

2023-24

DELIVERY PLAN

Housing and Employability



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1. Introduction

Housing & Employability comprises a wide range of services covering Communities, Housing Development and Homelessness, Housing Operations and Working 4U. It is one of 8 strategic areas responsible for delivering the Council's Strategic Plan. Key actions to help achieve that are set out in this Delivery Plan, together with actions to address any performance issues and service priorities identified in the planning process.

The progress of this Plan will be monitored and managed by the management team and reported to Housing & Communities Committee twice yearly, at mid-year and year-end.

2. Performance Review

The management team completed a detailed review of 2022/23 performance, focusing on the following:

- 2022/23 Delivery Plan year-end progress;
- Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF) comparative data;
- Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE) comparative data;
- Scottish Housing Regulator
- Citizens' Panel feedback;
- Telephone Survey feedback;
- Complaints;
- Continuous Improvement (Fit for Future reviews)
- Other benchmarking/feedback/ etc.

This review highlighted our key achievements in 2022/23 as well as the challenges to be addressed in 2023/24. These are summarised below.

Key Achievements 2022/23

Communities

- Secured UK Shared Prosperity Funding for the upgrade of CCTV infrastructure; for three Community projects, Pride in Place, Community Soups, Community Pantry network; and to support the development of a dynamic approach to awareness raising and promotion of Participatory Budgeting across West Dunbartonshire Council
- Delivered Community Empowerment priority projects
- Developed Community Voice groups based on the findings from the Community Engagement Communications plan survey, this community-led approach will support a transition from the Community Alliance
- Development of the COSLA led Consul digital platform to support Participatory Budgeting across West Dunbartonshire

Housing Development and Homelessness

- Our approach to tenant participation retained the Gold accreditation from TPAS Scotland, making it the first local authority to do so.
- We delivered our 500th new council home through the More Homes West Dunbartonshire strategic approach
- Our new housing development at Queens Quay, Clydebank was completed delivering 146 new homes
- New key housing policies were implemented during the year included our Local Housing Strategy and a new Domestic Abuse Policy; we also reviewed and implemented a review of our housing allocation policy
- Our Home at the Heart, Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan's Year 4 objectives were delivered
- Our Homelessness and Housing Options service supported 500 households to prevent an episode of homelessness
- Our resettlement service welcomed our first Ukrainian families to be settled in West Dunbartonshire in council tenancies
- Delivered a range of sustainability improvements to our housing stock to inform future retrofit programmes
- We were awarded £1.25m from the Scottish Government's Vacant and Derelict Land Fund
- Delivered a new Strategic Housing Investment Plan which will begin to deliver on the vision to deliver 2500 new homes in the next 10 years
- Delivered a range of key improvements in respect of the QL housing management system including the launch of the tenant self-service portal and improving system capability and performance for Housing Operations and Building Services Teams

Housing Operations

- Reduced our re-let times by 12% compared to the previous year-end figure
- Achieved consistent tenancy sustainment rate of 94% against the background of cost of living and energy crisis

- Supported new and existing tenants with financial/income maximisation, assistance from our Tenancy Sustainment Fund and continued to support tenants via our Tenancy Hardship Fund to prevent homelessness
- Introduced new stock availability and turnover tool for staff use when providing housing options advice for applicants and tenants. Further work in progress and will continue in 2023/24 to rollout web support to the online housing application process for applicants
- Introduced a mobile app pilot for Housing Officers to enable real-time community-based working which will be further developed in 23/24
- Delivered proactive and visible ASB service 7 days per week until 2 am and Neighbourhood Service 7 days per week until 1 am
- Worked jointly with Building Services to review and enhance dampness and mould processes

W4U

- Secured UK Shared Prosperity Funding to support People and Skills, Local Businesses, Communities and Place and Adult numeracy projects
- Developed the local employability partnership and established a joint commissioning approach for the use of No One Left Behind and Parental Employability Funds
- Delivered the Apprenticeship programme supporting 180 young people through Modern and Foundation Apprenticeships
- Addressed poverty by supporting residents to maximising income from work and benefits
- To support the advancement of equalities within West Dunbartonshire we secured English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) funding for adult learning and delivered ASN education programme & summer programme for young people

Challenges

- Across Housing and Employability, there were several challenges relating to increased demand for support from communities, which is anticipated to be an ongoing challenge in future years, largely exacerbated by the ongoing increased cost of living. The cost of living crisis should be seen as more than an economic squeeze, as well as not being able to afford the essentials, such as food, rent, heating or transport, there is a wide range of negative impacts on mental and physical health and well-being which will require a great deal of concerted support across all of the H&E services.
- The workforce levels of the Communities Team and W4U youth learning service has reduced in line with budget constraints

which will put pressure on services to meet competing demands and support communities. In addition to this the team will face significant challenges supporting employees through the restructures at the same time as delivering on additional service remits such as the West Dunbartonshire Community planning and the transition from European funding to UK Shared Prosperity Funding. The impact of the reduced resources across the wider council also poses challenges to the H&E services to get buy-in from other services to deliver on initiatives.

- Housing services face operational challenges relating to a significant backlog of voids impacting the movement of the housing waiting list, re-let times, void rent loss, and temporary accommodation demands.
- There are a number of key strategic housing challenges which the Council will be required to negotiate over the next 12-month period. Similar to other Scottish Local authority areas, we have a record number of homeless households in temporary accommodation, and access to suitable housing is proving to be extremely challenging. Added to the challenges around homelessness and housing access will be the impact of the cost of living pressures on local communities, as well as recent cuts to the Affordable Housing Supply Programme and challenges to the future financing of Energy Efficient Standards for Social Housing (ESSH2), given that our current business plan proposes to maintain rent levels below the current rate of inflation in respect of any uplifts, we will have significant challenges to overcome in the coming year.

3. Strategic Assessment

The Housing & Employability team completed a strategic assessment and performance review to determine the major influences on service delivery and strategic priorities going forward into 2023/24. As a result of this assessment, the following factors were recognised as having a significant influence on the work of service in 2023/24:

Financial Challenges

The entire public sector is continuing to face significant financial challenges due to a range of factors including inflationary cost increases, rising utility costs and insufficient funding. The Council are currently faced with an estimated cumulative funding gap in 2024/25 of £9.7m rising to £29.5m by 2027/28. We will continue to monitor the overall financial position of the Council and updates on estimated future budget gaps will be reported to Elected Members throughout 2023/24.

These challenges mean further action is required to balance our budget and protect services for residents. This will mean that within H&E available funding will be reduced over time and we will need to reconfigure how we work, what we do, where we work, and potentially reduce the number of people employed. In this context, we will aim to continue to provide a sustainable, quality service to internal clients and the public.

Employability

Future Prosperity Fund

We have submitted an Investment Plan for the delivery of the 'Future Prosperity Fund' and secured funds to deliver a range of programmes. We have also secured 'No One Left Behind' Funds and Parental Employability Support Funds.

The conditions of grants suggest Working4U has to change from a service provider to a lead/managing agency taking responsibility for co-design and co-commissioning. This has established a range of challenges around the development of assurance frameworks, procurement and competitive grant management.

We are establishing the policies and processes for this transition while delivering services. This places challenges on the team resources. However, we have plans in place to ensure that we achieve this transition as effectively as possible.

Local Employability Developments / Fair work

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

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

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

maximize the benefits for young people in West Dunbartonshire. We are currently developing a three-year plan for delivery of employability services.

Employment: Green jobs

Working 4U will continue to monitor labour market policy and direction to capitalise on emerging opportunities in zero carbon/green energy sectors. This will be carried out in conjunction with Skills Development Scotland and West College Scotland. The aim will be to identify any emerging opportunities for zero carbon employment development, including for example Retro fit housing including internal wall insulation; solar panels; and air source heat pumps.

Supporting Vulnerable People

People are vulnerable if they are unable to live at the standard that most others would expect. For instance, households may have housing and food, but remain poor if they can't afford to put the heating on at home, families and children may have mobile phones, mobile devices and computers, but remain poor if there isn't sufficient connectivity to use the equipment for the everyday activity that others take for granted.

Understanding life transitions is important in this regard. These are typically the most significant milestones in people's lives that often become our greatest undertakings/challenges and will have a direct impact on the quality of our lives, these can include, losing a job, having your tenancy ended unexpectedly or imprisonment or release. Our ability to cope with the impact of these transitions can be significant and will have a bearing on our well-being and prosperity.

Each of these transitions has an associated cost that, in combination with other factors such as life circumstances, can exacerbate difficulties, particularly among families with limited resources such as those in our priority groups. It is not sufficient to focus on particular groups without understanding circumstances, transitions and barriers that affect families and individuals on a daily basis. Housing and Employability's approach to addressing vulnerability, disadvantage and poverty in West Dunbartonshire is based on delivering services and support that can mitigate the negative impact of transitions; address the barriers households and communities face and address, where possible, the structural drivers of poverty.

To date, we have established a local employability partnership to ensure that we coordinate employability service provision in an effective way. In addition to No One Left Behind, Parental Employability Support and Modern Apprenticeship programme funds we will also manage the delivery of UK shared prosperity priorities. We will integrate strategic management of the funds into the local employability partnership approach in order to maximize the benefits for West Dunbartonshire residents. We are currently implementing a three year-plan for the delivery of employability services.

Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017

The intention of the Child Poverty Bill is to 'set targets relating to the eradication of child poverty' as well as making provisions for plans and reporting relating to achievement of these targets. It requires the Scottish Government to meet four income-based child poverty targets by 2030 as well as set out and report on the actions they will take to meet those targets. In addition, the Act places a duty on local authorities and health boards to report annually on what they are doing to contribute to reducing child poverty.

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

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

Community Learning and Development

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

The CLD plan 2021-24 specifies:

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

We have established the plan and are delivering community-based learning opportunities throughout West Dunbartonshire.

In 2023/24, we will review and implement revised service provision within W4U and Communities

Statement of provision for period products

The Period Products (Free Provision) (Scotland) Act 2021 received Royal Assent on 12th January 2021. The Act requires local authorities to ensure period products (like pads and tampons) can easily be picked up free of charge for anyone who needs to use them. Each responsible body must, as soon as reasonably practicable, prepare a written statement describing the plans for provision. The statement has been prepared in consultation with relevant individuals, groups and organisations. During 2023/24 the Communities Team will take the lead in delivering and continued development of the community-based provision and will promote the service through the range of Community Planning Partnership and associated networks.

Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015

The Act sets out clear requirements for public bodies in promoting a greater level of local decision-making and empowerment of citizens. This includes, for example, Asset Transfers, Participation Requests and Community Planning. All services across WDC must be engaged in the process of empowering communities and work is underway to ensure awareness of the empowerment agenda is raised. The West Dunbartonshire Community Empowerment Strategy and Action Plan is far-reaching and sets out what is required to promote empowered communities. The Strategy was developed by a partnership strategic group and with the Scottish Community Development Centre (SCDC) leading the consultation with local residents.

A Project Board and Project Team are now well established to monitor delivery against the actions set out in the Strategy. Successful delivery will depend on a collaborative approach across the organisation, partnership and wider community to build more resilient and empowered communities across West Dunbartonshire. This is a long-term agenda that requires a real change to service delivery to ensure it is responsive to local needs. The additional focus on our communities affected by the cost of living crisis will also be an additional priority across the newly restructured teams.

Progress will be driven and monitored by a Project Board that will report to CPWD via the Empowered DIG, during 2023/24 we will continue the programme of work set out within the WDC Community Empowerment strategy.

Community Choices 1% Framework agreement / Local Democracy

This joint agreement between COSLA and Scottish Government sets out a framework for at least 1% of local government budgets to be decided by local residents through a participatory budgeting (PB) approach. The framework has been refreshed and now includes the need for greater deliberative and participatory processes that contribute to ensuring equality, inclusion and social renewal.

Actively involving local people can make them less passive consumers of public services and more supportive of new models of delivery. It promotes active participation and increased levels of local decision-making.

The key mechanism for meeting this target is the mainstreaming of Participatory Budgeting. This requires service areas across the Council to consider and agree on how a percentage of their annual budgets can be decided/directed by local people. A PB Mainstreaming Steering Group has been established to monitor performance, promote a corporate PB approach and ensure accurate reporting to the Scottish Government on an annual basis. The team have developed the COSLA led Consul digital platform for West Dunbartonshire, improving the uptake and the ability to report accurately. The team have also focused on young people supporting the crosscutting of the UNCRC policy and participatory budgeting, both rooted in the principle of participation. The UNCRC emphasizes the importance of involving children in decisions that affect them, while participatory budgeting provides an avenue for community members, including children, to participate in decision-making processes.

Community Planning and Locality Planning

Locality planning was introduced in the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, under Part 2: Community Planning. Locality planning has two main functions:

- to tackle inequalities
- to enable community bodies to participate in decision-making at a neighbourhood level

The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 requires Community Planning Partnerships to develop at least one Locality Plan to support communities to identify their unique ambitions. Work is ongoing to support a range of communities to develop their own neighbourhood plans that will combine with Locality Plans to form Local Place Plans. This work needs to be led by local communities and supported by the Community Planning Partnership. The Communities Team will support this process to ensure both the CPWD and wider communities are fully engaged in the process.

CCTV infrastructure

The council's CCTV infrastructure covers the three townships of West Dunbartonshire within our Town Centre's and housing estates. Investment is required to bring the estate up to modernization and in 2022/23 the Communities Team secured funding from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. In 2023/24 the focus will be to implement improvements identified in the stock condition survey and to develop the CCTV transmission strategy. The public space CCTV teams play a crucial role in enhancing community safety and engagement by deterring criminal activity, providing rapid response to incidents, and there will be a focus on engaging with the community, building trust, and promoting transparency and accountability in partnership with Police Scotland.

Housing Bill 2023 - Homelessness Prevention Duty

Many of the proposals within the recent Homelessness prevention consultation would introduce important and positive changes for people at risk of homelessness and we had outlined our broad views in our consultation response. Key issues for West Dunbartonshire will be a need to have sufficient and adequate resources to fund the crucial services to address homelessness, as well as local flexibility in line with local circumstances. In addition, local democratic oversight and accountability over services involved.

Presently, local authority homeless and housing services are stretched and financially challenged across Scotland. The current situation is also becoming increasingly more challenging in a context of constrained resources, changes to the Unsuitable Accommodation Order, the humanitarian efforts to accommodate refugees and deliver the more recent Ukrainian schemes, as well as the risks surrounding the potential increase in homelessness presentations when the schemes come to an end.

A further concern is the recent Court of Session decision in Glasgow on the local authority providing appropriate accommodation, which could result in an increase in Judicial Reviews across the country with a further impact on resources. Consideration also needs to be given to the timing of the implementation of changes to local connection which could potentially exacerbate current pressures.

Additionally, as part of the process to respond to homelessness that relates to domestic abuse to prioritise the housing rights and personal safety of those facing abuse are crucial, given they drive a significant proportion of homelessness presentations from women. As women mainly lead an overwhelming proportion of single-parent families in Scotland this has an impact on children's wellbeing and development.

Improving housing options for young people are also vital, along with a need for an improvement in the availability and effectiveness of support services for those likely to struggle to manage a tenancy. As well as for those individuals at risk of homelessness when leaving custody.

Local Housing Strategy & Housing to 2040

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

We will implement the new strategy in 2022/23 and this new plan aims to build on the significant progress made on the issues identified in the previous LHS 2017-2022 and to address newly arising housing matters, particularly in response to the COVID-19 crisis.

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

Delivering high quality housing and housing related services across all tenures; setting out its contribution to the effective integration of health and social care; and showing how the LHS is supporting the Scottish Government National Outcomes and Targets, whilst reflecting the needs and priorities of the local authority area.

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

- A well-functioning housing system: people can find, and afford, the right home for their needs. This will involve making the best out of the housing stock we have, providing people with good investment options and ultimately ensuring the housing system is fair;
- High-quality sustainable homes: all homes, regardless of the tenure or age of the home, should be well-designed and high quality. They should be easily maintained, have clear running costs and be low-carbon. Further, all homes should be occupied;
- Sustainable Communities: Places should be vibrant, well connected and well designed. They should include a variety of houses to enable people to move as their needs change and be designed to promote health and well-being including quality green space; and
- Homes that meet people's needs: homes should support well-being and areas should offer a diverse range of homes to allow people to move. People should be able to easily access information about their housing rights alongside services to support their independence.

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

Rapid Rehousing/Housing First/ homeless first

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

Where homelessness cannot be prevented, Rapid Rehousing means:

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

And for people with multiple needs beyond housing:

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

The need to continually improve the approach to homeless people with the most complex needs is recognised and Housing First initiatives form part of the wider approach to tackling homelessness and repeat homelessness in Scotland.

Housing First West Dunbartonshire launched in April 2019 and the service is targeted at those with a history of issues such as repeat homelessness, multiple and complex support needs and previous engagements with support services which have not led to successful and/or sustainable outcomes.

New Housing Supply

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

Better Homes/Sustainability

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

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

In response, we intend to further develop our housing asset management strategic approach and commitment to environmental sustainability which will allow us to build new homes and manage existing stock and assets in a way that will make them fit for generations to come. Key to this will be developing a new Housing Capital Investment Programme that combines our approach to decarbonisation and positively impacting on fuel poverty.

In addition to the above, through our Better Homes approach, we are seeking to develop a new strategic vision for the future of our high-rise accommodation to enhance tenants' living experiences and we intend to improve connectivity across our housing stock, again to improve the lives of our tenants.

Housing: Improving the customer journey and support

During 2022/23, we reviewed the customer journey to ensure the service is able to adapt to change and is reflective of new ways of engagement and working, this included exploring the opportunity for implementing digital improvements into service delivery. In 2023/24 we will expand the implementation of digital technologies to drive efficiency and a modernized service, the focus of this work will include the launch of the mobile app and the self-serve portal.

In line with the Council's Strategic priorities, Housing Operations is focused on ensuring continuous improvement across all of our services. In 2023/24 understanding tenant experience in engaging with our services will be a priority, the focus of this work will aim to increase tenant feedback with the housing operations processes and encourage participation in tenant satisfaction surveys.

Antisocial Behaviour

Under the Antisocial Behaviour etc. (Scotland) Act 2004, the Council, together with the relevant chief constable, must prepare, publish and review a strategy for dealing with antisocial behaviour (ASB). The Antisocial behaviour strategy provides the basis for promoting coordinated action to prevent and tackle antisocial behaviour in our local communities setting out antisocial behaviour problems in the area; the services already available for preventing and tackling them; the new services that the council and other agencies will need to put in place to fill any gaps in services; and how the council and the police will co-ordinate their work and exchange information. Strategies will be expected to identify those areas where antisocial behaviour problems are particularly bad and how the council will work with local people on an ongoing basis to tackle the problems. Through Community Planning West Dunbartonshire, Delivery and Improvement Groups, this work has already started and in 2023/24 the focus will be on finalising the ASB strategy and associated action plan.

Continuous Improvement

In 2020, to support continuous improvement, the Council embarked on a programme of Fit for Future service reviews. Using a range of tools that encapsulates service design, maturity assessments and employee engagement, information is gathered and reviewed to identify improvements and to ensure our services are efficient and that we make the best use of our resources. During 2023/24 we will continually assess the performance of the services within Housing and Employability, with a view to determining if any services would benefit from a Fit for Future service review.

Within Housing Operations we have already started work on undertaking a review of specific services, such as Voids/Allocations and Caretaking Services. As part of our continuous improvement journey, we will continue to review other areas and have commenced short term working groups to undertake walk the process reviews across arrears, ASB and medical application processes. These groups will look at a range of aspects including existing processes, systems and interaction with customers to identify improvements to our service delivery areas.

Budget Sensitivity Analysis

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

Within this service, £0.467m of the budget which has been identified as being more susceptible to fluctuations is:

- The Homeless income budget of £4.718m is sensitive due to the nature of the service, as the income received will be dependent on client presentations.

Action Plan & Risks

The challenges identified at section 2 and the key factors identified in Section 3 have informed Housing & Employability priorities for 2023/24. Appendix 1 sets out the action plan to address them, including the relevant risks and the performance indicators and targets that will enable progress to be monitored and reported to stakeholders. It also incorporates the Strategic workforce actions.

The Council has identified risks at both a strategic and service level. Strategic risks represent the potential for the Council to take advantage of opportunities or fail to meet stated strategic objectives and those that require strategic leadership. Service risks relate to service delivery and represent the potential for impact on individual services, or the experience of those who work within the services, i.e. employees, partners, contractors and volunteers or service users and clients in receipt of the services provided.

In planning for 2023/24, the Housing and Employability team considered the Council’s strategic risks and identified risks specific to the service. These are set out in the action plan at Appendix 1 alongside actions to mitigate these, with the aim of improving or maintaining the current position (i.e. the current risk score).

4. Resources

Finance

Housing & Employability has a net General Services revenue budget of £3.344m and a nil capital budget in 2023/24. A breakdown by service area is set out below. We will make the best use of the resources available to deliver on key priority areas and secure external/match funding where this is possible.

Service Area	Gross Expenditure 2023/24 (£m)	Gross Income 2023/24 (£m)	Net Expenditure 2023/24 (£m)	Capital Budget 2023/24 (£m)
Private Sector Housing	0.033	0	0.033	0
Homeless	5.185	4.718	0.467	0
Community Planning and Development Team	1.221	0.125	1.096	0
W4U	2.902	1.416	1.486	0
Anti-Social Behaviour	0.263	0.001	0.262	0
Total	9.604	6.260	3.344	0

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

	Gross Expenditure (Revenue) £m	Capital £m
HRA budget 2023/24	49.186	76.056

Employees

Employee Numbers

The headcount and full time equivalent staff in each service area (as of 31st March 2023) are as follows:

Service Area	Headcount	FTE
Community Planning and Development Team	22	21.05
Housing Development & Homelessness	103	87.48
Housing Operations	123	119.27
Working 4U	116	96.05
TOTAL	364	323.85

Absence in 2022/23

The quarterly absence statistics for Housing & Employability are shown below together with the Council average for the same periods for comparison. The figures for Housing & Employability have been lower than the Council average throughout 2022/23:

Absence in 2022/23	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Annual FTE days lost per FTE employee
Housing & Employability	2.93	3.47	3.73	3.31	12.20
COUNCIL WIDE TOTAL	3.86	3.28	4.42	4.02	14

5. Appendix 1: Action Plan

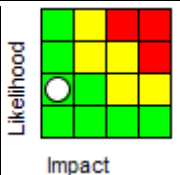
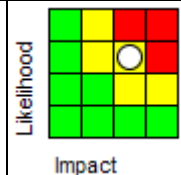
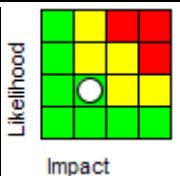
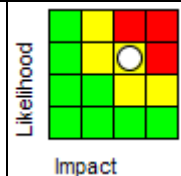
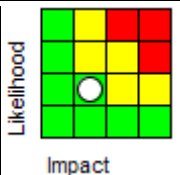
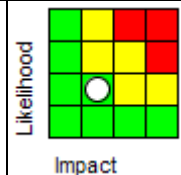
P 1. Our communities

Ob Our neighbourhoods are safe, resilient and inclusive

Performance Indicator	2023/24 Target	Owner
% of anti-social behaviour cases resolved	98%	Nicola Pettigrew
% of Neighbourhood and Locality Plans supported by the Communities Team	25%	Elaine Troup
Number of incidents directed to Police by Public Space CCTV team	400	Elaine Troup
% of Public Space CCTV cameras operational	85%	Elaine Troup

Action	Due Date	Owner
Develop and implement the revised Antisocial Behavior Strategy	31-Mar-24	Nicola Pettigrew
Develop CCTV transmission strategy	31-Mar-24	Elaine Troup
Upgrade CCTV infrastructure	31-Mar-24	Elaine Troup
Build community resilience and advance community empowerment including the development of a training programme to support the Community empowerment agenda	31-Mar-24	Elaine Troup
Deliver on the provision of period products	31-Mar-24	Elaine Troup

Strategic Risk	Description	Current Assessment	Target Assessment	Owner
Engaging positively with Residents, Communities & Partnerships	The risk that the Council fails to adequately engage, establish and maintain positive relationships with local residents and communities in addition to partnership bodies.	<p>Likelihood</p> <p>Impact</p>	<p>Likelihood</p> <p>Impact</p>	Elaine Troup

Service Risk	Description	Current Assessment	Target Assessment	Owner
Failure to deliver sufficient community capacity building / community development support to groups impacted by COVID-19.	COVID-19 has had a huge impact on communities across the authority. A focused approach is needed to understand the impact on community groups and to support them to re-start and re-build. Failure to do this would impact on the individual and community resilience of citizens.			Elaine Troup
Failure to deliver on the capacity building of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act	As communities continue to recover from the impact of Covid-19 there is an ever greater need to support and develop communities. Community capacity building and community development work continues within existing resources.			Elaine Troup
Failure to secure community and partner buy-in for the approved Community Empowerment Strategy and Action Plan.	The risk level remains the same as work continues on the Delivery Plan. The establishment of a Project Board in 2021/22 has reduced this risk level in relation to service area buy-in.			Elaine Troup

Ob Our residents health and wellbeing remains a priority

Performance Indicator	2023/24 Target	Owner
% of youth Homeless levels in West Dunbartonshire	15%	John Kerr
Action	Due Date	Owner
Implement Year 5 of the Home at the Heart – Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan	31-Mar-24	John Kerr

Performance Indicator	2023/24 Target	Owner
Respond to the findings of the Homelessness Prevention and Temporary Accommodation Task and finish Group recommendations	31-Mar-24	John Kerr
Carry out a review of the Council's approach to Homelessness prevention	31-Mar-24	John Kerr
Implement Year 5 of the Home at the Heart – Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan	31-Mar-24	John Kerr
Review and provide greater integration within Housing Support	31-Mar-24	John Kerr

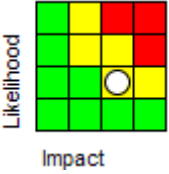
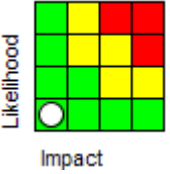
Ob Our residents are supported to increase life and learning skills		
Action	Due Date	Owner
Ensure no one left behind by supporting skills and learning for work, life and learning	31-Mar-24	Stephen Brooks
Review and implement revised service provision for W4U and Communities – youth learning	31-Mar-24	Stephen Brooks

P 2. Our Environment

Ob Our resources are used in an environmentally sustainable way		
Action	Due Date	Owner
Deliver new Housing Asset Management Strategy	31-Mar-24	John Kerr
Develop new Housing Design Standard incorporating proposed changes to specifications for new social housing	31-Mar-24	John Kerr
Deliver an approach to meet Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (ESSH 2)	31-Mar-24	John Kerr
Deliver a Greener, Fairer revised HRA Capital Investment Plan	31-Mar-24	John Kerr

Ob Our neighbourhoods are sustainable and attractive

Performance Indicator		2023/24 Target	Owner	
Number of new supply social housing for rent (all supply)		80	John Kerr	
Tenancy Sustainment Levels within Housing First		90%	John Kerr	
% satisfaction with quality of new build council housing (SHN)		80%	John Kerr	
% of all homeless cases re-assessed within 12 months (repeat homelessness)		5%	John Kerr	
The number of incidences of youth homelessness in West Dunbartonshire is reduced		280	John Kerr	
Action		Due Date	Owner	
Implement digital improvement for housing operations (mobile app)		31-Mar-24	Nicola Pettigrew	
Implement digital improvement for housing operations (self-serve portal)		31-Mar-24	Nicola Pettigrew	
Increase tenant participation in relations to housing ops (response rates)		31-Mar-24	Nicola Pettigrew	
Deliver Year 2 local Housing Strategy Objectives		31-Mar-24	John Kerr	
Deliver the Council's Affordable Housing Supply Programme		31-Mar-24	John Kerr	
Review Council buyback policy		31-Mar-24	John Kerr	
Develop an approach to delivering alternative housing tenures		31-Mar-24	John Kerr	
Service Risk	Description	Current Assessment	Target Assessment	Owner
Failure to secure funding to invest in WDC's CCTV infrastructure.	The public space CCTV infrastructure covers the three main townships of Alexandria, Dumbarton and Clydebank with a mix of fixed space and redeployable cameras. Until resources can be secured and improvements made the Council does remain at risk from reputational damage, should the system fail.	 Likelihood Impact	 Likelihood Impact	Elaine Troup

Failure to achieve the outcomes of the Scottish Social Housing Charter	The Scottish Social Housing Charter sets out the standards and outcomes that tenants and customers should expect from social landlords, in terms of the quality and value for money of the services they receive. Failure to continue to meet these could place the Council at risk of the intervention powers of the Scottish Housing Regulator			John Kerr
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P 3. Our Economy

Ob Our area has the infrastructure for sustainable and inclusive growth where businesses can flourish

Action	Due Date	Owner
Engage with W4 business to explore the potential for access to green jobs for local residents	31-Mar-2024	Stephen Brooks


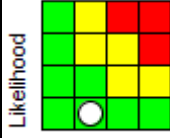
Ob We will support our residents to access employment and training opportunities

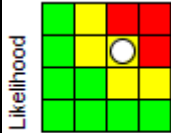
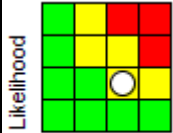
Performance Indicator	2023/24 Target	Owner
Value (£) of debt managed	£1,711.520	Stephen Brooks
Number of local people entering employment through Working 4U	407	Stephen Brooks
Number of local people entering education or training	949	Stephen Brooks
Number of local people gaining a full qualification	630	Stephen Brooks
Action	Due Date	Owner
Support and implement CLD, Employability and Welfare benefit three year plans to promote quality frameworks and partnership working to enhance work, learn, money service provision	31-Mar-24	Stephen Brooks
Maximise income from employment – supporting residents into employability	31-Mar-24	Stephen Brooks
Promote inclusive growth through access to training and apprenticeship opportunities	31-Mar-24	Stephen Brooks

Performance Indicator	2023/24 Target	Owner
Review and implement revised service provision W4U – adult learning	31-Mar-24	Stephen Brooks

Ob We will work with partners to support economic development to deliver increased prosperity for our area

Performance Indicator	2023/24 Target	Owner
Total Value (£) of Income Generated	£8,110,699	Stephen Brooks
Number of local people receiving support through Working 4U	6,724	Stephen Brooks
Percentage of local people with increased or sustained income through reduced debt liability/debt management	TBC	Stephen Brooks
Number of people receiving support through Working 4U with more than one barrier to employment	TBC	Stephen Brooks
Action	Due Date	Owner
Develop and deliver an investment plan for shared prosperity fund	31-Mar-24	Stephen Brooks
Produce Local Child Poverty annual report	31-Mar-24	Stephen Brooks
Review and implement revised service provision W4U – Welfare support	31-Mar-24	Stephen Brooks

Service Risk	Description	Current Assessment	Target Assessment	Owner
Failure to respond to child poverty legislation	Failure to respond to child poverty legislation will have a significant impact on the Council's reputation, more importantly an opportunity to raise issues and respond more effectively to child poverty issues will be lost			Stephen Brooks

Service Risk	Description	Current Assessment	Target Assessment	Owner
The cost of living crisis will lead to a substantial demand for access to welfare/debt support services.	We will monitor the changing levels of demand and target our resources to individuals and areas that are most in need. We will seek to work with partners to ensure we receive appropriate referrals who can benefit from our support.			Stephen Brooks

P	4. Our Council
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Ob Our workforce is resilient and skilled where digital technology supports service delivery for our residents		
Action	Due Date	Owner
Develop and implement wellbeing, employee engagement, equality and learning and development plans to enable capabilities, improve resilience and promotion of a diverse workforce	31-Mar-2024	All Managers
Develop and implement employee life cycle plans in line with the People First Strategy to attract and retain the workforce	31-Mar-2024	All Managers
Develop and implement learning and development opportunities to improve capabilities and resilience within the workforce	31-Mar-2024	All Managers
Implement service review process including role design, use of new technology and new ways of working to add resilience, address gaps, and establish opportunities for efficiencies	31-Mar-2024	All Managers

Ob Our Council is adaptable and focused on delivering best value for our residents		
Performance Indicator	2023/24 Target	Owner
% of tenants satisfied with the overall service provided by their landlord	84%	John Kerr
Average length of time to re-let properties	25	Nicola Pettigrew
% of council rent that was lost due to houses remaining empty	1%	Nicola Pettigrew
Action	Due Date	Owner

Ob	Our Council is adaptable and focused on delivering best value for our residents		
	Lead the redesign and restructure of Working4U and Communities Team services to respond to Council decisions to reduce overall budgets	31-Sept-23	Peter Barry

Ob	Our residents are engaged and empowered		
	Action	Due Date	Owner
	Explore alternative forms of funding to encourage less reliance on mainstream council funding	31-Mar-24	Elaine Troup
	Lead on the Council's approach to Participatory Budgeting Mainstreaming across the organisation	31-Mar-24	Elaine Troup
	Deliver the objectives set out in the Community Empowerment Strategy and Action Plan through identified priority projects	31-Mar-24	Elaine Troup
	Work with CPWD and wider communities to develop the Locality Planning Process.	31-Mar-24	Elaine Troup