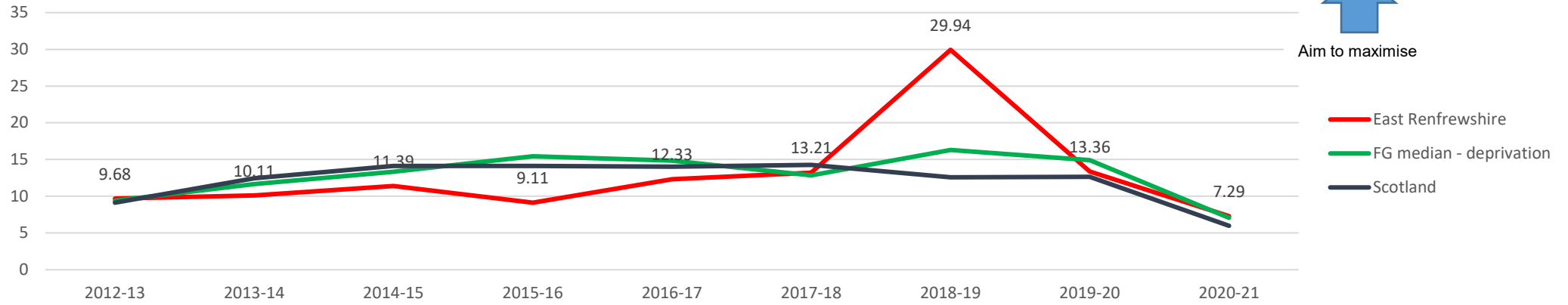
Economic Development & Planning

Alignment	Indicator	East Renfrewshire values					East Renfrewshire ranks		
		2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2020/21 Scotland	2020/21 Family Group	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Delivery Outcome	% unemployed people accessing jobs via council operated/funded employability programmes	29.9%	13.4%	7.3%	6%	8%	1	17	14
	% of procurement spent on local small/medium enterprises	8.9%	9.6%	11.3%	29.1%	20.3%	32	31	31
	No of business gateway start-ups per 10,000 population	17.7%	15.1%	22.4%	11.2%	15.3%	18	25	4
	% of people earning less than the living wage	30.1%	25.5%	30.9%	15.2%	22.6%	28	26	26
	% of properties receiving superfast broadband	96.1%	96%	96.2%	93.8%	95.2%	9	11	11
	Town vacancy rates	10.2%	11.9%	7.2%	12.4%	11.7%	16	20	9
	Immediately available land as a % of total land allocated for employment purposes in the LDP	97.5	94.1%	94.1%	38.9%	63.5%	2	2	3
	Claimant Count as % of Working Age Population	1.5%	1.7%	3.7%	6.1%	5.7%	3	2	3
	Claimant Count as % of 16-24 Population	1.9%	2%	4.4%	7.2%	7.5%	3	2	1
Efficiency Outcome	Cost of planning and building standards per planning application	£4,205	£4,210	£5,831	£5,067	£5,423	15	16	19
	Average time (weeks) per business and industry planning application	8.5	7.8	9	11.1	9.7	18	9	11
	Investment in Economic Development & Tourism per 1,000 population	£62,036	£27,436	£17,791	£88,582	£55,735	17	2	1
	Gross Value Added (GVA) per capita ¹²	11,411	11,417	-	-	-	32	32	-

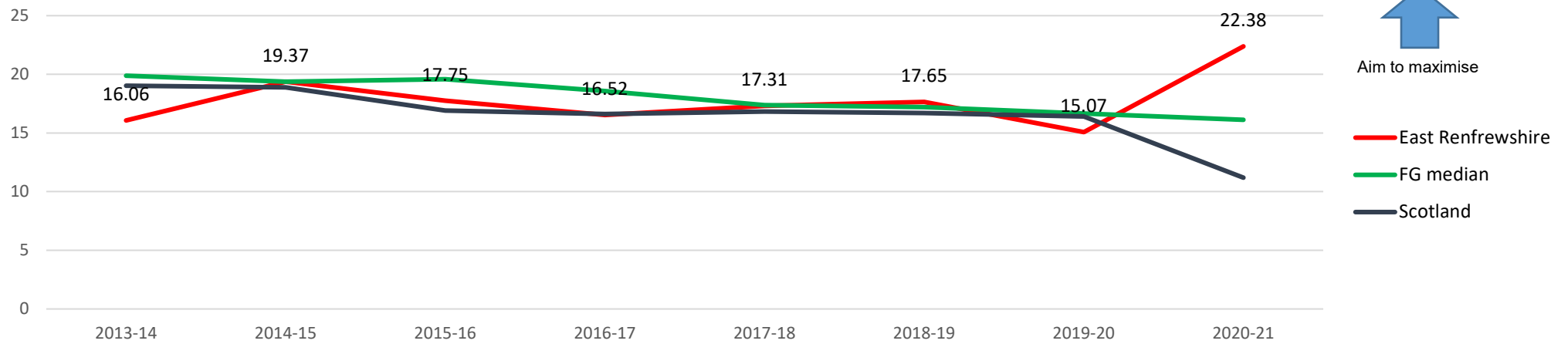
¹² Due to data availability issues, the LGBF data for the indicators below will not be available until July 2022.

Economic Development & Planning: Spotlights

ECON1 - Percentage of Unemployed People Assisted into work from Council Funded/Operated Employability Programmes



ECON5 - Business Gateway Start up rate



Economic Development & Planning: Information

National overview

There has been a 15.6% decrease in economic development and tourism investment between 2010/11 and 2020/21 from £103,972 to £87,793 per 1,000. This reflects a real terms reduction in expenditure of 11.6%, against a population growth of 4.7%. In 2020/21, investment per 1,000 has reduced by 20%, the largest reduction recorded since the benchmarking framework began. There has been significant capital investment in Economic Development and Tourism across this period as part of the current regional growth development programmes, including the Cities deals. Prior to COVID-19, between 2010/11 and 2019/20, revenue funding had reduced by 19.6%, and capital funding had grown by 122% (from £114 million to £255 million). In 2020/21, the trend altered markedly, with revenue funding growing by 4.7% and capital funding falling by 53.3%. As a result, in 2020/21, capital expenditure as a proportion of total economic expenditure reduced sharply, from 42% to 25% of total economic development expenditure. In terms of employment services, the percentage of unemployed people supported into work fell from 12.7% to 6.0% in 2020/21, while the claimant count rose from 3.3% to 6.1% at the end of March 2021. Claimant count rose faster among young people, increasing from 3.9% to 7.2%. 70% of employee job losses between March 2020 and May 2021 in the UK were among under 25s. Much of this disproportionate impact on young people is driven by the fact that under-25s are more likely to work in sectors such as hospitality and retail and leisure which were particularly severely impacted by COVID-19 restrictions.

Strategic Policy Intention

In the Council economic development encompasses three core service areas – People, Place and Business. These are designed to support and develop the core areas of the economy: the skills and employability of our local residents, and to help them access sustainable employment; local business support in terms of new starts and growth for existing businesses and access to grants and loans; and place which aims to make our town centres and localities more attractive by increasing footfall and developing a placed based approach to support economic growth.

Council performance

2020/21 data shows that 7.29% of unemployed people were assisted into employment by East Renfrewshire Council operated/funded employability programmes, which was down from 13.36% for the previous year. The global pandemic has had a negative impact on the amount of people being referred to the employability team as well seeing a dramatic decrease in the number of jobs available. In 2020-21 the number of clients being referred to employability services required much more intensive support to get them "job ready". East Renfrewshire Council percentage spend with local small/medium enterprises will always be comparably low given factors such as the existing supplier base and size and location of the local authority area. The global pandemic has also had a negative impact on businesses having adequate resources to bid for public sector contracts as many of them were in survival mode due to the decrease in trade and footfall across the area. We are focusing on maximising opportunities to encourage local businesses, third sector organisations, and supported businesses, to do business with the Council. In East Renfrewshire the number of Business Gateway start-ups has increased from rank 25 in 2019-20 to 4 in 2020-21. There has been a significant increase in the amount of people looking to start their own businesses which is largely down to people looking for other viable employment options as a result of the pandemic.

What the Council is doing to improve services

We continue to maximise the use of externally funded areas such as the ERC CPP Employability Pipeline, ER Business Competitiveness and the No One Left Behind Programme programmes which are part-financed by Council resources, the European Social Fund, European Regional Development Fund and the Scottish Government, respectively. Changes in provision for Work EastRen's strategic skills pipeline (Phase 2) has seen new services include dedicated provision to work with those at risk of redundancy, disabled parents and a new Young Persons Guarantee programme. The Scottish Government's No One Left Behind approach to deliver employability services has allowed us to help shape provision to meet the needs of our local residents.

The Council continues to adopt a more corporate approach which links with the Workforce Planning agenda, which has been reflected in our National Training Programmes bids to Skills Development Scotland. The Council actively promotes business support and employability services to help ensure targets are achieved and continue to play an important role in the delivery and promotion of national employability agendas. 2020/21 also saw the continuation of the Family Firm traineeship. Family Firm is a tailored pre-employment programme which has been designed to help young people who are looked after or involved with Social Work authorities, transition into the world of work. Each trainee is employed for a 12 month period and experiences working across different teams within the Department. The programme continues to be a huge success with all trainees moving onto a positive destination once the programme came to an end.

Housing Services

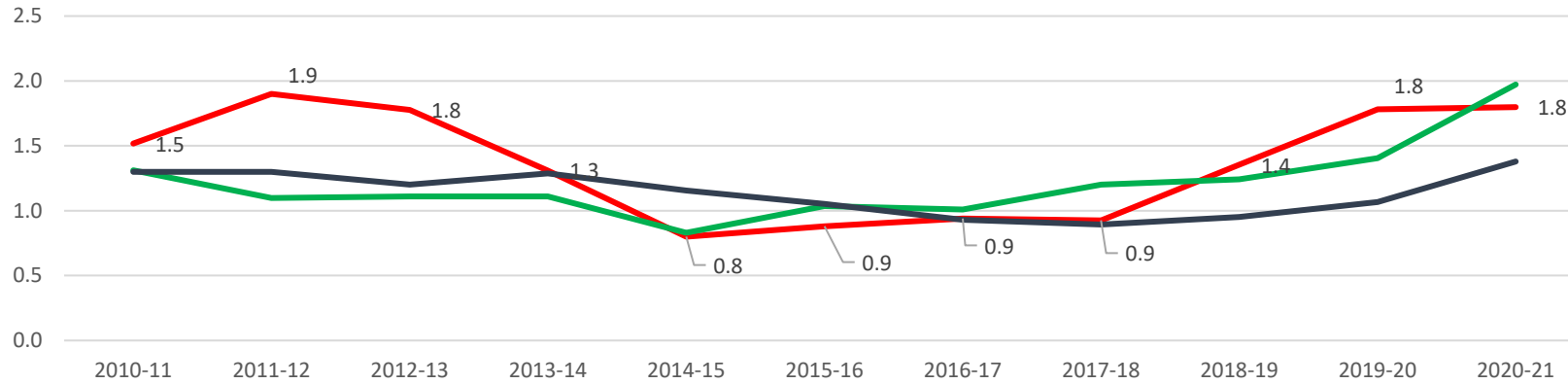
Alignment	Indicator	East Renfrewshire values					East Renfrewshire ranks		
		2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2020/21 Scotland	2020/21 Family Group	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Delivery Outcome	% of stock meeting the Scottish Housing Quality Standards ¹³	97.4%	97.9%	91.4%	90.2%	80.5%	11	5	14
	% of council dwellings that are energy efficient ¹⁴	74.4%	79.0%	93.2%	86.3%	81.5%	17	19	6
	Average number of days taken to complete non-emergency repairs	5.2	5.4	6.2	7.3	11	3	5	11
Efficiency Outcome	Gross rent arrears (all tenants) as at 31 March each year as a percentage of rent due for the reporting year	5.8%	6.5%	9.5%	8.2%	10.7%	7	9	15
	% of rent due in the year that was lost due to properties being empty (voids)	1.4%	1.8%	1.8%	1.4%	1.8%	20	22	20

¹³ Council stock figures are only relevant for 26 of 32 authorities (rank runs from 1 to 26).

¹⁴ Previously this indicator had been calculated on progress towards the Scottish Housing Quality Standards – SAP ratings. From 2019/20 the indicator is now based on progress towards meeting the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (ESSH).

Housing: Spotlights

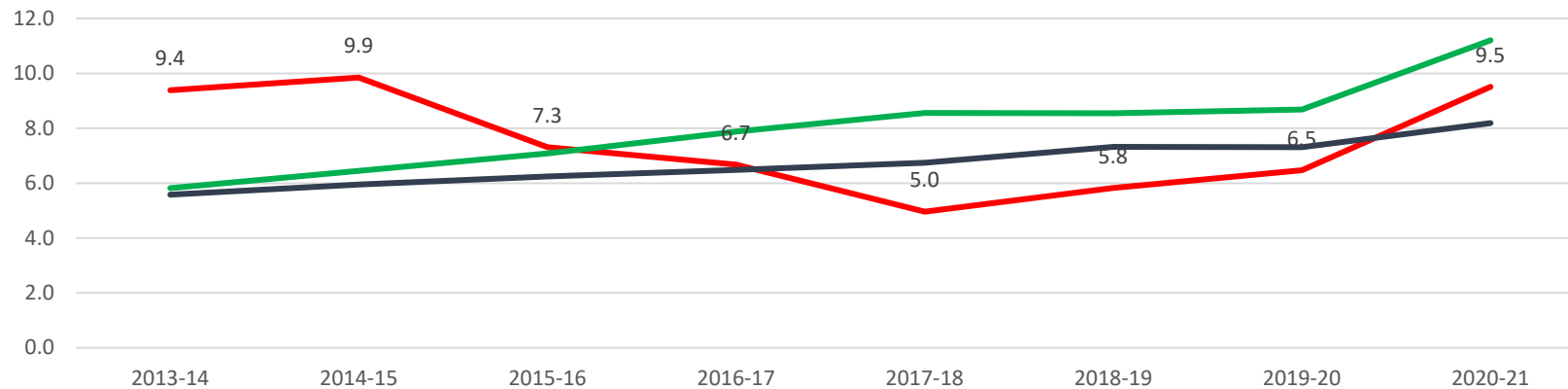
HSN2 - Percentage of rent due in the year that was lost due to voids



Aim to minimise

- East Renfrewshire
- FG median
- Scotland

HSN1b - Gross rent arrears (all tenants) as at 31 March each year as a percentage of rent due for the reporting year



Aim to minimise

- East Renfrewshire
- FG median
- Scotland

Housing: Information

National Overview

Councils continue to manage their housing stock well. Since 2013/14, the average time taken to complete non-emergency repairs has reduced by 28.4%, from 10.2 days to 7.3 days in 2020/21. Prior to COVID-19, rent lost due to voids had reduced from 1.3% in 2010/11 to 1.1% in 2019/20. In 2020/21, this increased to 1.4%, the highest recorded level of rent lost since the start of the benchmarking framework. The level of rent arrears rose sharply in 2020/21, increasing from 7.3% to 8.2% (range: -0.9pp to +3.4pp). While the percentage of energy efficient council dwellings continued to increase, from 84.1% to 86.4% in 2020/21, there was a reduction in the percentage of council dwellings which meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS), falling from 94.9% to 90.3%.

Strategic Policy Intention

The key policy driver for East Renfrewshire Council remains driving up the standards of the homes we provide so that they are of good quality, energy efficient and affordable to live comfortably within. In addition, we are committed to achieving high quality customer focused housing services and good value for our tenants rents.

Council Performance

We have made steady progress in improving the standard of our homes, including delivery of new homes and raising energy efficiency in line with national targets. The dip in performance against Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) reflects enhancement of the energy efficiency standard within SHQS and our focus is on continued progress in meeting the enhanced energy efficiency targets set nationally. Rent arrears recovery and reduction in rent lost through voids continues to be a priority focus for our service development. COVID restrictions severely impacted these areas and were only able to be addressed once restrictions were lifted.

What the Council is doing to improve services

The impact of COVID-19 restrictions on our ability to collect rent and re-let empty homes set back our intended progress in improving these areas. Social landlords have faced increasing rent arrears in 2020/21, with a larger proportion of tenants facing financial difficulty or going on to claim Universal Credit. With national directive being to minimise legal action on rent arrears through the pandemic, our focus has been on providing direct support and advice to tenants on maximising income and making arrangements for recovery. We have been able to respond to acute accommodation needs of those facing homelessness through the pandemic by use of empty homes for temporary and permanent accommodation for priority households. Development of clearer processes and a fresh performance management framework around voids will deliver ongoing improvements.

Roads Services

Alignment	Indicator	East Renfrewshire values					East Renfrewshire ranks		
		2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2020/21 Scotland	2020/21 Family Group	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Delivery Outcome	% of class A roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment ¹⁵	17.2%	15.5%	17.3%	29.8%	22.6%	1	1	2
	% of class B roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment ¹⁶	29.6%	26.3%	24.1%	34%	27.9%	14	13	9
	% of class C roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment ¹⁷	34.5%	33.0%	31.2%	33.6%	32.8%	17	16	14
	% of unclassified roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment ¹⁸	44.2%	40.0%	41.9%	38.2%	36.5%	26	22	22
Efficiency Outcome	Cost of maintenance per kilometre of roads	£21,136	£24,514	£24,411	£9,389	£14,461	30	31	31
Customer Outcome	<i>Citizens' Panel - % rating maintenance of roads as good or very good*</i>	21%	22%	*	*		*		

¹⁵ Data relates to 2017-19, 2018-20 and 2019-21

¹⁶ As above

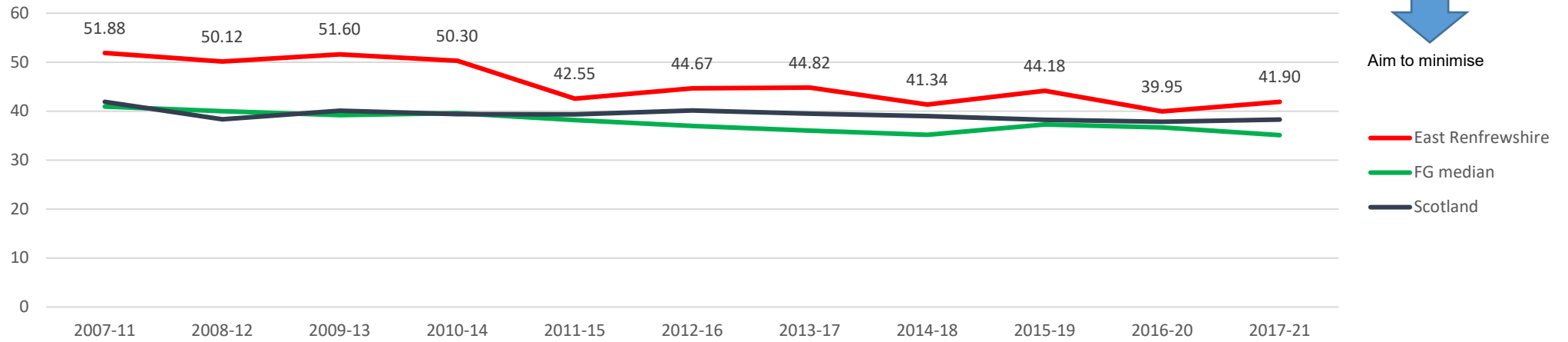
¹⁷ As above

¹⁸ Data relates to 2015-19, 2016-20 and 2017-21

* This is from East Renfrewshire Council's Citizens' Panel surveys in 2019 and 2020, and therefore is not comparable with the LGBF. Data has been provided for additional context. There was no Citizens' Panel survey carried out in 2020/21.

Roads Services: Spotlight

ENV4e - Percentage of unclassified roads that should be considered for maintenance treatment



Roads Services: Information

National Overview

Since 2010/11, real spending on roads has fallen by 25.4%, including a 2.6% reduction in 2020/21. Since 2010/11, the road conditions index indicates conditions have been largely maintained across all class of roads with around 30% to 35% of roads continuing to require maintenance. The impact of the COVID-19 lockdown on roads services has resulted in a reduction in planned work and a reliance on reactive repairs of defects to keep road networks safe, and this will inevitably lead to a backlog of repair work and a reduction in overall network condition and satisfaction.

Strategic Policy Intention

Our aim is to provide a road network that is maintained in a safe and serviceable condition and to ensure that investments are targeted at the right place, using the correct type of treatment which maintains quality in our road network. When identifying treatment priorities, we take into consideration the condition, level of use, ongoing maintenance costs and spread of investment across East Renfrewshire.

Council Performance

There has been a slight decrease in the percentage of the overall network of roads in East Renfrewshire that should be considered for maintenance treatment in 2020/21 compared with 2019/20. Additional capital funding has been targeted to improve the condition of our unclassified network and overall our network has improved from 39.1% requiring treatment in 2018/19 to 36.4% requiring treatment in 2020/21. However, latest figures for 2021/22 show this has decreased to 37.3% for the overall network.

What the Council is doing to improve services

Despite delays due to COVID-19 the Roads and Transportation Service strategic review was completed in 2020/21 and new digital processes including the introduction of a new asset management system and mobile working are planned to go live in 2022. Additional capital investment of £3m per year over 5 years 2019/20 – 2023/24 will target improvements to our unclassified roads, over 40% of which have been identified as requiring treatment. Ongoing replacement of street lighting with LEDs will help reduce our energy consumption and carbon output and we will continue to improve our active travel and public transport infrastructure through a programme of prioritised improvements.

Waste, Cleanliness & Recycling Services

Alignment	Indicator	East Renfrewshire values					East Renfrewshire ranks		
		2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2020/21 Scotland	2020/21 Family Group	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Delivery Outcome	% of total household waste that is recycled	66.2%	67.8%	56.6%	42%	47.8%	1	1	2
	Street cleanliness score - % areas assessed as acceptable	94.9%	92.6%	95.4%	90.1%	91.6%	8	16	5
Efficiency Outcome	Net cost per waste collection per premise	£68.15	£77.25	£87.72	£72.35	£68.60	23	26	30
	Net cost per waste disposal per premise	£84.97	£87.02	£100.97	£105.88	£94.90	8	10	13
	Net cost of street cleaning per 1,000 population	£8,910	£9,484	£9,380	£14,492	£13,661	7	10	9
Customer Outcome	% of adults satisfied with refuse collection ¹⁹	75.9%	79.9%	-	-	-	24	14	-
	<i>Citizens' Panel – Wheeled bin refuse collection % of service users rating service as very good/good*</i>	83%	86%	*	*	*	*		
	<i>Citizens' Panel – % of service users rating recycling services as very good/good*</i>	92%	91%	*	*	*	*		
	% of adults satisfied with street cleaning ²⁰	71.2%	67.5%	-	-	-	11	13	*
	<i>Citizens' Panel - % rating street cleaning and litter control as good or very good*</i>	92%	91%	*	*	*	*		

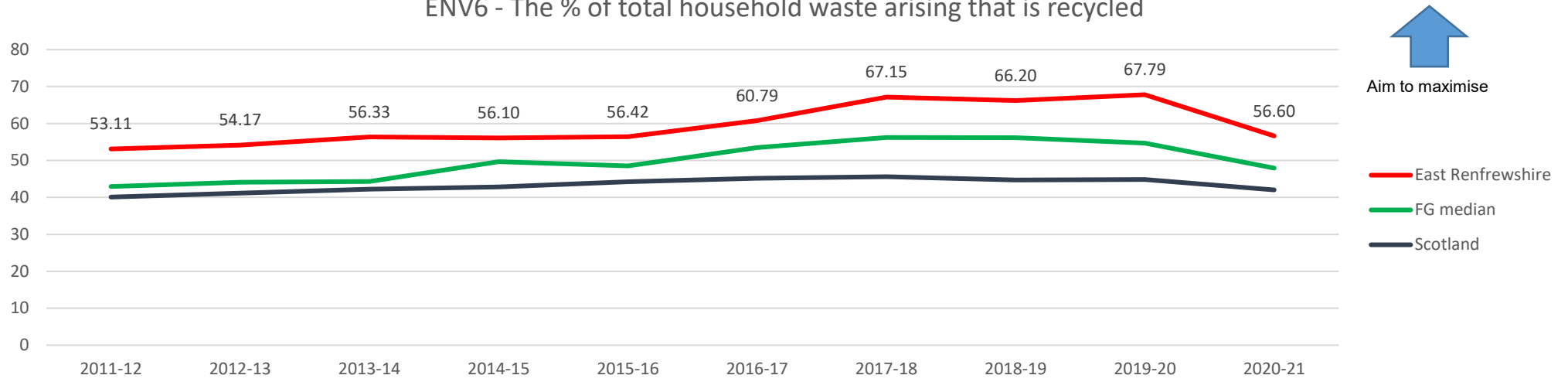
¹⁹ Data drawn from the Scottish Household Survey. Data represents three-year average for each period (e.g. 2019/20 = average for 2017-20). Satisfaction data is not yet available for 2020/21 at local authority level. Methodological changes due to COVID-19 introduced some comparability issues that need to be resolved before inclusion in the published data.

* This is from East Renfrewshire Council's Citizens' Panel surveys in 2019 and 2020, and therefore is not comparable with the LGBF. Data has been provided for additional context. There was no Citizens' Panel survey carried out in 2020/21.

²⁰ Data represents three year average for each period (e.g. 2019/20 value equals 2017-20). Satisfaction data for 2020/21 is not yet available at local authority level. Methodological changes due to COVID-19 introduced some comparability issues that need to be resolved before inclusion in the published data..

Waste, Cleansing & Recycling: Spotlight

ENV6 - The % of total household waste arising that is recycled



Waste, Cleansing & Recycling: Information

National Overview

The Scottish average for the cleanliness score has remained above 90% since the base year, although scores have shown a reducing trend since 2013/14. In 2020/21, 90.1% of streets were assessed as 'clean', a decrease of 1.9% in the past 12 months. The combined net cost of waste disposal and collection reduced by 3.1% between 2012/13 and 2020/20, from £182 to £177 per premise. The range across Scotland in 2020/21 was £103 to £246. Recycling rates dropped in 2020/21 by 2.9% to 42.8%. This is counter to the previous trend and is the lowest rate since 2013/14. This reflects a small increase in residential waste in most areas due to lockdowns and wider pandemic.

Strategic Policy Intention

We aim to maintain and improve street cleaning making East Renfrewshire an attractive place to live with a good physical environment. We are proactive in providing education on litter issues and makes use of community engagement opportunities to discuss street cleansing and other issues with residents. The service is governed by the national code of practice (Local Environment Audit Management System - LEAMS). Our level of recycling rates ensure that we make a significant impact to achieving the outcome of an environmentally sustainable East Renfrewshire. East Renfrewshire Council has committed to implementing the national Household Waste Recycling Charter in order to ensure we meet the national requirements set. Our strategy ensures that we maximise the opportunity for recycling and manage our waste/recycling contracts to ensure best value at all times.

Council performance

Our Street Cleanliness Score for 2020/21 has showed improvement from the previous year and remains above the national average at 95.39% (ERC)/ 90.10 (National). East Renfrewshire's cost of street cleaning per 1000 of population is lower than the national average (£14,845) at £9,380 (ERC 2020/21) and has reduced from 19/20 levels (ERC £10,116). Reductions in cost are attributable to the COVID-19 pandemic and the need for service delivery to be realigned and prioritise other essential service areas as well as the impact of restrictions on people resource deployment.

During 2020, East Renfrewshire Council's Household Recycling Performance continued to remain strong despite the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Council delivered a Recycling Performance of 56.6% compared to the National Average of 42% (SEPA verified). Recycling rates did reduce compared to 2019 levels (67.8%), however, this downward trend was experienced nationally, as highlighted above. The Council had to prioritise service delivery as a result of the impact of the pandemic and this combined with lockdowns and other restrictions, has impacted our recycling levels. Costs of collection and disposal also increased in the Council during the period concerned, with the prime factor being the impact of COVID-19 on increases in costs being experienced in people resource and transportation costs.

What the Council is doing to improve services

The Council continue to focus on improving the cleanliness of our environment for our residents. During the pandemic there has been a strong support from the community to engage in local litter picking/clean up events, and the service has been supportive of those activates working directly with those groups concerned. Having worked with key partners and stakeholders, the Council is awaiting the introduction of the audit/monitoring scheme associated with the Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse Regulations (CoPLAR), which will supersede the Local Environmental Audit and Management System (LEAMS) process. Information gathered from the Audit systems will assist the service in providing information to target particular areas with litter issues/litter hotspots in

order to meet the required standards. The Council continues to focus on recovery and improving the rates of household recycling in order to meet the national target of 70% by 2025. We are strongly focused in contributing towards the Council's Get to Zero, carbon emissions reduction targets by being ready for the 2025 Landfill Ban and by exploring viable alternative transportation methods for our fleet.

Tackling Climate Change

Alignment	Indicator	East Renfrewshire values				East Renfrewshire ranks			
		2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2020/21 Scotland	2020/21 Family Group	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Delivery Outcome	CO2 emissions area wide per capita ²¹	4.2	4.1	-	-	-	7	7	-
	CO2 emissions are wide: emissions within scope of LA per capita ²²	3.6	3.4	-	-	-	2	2	-

National Overview

Given the significance of this major policy agenda for local government, work is underway to identify a suite of measures which could support Local Government in its efforts to contribute to national carbon reduction targets. As a starting point, two high-level measures on total CO2 emissions have been included this year – CO2 area wide emissions, and CO2 area wide emissions within scope of local authorities.

Strategic Policy Intention

The Council published its Get to Zero ambition statement in November 2021 and declared a climate emergency in October 2021. The Council has committed to publishing its Get to Zero Action Plan in 2022, which will set out the actions to reduce its own emissions and the role played in reducing community emissions.

Council performance

The Council has been steadily decreasing its emissions for 10-years in real terms and on a per-capita basis. On the 'emissions within scope of LA per capita', which is more likely a fairer assessment of the emissions that a Council can control, the Council is ranked 2nd in Scotland and has consistently ranked number 1 or 2 for the last 10-years.

What the Council is doing to improve services

The Council will publish its Get to Zero Action Plan in 2022, which will set out the further actions needed to achieve net zero GHG emissions in line with the Scottish Government's timetable for 2045.

²¹ Due to data availability issues, the LGBF data for this indicator will not be available until July 2022.

²² As above.

Trading Standards, Money Advice & Environmental Health Services

Alignment	Indicator	East Renfrewshire values					East Renfrewshire ranks		
		2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2020/21 Scotland	2020/21 Family Group	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Efficiency Outcome	Cost of trading standards and environmental health per 1,000 population	£17,485	£15,974	£16,635	£18,998	£16,862	11	10	11
	Cost of environmental health per 1,000 population	£7,670	£7,191	£7,370	£13,070	£10,652	2	2	3
	Cost of trading standards, money advice and citizen advice combined per 1,000 population	£9,814	£8,783	£9,265	£5,928	£6,210	26	25	26
	Cost of <i>trading standards only</i> per 1,000 population ²³	-	£2,500 (approx.)	-	-	-	-		

²³ This is not included in the LGBF therefore there is no Scotland or Family Group comparison. Data has been provided for additional context.

Trading Standards, Money Advice & Environmental Health: Information

National Overview

Since 2010/11, the aggregated environmental health, trading standards, money advice and Citizens' Advice grant costs have reduced by 39.2% from £30,386 to £18,463. At the same time, demand for these services is increasing in terms of reactive complaints and proactive business support and interventions. There have been considerable demands on environment health to prepare for the impact of EU Exit, and in particular export health certification. Additional demand through COVID-19 enforcement responsibilities and public health protection work has further added to the challenges facing this sector during this period.

Strategic Policy Intention

The demands on Environmental Health and Trading Standards has been significant since the start of the pandemic and enactment of the associated statutory restrictions. All Environmental Health & Trading Standards staff have undertaken additional COVID-19 responsibilities, which have been unpredictable in complexity, often unique and very time consuming. We will continue to work at a national level liaising with other local authorities and partner organisations to promote the adoption of the baseline measures and enforcement of the COVID-19 certification measures. At the same we continue to provide support to residents and businesses through new ways of working and online resources.

Council performance

The cost of Trading Standards slightly increased in 2020/21 compared to previous year, note that this cost also includes costs of Money Advice and Citizens' Advice Bureau. During 2020/21 Trading Standards Financial Harm Prevention Toolkit continues to protect our most vulnerable residents with 950,000 nuisance and scam calls prevented in total. Environmental Health costs have increased slightly in 2020/21 now ranked 3rd.

What the Council is doing to improve services

The COVID -19 Pandemic has led to a significant shift in resources away from the core service planned activity for 2019/20 and 2020/21. We will continue to prioritise key elements of its service plan for delivery in 2021/22 while continuing to monitor and advise traders in relation to COVID-19. Key priority delivery has been supported through creative risk assessments and new ways of working. Our environmental health workload continues to increase, with a significant spike in public health work including the new food rating system. Food safety visits requires all food businesses to be prioritised to meet new requirements and the backlog will be addressed by the development of a recovery plan for 2021/22. A new document management system is also being implemented to meet the needs of this requirement.

Delivery Outcome

Older people and people with long term conditions in East Renfrewshire are valued; their voices are heard and they are supported to enjoy full and positive lives

Adult Social Care Services

Alignment	Indicator	East Renfrewshire values					East Renfrewshire ranks		
		2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2020/21 Scotland	2020/21 Family Group	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Delivery Outcome	% of people 65 and over with long-term care needs receiving personal care at home	57.4%	57%	62.2%	61.7%	61.2%	23	23	16
	Self-Directed Support (SDS) spend on adults 18+ as a % of total social work spend on adults 18+	8.2%	8.4%	8.7%	8.5%	6.9%	4	7	7
	Rate of readmission to hospital within 28 days per 1,000 discharges	78.8	76.2	98.2	120	110.5	4	4	6
	Number of days people spend in hospital when they are ready to be discharged per 1,000 population (75+)	170.5	155.8	189.4	484.3	283.7	3	1	3
	% of care services graded 'good' (4) or better in Care Inspectorate reports	83.9%	84.4%	84%	82.5%	86.9%	19	17	21
			2017/18	2019/20	2020/21	2020/21 Scotland	2020/21 Family Group	2017/18	2019/20
	% of adults supported at home who agree that their services and support had an	76.5%	77.8%	-	-	-	26	25	-

	impact in improving or maintaining their quality of life ²⁴					
	% of adults supported at home who agree that they are supported to live as independently as possible ²⁵	73.9%	78.3%	-	-	-
	% of carers who feel supported to continue in their carer role ²⁶	37.5%	35.3%	-	-	-
		2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2020/21 Scotland	2020/21 Family Group
Efficiency Outcome	Home care costs per hour for people aged 65 or over	£24.77	£26.83	£37.24	£27.65	£30.50
	Residential costs per week per resident for people aged 65 or over.	£160	£171	£273	£432	£628
Customer Outcome	<i>Citizens' Panel Health and social care for adults % of service users rating service as very good/good*</i>	81%	75%	84%		*

31	26	*
18	14	-
2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
18	21	29
1	1	4
	*	

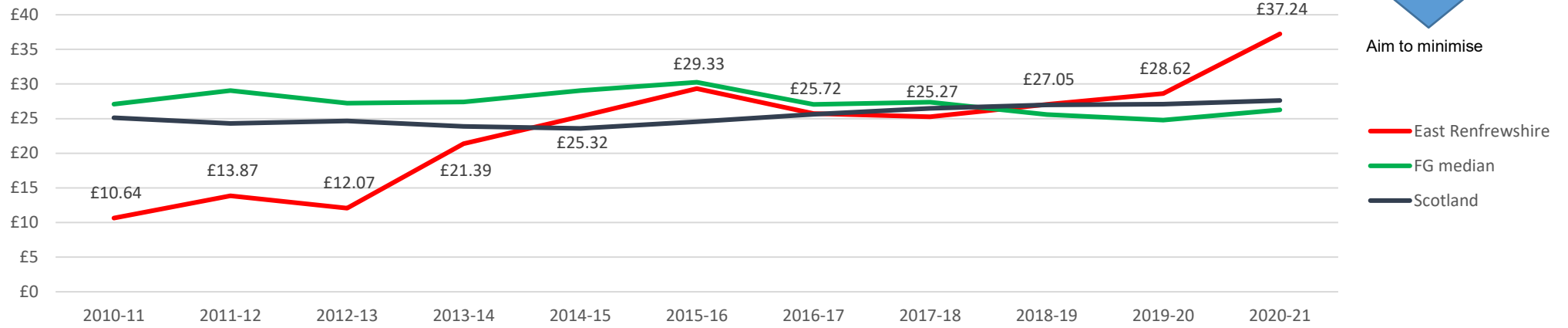
²⁴ The data for this indicator comes from the bi-annual Health and Care Experience Survey. 2020/21 data is not yet available.

²⁵ As above.

²⁶ As above.

Adult Social Care: Spotlight

SW1 - Older Persons (Over65) Home Care Costs per Hour



Adult Social Care: Information

National Overview

Councils' social care spending on adults has grown by 18% since 2010/11, and by 1.6% in 2020/21. Spending on home care and residential care for older people remains the most significant element of social care spend accounting for around 60% of the total. Spending per hour on home care for older people has risen in real-terms by 10% since 2010/11, and by 1.3% in 2020/21. Net spending on residential care has fallen by 7.8% since 2012/13. Direct payments and personalised managed budgets have grown steadily across the period from 1.6% to 8.2% of total social work spend including a 0.4% increase in 2020/21. Progress has been made across the longer period in shifting the balance of care between acute and institutional settings to home or a homely setting, with the overall proportion of those in need of personal care who were cared for at home increasing by 1 percentage point in 2020/21, to 62%. However, the growing elderly population living into older age means making further progress in this area will become increasingly challenging.

Health & Social Care Partnership's Strategic Policy Intention

Our strategic policy intention for the period 2020-21 was set out in the Health and Social Care Strategic Plan 2018-21 which is shaped by the National Health and Wellbeing Outcomes and Community Planning commitments. Through the plan we work to maximise the number of older people and people with long-term conditions that are able to live independently and well in their own home and community. We do this through appropriate provision of care at home services, expansion of choice and control through the development of self-directed support, and delivery of community-led supports. We work in partnership with primary and acute health care colleagues to minimise unplanned hospital care. Through development of rehabilitation services and targeted action by our Hospital to Home team, we intend to continue reducing delayed discharges and readmissions to hospital. In close partnership with local voluntary sector stakeholders we aim to ensure that all carers can access the supports they need. We have produced a new three-year HSCP Strategic Plan for 2022-25. Many of our strategic priorities remain in place but with delivery reflecting the changing context as we recover from the pandemic. This includes a renewed focus on supporting mental health and wellbeing across our communities and supporting the wellbeing and resilience of our health and care workforce.

Health & Social Care Partnership's Performance

We are committed to shifting provision away from institutional care and the acute sector and continue to see very good performance in relation to minimising delayed discharges and hospital readmissions. For 2020-21 we were the 3rd ranked best performing HSCP in Scotland for hospital bed days lost to delayed discharge (189 days per 1,000 population) and are ranked 6th (from 4th last year) for the rate of readmissions to hospital within 28 days. During 2020-21 we continued our collaborative work with local care homes, working to minimise emergency attendances and admissions and continued to develop our model for supporting safe and early discharge from hospital. Our performance on readmissions is a positive reflection on the homecare and re-ablement services that have continued to support local people throughout the pandemic period.

We continue to support the expansion of choice and control by encouraging the uptake of Self-Directed Support (SDS) options. The LGBF measure shows continued growth in the proportion of spend through SDS Options 1 and 2, and we are currently 6th ranked across Scotland (up from 7th in the previous year). The provision of quality care at home to support people to live independently and well in their own homes remains a key priority for the partnership. In 2020/21 we significantly improved performance in the % of people aged 65 and over with long-term care needs receiving personal care at home. This has subsequently seen our ranking move from 23rd up to 16th this year. We continued to expand our Telecare provision and our Home and Mobile Health Monitoring (HMHM) service is now active across GP practices.

Residential costs per week per resident (65 or over) have increased this year to £273 (from £182 in 2019/20) this has resulted in our ranking falling to 3rd from 1st in the previous three years (nationally the average is £439). Our costs for residential care have increased in line with the National Care Home Contract. The change in cost per resident relates to the level of contribution from individuals living in our care homes, which varies from year to year; given this is out with the control of any HSCP this makes the benchmarking somewhat arbitrary. Our overall cost remains low in comparison with the Scottish average reflecting the higher proportion of self-funders in East Renfrewshire. Our allocation methodology changed in this return as we took the opportunity to review guidance and improve the accuracy of allocations which has impacted on the performance measure, this means the associated overheads are slightly increased in this year.

Our homecare costs per hour for people aged 65 or over have also increased with our ranking decreasing from 20 to 29. During the pandemic we have seen non-residential care costs increasing due to changing patterns of demand. Earlier and more complex discharges from hospital, as well as reluctance to access residential care and lower availability of day supports has resulted in additional pressures for care at home services with more people with complex needs accessing our services. Staffing increased significantly by 50 employees during the year, and we also experienced increased agency costs and higher purchased care costs influenced by the pandemic. We have seen a significant reduction in the number of referrals accepted by our external partner providers meaning that more packages have had to be delivered in-house. The transition to a national framework for care and support as well as costs relating to fair work practices have also contributed to increased costs overall.

What the HSCP is doing to improve services

The HSCP continues to be at the forefront of local efforts to support our most vulnerable residents through the pandemic. Our newly developed Strategic Plan sets out our key priorities for 2022-25. As we continue our recovery from COVID-19 we will ensure our services address the challenges and wider impacts resulting from the pandemic in terms of direct impacts on the health and wellbeing our residents and changes in the way we deliver support. We will make best use of technology and health monitoring systems to support independence and self-management. In line with the NHSGGC recovery planning we will support the increased use of digital technology, telephone and Near Me video conferencing technology to support remote consultations and enable services to continue seeing patients in new ways.

We remained focused on ensuring people are supported in their community and avoid unnecessary use of hospital services. To support this we continue to work in close collaboration with our Primary Care partners and are working to improve our approaches to Anticipatory Care Planning, local out of hours response arrangements, and our 'discharge to assess' protocol. We continue to develop our support to local care homes and other supported living providers through safety and professional assurance arrangements. We continue to develop our interim care models and our social work staff continue to proactively encourage families to consider interim care options.

To meet continuing demand pressures following the pandemic we have undertaken significant recruitment activity, strengthening capacity in our Review Team and Intensive Support Service. We are also recruiting a range of multi-disciplinary roles to support our interim care arrangements (step up /step down and proactive support in the community).

Organisational Outcomes

Customer: Satisfied customers access services that meet their needs

Efficiency: Our physical, information and financial assets are efficiently managed

People: We have engaged employees who are motivated to deliver our outcomes

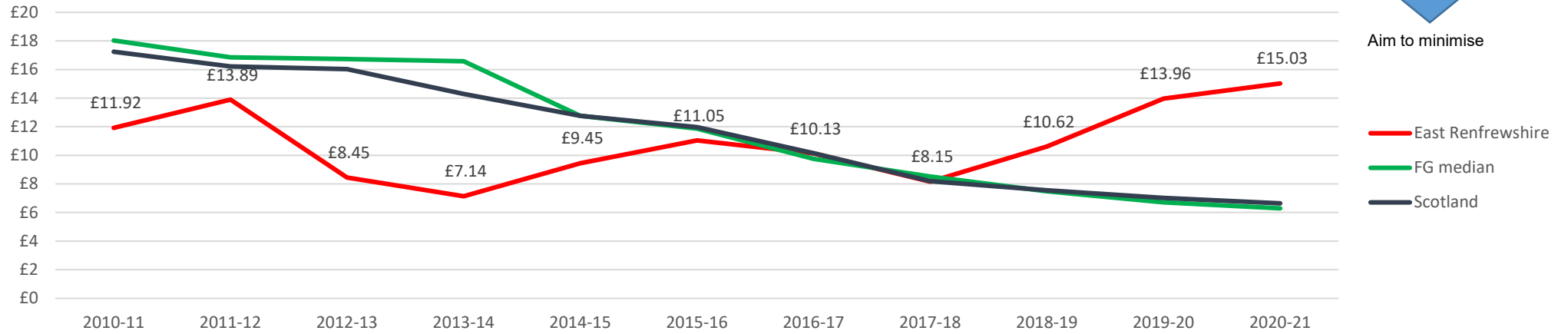
Corporate Costs & Processes

Alignment	Indicator	East Renfrewshire values			2020/21 Scotland	2020/21 Family Group	East Renfrewshire ranks		
		2018/19	2019/20	2020/21			2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Efficiency Outcome	Support services as a % of total gross expenditure	4.8%	5.0%	4.8%	4.1%	4.3%	26	26	26
	Cost per dwelling of collecting Council Tax ²⁷	£10.62	£13.96	£15.03	£6.64	£7.30	26	30	30
	% of income due from Council Tax received by the end of the year	97.6%	97.5%	96.4%	94.8%	96.3%	4	3	6
	% of invoices sampled that were paid within 30 days	81.4%	75.3%	79.8%	91.8%	91.8%	30	32	31

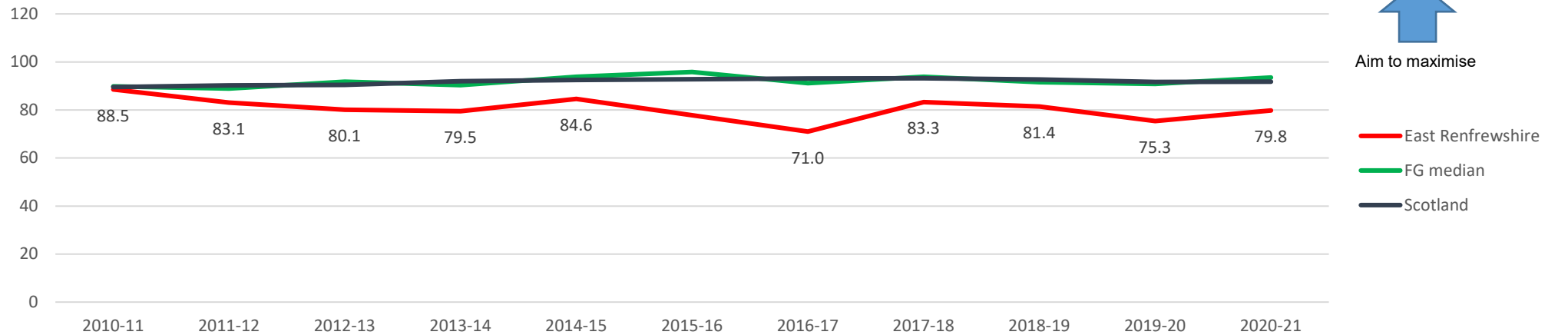
²⁷ These figures represent cash values which have been adjusted for the effects of inflation in April 2022.

Corporate Costs & Processes: Spotlights

CORP 4 - The cost per dwelling of collecting Council Tax



CORP 8 - Percentage of invoices sampled that were paid within 30 days



Corporate Costs & Processes: Information

National Overview

Corporate services spend has fallen by 29% in real terms since 2010/11, including by 3% in 2020/21, and now accounts for only 4.1% of total spending. This is the lowest corporate overhead ratio yet recorded and reflects councils' commitment to protect frontline services over 'back office' functions. It also reflects the success of the councils' digital strategies. Council Tax collection within the year remains above 95% and the cost of collection has reduced by 64% in real terms since 2010/11. The percentage of all invoices paid within 30 days was 91.8% in 2020/21. Across Councils, the reduction in spend has created some risks around organisational strategic capacity, reduced flexibility in the system and may impact or constrain future change capability.

Strategic Policy Intention

To provide efficient and effective support services, to properly and adequately resource the democratic governance of the Council and the area.

Council Performance

Council Tax collection rate continues to be top quartile and significantly above the Scottish average. Despite the reduction of 1.05% in cash collected, the net billed figure increased to £56.5m (prior year £53.4m) with an additional £2.2m of cash collected. The reduction in collections is in line with the experience of other Scottish councils due to the impact of COVID-19, where typical reductions are 1-2%. This indicator is above the Scottish average in 6th position. The cost of Council Tax collection has been adversely impacted by project costs recharged for implementing the new Council Tax and Benefits ICT system. It is anticipated that these costs will continue to be elevated as we seek to modernise and improve Council Tax and Benefits processes. Invoice payments performance has improved by 4.48% with 79.82% of invoices paid within 30 days (note that 58% of invoices are paid within 10 day targets to local suppliers and this is 17th in Scotland). This has been achieved against a backdrop of significant process and compliance demands due to COVID-19, with local businesses and residents supported through the payment of grants. A new Purchase to Pay (P2P) Group was developed during 2020/21 to provide improved collaboration between AP/Procurement and other Directorates, building a foundation for future improvement and delivery. The 4th quartile position is not reflective of the improvements in accuracy and error rates, avoiding duplicate payments and mitigating against potential financial risk. A rigorous compliance regime is firmly embedded and auditors continue to recognise the very significant performance improvements in this area.

What the Council is doing to improve services

We are keen to improve customer journeys, processing times and the digitisation of our end to end processes. The implementation of the new finance/procurement system in September 2019 and the subsequent merging of the Creditors and Debtors teams into the new Accounts Payable/Receivable team in October 2020, are now resulting in modernisation and streamlining of both our invoice payments and sundry debt processes. The replacement of the Council Tax and Benefits ICT system in December 2020 provides a platform to allow fundamental process change and improvement. COVID-19 has resulted in some challenges and delays to our plans, with the Citizen Access front end portal now scheduled for implementation during 2022. Once implemented, this will lead to improved automation and an improved customer experience.

Corporate Assets

Alignment	Indicator	East Renfrewshire values				East Renfrewshire ranks			
		2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2020/21 Scotland	2020/21 Family Group	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Efficiency Outcome	% of operational buildings that are suitable for their current use	84.1%	84.2%	84.5%	82.3%	88.0%	17	18	18
	% of internal floor area of operational buildings in satisfactory condition	83.6%	83.9%	84.1%	89.2%	91.7%	22	25	27

Corporate Assets: Information

National Overview

There has been continued annual improvement in the condition of the Councils' corporate assets over the period nationally, with 82.3% of operational buildings suitable for their current use and 89.2% in satisfactory condition, the highest rates recorded since the benchmarking framework was launched.

Strategic Policy Intention

To deliver high quality, efficient and effective asset management and property maintenance to support a thriving, attractive and sustainable place for residents and businesses to grow. Providing efficient buildings that are cost effective, user friendly and support new ways of working are also key to contributing to the Council's overall efficiency.

Council Performance

Overall, property performance has continued to improve again in 2020/21. This slight increase from 83.9% to 84.1% reflects both improvements in property condition and consideration of detrimental changes with defects recorded against properties.

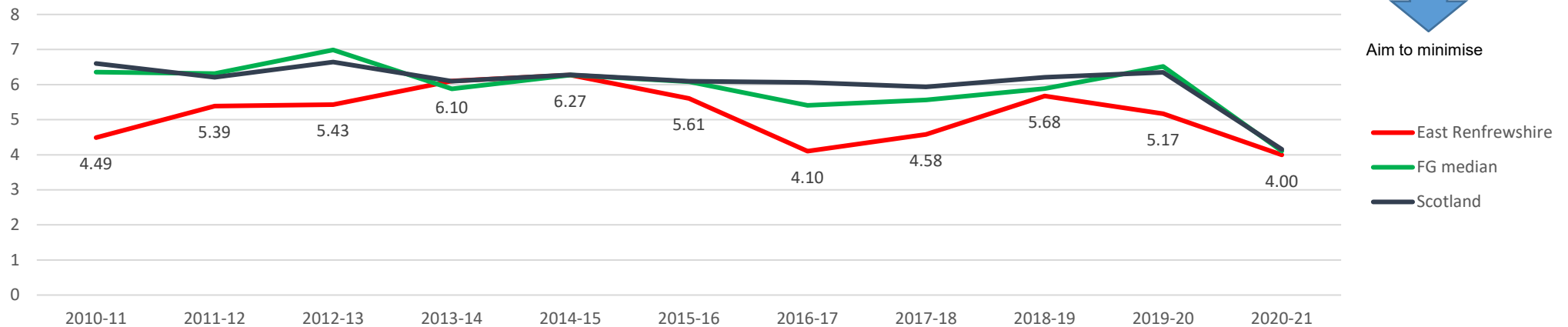
What the Council is doing to improve services

The Council continues to explore opportunities for property colocation with community partners. This could potentially reduce running costs whilst allowing community access to services at one location. Property Asset Management Plans are being updated to ensure all tie to the same period. In addition, a draft Accommodation Strategy has been prepared, however, delayed due to COVID-19, which, along with our The Way We Work Group we will assess our longer term opportunity to implement a hybrid working model alongside assessing our future property needs.

Employees

Alignment	Indicator	East Renfrewshire values			2020/21 Scotland	2020/21 Family Group	East Renfrewshire ranks		
		2018/19	2019/20	2020/21			2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
People Outcome	% of the highest paid 5% employees who are women	59.9%	59.3%	57.5%	58.3%	57.5%	4	11	14
	The gender pay gap (%)	7.5%	6.3%	6.5%	3.7%	3.1%	27	27	27
	Sickness absence days per teacher ²⁸	5.7	5.2	4	4.2	4.6	11	6	15
	Sickness absence days per employee (local government employees) ²⁹	12.4	13	10.4	9.7	10.1	21	26	24

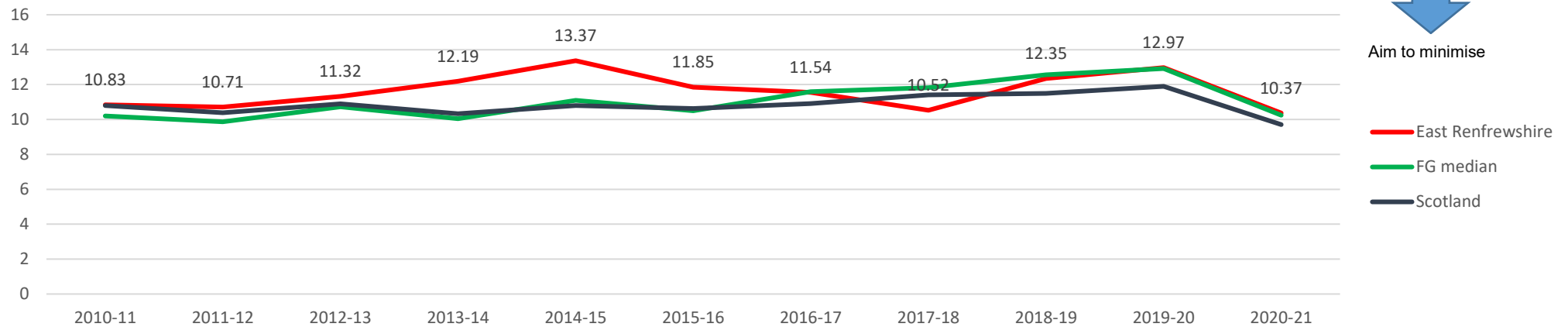
CORP 6a - Sickness Absence Days per Teacher



²⁸ Through work undertaken to review sickness reports from the new iTrent HR system it has been identified that due to the way the data was loaded into iTrent the overall FTE figure used to calculate and report absence data to Improvement Services was incorrect. We have over reported absence for both Local Government Employees (LGE) and Teachers. The calculation has been rectified which means for 2020/21 the LGE absence is now 10.16 days per FTE which would have put us at 21st instead of 24th. The teaching absence is 3.61 days per FTE and would have put us in 10th place instead of 15th place.

²⁹ As above.

CORP6b - Sickness Absence Days per Employee (non-teacher)



Employees: Information

National Overview

Prior to COVID-19 in 2019/20, Local Government absence levels were at their highest since 2014/15, increasing on average by 7% across the period. In 2020/21, absence levels (excluding COVID-19 related absence) for both teaching and non-teaching staff reduced significantly, by 30.2% for teachers, and by 22% for non-teachers.

Strategic Policy Intention

To reduce the number of sickness absence days within the Council and ensure that ERC continues to be a fair and equal employer.

Council Performance

Through work undertaken to review sickness reports from the new iTrent HR system it has been identified that due to the way the data was loaded into iTrent the overall FTE figure used to calculate and report absence data to Improvement Services was incorrect. We have over reported absence for both Local Government Employees (LGE) and Teachers. It was identified that employees who left, returned, changed positions or changed their employment status prior to the data load were not counted in the FTE. The calculation has been rectified which means for 2020/21 the LGE absence is now 10.16 days per FTE which would have put us at 21st instead of 24th. The teaching absence is 3.61 days per FTE and would have put us in 10th place instead of 15th place. This is a one off issue which is directly linked to the data loaded between the old and new HR system, and this will not occur in the future.

The gender pay gap figure for 2020/21 increased slightly from the previous year to 6.48% which was unexpected given we had consolidated the living wage. On review of the gender pay gap we identified that the consolidation did reduce the pay gap for our lowest paid employees, and the gap remains small for our higher graded employees. The issue remains for those in the middle of our pay grades where there are more progression points within the grades and therefore it takes new employees longer to reach the top of the pay scale which means a pay gap will exist where the proportion of roles are held by females with low service.

What the Council is doing to improve services

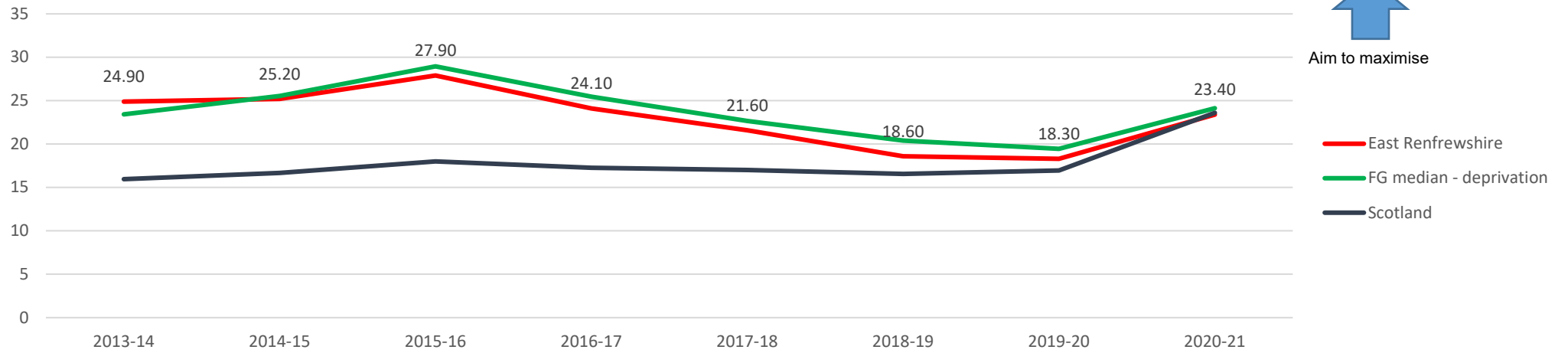
Health and wellbeing is an important focus, and a draft strategy has been developed with the aim to launch in 2022. A number of employee benefits were launched last year including a car benefit scheme, financial wellbeing products and a discount card which can be used with national retailers.

Financial Sustainability

Alignment	Indicator	East Renfrewshire values					East Renfrewshire ranks		
		2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2020/21 Scotland	2020/21 Family Group	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Efficiency Outcome	Total useable reserves as a % of council annual budgeted revenue (<i>% of income held in reserves</i>)	18.6%	18.3%	23.4%	23.6%	29.9%	12	12	14
	Uncommitted General Fund Balance as a % of council annual budgeted net revenue (<i>% of revenue that is not committed to a specific theme/project</i>)	4.5%	4.0%	4.5%	3.5%	2.6%	5	6	8
	Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream - General Fund	9.0	9.0	7.6	6.2	6.4	22	25	25
	Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream - Housing Revenue Account	34.6	29.7	32.1	22.9	25.4	22	20	21
	Actual outturn as a % of budgeted expenditure (<i>% of budgeted spend that is spent in practice</i>)	98.2%	99.2%	97.4%	97.4%	97.9%	23	19	19

Financial Sustainability: Spotlight

FINUS1 - Total useable reserves as a % of council annual budgeted net revenue



Financial Sustainability: Information

National overview

From 2013/14, the proportion of income councils held in reserves has increased from 15.8% to 23.6%, including a 6.7% increase in 2020/21 alone. This is largely as a result of the timing and nature of additional COVID-19 funding which has contributed to a significant carry forward of reserves. Uncommitted General Fund Balance as a % of council annual budgeted net revenue has remained stable at around 4%, and is currently 3.5% for 2020/21. Actual outturn as a percentage of budgeted expenditure had remained between 99% and 100% from 2013/14 to 2019/20, however it has dropped to 97.4% in 2020/21.

Strategic policy intention

East Renfrewshire's vision is to ensure a financially secure position underpinned by efficient and effective use of all financial resources.

Council performance

Overall performance reflects a short term improvement and is mainly due to late receipt of COVID-19 related government funding. There still remains an ongoing challenging financial situation.

What the Council is doing to improve services

Given the current financial climate is not anticipated to improve in the short or medium term this will present a challenge to improve performance. As the Council's Capital Programme and Housing Capital Programmes become more ambitious it is likely that, regardless of steps taken, the indicators around these areas will not improve.

Directors have been requested to avoid non-essential spending and to manage any forecast overspends during the year. This reflects a deliberate policy and will allow the Council to continue to not have to call on the planned use of reserves and therefore allows them to be used to balance future year budgets. Again this will have an unfavourable impact on the indicator 'total useable reserves as a % of council annual budgeted revenue'.

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EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCILCABINET16 June 2022Report by Director of EnvironmentALLOCATIONS POLICY EMERGENCY CHANGES**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1. To advise the Cabinet of the emergency changes required to East Renfrewshire Council's Lettings Policy.

RECOMMENDATIONS

2. The Cabinet is asked to note;
- a) the current demand for Council housing in East Renfrewshire Council, in particular the increase in homelessness;
 - b) the emergency decision to increase the percentage of lets to homeless households from April 2022 until October 2022; and
 - c) the proposal to report back to the Cabinet later in 2022 with a comprehensive review of the Council's Allocation Policy.

BACKGROUND AND REPORT

3. The existing Lettings Policy was approved by the Cabinet in June 2018 in preparation for the launch of the Choice Based Lettings service in February 2019. The existing policy included a lettings target to determine what percentage of empty homes should be allocated to each priority group. The lettings targets can be found in appendix 1 of this report and the full lettings policy at:

https://www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/media/2591/Cabinet-Item-08-21-June-2018/pdf/Cabinet_Item_08_-_21_June_2018.pdf?m=637357810219800000

4. The policy requires to be reviewed regularly but due to additional demand placed on the Housing Service as a result of COVID 19 this has not been progressed as quickly as had been hoped (however, a full review is currently underway and a report will be submitted to the Cabinet later in 2022 following a consultation process).

5. In March 2020 national lockdown restrictions put in place by the Scottish Government due to the COVID 19 pandemic resulted in significant disruption to all services provided by the Council. For the allocation of council homes in particular this meant:

- Homeless households were unable to move on from their temporary accommodation into their new permanent homes from March 2020 until July 2020.
- During this time repair work for empty homes was only permitted for emergency homeless accommodation.

6. The resulted in a considerable backlog of homeless applicants waiting for housing. This was exacerbated as social distancing rules reduced the productivity of the workforce once repair work was permitted.

7. In order to address the backlog, using delegated emergency powers, the percentage of lets to homeless households was increased during 2020/21 (and reported to Cabinet in June 2021) as follows:

Priority Group	Target % Lets (excludes new build housing)	April 2020 to March 2021 no of lets	April 2020 to March 2021 % of lets
Priority A	55%	155	67%
Priority B	28%	34	15%
Priority C	8%	12	5%
Priority D	8%	21	9%
Priority E	1%	10	4%

8. However, whilst these actions addressed the immediate issue at that time, the demand on housing has remained consistently high.

WIDER CONTEXT: HOUSING DEMAND

9. The demand for council housing has increased steadily over the past few years and in particular from homeless households. The table below details the increase in recent years.

Year	No of homeless presentations	No of households who had the right to an offer permanent accommodation
2018/19	308	251
2019/20	340	287
2020/21	372	301
2021/22	378	309

10. The demand from homeless households is in addition to the general waiting list. On the general waiting list there are households with various needs including medical needs, overcrowding and having lodgers. The demand from the general waiting list has increased from approximately 2800 in 2018/19 to over 4000 at the end of 2021/22.

11. To address this the Council has around 250 – 300 empty council homes each year that are available to let. Local Housing Associations operate their own waiting lists and also have a legal duty to assist with the housing of homeless households. However many in the area are specialist providers and are rarely able to assist the needs of homeless households. However as a mainstream landlord, Barrhead Housing Association (BHA) assist by allocating up to 40% of all their empty properties to homeless households.

12. East Renfrewshire Council has a healthy new build programme being delivered by the Council and other Housing Associations. The Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) ensures that 25% of all new build social housing in the area is allocated to homeless households.

13. The impact of the increase in both homeless households and the general waiting list along with the impact of the initial COVID restrictions has created a large backlog of homeless

households. Over the past two years, the number of homeless households waiting for an offer of accommodation has remained steadily above 100 households at any one time.

14. This demand also places significant pressure of our supply of temporary accommodation. Pre 2020 Housing Services required around 60 properties to use as temporary accommodation consisting of mainly council owned properties but also using some properties from the private sector and BHA. This supply was supplemented with the small use of Bed & Breakfast accommodation as and when required. The Council now has a supply of over 100 properties and is using a significant amount of Bed & Breakfast accommodation because of the current challenges. Significant use of Bed and Breakfast accommodation is contrary to best practice.

LETTINGS POLICY TEMPORARY AMENDMENT

15. In view of the emerging situation and in order to address and ease the backlog, in April 2022 Cllrs Tony Buchanan and Cllr Danny Devlin approved under emergency powers a 6 month change to the Lettings Policy for a period of 6 months. This

- Increased the % of new build council homes allocated to homeless households from the existing target of 25% "to up to 40%".
- Increased the % of existing council homes allocated to homeless households from the existing target of 55% "to up to 70%".

16. These changes will be in effect from 5th April until 5th October 2022. It is hope these changes will help ease the backlog of homeless applications and the associated issues which the Council is currently experiencing.

FINANCE AND EFFICIENCY

17. The impact of these changes will result in a lower demand for temporary accommodation which should in due course provide a financial saving.

CONSULTATION

18. When setting/changing allocation polices, social landlords are required to undertake a full consultation exercise. However, given the emergency nature of this issue, this was not possible in April 2022.

19. Before returning to Cabinet with any permanent proposed changes to the Allocations Policy, Housing Services will consult with the following groups:

- existing ERC tenants;
- those on our housing waiting list;
- registered tenants' organisations in East Renfrewshire
- East Renfrewshire Health & Social Care Partnership
- relevant organisations, including other housing providers and voluntary agencies operating in the area, e.g. Shelter Scotland.

20. The consultation will be undertaken in summer 2022 with a policy review being presented to Cabinet later in 2022.

PARTNERSHIP WORKING

21. It is vital that all social landlords in East Renfrewshire contribute towards addressing housing need and homelessness. Housing Services will therefore engage with local Registered Social Landlords to review referral and nomination agreements for the allocation of new and existing social housing.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSALS

22. There are no implications with these proposals in terms of staffing, legal, property or sustainability.

23. An Equalities Impact Assessment will be required for any new policy changes

CONCLUSIONS

24. Over the past few years, the need for housing from homeless households has increased year on year. In addition, the restrictions and challenges from COVID 19 caused a backlog of homeless households awaiting permanent accommodation. Emergency changes were required to address this housing need.

25. A review of the existing policy is underway to ensure it addresses the housing concerns of those most in need. A full consultation exercise will be undertaken and the policy presented to Cabinet for their approval.

RECOMMENDATIONS

26. The Cabinet is asked to note;

- a) the current demand for Council housing in East Renfrewshire Council, in particular the increase in homelessness;
- b) the emergency decision to increase the percentage of lets to homeless households from April 2022 until October 2022; and
- c) the proposal to report back to the Cabinet later in 2022 with a comprehensive review of the Council's Allocation Policy.

Director of Environment

Further information can be obtained from: Phil Daws, Head of Environment (Strategic Services) phil.daws@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk 0141 577 3186

Convener contact details

Councillor Danny Devlin
(Convener for Housing and Maintenance Services)

Office: 0141 577 3107/8

June 2022

Appendix 1

Priority Pass A

- Unintentionally homeless or threatened with homelessness
- Moving from ERC young person's supported housing
- Special cases not covered by the allocation policy

Priority Pass B

- Intentionally homeless or threatened with homelessness
- Living in East Renfrewshire or with a local connection and:
 - living in unsatisfactory housing or cannot meet housing needs
 - a social housing tenant with 2 or more bedrooms than you need
 - existing home unsuitable and delaying discharge from hospital
 - overcrowded - 2 or more bedrooms less than you need
 - has a medical need for more suitable housing
 - living in one of our adapted homes and no longer need adaptations
 - leaving the Armed Forces

Priority Pass C

- Need to move to give or get support
- Live in East Renfrewshire or with local connection and:
 - sharing facilities and don't have own bed space
 - overcrowded - 1 bedroom less than you need
 - a social housing tenant with one more bedroom than you need
 - experiencing harassment in current home but safe to stay for a time
- 2 ERC tenants combining to make 1 household

Priority Pass D

- Live in East Renfrewshire or with local connection and:
 - sharing facilities and have own bed space
 - has a current home unsuitable for children who sometimes stay overnight but live somewhere else
 - lives in a private rented house
- Don't live in East Renfrewshire but want to move here because you:
 - work here
 - have been offered a job here
 - are looking for work here and have proof
 - want to be near a relative or carer
 - have a social or medical need to live in the area

Priority Pass E

- No circumstances in A to D apply. Order of priority:
 - Lives in East Renfrewshire or with a local connection to area and no housing need
 - No local connection and has a medical need for more suitable housing
- No local connection and no medical need for more suitable housing

EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCILCABINET16 June 2022Report by Director of EnvironmentPLACE BASED INVESTMENT PROGRAMME 2021/22**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1. The purpose of this report is to inform members of the progress being made with the Placed Based Investment Programme (PBIP) and advise members on the decision to fund 2 replacement projects from the 2021/22 grant allocation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

2. It is recommended that the Cabinet:
- a) Note the progress made to date on the implementation of the programme to date; and
 - b) Note the decision to approve the substitution of the Dunterlie Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) project with the projects from Young Enterprise Scotland and the Neilston Shop Front Improvement Scheme as outlined in the report.

BACKGROUND

3. A report was submitted to the Cabinet on 25 November 2021 which informed members of the new Placed Based Investment Programme (PBIP) award from the Scottish Government and sought approval of 7 projects which totalled £635,000 for 2021/22.

4. The report advised that the Scottish Government proposed to implement a place-based investment programme over the 5-year period of the next parliament. The funding is targeted at addressing some of the challenges faced by Scotland's places across the country. East Renfrewshire Council were awarded £635,000 for the financial year 2021/2022, £551,100 in 2022/2023 and £384,100 in each of the remaining 3 years of the programme thereby providing a funding programme in the region of £2.34m over the 5-year period. The high level main objectives of the Place Based Investment Programme are:

- to link and align place based initiatives and establish a coherent local framework to implement the Place Principle;
- to support place policy ambitions such as town centre revitalization, community led regeneration, 20 minute neighbourhoods and Community Wealth Building;
- to ensure that all place based investments are shaped by the needs and aspirations of local communities;
- to accelerate ambitions for net zero, wellbeing and inclusive economic development, tackling inequality and disadvantage, community involvement and ownership.

5. The confirmation of a 5-year programme allows a more structured approach to the preparation, allocation and delivery of projects when compared to previous annual allocations for town centre funding.

REPORT

6. With regard to the grant of £635,000 for the financial year 2021/22 it is a Scottish Government requirement that any works contracts should be **signed by 31 March 2022 at the latest**.

7. The Dunterlie MUGA project was awarded £250,000 at the Cabinet meeting of 25 November 2021. The project would replace the existing derelict MUGA at Dunterlie Resource Centre, Barrhead.

8. The tender for this project has resulted in potential contract costs of £450,200 compared with the original estimate of £250,000. Only one tender was submitted in a recent tendering exercise. This meant that should the project proceed the Council would have had to find an additional £200,000 from its own resources to cover the shortfall between the total cost and the grant funding awarded.

9. Given the circumstances regarding substantial cost increases related to this project a decision was made by the Director of Environment not to proceed with this project at this time at least until market conditions have stabilised or improved. The Council's Economic Development team will work with Procurement and Property and Technical Services to explore more financially viable options that could be considered for future years funding.

10. As stated above all contracts require to be let by 31 March 2022. In order to avoid the potential loss of £250,000 Scottish Government grant to the programme, the Council's Environment Department have been in discussion with the Scottish Government who have advised that no new activity can be funded from this round of grant funding for 2021/22. However, helpfully they also advised that any uncommitted funds could be allocated even at this late stage to existing Placed Based Investment Programme projects provided the contracts could be let by 31 March 2022.

11. There were two projects within the existing programme approved by the Cabinet in November 2021 that could be expanded quickly in terms of scope and size. These were:

- **Neilston Shop Front Improvement Scheme.** It was possible to award a further £180,000 to the Neilston Shop Front Improvement scheme which would mean a further 13 shops being in scope. The project ties in with the overall regeneration of Neilston and will add value and complement works already planned for the village including the Education Campus and Neilston Leisure Centre; and
- **Young Enterprise Scotland (YES) premises at Rouken Glen Park Training Centre.** This project was a substitution project already agreed by the Cabinet in March 2022. It was possible to enhance the existing project to create additional new business start-up space on the site as well as increased event space at a further cost of £60,000. This would involve further classrooms being installed with bandstand/events space resulting in YES being able to expand its employability offer to young people in East Renfrewshire.

12. Both projects combined result in £240,000 being redirected to two priority regeneration projects already approved by the Cabinet and would mean only £10,000 grant being lost to the programme in 2021/22.

13. Both projects align with the Place Based Investment Programme criteria, our approach to place based regeneration and 20 minute neighbourhoods. The YES project is aligned with the East Renfrewshire employability strategy and the Scottish Youth Guarantee Programme in terms of reducing unemployment for young people in ER.

14. There are no planning issues to be addressed with either project.

15. Those remaining projects approved by the Cabinet on 25 November 2021 are making good progress and will be completed by end of September 2022.

16. Normally any new proposals or proposals to amend the previously approved projects would be submitted to the Cabinet for approval. However, due to the short time remaining for contracts to be signed and the lack of a suitable Cabinet meeting to consider the proposal, the decision was taken by the Director of Environment to seek urgent approval for the substitution projects outlined above. In terms of emergency powers Councillors Buchanan and Bamforth were consulted over the change and were supportive of this approach.

FINANCE AND EFFICIENCY

17. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report. Project implementation will be funded through the Place Based Investment Programme.

18. The Council must comply with the conditions of the grant, as set out in Scottish Government guidelines.

CONSULTATION AND PARTNERSHIP WORKING

19. Consultation has taken place with a range of key stakeholders including Legal and Procurement colleagues.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSALS

20. There are no equalities, IT or staffing implications associated with this report.

CONCLUSIONS

21. The PBIP programme provides an excellent opportunity to deliver further investment to key areas of East Renfrewshire and has been a catalyst for community and stakeholder engagement which will help provide direction for future investment and collaborative working.

22. The decision taken has ensured that the Council has retained £240,000 of Scottish Government funding in relation to the Place Based Investment Programme report for 2021/22 for implementation during 2022/23.

RECOMMENDATIONS

23. It is recommended that the Cabinet:
- a) Note the progress made to date on the implementation of the programme to date; and
 - b) Note the decision to approve the substitution of the Dunterlie Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) project with the projects from Young Enterprise Scotland and the Neilston Shop Front Improvement Scheme as outlined in the report.

Director of Environment

For further information contact: Michael McKernan, Economic Development Manager
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Convener contact details

Councillor Owen O'Donnell
Leader of the Council

Office: 0141 577 3107

June 2022

EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCILCABINET16 June 2022Report by Director of EnvironmentREGENERATION CAPITAL GRANT FUND 2020/21 – COWAN PARK ENTERPRISE
AND COMMUNITY HUB**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1. The purpose of this report is to inform the Cabinet on the progress of the Cowan Park Enterprise and Community Hub which is funded through the Scottish Government's Regeneration and Capital Grant Fund (RCGF) and Council resources and subsequent increased costs in relation to project delivery.

RECOMMENDATIONS

2. The Cabinet is asked to:
- (a) note the progress of the Cowan Park Enterprise and Community Hub project
 - (b) note the increased capital work costs and additional funding of £200,000 secured from the Scottish Government; and
 - (c) note the urgent variation to the contract to allow the project to be completed.

BACKGROUND

3. The Cowan Park Enterprise and Community Hub was the result of a successful bid to the Scottish Government Regeneration Capital Grant Fund.

4. The total cost of the awarded contract was £890,000. Scottish Government's Regeneration Capital Grant Fund programme provided £499,000 and East Renfrewshire Council's contribution of £391,000 was approved and reflected in the Council's General Fund Capital Programme for 2021/22 and 2022/ 23.

5. This community backed project comprises the creation of an Enterprise & Community Hub through the regeneration of the partly derelict Cowan Park Gate Lodge property situated in Cowan Park Barrhead. The Hub will provide a much needed space for the delivery of skills development, training and improving employability prospects by third sector organisations. It will also allow vital opportunities for community capacity building, increased support for social enterprises & community groups and health & wellbeing benefits for residents.

6. Whilst East Renfrewshire Council are the lead on this project, the management of the hub will be undertaken by a third party, Include Me 2 Club.

7. Due to external factors outwith the Council's control there has been an increase in contract costs.

REPORT

8. The project included a full renovation of the lodge to encompass a workshop, office & meeting space, public toilets, kitchen and café and is now scheduled to open in June/July 2022.

9. The delivery of this project has been challenging. The project has resulted in increased contract costs of £228,700. This was due to a combination of factors experienced since the start of the project;

- collapsed main sewer requiring rerouting and renewal to main road connection
- increases due to Covid experienced as manpower and material shortages and delays,
- increases due to necessary scope enhancements - e.g. end user adjustments to expand toilets and increase disabled car parking .

10. The additional works were required to complete the project in difficult circumstances.

11. However, the Council's Economic Development team were able to secure a further £200,000 in grant funding from the Scottish Government's Regeneration Capital Grant Fund programme to offset this additional cost. The balance of £28,700 can be found from existing budgets from within the Environment Departments section of the Council's General Fund Capital for 2022/23 through the use of unallocated provisional sums.

12. It was not possible to seek prior approval from Cabinet for the contract variation as required under Standing Orders Relating to Contracts prior to the May 2022 elections and therefore details of this are being brought to the first available Cabinet meeting post-elections. Variations greater than £100,000 must be reported to Cabinet for approval prior to the variation being instructed. As the variation was urgently required to ensure the completion of the project, approval was sought and obtained from Councillors Buchanan and Bamforth.

FINANCE AND EFFICIENCY

13. The total cost of the project is now £1,118,700. Scottish Government's RCGF programme contribution will be £699,000 and East Renfrewshire Council's contribution is now £419,700 with £391,000 already approved and allocated within the existing General Fund Capital Programme with a further £28,700 being secured through adjustments to the 2022/23 General Fund as outlined above. This approach is supported by the Head of Accountancy and is in accordance with the Councils Financial Regulations.

14. The Council must comply with the conditions of the grant, as set out in Scottish Government guidelines.

CONSULTATION AND PARTNERSHIP WORKING

15. Consultation has taken place with a range of key stakeholders including the Council's Property and Technical Services, Legal and Procurement teams and the Scottish Government.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSALS

16. There are no equalities, IT or staffing implications associated with this report.

CONCLUSIONS

17. The increased allocation of Regeneration Capital Grant Fund resources and additional capital funding from the Council will allow this project to be completed. The project will deliver significant investment within Cowan Park by renovating a prominent, derelict building into a functioning community asset. The creation of an Enterprise and Community Hub will improve local residents' access to community services, social inclusion, increase opportunities for community involvement in enterprise development and support employment and volunteering opportunities for local residents and in particular those with additional support needs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

18. The Cabinet is asked to:

- a) note the progress of the Cowan Park Enterprise and Community Hub project
- b) note the increased capital work costs and additional funding of £200,000 secured from the Scottish Government; and
- c) note the urgent variation to the contract to allow the project to be completed

Director of Environment

Further information can be obtained from: Michael McKernan, Economic Development Manager, michael.mckernan@eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk

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June 2022

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