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ABERDEEN
CITY COUNCIL

<u>To</u>:   Councillor Radley, <u>Convener</u>; Councillor Henrickson, <u>Vice-Convener</u>; and Councillors Bouse, Cross, Davidson, Graham, McLellan, Mrs Stewart and Tissera.

Town House,
ABERDEEN 28 August 2024

COMMUNITIES, HOUSING AND PUBLIC PROTECTION COMMITTEE

The Members of the **COMMUNITIES, HOUSING AND PUBLIC PROTECTION COMMITTEE** are requested to meet in **Committee Room 2 - Town House on <u>THURSDAY, 5 SEPTEMBER 2024 at 10.00 am</u>. This is a hybrid meeting and Members may also attend remotely.**

The meeting will be webcast and a live stream can be viewed on the Council's website. https://aberdeen.public-i.tv/core/portal/home

ALAN THOMSON
INTERIM CHIEF OFFICER – GOVERNANCE

<u>B U S I N E S S</u>

<u>DETERMINATION OF URGENT BUSINESS</u>

1.   <u>There are no items of urgent business at this time.</u>

<u>DETERMINATION OF EXEMPT BUSINESS</u>

2.   <u>Determination of Exempt Business</u>

<u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND TRANSPARENCY STATEMENTS</u>

3.   <u>Members are requested to intimate any declarations of interest or connections.</u>

<u>REQUESTS FOR DEPUTATION</u>

4.   There are no requests for deputation at this time

MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

5.   Minute of the Previous Meeting of 30 May 2024 (Pages 7 - 16)

COMMITTEE PLANNER

6.   Committee Business Planner (Pages 17 - 24)

NOTICES OF MOTION

7.1.   Notice of Motion by Councillors Macdonald and Malik - referred from Council on 3 July 2024

       That Aberdeen City Council:

1. notes that anti-social behaviour includes street drinking, fist fights, drug taking and dealing, aggressive begging and recognises that anti-social behaviour incidents in the city centre are causing increasing concern to residents, businesses and those who work, shop and visit the area;
2. notes that Aberdeen holds Scotland's only Purple Flag accredited city centre status and that efforts should continue to retain this accreditation; and
3. instructs the Chief Officer - Governance to co-ordinate a further report from the Community Safety Partnership to the Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee on current efforts to manage anti-social behaviour in the city centre and on approaches to offering wider system awareness and understanding of the issues.

7.2.   Notice of Motion by Councillor Graham - referred by Council on 3 July 2024

Council notes the unprecedented housing and homelessness issues affecting tenants and potential tenants in Aberdeen.

Recognises the extreme pressures facing housing and homelessness services in Aberdeen today.

These pressures exist despite the best endeavours and professionalism of officers within the Council that have seen a number of positive achievements. These include:

The Aberdeen Labour decisions alongside our coalition partners 2017-2022 to build 2,000 new Council homes on top of procuring over 4,000 Affordable homes with Registered Social Landlords.

This has resulted in
- Dyce new Builds Completed
- Auchmill Road New builds Completed.
- Summerhill New Build has now achieved Practical Completion for all blocks
- Tillydrone New Build has now achieved Practical Completion for all blocks
- Cloverhill New Build is progressing as planned
- Kaimhill New Build is nearing completion,
- Greenferns and Greenferns Landward are progressing to achieve RIBA 3 completion
- Craighill New Build is out to tender
- Kincorth New Build tender documentation is being finalised; and
- 206 Union Street works have commenced

However, the number of households assessed as homeless or in housing need waiting for a home to call their own remains of significant concern.

As detailed in the reports to the Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee:
- Homeless applications are at a 13 year high at the end of March 2024, with levels recorded (1,481) not seen since the same period in 2010/11
- 442 Statutory Homeless Households Residing in Temporary Accommodation at end March 2024.
- Only 30 % of Unintentional homeless decisions reached within 21 Days
- 161 days the Average length of journey in days for applicants assessed as unintentionally homeless at the end of March.
- The Council are now breaching our duties in accordance with the Unsuitable Accommodation Order, by having households in unsuitable accommodation for longer than 7 days.
- 237.7 The YTD Average time taken to re-let all properties (Citywide - days) against a target of 125 days at the end of March 2024.
- The YTD Void Rent Loss figure for 2023/24 is £7,805,806 this equates to 7.91% of the gross debit (rent due) which is a significant increase when compared with the same period last year where the figure stood at £5,271,632 (5.70%).
- Planned maintenance projects such as in Summerhill have been put on hold.
- In April 2022, 4,750 applications were on the waiting list for housing, this has grown to 6,658 in May 2024

    These issues have been exasperated by the following.
- We have 366 houses identified as uninhabitable due to RAAC and a massive transfer operation in place for Council tenants.
- Of the 366 houses, 138 are privately owned properties whose owners have been virtually neglected by ACC, The Scottish Administration and the UK Government, families face ruin and bankruptcy and this should not be allowed to happen in a Civil Society.
- The Housing Revenue account is funding the majority of the costs currently being incurred and faces unprecedented financial pressures. .

This a perilous situation and one that requires action today.

That the Council therefore agrees to:-

- Declare a **Housing Emergency** in Aberdeen today.
- Instruct the Executive Director – Families and Communities, working with key partners internally and externally, to bring forward a Housing Emergency Action Plan in two cycles. This plan will address how we will tackle homelessness and increase housing supply in the short and medium term, increase maintenance programmes on our housing stock and support the findings of the RAAC report due in August.
- Instruct the Chief Executive to write to both Scottish and UK Governments advising them of this grave situation and requesting immediate support.
- Request that the Scottish Government urgently review the decision to cut the Affordable Housing Supply Programme allocation to Aberdeen by 24% (£3.904m) for 2024/25.

REFERRALS FROM COUNCIL, COMMITTEES AND SUB COMMITTEES

8.   There are no reports under this heading

GENERAL BUSINESS

PUBLIC PROTECTION

FINANCE, PERFORMANCE, RISK AND SERVICE WIDE ISSUES

COMMUNITIES AND HOUSING

Integrated Impact Assessments related to reports on this agenda can be viewed here

To access the Service Updates for this Committee please click here

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Should you require any further information about this agenda, please contact Lynsey McBain, lymcbain@aberdeencity.gov.uk or 01224 067344

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Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee

ABERDEEN, 30 May 2024. Minute of Meeting of the COMMUNITIES, HOUSING AND PUBLIC PROTECTION COMMITTEE. <u>Present</u>:- Councillor Radley, <u>Convener</u>; Councillor Henrickson, <u>Vice-Convener</u>; and Councillors Bouse (for items 5 to 15) , Cross (for all items except 5 and 6), Davidson, Graham (for all items except 5 and 6), Kusznir (as substitute for Councillor Cross for items 5 and 6), Malik (as substitute for Councillor Tissera for items 1 to 4), McLellan, Mrs Stewart, Tissera (for items 7 to 15), Watson (as substitute for Councillor Tissera for items 5 and 6) and Yuill (as substitute for Councillor Bouse for items 1 to 4).

The agenda and reports associated with this minute can be found <u>here.</u>

Please note that if any changes are made to this minute at the point of approval, these will be outlined in the subsequent minute and this document will not be retrospectively altered.

MINUTE OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF 28 MARCH 2024

1.   The Committee had before it the minute of the previous meeting of 28 March 2024, for approval.

The Committee resolved:-
to approve the minute as a correct record.

COMMITTEE BUSINESS PLANNER

2.   The Committee had before it the planner of committee business, as prepared by the Interim Chief Officer – Governance (Legal).

The Committee resolved:-
(i)   to agree to remove item 7 (Public Engagement);
(ii)   to note the reason for the delay for item 6 (Busking Code of Practice); and
(iii)   to otherwise note the information contained in the business planner.

DEPUTATION REQUEST FOR ITEM 11.2 - ANTI MODERN SLAVERY REPORT

3.   The Committee received a deputation request from Professor Muhammad Azizul Islam and he addressed the Committee in the following terms:-

Professor Islam explained that he was a Professor in Sustainability Accounting and Transparency at Aberdeen University and they were carrying out three research papers. Research paper one was a critical analysis of the UK Modern Slavery Act 2015, research paper two was looking at vulnerability and exploitation of (women) workers in Bangladeshi garment factories supplying goods to the UK Market and the third paper

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was on unfair purchasing practices by retailers for the UK market; inherent reasons for the exploitation of workers.

Professor Islam expanded on the research papers and provided more detail on the aims and also explained the implications and recommendations for local councils. He advised that their findings were relevant to organisations including local councils with supply chain operations and noted that local councils had the following areas that needed attention to tackle modern slavery.

- Procurements – computers and garments for council staff, catering, industrial materials etc. If the council used suppliers that procure products from overseas, to ensure that there was no forced labour and exploitations during production/supply chains;
- Council's policy influence over businesses and partners operating in its jurisdiction and how to assure that businesses were modern slavery/human rights risk free; and
- Recruitment policy and training of staff on modern slavery issues.

Members then asked a number of questions of Professor Islam, based on his deputation.

The Convener thanked Professor Islam for his contribution.

ANTI-MODERN SLAVERY STATEMENT - CORP/24/147

4.   With reference to article 11 of the minute of the meeting of 6 July 2023, the Committee had before it a report by the Interim Chief Officer – People & Citizen Services, which provided an update on the development of an Anti-Modern Slavery statement for Aberdeen City Council.

The report recommended:-
that the Committee approve the Anti-Modern Slavery statement as contained in Appendix 1.

The Committee resolved:-
(i)   to agree that a report be brought back to this Committee in 2 years' time, to provide an evaluation of the implementation of the statement; and
(ii)   to approve the recommendation.

DEPUTATION REQUESTS FOR ITEM 11.5 - REINFORCED AUTOCLAVED AERATED CONCRETE (RAAC) FUNDING UPDATE

5.   The Committee received two deputation requests from Ms Paula Fraser and Ms Hannah Chowdhry and they addressed the Committee in the following terms:-

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Ms Fraser explained that she was representing Torry Community RAAC Campaign and she was concerned about the amount of people who were being asked to move to unsuitable places, which was causing severe distress to the community. Ms Fraser indicated that the Council's housing stock was insufficient and asked what was going to be done about the lack of suitable housing.

Ms Fraser advised that displacement payments had been delayed and noted that people should not have to pay to move. Ms Fraser also explained she was not previously aware of a lack of housing stock and felt that there had been no planning for family houses with a lack of 3 to 4 house properties available. Ms Fraser noted that individuals did not want to have to move to one bedroom properties and indicated that individual needs had to be taken into consideration.

Members then asked a number of questions based on the deputation and the information presented.

> **At this juncture, the Committee agreed to suspend Standing Order 14.13 in order to allow more time for Members to ask questions.**

The Committee then heard from Ms Hannah Chowdhry, who was supported by Mr Wilson Chowdhry. Ms Chowdhry explained that she was disappointed to have to attend the Committee to make another deputation on this issue and felt that private owners had been left in the dark in regards to support.

Ms Chowdhry felt that the Council should be resourceful, noting that the capital budget was under strain and no money was forthcoming from the UK or Scottish Governments.

Ms Chowdhry highlighted the financial strain home owners were now under, having to potentially pay to rent a property whilst repairs were carried out, as well as the cost of the remedial works to the affected areas. Ms Chowdhry felt that it was disturbing the lack of help and support available for private home owners.

Members then asked a number of questions based on the deputation and the information presented.

The Convener then thanked both Ms Fraser and Ms Chowdhry for their contributions.

RAAC FUNDING UPDATE - MAY 2024 - F&C 24/154

6. With reference to article 2 of the minute of the meeting of 28 March 2024, the Committee had before it a report by the Chief Officers – Housing, Corporate Landlord and Capital, which provided an update in relation to Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) roofed properties at Balnagask, and the progress on the engagement activity undertaken with residents.

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The report also acknowledged that there were no obvious funding solutions to address mitigations to the RAAC risk in privately owned properties, the cost and financial implications of which would develop as the Options Appraisal to mitigate the RAAC risk for the affected properties progressed.

The Committee then heard from the Chief Officer – Housing, Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord and Chief Officer - Capital who provided a verbal update to the Committee.

Jacqui McKenzie, Chief Officer – Housing, explained that they were currently engaging with the Aberdeen Health and Social Care Partnership as well as the Red Cross and were looking to see what other support people required, including support for mental health.

Mrs McKenzie outlined that they understood and recognised the challenges individuals were facing by being re-housed, noting that safety was really important for everyone involved. Mrs McKenzie also advised that
- A dedicated Housing and Support Team, supported by the Education Department and the Aberdeen Health and Social Care Partnership had been set up
- A leaflet had been produced for private owners;
- Families/individuals had been supported on a 1 2 1 basis to understand their needs;
- Meetings had been organised with private tenants and owners to discuss their individual options
- There had been signposting to Mental Health and Wellbeing support
- Online FAQ's had been frequently reviewed and updated
- A briefing for Torry Community Council had been organised and ongoing schedule of engagement agreed.

It was noted that as of 29 May 2024, 293 offers had been generated and 26 of these were with registered social landlords. 70 offers had been accepted and there was an increase in the number of offers refused due to the area and housing type.

Mrs McKenzie also explained that the Housing & Support Officer advised individuals of their entitlement to a disturbance payment and home loss payment at the time the tenants confirmed they were accepting the offer and the lease signing was arranged.

The Committee then heard from John Wilson, Chief Officer – Capital who explained that they were potentially looking at four options:-
Option 1 – bearing distance extension
Option 2 – install passive fail-safe support
Option 3 - RAAC roof replacement
Option 4 – demolition

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Mr Wilson advised that there were 366 Council properties affected, 138 privately owned properties and 27 privately leased, all affected by RAAC.

In terms of progress, the following was noted.

- The indicative cost of the options for remedial works/demolition would be presented when the appraisal work was completed;
- Officers were seeking indicative quotes from several contractors;
- The expected cost for each option would be significant;
- The Council did not have an obligation to meet these costs for private owners; and
- Approaches had been made to both the UK and Scottish Governments for financial assistance.

The Committee then asked a number of questions in regards to the update provided.

The report recommended:-
that the Committee –
(a)   note that approaches had been made to both the Scottish and UK Governments and their responses are included in Appendices 3 and 4;
(b)   note that the Chief Officers – Corporate Landlord, Housing and Capital would continue dialogue with both Governments as the Options Appraisal for the affected properties progresses; and
(c)   note that the Options Appraisal to be reported to Council on 21 August 2024 would include consideration of the impact of any preferred option on private owners including the financial impact on them.

The Committee resolved:-
(i)   to note that Cllr Miranda Radley, Convener of Housing, Communities and Public Protection had written to both the Scottish Government and UK Government to seek assistance;
(ii)   to instruct the Chief Executive to write to both the Scottish Government and UK Government reiterating the points raised by the Convener to seek assistance to ease the burden from the Housing Revenue Account and/or the General Revenue Account;
(iii)   to agree any Option Appraisal must include the consideration of options available to support private owners, including the potential of compulsory purchase orders and their implications;
(iv)   to explore availability of Council stock within Torry and Balnagask area and ask the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to consider whether Council buy back policy may be a vehicle that could be considered to support the rehoming programme where there was a need;
(v)   to instruct the Chief Officer – Housing to recirculate information on the options available to Council tenants when relocating, including support available from the Council towards relocation costs;

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(vi)   to instruct the Chief Officer – Housing to continue their engagement with the Health and Social Care Partnership and Third Sector Organisations to explore opportunities to widen mental health and wellbeing support for the community;

(vii)   to request that the Chief Officer – Housing, (1) explore the possibility of responding in writing to tenants/home owners following meetings with what was discussed and (2) make paper copies of the information leaflet which was produced available to private owners; and

(viii)   to request that the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord, circulate to members by way of email, available areas of green space in the Torry area for residents.

NOTICE OF MOTION BY COUNCILLOR KUSZNIR - REFERRED FROM COUNCIL ON 17 APRIL 2024

7.   Councillor Kusznir withdrew his Notice of Motion at the meeting, following the earlier decision at item 6 in regards to the Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete.

SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE PERFORMANCE REPORT APRIL 2023 - MARCH 2024 - SFR/24/177

8.   The Committee had before it the performance report for Scottish Fire and Rescue Service for April 2023 to March 2024, against the objectives contained within the Aberdeen City Local Fire and Rescue Plan.

The report recommended:-
that the Committee note the performance report.

The Committee resolved:-
(i)   to request that the clerk recirculate the information on the consultation being undertaken by Scottish Fire and Rescue Service to all Elected Members; and
(ii)   to note the performance report.

PROTECTIVE SERVICES FOOD REGULATORY SERVICE PLAN 2024/2025 - CORP/24/156

9.   The Committee had before it a report by the Interim Chief Officer – Governance (Legal) which stated that the Food Law Code of Practice (Scotland) 2019 required Local Authorities to prepare an annual Service Plan which detailed the intended activity of the service based on the resources allocated and that this plan must be approved by Committee.

The report recommended:-
that the Committee -

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(a)   approve the Protective Services Food Regulatory Service Plan 2024/2025 as detailed in Appendix A; and

(b)   note the review of performance against the Protective Services Food Regulatory Service Plan 2023/2024 contained within Appendix 2 of the Service Plan 2024/2025.

The Committee resolved:-
to approve the recommendations.

PROTECTIVE SERVICES OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY SERVICE PLAN 2024/25 - CORS/24/153

10.   The Committee had before it a report by the Interim Chief Officer – Governance (Legal) which outlined the Protective Services proposals for delivering the occupational safety and health regulatory service for year 2024/2025.

The report recommended:-
that the Committee approve the Occupational Health and Safety Service Plan for 2024/25 at Appendix 1.

The Committee resolved:-
to approve the recommendation.

GRAMPIAN JOINT HEALTH PROTECTION PLAN - CORS/24/158

11.   The Committee had before it a report by the Interim Chief Officer – Governance (Legal) which sought to update the Committee on any changes to the Joint Health Protection.

The report noted that the Public Health etc. (Scotland) Act 2008 ("the 2008 Act") placed a duty on health boards and local authorities, in carrying out their functions under the 2008 Act, to co-operate with any relevant person (e.g. health board, special health board, local authority, integration joint board, common services agency, Healthcare Improvement Scotland and Scottish Ministers) who appeared to have an interest in or a function relating to the protection of public health and produce a Local Health Protection Plan.

The report recommended:-
that the Committee –
(a)   note the updates and achievements in relation to the Grampian Joint Health Protection Plan ("the Plan"); and
(b)   note that the Plan will be reviewed again in 2026.

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The Committee resolved:-
to approve the recommendations.

PERFORMANCE REPORT - CORS/24/144

12. The Committee had before it a report by the Chief Officer – Data Insights, which presented Committee with the status of appropriate key performance measures relating to certain Operations and Customer services.

The report recommended:-
that the Committee note the information contained in the performance report.

The Committee resolved:-
to note the report.

BUILDING STANDARDS ACTIVITY REPORT - CR&E/24/155

13. The Committee had before it a report by the Chief Officer – Strategic Place Planning, which provided assurance and an overview of the Council's responsibilities in relation to securing dangerous buildings and protecting public safety, as well as activity on unauthorised building work and unauthorised occupation of buildings.

The report recommended:-
that the Committee -
(a)   note the contents of the report and appendix; and
(b)   agree to receive a further Building Standards Activity Report at the meeting of the Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee on 21st November 2024.

The Committee resolved:-
to approve the recommendations.

ABERDEEN CITY LOCAL HOUSING STRATEGY UPDATE - F&C/24/142

14. The Committee had before it a report by the Chief Officer – Housing, which sought approval of a timeline and the associated vision and strategic outcomes which would guide the development of the Aberdeen City Local Housing Strategy. The report also sought approval for the prioritisation methodology to be utilised for the affordable housing supply programme and a hybrid model of care and support at Provost Hogg Court.

The report recommended:-
that the Committee –
(a)   approve the timeline for the review of the Aberdeen City Local Housing Strategy at 3.2;

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(b)   approve the vision and strategic outcomes for the revised Aberdeen City Local Housing Strategy outlined at 3.3 and 3.4;

(c)   approve the prioritisation methodology for the affordable housing supply programme at 3.7; and

(d)   approve implementation of the hybrid model of care and support at Provost Hogg Court as detailed at 3.11 – 3.15.

The Committee resolved:-

(i)   to approve the recommendations;

(ii)   to note that the Chief Officer – Housing, in collaboration with the Aberdeen City Health & Social Care Partnership would engage with tenants in Provost Hogg Court to understand details of the likely impact on existing and prospective sheltered housing and very sheltered tenants of the implementation of the proposed hybrid model of care and support at Provost Hogg Court;

(iii)   to instruct the Chief Officer – Housing in collaboration with the Chief Officer – Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership, to report back to the Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee within 12 months on the implementation of the hybrid care and support model at Provost Hogg Court to evaluate the effectiveness before considering potential implementation in other parts of the city; and

(iv)   to instruct the Chief Officer – Housing to liaise with the Chief Officer – Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership to ensure the hybrid care and support model at Provost Hogg Court provided the best possible outcome for tenants from a care perspective as well as a housing perspective and report back to the relevant committee.

COUNCIL HOUSING IMPROVEMENT ACTIVITY – MAY 2024 - F&C/24/176

15.   The Committee had before it a report by the Chief Officers - Housing and Corporate Landlord, which implemented a previous committee instruction to look at ideas to improve planned maintenance and capital improvement works to Council homes along with providing an update on the improvement activity being progressed within the Housing Improvement Group/ Housing Board.

The report also aimed to consolidate all activity within the one report to ensue consistency across all improvement activity.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

(a)   notes that the Housing Improvement Group was replaced by the Housing Board, established on 26th March 2024 to oversee all improvement activity relating to Housing, including capital works;

(b)   instructs the Executive Director Families and Communities to bring back to this Committee bi-annual reports providing oversight on Housing Improvement Activity; and

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(c)   instructs the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to pause any new applications under the Council House buy-back scheme in light of wider resource pressures and the funding and voids impact and bring a report on the Acquisition and Disposal policy and buy-backs progress to a future meeting of this Committee, no later than 21 November 2024.

The Committee resolved:-
(i)   to approve recommendations (a) and (b);
(ii)   to instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to pause any new applications under the Council House buy-back scheme (with the exclusion of any properties in Torry that may meet the requirements of RAAC affected tenants) in light of wider resource pressures, accelerated by RAAC in Torry, and the funding and voids impact and bring a report on the Acquisition and Disposal policy and buy-backs progress to a future meeting of this Committee, no later than 21 November 2024; and
(iii)   to request that the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord, let members of the Committee know by way of email, how many buy back properties there were currently in the void stock.
-       **Councillor Miranda Radley, <u>Convener</u>**

	Report Title	Minute Reference/Committee Decision or Purpose of Report	Update	Report Author	Chief Officer	Director	Terms of Reference	Delayed or Recommended for removal or transfer, enter either D, R, or T	Explanation if delayed, removed or transferred
		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
1	COMMUNITIES HOUSING AND PUBLIC PROTECTION COMMITTEE BUSINESS PLANNER The Business Planner details the reports which have been instructed as well as reports which the Functions expect to be submitting for the calendar year.								
3	05 September 2024								
4	Scottish Fire and Rescue	To provide a thematic report on new initiative Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (UFAS)	On agenda	Andy Wright	SFRS	SFRS	2.20		
5	Police Scotland Performance Report	Performance Report from Police Scotland for 2023-24.	On agenda	Graeme Mackie	Police Scotland	Police Scotland	2.20		
6	Performance Report	The purpose of this report is to present Committee with the status of key performance measures relating to the Operations Directorate (non-Education).	On agenda	Louise Fox	Data Insight	Corporate Services	1.1.3		
7	Busking Code of Practice	At the meeting on 23 January 2024, it was agreed to instruct the Chief Officer – Early Intervention and Community Empowerment to report back to this committee to seek approval of a Busking Code of Conduct.	On agenda	Mark Wilson	Governance	Corporate Services	1.1.5		
8	Housing Improvement Group	At the meeting on 17 January 2023, it was agreed that (i) to note the work of the Housing Improvement Group in identifying improvements and efficiencies around the management and maintenance of the housing stock and instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to bring forward regular reports (bi-annual) on the work of the Group to this Committee, the first such report to go to the Committee meeting in July 2023; and (ii) to note that, as part of the transformation programme, there is an ongoing review of the structure of the organisation around housing repairs and maintenance and instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to report any changes to this Committee on 6 July 2023;	A new structure for the organisation was approved by Council in early 2024. This consolidates all housing activity within the same directorate and brings soft FM and Building Services with the Corporate Landlord structure whilst also creating a Chief officer – Housing, the implications of this and the mechanism around how Housing will be managed within this structure are being finalised and will be brought to this Committee after the Summer.'	Stephen Booth	Corporate Landlord	Families & Communities	1.1.1	R	This item will be incorporated with the joint report at number 37 on the planner.
9	RAAC Interventions	At the meeting on 30 May 2024, it was agreed to instruct that a verbal update should be provided to each meeting of the Committee and that such an update should be included as a standing agenda item until the Committee otherwise instructs.	Verbal update	Jaqcui McKenzie/ John Wilson/ Stephen Booth	Housing/ Capital/ Corporate Landlord	Various	1.1.1		
10	Library Provision	At the meeting on 23 January 2024, it was agreed to instruct the Chief Officer - Early Intervention and Community Empowerment to continue to collaborate with stakeholders in designing a strategic vision and model for the Library and Information Service, reporting back to this Committee on the Future Libraries and Information Service vision and model at the meeting on 5 September 2024. Also at the meeting on 23 January 2024, it was agreed to instruct the Chief Officer - Early Intervention and Community Empowerment to undertake a consultation (including by means of newspaper advertisement) on the proposed Library and Information Services Management Rules at Appendix C and thereafter report back to a meeting of this Committee on the outcome of such consultation and to seek a decision on whether such Rules should be made, all in accordance with section 112 of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982.	On agenda	Margaret Stewart	Education & Lifelong Learning	Families & Communities	1.1.1		

	Report Title	Minute Reference/Committee Decision or Purpose of Report	Update	Report Author	Chief Officer	Director	Terms of Reference	Delayed or Recommended for removal or transfer, enter either D, R, or T	Explanation if delayed, removed or transferred
		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
11	City Centre Multi Storey Blocks	At the meeting on 16 May 2023, it was agreed to instruct the Chief Officer Corporate Landlord to report the findings of the extensive consultation exercise in the summer of 2024, with recommendations as to potential decisions that may then be made.		Stephen Booth	Corporate Landlord	Families & Communities	1.1.1	D	**This will now be reported to the November meeting.**
12	Establishing a Trusted Trader Scheme in Aberdeen City	At the meeting on 5 September 2023, it was agreed to instruct the Chief Officer – Operations and Protective Services to report back to the Committee in 12 months on the effectiveness of the scheme against the aims of the scheme.	On agenda	Graeme Paton	Governance	Corporate Services	1.1.2 and 1.1.5		
13	The Aberdeen City Retailers' Charter for the Responsible Sale of Tobacco and Vaping Products	At the meeting on 5 September 2023, it was agreed to instruct the Chief Officer Operations and Protective Services to report back to the Committee in 12 months on the effectiveness of the Charter.	On agenda	Graeme Paton	Governance	Corporate Services	2.5		
14	Annual Assurance Report	Annual submission required to the Scottish Government. October/November 2024	On agenda	Jacqui McKenzie	Housing	Families & Communities	1.1.1		
15	Cost Neutral Environmental Enforcement	At the meeting on 6 July 2023, the Committee resolved:(i) to agree the implementation of a 12-month pilot programme with the selected supplier for the enforcement of Littering, Dog Fouling and Fly Tipping legislation; and (ii) to instruct the Chief Officer - Early Intervention and Community Empowerment to monitor and evaluate the pilot and prepare a report for Communities Housing and Public Protection Committee on conclusion of the pilot in 2024.		Mark Wilson	Governance	Corporate Services	1.1.1 and 1.1.2	D	**The contract is due to start on 19th August 2024 so the report on the pilot will be reported back in summer 2025.**
16	Homewards Programme Update	To provide committee with an update on the Homewards Programme in Aberdeen. Specifically an update on the formation of the Aberdeen coalition and the progress made on the development of the local action plan.	On agenda	Rachel Harrison	Housing	Families & Communities	1.1.1		
17	Housing Capital Update	To provide an update on Housing Capital projects.	On agenda	John Wilson	Capital	City Regernation & Environment	1.1.1		
18	Housing Bill Update	To provide an update in regards to the Housing Bill.	On agenda	Mel Booth	Housing	Families & Communities	1.1.1		
19	Affordable Housing Update	To provide an update in regards to Affordable Housing.	On agenda	Mel Booth	Housing	Families & Communities	1.1.1		

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2	Report Title	Minute Reference/Committee Decision or Purpose of Report	Update	Report Author	Chief Officer	Director	Terms of Reference	Delayed or Recommended for removal or transfer, enter either D, R, or T	Explanation if delayed, removed or transferred
20	Notice of Motion by Councillor Graham - referred by Council on 3 July 2024	Council notes the unprecedented housing and homelessness issues affecting tenants and potential tenants in Aberdeen. Recognises the extreme pressures facing housing and homelessness services in Aberdeen today. These pressures exist despite the best endeavours and professionalism of officers within the Council that have seen a number of positive achievements. These include: The Aberdeen Labour decisions alongside our coalition partners 2017-2022 to build 2,000 new Council homes on top of procuring over 4,000 Affordable homes with Registered Social Landlords. This has resulted in Dyce new Builds Completed, Auchmill Road New builds Completed, Summerhill New Build has now achieved Practical Completion for all blocks, Tillydrone New Build has now achieved Practical Completion for all blocks , Cloverhill New Build is progressing as planned, Kaimhill New Build is nearing completion, Greenferns and Greenferns Landward are progressing to achieve RIBA 3 completion, Craighill New Build is out to tender, Kincorth New Build tender documentation is being finalised; and 206 Union Street works have commenced However, the number of households assessed as homeless or in housing need waiting for a home to call their own remains of significant concern. As detailed in the reports to the Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee: Homeless applications are at a 13 year high at the end of March 2024, with levels recorded (1,481) not seen since the same period in 2010/11, 442 Statutory Homeless Households Residing in Temporary Accommodation at end March 2024, only 30 % of Unintentional homeless decisions reached within 21 Days, 161 days the Average length of journey in days for applicants assessed as unintentionally homeless at the end of March, the Council are now breaching our duties in accordance with the Unsuitable Accommodation Order, by having households in unsuitable accommodation for longer than 7 days, 237.7 The YTD Average time taken to re-let all properties (Citywide - days) against a target of 125 days at the end of March 2024, the YTD Void Rent Loss figure for 2023/24 is £7,805,806 this equates to 7.91% of the gross debit (rent due) which is a significant increase when compared with the same period last year where the figure stood at £5,271,632 (5.70%), planned maintenance projects such as in Summerhill have been put on hold. In April 2022, 4,750 applications were on the waiting list for housing, this has grown to 6,658 in May 2024 These issues have been exasperated by the following. We have 366 houses identified as uninhabitable due to RAAC and a massive transfer operation in place for Council tenants. Of the 366 houses, 138 are privately owned properties whose owners have been virtually neglected by ACC, The Scottish Administration and the UK Government, families face ruin and bankruptcy and this should not be allowed to happen in a Civil Society. •The Housing Revenue account is funding the majority of the costs currently being incurred and faces unprecedented financial pressures. . This a perilous situation and one that requires action today. That the Council therefore agrees to:- -Declare a Housing Emergency in Aberdeen today. -Instruct the Executive Director – Families and Communities, working with key partners internally and externally, to bring forward a Housing Emergency Action Plan in two cycles. This plan will address how we will tackle homelessness and increase housing supply in the short and medium term, increase maintenance programmes on our housing stock and support the findings of the RAAC report due in August. -Instruct the Chief Executive to write to both Scottish and UK Governments advising them of this grave situation and requesting immediate support.	On agenda		Housing	Families & Communities			
21	Notice of Motion by Councillor Macdonald - referred from Council on 3 July 2024.	At the Council meeting on 3 July 2024, it was agreed to refer the Notice of Motion by Councillor Macdonald. 1.notes that anti-social behaviour includes street drinking, fist fights, drug taking and dealing, aggressive begging and recognises that anti-social behaviour incidents in the city centre are causing increasing concern to residents, businesses and those who work, shop and visit the area; 2.notes that Aberdeen holds Scotland's only Purple Flag accredited city centre status and that efforts should continue to retain this accreditation; and 3.instructs the Chief Officer - Governance to co-ordinate a further report from the Community Safety Partnership to the Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee on current efforts to manage anti-social behaviour in the city centre and on approaches to offering wider system awareness and understanding of the issues.	On agenda		Governance	Corporate Services			
22	21 November 2024								

	Report Title	Minute Reference/Committee Decision or Purpose of Report	Update	Report Author	Chief Officer	Director	Terms of Reference	Delayed or Recommended for removal or transfer, enter either D, R, or T	Explanation if delayed, removed or transferred
		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
23	Police Scotland - thematic report - Hate Crime	At the meeting on 28 March 2024, it was agreed to note many within the public and the media have great concerns that the implementation of the Hate Crime and Public Order (Scotland) Act 2021 will criminalise freedom of thought, freedom of speech, and freedom of belief; and requests the Chief Superintendent Graeme Mackie, North East Division, Police Scotland bring forward a thematic report to the meeting on 21 November 2024 on the implications to the media and the public from this new Act		Graeme Mackie	Police Scotland	Police Scotland			
24	Scottish Fire and Rescue	To provide a six monthly performance report		Andy Wright	SFRWS	SFRS	2.20		
25	RAAC Interventions	At the meeting on 30 May 2024, it was agreed to instruct that a verbal update should be provided to each meeting of the Committee and that such an update should be included as a standing agenda item until the Committee otherwise instructs.		Jaqcui McKenzie/ John Wilson/ Stephen Booth	Housing/ Capital/ Corporate Landlord	Various	1.1.1		
26	Performance Report	The purpose of this report is to present Committee with the status of key performance measures relating to the Operations Directorate (non-Education).		Louise Fox	Data Insight	Corporate Services	1.1.3		
27	Adult Protection Committee Biennial Report	To provide the Adult Protection Committee Biennial report		Val Vertigans	AHSCP	AHSCP	2.1		
28	Annual Effectiveness Report	To report on the annual effectiveness of the committee.		Lynsey McBain	Governance	Corporate Services	GD8.5		
29	Asset Management Strategies for the HRA Estate	At the meeting on 17 January 2023, it was agreed to instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to consolidate and refresh all asset management strategies for the HRA estate and report back to this Committee on this matter by late 2024.		Stephen Booth	Corporate Landlord	Families & Communities	1.1.1	R	**This item will be incorporated with the joint report at number 37 on the planner.**
30	Rental Differentials	At the Council meeting on 14 December 2023 it was agreed to instruct the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord, in consultation with the Chief Officer - Finance and the Chief Officer - Early intervention and Community Empowerment, to undertake a review of the rental differentials per property type, including any premium that may be applied to properties with high energy efficiency levels reporting the outcome to a future meeting of the Communities Housing and Public Protection Committee and thereafter as part of the 2025/26 HRA budget process.		Stephen Booth / Jonathan Belford/ Jacqui McKenzie	Stephen Booth / Jonathan Belford/ Jacqui McKenzie	Various		T	**This will be incorporated into the report to Council - Housing Revenue 30 Year Account Business Plan**
31	Building Standards Activity Report	At the meeting on 30 May 2024, it was agreed to receive a further Building Standards Activity Report at the meeting of the Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee on 21st November 2024.		Grant Tierney	Strategic Place Planning	City Regernation & Environment	2.7 and 2.8		

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32	Council Housing Improvement Activity and Acquisition and Disposal Policy	At the meeting on 30 May 2024, it was agreed to instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to pause any new applications under the Council House buy-back scheme (with the exclusion of any properties in Torry that may meet the requirements of RAAC affected tenants) in light of wider resource pressures, accelerated by RAAC in Torry, and the funding and voids impact and bring a report on the Acquisition and Disposal policy and buy-backs progress to a future meeting of this Committee, no later than 21 November 2024		Stephen Booth	Corporate Landlord	Families & Communities		R	**This item will be incorporated with the joint report at number 37 on the planner.**
33	Strategic Housing Investment Plan	To approve the Strategic Housing Investment Plan.		Mel Booth	Housing	Families & Communities			
34	Empty Homes Update Report	To provide an update on empty homes		Mel Booth	Housing	Families & Communities			
35	Housing (Cladding Remediation) (Scotland) Bill	To provide an update on the Housing (Cladding Remediation) (Scotland) Bill		Stephen Booth	Corporate Landlord	Families & Communities			
36	Housing Board Report	At the meeting on 30 May 2024, it was agreed to instruct the Executive Director Families and Communities to bring back to this Committee bi-annual reports providing oversight on Housing Improvement Activity.		Eleanor Sheppard		Families & Communities		R	**This item will be incorporated with the joint report at number 37 on the planner.**
37	Housing Board Bi Annual Report	This will be a combined report incorporating numbers (8) on the planner - Housing Improvement Group, (29) - Asset Management Strategies for the HRA Estate, (32) - Council Housing Improvement Activity & Acquisition and Disposal Policy and (36) Council Housing Improvement Activity		Eleanor Sheppard		Families & Communities			
38	Notice of Motion from Cllr Boulton	At Council on 21 August 2024, the following Notice of Motion was approved. To instruct the Executive Director of Families and Communities to investigate, with urgency, the opportunity for post offices that are closing to be set up in our local libraries and to report back to the Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee as soon as possible. With the closure of both Culter and Cults post offices recently, this leaves a huge number of people without a post office facility.		Eleanor Sheppard		Families & Communities			
39			**14 January 2025**						
40	RAAC Interventions	At the meeting on 30 May 2024, it was agreed to instruct that a verbal update should be provided to each meeting of the Committee and that such an update should be included as a standing agenda item until the Committee otherwise instructs.		Jaqcui McKenzie/ John Wilson/ Stephen Booth	Housing/ Capital/ Corporate Landlord	Various	1.1.1		
41			**11 March 2025**						
42	Resilience Report	Annual report - to provide an update on arrangements which have been put in place with communities across the city to support them in local emergency response during disruptive weather events and power outages. Reported in March 2024, therefore March/April 2025.		Fiona Mann	Governance	Corporate Services	2.12		

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43	RAAC Interventions	At the meeting on 30 May 2024, it was agreed to instruct that a verbal update should be provided to each meeting of the Committee and that such an update should be included as a standing agenda item until the Committee otherwise instructs.		Jaqcui McKenzie/ John Wilson/ Stephen Booth	Housing/ Capital/ Corporate Landlord	Various	1.1.1		
44			**27 May 2025**						
45	Housing Board report	At the meeting on 30 May 2024, it was agreed to instruct the Executive Director Families and Communities to bring back to this Committee bi-annual reports providing oversight on Housing Improvement Activity. Due to be reported November 2024 then May 2025.		Eleanor Sheppard		Families & Communities			
46	RAAC Interventions	At the meeting on 30 May 2024, it was agreed to instruct that a verbal update should be provided to each meeting of the Committee and that such an update should be included as a standing agenda item until the Committee otherwise instructs.		Jaqcui McKenzie/ John Wilson/ Stephen Booth	Housing/ Capital/ Corporate Landlord	Various	1.1.1		
47	Review of the Non Traditional Housing Stock	At the meeting on 17 January 2023, it was agreed to instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to review the HRA's non traditional housing stock to identify properties that will be unable to meet future environmental or other standards, identify a budget to undertake these inspections within the 2023/24 budget and report back to this Committee on progress in November 2023.	Consultation works on the future of the City centre multi's has been undertaken with excellent level of tenant and owners participation. Further works has not been progressed as staff time has been diverted to other RAAC related issue.	Stephen Booth	Corporate Landlord	Families & Communities	1.1.1		
48			**02 September 2025**						
49	RAAC Interventions	At the meeting on 30 May 2024, it was agreed to instruct that a verbal update should be provided to each meeting of the Committee and that such an update should be included as a standing agenda item until the Committee otherwise instructs.		Jaqcui McKenzie/ John Wilson/ Stephen Booth	Housing/ Capital/ Corporate Landlord	Various	1.1.1		
50			**11 November 2025**						
51	RAAC Interventions	At the meeting on 30 May 2024, it was agreed to instruct that a verbal update should be provided to each meeting of the Committee and that such an update should be included as a standing agenda item until the Committee otherwise instructs.		Jaqcui McKenzie/ John Wilson/ Stephen Booth	Housing/ Capital/ Corporate Landlord	Various	1.1.1		
52	Council Housing Improvement Activity	At the meeting on 30 May 2024, it was agreed to instruct the Executive Director Families and Communities to bring back to this Committee bi-annual reports providing oversight on Housing Improvement Activity. Due to be reported November 2024 then May 2025		Eleanor Sheppard		Families & Communities	1.1.1		
53			**Future reports**						
54	Grampian Joint Health Protection Plan	At the meeting on 30 May 2024 it was noted that the plan would be reviewed again in 2026.		Hazel Stevenson	Governance	Corporate Services	2.2		
55	Rent Assistance Fund 2024/25	At the meeting on 28 March 2024, it was agreed to instruct the Chief Officer – Finance to present a further evaluation covering the full 12 months of the pilot to be presented to the Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee after one full year of operation.		Jonathan Belford	Finance	Corporate Services	1.1.1		

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56	Aberdeen City Local Housing Strategy Update	At the meeting on 30 May 2024, it was agreed to instruct the Chief Officer – Housing in collaboration with the Chief Officer – Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership, to report back to the Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee within 12 months on the implementation of the hybrid care and support model at Provost Hogg Court to evaluate the effectiveness before considering potential implementation in other parts of the city.		Jacqui McKenzie	Housing	Families & Communities	1.1.1		
57	Anti Modern Slavery report	At the meeting on 30 May 2024, it was agreed that a report be brought back to this Committee in 2 years time, to provide an evaluation of the implementation of the statement.		Sandie Scott/ Isla Newcombe	People & Citizen Services	Corporate Services	GD 8.1		
58	Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) - Outcome of Options Appraisal August 2024	At the Council meeting on 21 August 2024, it was approved to agree that the optimum option was the demolition and rebuild of homes on site and instruct the Chief Officer - Capital to proceed with the demolition aspect of this (Option 4a), and report back to the next appropriate meeting of the Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee on the initial phasing of demolition and landscape details.		John Wilson	Capital	City Regeneration & Environment			
59	Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) - Outcome of Options Appraisal August 2024	At Council on 21 August 2024, it was agreed to to instruct the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord in consultation with the Chief Officer - Capital, Chief Officer - Housing, and the Chief Officer - Finance, to assess the 'building new homes' option as alluded to in Option 4b with consideration towards undertaking a detailed masterplanning exercise assuming the site is vacant to determine future redevelopment proposals. For the wider site give consideration to creation of appropriate greenspace, preferred housing mix, opportunities to extend tenure mix and provision for housing for varying need and report this to a future meeting of the Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee in 2025 (as early as possible);		Jacqui McKenzie/ Stephen Booth/ John Wilson/ Jonathan Belford	Various	Various			
60	Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) - Outcome of Options Appraisal August 2024	At Council on 21 August 2024, it was agreed to instruct the Chief Officer - Housing to continue the re-homing process and report progress to the Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee on a regular basis, noting that there may be requirements to commence legal proceedings under the Scottish Tenancy Agreements, where tenants refused to move to alternative accommodation having received reasonable offers of alternative accommodation to ensure that tenant safety remains the Council's primary objective;		Jacqui McKenzie	Housing	Families & Communities			

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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Communities, Housing and Public Protection
DATE	5 September 2024
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Police Scotland Performance Report April 2023 - March 2024 (Appendix A)
REPORT NUMBER	POL/24/237
DIRECTOR	
CHIEF OFFICER	
REPORT AUTHOR	Chief Superintendent Graeme Mackie, North East Division, Police Scotland
TERMS OF REFERENCE	2.20

1.   **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1   To present the Police Scotland Performance Report covering April 2023 - March 2024 for Committee scrutiny.

2.   **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

      That the Committee:-

2.1   Discuss, comment on, and endorse the report.

3.   **CURRENT SITUATION**

3.1   The report, attached as **Appendix A** provides a detailed account of Police Performance in Aberdeen City in support of agreed priorities, both local and national for April 2023 – March 2024.

3.2   Much of the content of the report reflects on the collaborative methods in which Police Scotland operate across the City. The report demonstrates how communities can benefit when Community Planning Partners work within both the Local Outcome Improvement Plan and Locality Plans.

3.3   The report covers a wide range of police activity including corporate governance; recorded crime; detection rates; and operations. The report provides both 5 year and year on year comparisons to allow the Committee to evaluate trends in performance.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

7. RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic Risk	No significant risks			
Compliance	No significant risks			
Operational	No significant risks			
Financial	No significant risks			
Reputational	No significant risks			
Environment / Climate	No significant risks			

8. OUTCOMES

Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan	
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	Police Scotland are key partners within Community Planning Aberdeen and help contribute to the shared vision for 2026 that '*Aberdeen is a place where all people can prosper*' and towards the achievement of the LOIP theme which aims to make people more resilient and protect them from harm; where every child, irrespective of their circumstances, is supported to grow, develop and reach their full potential; and where all people in Aberdeen are entitled to live within our community in a manner in which they feel safe and protected from harm, supported when necessary and fully included in the life of the city.
Prosperous Place Stretch Outcomes	Police Scotland are key partners within Community Planning Aberdeen and help contribute to the shared vision for 2026 that '*Aberdeen is a place where all people can prosper*' and towards the achievement of the LOIP theme which aims to support individuals and communities to live in healthy, sustainable ways.

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	Not required
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required
Other	None

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 Not applicable

11. APPENDICES

11.1 A - Police Scotland Performance Report April 2023 - March 2024

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

Name	Graeme Mackie
Title	Chief Superintendent, North East Division, Police Scotland
Email Address	
Tel	

Performance against Local Policing Plan 2023-26

POLICE SCOTLAND
Keeping people safe

North East Division
Aberdeen City

April 2023 – March 2024

Introduction by the Divisional Commander

I am delighted to be able to share the latest Communities, Housing & Public Protection Committee report on behalf of Police Scotland, North East Division. This report details performance in Aberdeen City aligned to the agreed priorities at local and national level from the period of 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.

Serving our communities throughout North East Division with our dedicated Community Policing Teams at the heart of everything we do, we continue to actively engage with residents of Aberdeen aiming to understand and respond to concerns.

Crimes of violence and antisocial behaviour continue to be of particular concern to people living in Aberdeen. We remain committed to working positively with our partners to reduce incidents of violent crime and antisocial behaviour adopting a holistic approach focused on early intervention and diversion. Our work along with partners through the Community Safety Partnership allows effective partnership working to identify and tackle causation factors before impacts are felt in our communities.

As the needs of our communities grow more complex, we have adapted and allocated resources to meet these demands effectively. In areas like Fraud, where victims are often highly vulnerable, we have enhanced the Divisional Cyber-Enabled Crime Team with Officers skilled in financial investigation. This team collaborates closely with Crime Prevention Officers to support and protect our communities in Aberdeen.

We are dedicated to our role in the Community Planning Partnership, working closely with our partners. This report highlights our commitment to collaboration and illustrates how this approach has led to success. Through joint efforts, we have achieved significant progress, demonstrating the power of teamwork and shared goals. Our collaborative approach ensures we address community needs effectively, leveraging the strengths and resources of all partners involved. We are proud of our achievements and remain focused on strong, cooperative relationships for continued success.

Reducing road fatalities and serious injuries remains a priority, balancing enforcement, and education activities. Our partnership approach reinforces our strong road safety message across Aberdeen's communities to make our roads safer during this reporting period.

The city has tremendous support from our Local Policing Teams, Police Staff, Special Constables, and Police Scotland Youth Volunteers all of whom have contributed significantly to Aberdeen's continued success. I also recognise the support provided by our colleagues in specialist roles and national teams who remain committed to delivering effective Policing across the city and beyond.

Graeme Mackie
Divisional Commander
North East Division

POLICE SCOTLAND Keeping people safe **POILEAS ALBA**

Plan on a Page
Aberdeen City

Our vision | Policing for a safe, protected and resilient Aberdeen
Our purpose | Improve the safety and wellbeing of people, places and communities in Aberdeen
Our values | Fairness, Integrity, Respect, Human Rights

PUBLIC HEALTH

PERSON CENTRED APPROACH

PARTNERSHIPS

Our Local Policing Priorities

Protecting Vulnerable People

Serious Organised Crime

Antisocial Behaviour, Violence and Disorder

Road Safety and Road Crime

Acquisitive Crime

Counter Terrorism & Domestic Extremism

Our Objectives

- Reduce violence against women and girls
- Minimise harm and support/signpost vulnerable persons towards partners
- Prevent abuse of children and other vulnerable persons

- Divert people away from Serious Organised Crime (SOC)
- Deter SOC Groups by supporting organisations to protect themselves
- Identify, detect and prosecute those involved in SOC
- Disrupt SOC Groups by sharing intelligence, ideas and resources

- Facilitate early intervention for those vulnerable to involvement in antisocial behaviour (ASB), violence and disorder
- Identify likely locations for ASB and violence and find lasting solutions
- Enhance understanding of underlying causes for ASB and violence

- Increase safety and reduce casualties on our roads
- Prevent instances of crime occurring on our road network
- Improve road safety by proactively targeting drink and drug drivers

- Facilitate early intervention for those involved in, or those vulnerable to becoming involved in, acquisitive crime
- Identify likely locations for acquisitive crime and find lasting solutions
- Promote awareness of, and prevent, Cybercrime

- Safeguard vulnerable persons from being drawn into terrorism
- Share information to identify and tackle suspicious activity
- Share knowledge to strengthen protection against terrorist attacks
- Mitigate against the impact of terrorist attacks

Strategic Outcomes

Threats to public safety and wellbeing are resolved by a proactive and responsive police service

The needs of local communities are addressed through effective service delivery

The public, communities and partners are engaged, involved and have confidence in policing

Our people are supported through a positive working environment, enabling them to serve the public

Police Scotland is sustainable, adaptable and prepared for future challenges

PREVENTION & EARLY INTERVENTION

Executive Summary

Protecting Vulnerable People

Reinforcing our commitment to protect the most vulnerable in society, the Protecting Vulnerable People (PVP) Governance Group was established. This group provides a forum for enhanced scrutiny and oversight of Sexual and Domestic related crime, along with issues pertaining to Adult Support & Protection, across the Division. This is supported by a bespoke data dashboard to better inform trends and reporting.

As part of our work to reduce violence against women and girls (VAWG), local governance and scrutiny of domestic crime remains robust. Detection rates for this crime type within North East Division over the reporting period, when compared with previous year, have increased, and exceed the Force average. Our enforcement activities are equally balanced with preventative tactics including the Disclosure Scheme for Domestic Abuse Scotland (DSDAS), Multi-Agency Tasking & Coordinating (MATAC) and Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC). These forums facilitate multi-agency discussion through which we target the behaviour of perpetrators and support/safeguard victims and their families. Supporting the wider agenda, we continue to support the Aberdeen City Violence Against Women Partnership, delivering positive outcomes through activity aligned to the partnership's Improvement Plan.

Notably, crimes specifically recorded under the Domestic Abuse Scotland Act 2018 rose by 24% during the review period demonstrating a growing confidence in reporting Domestic Abuse by our communities, along with a more comprehensive understanding of the legislation by our Officers. Conversely the number of reported Rapes continued to trend below the levels seen in 2022/2023 however, analysis of last year's figures identified a spike in reporting.

We continue to develop and grow our knowledge of and response to Adult Support & Protection matters within our communities, actively participating in and driving work streams via the Aberdeen Adult Protection Committee and Learning Review groups. This is replicated within Child Protection forums.

As a result of significant focus and commitment the Scottish Child Interview Model (SCIM) is now firmly embedded across the North East with local delivery being seen as an exemplar across national forums. This achievement has undoubtedly been pivotal in Aberdeen City's successful bid to be a pathfinder for delivery of the Scottish Government's new Bairn's Hoose model. An exciting opportunity to further develop and enhance our service delivery in response to child protection matters across Aberdeen.

Serious Organised Crime

North East Division continues our innovative approach to tackling Serious and Organised Crime (SOC) utilising the 4D strategy of 'Disrupt, Detect, Deter and Divert'. The individual strands allow comprehensive and cohesive focus ensuring a multi-agency approach to pro-actively collaborate with partners and support those most vulnerable from the effects of SOC and drugs misuse in our communities.

Operation Protector continues to provide support, diversion, and education to those most vulnerable from drugs and associated harm and enforcement against those causing harm in our communities.

As can be seen from the increase in drug supply charges and increase in production and manufacture charges there has been a continued proactive enforcement and disruption of Serious Organised Crime groups.

In this reporting period, controlled drugs with a street value of over £3 million have been recovered.

Antisocial Behaviour, Violence and Disorder

Communities across Aberdeen want to feel safe and reducing antisocial behaviour (ASB) and violence remains a priority for North East Division. During this reporting period, we have worked alongside partners, right across the City to bring to reduce ASB felt in some of our communities and City Centre. We know that tackling the underlying causes should be the focus of multi-agency efforts and only by doing so, can we achieve lasting solutions. During this reporting period, our presence within the Community Safety partnership delivered significant reductions in ASB in the City Centre, helping ensure our highly regarded Purple Flag accreditation remained, endorsing Aberdeen as a safe place to live, work and visit.

Our performance in tackling nonsexual crimes of violence has remained strong both in terms of volume and detection rate which are comparable to that of the previous year despite the challenges faced by many services including Police Scotland. Against this backdrop, we are taking opportunities to modernise and evolve, introducing a Community Investigations Unit to tackle and deal with the most serious ASB and violence in our communities. The Team's focus on serious crimes of violence has seen the number of Serious Assaults perpetrated across the city reduce significantly compared to the previous year and, below the 5 Year Average.

Road Safety and Road Crime

We continue to collaborate with our partners across Aberdeen City and North East Division, dedicated to road safety and reducing road casualties. With our focus throughout the year aligned with the Fatal Five Campaign, targeting key offences identified as contributory factors associated with fatal and serious injury collisions, we have recorded successes in identified increased offending in many key areas.

Our Officers and colleagues from Roads Policing and Community Policing Teams have maintained a visible presence on the road network across Aberdeen supported by delivery of targeted campaigns and initiatives throughout the year.

Acquisitive Crime

Crimes of Dishonesty have increased in Aberdeen compared to the same period last year however, these are primarily related to Theft by Shoplifting, Theft from Insecure motor vehicles and other opportunistic crimes. There have been decreases in Housebreaking and vehicle crime, which significantly impact victims and their families.

North East Division continues to implement preventative strategies and remains focused to reduce acquisitive crime by working with partners and identifying locations where acquisitive crime is most likely to occur.

A variety of pro-active engagement with communities and targeting of locations where acquisitive crime occurred has assisted with reduction of key crime types. Working with partners who can help facilitate early interventions for those involved is another key factor in reducing acquisitive crime.

The Divisional Cyber-Enabled Crime Team continue to engage and support Crime Reduction and local Officers to identify vulnerable groups; develop ongoing targeted campaigns; promote awareness of Cyber and prevent such instances utilising the '4P' methodology of Prevent, Prepare, Protect and Pursue.

Counter Terrorism & Domestic Extremism

We aim to reduce the risk of terrorism so people can go about their lives freely and with confidence by focusing on the local delivery of the CONTEST strategy using four key objectives: PROTECT, PREPARE, PURSUE and PREVENT. Partners in Aberdeen continue to contribute to the local CONTEST delivery plan and significant work continues to ensure the city is protected against the threat of terrorism.

Protecting Vulnerable People

Objective: Work with statutory and third sector partners to reduce violence against women and girls

During the review period, North East Division continued to be an integral partner within the Aberdeen City Violence Against Women Partnership, chaired and represented by specially trained Officers who supported and delivered improvement activity, as outlined in the Partnership's two-year Improvement Plan.

Internal enhanced governance and scrutiny ensured continued strong performance in relation to Domestic Abuse crime with the number of 'live' undetected enquiries across Aberdeen City being reduced by approximately 20% and a detection rate consistently exceeding the Force average.

Our commitment to supporting and safeguarding victims of Domestic Abuse remained steadfast, continuing to lead and administrate the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) process on behalf of all partners, ensuring those victims deemed High Risk were subject of robust safety planning along with professional and specialist support. During 2023, 476 individuals were supported through the MARAC process within Aberdeen City with approximately 90% of referrals originating from Police.

Further supporting our efforts to safeguards individuals was our continued commitment to the Police Scotland Disclosure Scheme for Domestic Abuse Scotland (DSDAS), a highly effective tool which provides a formal way of sharing information about a partner's abusive past with a potential victim. During 2023/2024, because of proactive awareness raising, referrals increased by approximately 37% with all subsequent disclosures discussed and agreed through a multi-agency forum, allowing for wider safeguarding and support measures to be considered.

The MARAC and DSDAS processes are supported by Police Scotland's Domestic Abuse Multi Agency Tasking & Co-ordination (MATAC) process which targets domestic abuse perpetrators who present the greatest risk of offending. Whilst governed by a National Framework, activity is managed at a local level providing an environment where partners are encouraged to utilise their collective available resources; including individual's skills, knowledge, and experience; to target perpetrators and keep victims and their families safe.

They key aims of MATAC include the identification of individuals who present the greatest risk, proactive enforcement/active targeting of offenders, and the sharing of information for intelligence development, prevention, or enforcement as appropriate. During 2023/2024, over 20 perpetrators were proactively targeted by means of enhanced investigation within Aberdeen City.

The annual '16 days of Activism against Gender Based Violence', ran from the 25th of November until the 10th of December. This saw a focus on enforcement against domestic abuse offenders. Multi-agency messaging was shared on social media in support of the event and several 'Engagement Pop Up Sessions' were held at locations across the North East, aimed at raising awareness and taking measures to prevent all forms of Gender Based Violence. These were attended by North East Division's Crime Reduction teams along with Domestic Abuse Coordinators and partners such as Rape Crisis.

Objective: Drive the development of multi-agency agendas to minimise harm and support / signpost those we identify as vulnerable towards partners

Specialist Officers continued to support the Aberdeen City Adult Protection Committee and it's varying sub-groups, effectively delivering positive outcomes through multi-agency improvement activity.

We continued to drive and support positive change through our chairing and representation at the Grampian Wide Adult Protection Group with specialist officers, through effective collaboration, devising multi-agency information sharing guidance and a financial harm strategy.

In February 2023, we supported the delivery of a multi-agency media strategy to spotlight National Adult Support & Protection Awareness Day, aligning both local and national communications with partner agencies and engaging directly with the media to provide an insight into the work of our Specialist Officers and their commitment to supporting those who are vulnerable in our communities. Through Police facilitation, an impactful 'lived experience' interview was provided by an individual in receipt of service support which was subsequently reported in the local press, on social media and radio, crucially raising awareness of Adult Support & Protection matters in our communities.

Objective: Raise awareness of and prevent abuse of children and other vulnerable persons, ensuring a victim centred approach

The Scottish Child Interview Model (SCIM) is now well-established across the North East, with Inter Agency Referral Discussions and Joint Investigative Interviews being conducted to a high standard with the wellbeing of the child prioritised at every stage. Our local implementation of the model has been held in high regard nationally and was acknowledged in this year's Chief Constable's Excellence Awards, with the Team coming out top in the Service Improvement category.

Scottish Child Interview Model Team
North East Division

The first annual review of the model's implementation across the North East has now been completed with evidence clearly showing that the implementation of the SCIM across the North East has meant children are better protected and high quality, child centred evidence is routinely secured. A number of recommendations have also been made to effectively build upon our success.

During the reporting period, Aberdeen City Child Protection Partnerships was successful in their application to become Bairns' Hoose pathfinder. It is believed that the positive work of the North East SCIM Team to date, has been highly influential in this regard. Specialist Public Protection Officers are integral to the local multi-agency team progressing this significant piece of work with coordination on a national basis supporting our local delivery.

We continue to work with partners to prevent abuse of children with our Specialist Officers key to developing new Child Sexual Abuse Guidance through the Child Protection Committee. The guidance has been recognised nationally and shared Force wide, to aid our colleagues in other areas. We have also delivered training and education inputs to practitioners in partner agencies to ensure understanding and build service provision in relation to Child Protection processes and investigations.

We also continue to collaborate positively with Grampian Rape Crisis supporting training and developing a sound understanding of respective roles to maximise the level of service provided to survivors.

Serious Organised Crime

Objective: DETER - Support private, public and third sector organisations to protect themselves and each other. Understand the drivers and emerging risks in respect of Serious Organised Crime and encourage a multi-agency approach to protect those vulnerable in our communities

North East Divisions innovative and collaborative engagement with partners under Operation Protector continues to provide significant support and assistance to those vulnerable to the scourge of drugs. Support mechanisms and diversionary tactics provide protection for those most vulnerable coupled with an enforcement and disruption arm to ensure those involved in drug dealing are subject to robust enforcement with all available means utilised to bring them to justice.

As part of Operation Protector, several 'Days of Action' took place in Aberdeen during the period from April 2023 till March 2024.

Throughout these days several departments within Police Scotland alongside various external partners and multi-agency staff were deployed to tackle drug related harm. Safeguarding visits were undertaken with several individuals being integrated into support services. Community safety work was undertaken in the areas where enforcement was done, and other areas affected by drug related harm.

Over 600 individuals were engaged with as part of the assertive outreach visits over the course of the reporting period and over 1000 via community outreach hubs.

Drug Search warrants were executed with controlled drugs, cash and goods seized under the Proceeds of Crime Act.

Case Study

In June 2023, whilst investigating an Organised Crime Group operating in Aberdeen and surrounding area, Police Scotland received information of two 16-year-old males forced to carry out work on behalf of the group and originating from the North of England.

Enforcement action was taken against the group with quantities of controlled drugs and cash seized. Furthermore, a multi-agency response was instigated for the individuals identified as being the victims of Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE). Safeguarding measures were put in place, assisted by local authority and wider partners.

The males were repatriated back to their home areas with support mechanisms in place and relevant Social Work and multi-agency support provided.

Objective: DIVERT - Build an effective pan-Grampian partnership, with a view to diverting people away from involvement in Serious Organised Crime, making Aberdeen City a hostile environment for those who seek to exploit our communities

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) continues to be a significant risk associated to SOC and during the Operation Protector 'Days of Action' a number of children considered to be the victims of County Lines based child criminal exploitation were traced, safeguarded, and repatriated to their home area with Human Trafficking offences being investigated.

Objective: DETECT - Work collaboratively with others to provide a coordinated response to identify, detect and prosecute those involved in serious organised crime

As part of the 4D strategy actions under the 'Detect' and 'Disrupt' strands continue through pro-active enforcement and disruption of Organised Crime Groups by our Local Policing; Pro-Active; Organised Crime Teams and supported by national resources. There have been over 100 Drug Search Warrants executed across Aberdeen in this reporting period.

During this time over £400,000 worth of Cannabis, over £350,000 of Heroin and over £2,000,000 of Cocaine, along with several other substances, were seized as we continued to ensure the North East remains an inhospitable environment for those who blight our communities with controlled drugs.

The case study below is one of our many positive enforcement successes and highlights the many approaches utilised to dismantle SOC.

Case Study

Over the course of 2023, an enquiry was instigated by North East Divisions OCG Team against a group operating in the Torry area of Aberdeen. During the enquiry enforcement was taken against the group, with vehicles stopped and warrants executed at several addresses. One such execution resulted in the recovery of over £60,000 in cash.

Further executive action and disruption tactics resulted in a principal member of the OCG being caught with half a kilo of heroin and a quantity of cocaine worth up to £170,000. Subsequent arrests and court appearances resulted in this individual receiving a custodial sentence of four years and nine months in relation to being Concerned in the Supply of controlled drugs.

Objective: DISRUPT - Deliver a collaborative multi-agency response to disrupt Organised Crime Groups by sharing intelligence, ideas and resources

As part of our Detect and Disrupt strands to focus on and dismantle OCG's, strong working relationships have been made with Police forces across the UK allowing mutually beneficial support for enforcement action to target OCG's and cause significant disruption to their operations. The case study below is one of our many positive enforcement successes supported by Merseyside Police for individuals travelling to our area seeking to profit from the illegal supply of drugs and causing harm to our communities.

Case Study

An OCG from Liverpool, involved in the distribution of drugs within Aberdeen, were targeted by the North East Division OCG Team. Several tactics were employed by the team resulting in the execution of several Drug Search Warrants at key addresses in Aberdeen and Liverpool. Over ½ kilo of Heroin was seized along with similar value of 'Crack' Cocaine/Cocaine. Initial enforcement action culminated in two key nominals in Liverpool being arrested and held to appear at court along with a local nominal who facilitated the groups activity in Aberdeen.

Further evidence gathered allowed for petition warrants to arrest further key nominals in Liverpool and ultimately the successful remand of key individuals with others bailed out of Scotland. This dealing 'line' is no longer in operation in the North East.

Antisocial Behaviour, Violence and Disorder

Objective: Reduce antisocial behaviour, violence and disorder by working with partners to facilitate early interventions for those involved in, or those vulnerable to becoming involved in, such behaviours

Our work within Aberdeen's Community Planning Partnership ensures our input and involvement in projects delivering on the City's Local Outcome Improvement Plans. These are ambitious from the perspective that they all seek to bring about enduring change. Officers help drive forward projects including those aiming to reduce ASB across our City and to reduce offending by young people. The project focuses on the early intervention principles and is governed through the Children's Services Board. With early interventions at its heart, the project is delivering collaborative work into areas most in need of support.

Our partnership with the Denis Law Legacy Trust continues. This organisation is engaging with hundreds of young men and women across our city each week using sport as a vehicle for engagement. Running in communities such as Torry, Northfield and Bucksburn, where ASB has traditionally seen higher levels of impact, this organisation is delivering their 'Street Sport' model, which sees hundreds of young people attend sport sessions each week where trained staff are engaging and influencing them in a positive way.

Objective: With partners, identify locations where antisocial behaviour and violence is most likely to occur and work with communities and other agencies to find lasting solutions and enhance community safety

During the first half of this reporting period, ASB within Aberdeen City Centre gained attention, evidencing the need for a partnership approach in tackling the underlying causes, alongside our continued commitment to robust action to protect communities. As previously reported on, a Thematic Report was produced for this Committee evidencing the challenges, and the action taken through the Community Safety Partnership to stem an increase and reduce reported ASB. In the second half of the reporting period, this work continued. The continued close links with our City Centre business community led to the identification of emerging problematic areas allowing Police and Community Safety partners, to flex resource, and help deliver enforcement and support where needed.

Our membership of the Community Safety Partnership, alongside Aberdeen City Council and other partners has given us opportunities to collaborate on other emerging issues for communities across Aberdeen. Significant work has been and continues to be undertaken in the Stockethill and Wellheads areas of the City, seeing issues of antisocial behaviour tackled and helping to restore a feeling of community, by engaging, listening, and acting on what local people and businesses are telling us. The formation of our Community Investigation Unit has brought expertise to how identified issues have been tackled.

We would also like to celebrate our volunteers, including our Special Constables who selflessly give up their time, often to form part of our Weekend Policing Plans which keep our city centre safe. Also, volunteers who must be acknowledged are the Street Pastors and Police Scotland are proud to have

provided funding to them with their presence a support to many who have become vulnerable because of alcohol consumption.

For many years, Street Pastors and Police have worked alongside each other, complimenting the service that each brings to our city. Their presence cannot be underestimated and our support for their work will continue. Their innovative work includes delivering support to sex workers, helping them reach better destinations in their lives, in turn reducing their vulnerability and likelihood of becoming the victims of sometimes violent crimes. Police led activity continues to target those who prey on the vulnerable.

Objective: Working with partners, we will enhance our understanding of the underlying causes of antisocial behaviour and violence and develop public health approaches to prevent these harms

Our colleagues in Education play a prominent role in terms of having access and engagement with our young people. Our division has introduced Youth Engagement Officers, who now work closely with Education partners in and out of the school setting, ensuring we can understand what they are identifying about the underlying drivers of ASB and violence but also to better support our schools. Our Officers have direct links into schools highlighting community-based issues that can often be supported in a school setting. Collaboration between Police and Education partners is clear through the delivery of the DSM Foundation pilot which has been positively received by young people. The project, which focuses on substance use, helps young people identify what the 'right choices' are in any given situation. We know these decision-making skills are 'life skills' directing young people towards good citizenship.

Licensed premises in Aberdeen continue to draw thousands of people each year and we want people to be and feel safe. It is therefore also essential that we maintain our strong links with our Licensing colleagues and through schemes such as Pub Watch, maintain links to the licensed premises themselves. Partnership working ensures premises are run well, with a strong focus on reducing disorder. Within this reporting period, our strong links to Public Health colleagues ensured their continued support in voicing shared concerns around health impacts of alcohol consumption and the impacts upon our Health Service. Health based discussions around licensing provision and public event delivery is positively influencing those organising concerts, events, or high-profile festivals towards the greater provision of safety measures. It is also essential that we deal strongly with those perpetrating alcohol fuelled violence and we are proud that events in Aberdeen are being delivered in a safe way for all to enjoy.

Road Safety and Road Crime

Objective: With partners on the North East Safety Strategy Partnership (NESSSP), increase safety and reduce casualties on our roads

The Priority Routes for the City are the A90, A92, and the A96. Data provides that motorcyclists are disproportionately affected in serious and fatal collisions. As part of the ongoing National Motorcycle Safety Campaign which runs from 29 March – 27 September 2024, we will continue to deploy our resources along with partners on key motorcycle routes.

Further work in response to motorcycle safety is delivered in the city through 'Rider Refinement North'. This is a bespoke one-day course delivered to voluntary attendees from the motorcycling community and aims to raise road safety awareness and encourage riders to think about the consequences of risk-taking behaviour. Led by Police Advanced Motorcyclists and accompanied by an Institute of Advance Motorists observer, the course considers key risk factors and provides riders with the knowledge and skills to ride in a safe manner. The course involves demonstration rides and observation rides with feedback from Officers, and inputs on pre-ride motorcycle examination/safety checks.

We recognise that visitors from across the world make use of our road network when enjoying a holiday to the area, often having to drive on the opposite side of the road to their home nation. Along with our partners within the Visitor Management structures, Police Scotland aims to reduce the risk of collision through education and distribution of road safety advice such as 'drive on the left' wrist bands and other associated material.

The Road Safety Framework (RSF) with interim targets to 2030, has challenging reductions in the number of adults and children killed and seriously injured from a 2014/18 baseline, working towards the Vision Zero target of no deaths and no serious injuries on Scotland's roads by 2050.

Objective: Improve road safety by proactively targeting drink and drug drivers

Much of the focus in respect of Road Safety and Road Crime on the City's roads has been linked to the Fatal Five Campaign. This campaign was produced following in depth analytical work around the key contributory factors linked to Fatal and Serious Injury Collisions, namely, Careless Driving; Speeding; Seatbelt Offences; Use of Mobile Phone and Drink/Drug Driving. Officers from Road Policing Division and from our Community Policing Teams are visible across the local road network targeting the Fatal Five offences. This targeted approach has seen increased detection of drink and drug related driving offences.

Acquisitive Crime

Objective: Reduce acquisitive crime, by working with partners to facilitate interventions for those involved in, or those vulnerable to becoming involved in, acquisitive crime

Overall Crimes of Dishonesty saw an increase on recorded crime compared against the previous year. Of note however, are reductions in key crime types inclusive of Theft by Housebreaking and motor vehicle offences both of which have significant impact on victims and their families.

Notable increase in the Crimes of Dishonesty is evident in Theft by Shoplifting, which is replicated nationally, and cognisance is taken of the impact the cost-of-living crisis continues to have across the country.

Operation Protector continues to provide support and interventions to those involved in substance misuse who are vulnerable to becoming involved in Acquisitive crime. Police trailer and information engagement occurred during days of action in Aberdeen City Centre with Police supported by staff from ADA and Turning Point Scotland to engage and provide advice and support to members of the public. Further engagement for Operation Protector is detailed in the Serious Organised Crime section of this report.

Objective: Reduce acquisitive crime, by identifying locations where acquisitive crime is most likely to occur and work with communities and partners to find lasting preventative solutions

The Crime Reduction Unit (CRU) have a key role to play in this area to engage with partners and the public to highlight crime types and locations where acquisitive crime may occur and provide appropriate guidance to put a stop to such opportunistic crimes.

CRU awareness raising events occurred throughout Aberdeen and included a variety of venues and topics covered providing guidance and safety advice. CRU staff have attended secondary schools across the city providing advice to students and staff regarding preventative measures to avoid being the victim of acquisitive crime. Regular engagement took place with attendance and events at banks and businesses discussing 'Scams and Frauds'.

Objective: Raise public awareness, and prevent instances, of cyber enabled and cyber dependent acquisitive crime

With the ever-evolving nature of Cyber enabled and dependant crime, a multi layered approach of awareness, preventative initiatives and collaboration is employed to tackle the problem.

The CRU, as part of the Fraud Roadshow, visited several banks and other businesses within Aberdeen, upskilling staff, sharing emerging trends and raising awareness with employees and customers.

The launch of the annual Fraud Roadshow involved Police Scotland, British Transport Police, Neighbourhood Trading Standards and Scotrail. The initiative, which engaged with over 1000 travellers, began at Aberdeen Train Station, and saw officers from the Crime Reduction Unit and British Transport Police travel where they offered passengers advice on how to avoid being defrauded or what to do if they have been a victim of fraud.

The Divisional Cyber Enabled Crime Team (DCECT) continued to develop its operating model aligned to organisational Fraud and Cybercrime strategies. Collaboration with cross-sector stakeholders to prevent those most vulnerable from falling victim to cyber-enabled acquisitive crime remained a focus. Working in partnership to pursue those involved in SOC who target our communities through use of technology resulted in significant enforcement action.

The below case study is an example of such action.

Case Study

During January 2024, a vulnerable elderly male from Aberdeen was the victim of a cyber-enabled OCG resulting in the loss of his life savings - £330,000 - through fraud.

DCECT facilitated a multi-agency approach to ensure the male's wellbeing, including expedited financial support. The team led an investigation which identified a group of individuals involved in the crime operating in the Greater Glasgow area.

Liaising with partners in specialist crime and investigators from the City of London Police, the group were found to have international links, responsible for significant financial harm and orchestrating a multi-million-pound criminal enterprise.

DCECT coordinated enforcement across the Greater Glasgow area and Manchester resulting in the recovery of cash, controlled drugs, and weapons. Six individuals were arrested and charged in relation to their involvement in serious organised crime resulting in the disruption of the Group's activities and the dismantling of their criminal network.

Counter Terrorism & Domestic Extremism

POLICE SCOTLAND
Keeping people safe

The North East CONTEST Multi-Agency Board and associated subgroups continue to deliver the UK CONTEST Strategy across the North East of Scotland, aiming to reduce the risks of terrorism using the Prevent, Pursue, Protect and Prepare principles.

- **PROTECT** – strengthening our borders, infrastructure, buildings, and public spaces against attack.

- **PREPARE** – where an attack cannot be stopped, to reduce its impact and ensuring we can respond effectively.

- **PURSUE** – to disrupt or stop terrorist attacks.

- **PREVENT** – to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism.

In line with the Aberdeen City Local Policing Plan, we aim to reduce the risk of terrorism so people can go about their lives freely and with confidence by focusing on the local delivery of the CONTEST strategy using four key objectives:

PROTECT – with partners we will share knowledge so that our communities and businesses can strengthen protection against terrorist attacks

In the last year, Counter Terrorism Security Advisors (CTSA's) conducted thirty-eight security inspection visits to sites of a sensitive nature and twelve security presentations to key organisations and partners in Aberdeen City for various events and placed in education, transport, and the oil industry.

CTSA's continue to work closely with the organisations and the oil industry and held various onshore and offshore security courses attended by over sixty industry representatives. They also provided mail handling and document awareness courses, delivered to over 150 attendees, and hosted at Robert Gordon University. CTSA's continue to be involved in the planning of major events, including planning for the Tall Ships Event, Aberdeen Airport security and the General Election.

Borders Policing Command Officers continue to conduct operations at Harbours to proactively identify and deal with the illegitimate passage of persons and goods.

PREPARE – with partners we will mitigate against the impact of terrorist attacks

In November 2023, the Joint Operating Principles for the Emergency Services for Marauding Terrorist Attacks and Operation Plato Guidance for UK Policing were updated regarding learning derived from the Grenfell Tower and Manchester Arena Inquiries. These place a greater emphasis on emergency services responding quickly and dynamically to save life and neutralise threats, whilst also updating guidance in relation to Scene Command, Casualty Management and Fire & Hazards. Officers from our Counter Terrorism Planning Teams are working alongside partners and local Officers to embed these approaches.

Following Storm BABET a multi-agency Severe Weather Warning Workshop was held where Counter Terrorism Planning Teams engaged with relevant responders to gather learning and upskill local partnerships linked to emergency responses during Major Incidents.

There have been eight Project Servator deployments in Aberdeen City, helping build a network of vigilance from business and community partners, alongside the public. CT security coordinators were also deployed to provide advice on key events, including Offshore Europe and the Conservative Party Conference.

PURSUE – with partners encourage and share information to identify and tackle suspicious activity

The PURSUE strategy allows National Counter Terrorism structures within Police Scotland to provide information and assessments to North East Division's CONTEST Multi-Agency Board. This process informs Aberdeen City Policing teams and local partners on emerging themes and other relevant matters.

All information and intelligence relevant to Counter Terrorism is assessed and actioned appropriately by Counter Terrorism resources based within North East Division.

There has been no significant deviation in terms of expected volume or trends during this period within Aberdeen, however the Local CONTEST Board, Local Contest Liaison Officers (LCLO's) and national Police structures are in place to monitor and respond appropriately.

PREVENT – with partners safeguard vulnerable persons from being drawn into Terrorism

Within Police Scotland a 'Prevent' referral process is in place which allows Police and partners to assess and respond to information and intelligence which may require early intervention and safeguarding from potential harm which could be caused by individuals. This process is well established across the North East with representation from relevant partners to ensure wide ranging professions are present and perspectives gained to collectively manage people who are vulnerable to radicalisation. Such work is ongoing in Aberdeen and there has been no significant deviation or trends in this area which cause additional concern.

Performance statistics

These statistics can be found in their expanded form at: How we are performing - Police Scotland

Aberdeen City Council by selected crime classifications

Recorded crime by group/classification	Year-to-date (April - March)		
	2022/23	5 yr mean	2023/24
TOTAL CRIMES AND OFFENCES (GROUPS 1 - 7)	**20 892**	*22 822.2*	**22 172**
TOTAL CRIMES (GROUPS 1 - 5)	**11 485**	*11 532.6*	**11 805**
OVERALL VIOLENT CRIME*	**3 236**	*3 122.6*	**3 409**
TOTAL OFFENCES (GROUPS 6 - 7)	**9 407**	*11 289.6*	**10 367**
GROUP 1: NON SEXUAL CRIMES OF VIOLENCE	**604**	*523.0*	**621**
Murder (excluding culpable homicide at common law)	3	*2.2*	2
Culpable homicide (at common law)	1	*0.2*	-
Culpable homicide (under statute including RTA, sec. 1)	-	*0.8*	-
Attempted murder	22	*16.6*	25
Serious assault	189	*163.6*	158
Robbery and assault with intent to rob	110	*109.0*	123
Domestic Abuse (of female)	111	x	134
Domestic Abuse (of male)	4	x	9
Domestic Abuse (Total)	**115**	**x**	**143**
Cruel & Unnatural treatment of children	20	*29.6*	20
Threats and extortion	101	*57.4*	97
Other group 1 crimes	43	*26.8*	53
GROUP 2: SEXUAL CRIMES	**717**	*714.4*	**708**
Rape	98	*96.4*	86
Assault w/i to rape or ravish	4	*7.8*	6
Rape and attempted rape - Total	*102*	*104.2*	*92*
Sexual assault (pre-SOSA 2009)	-	*7.6*	6
Sexual assault (SOSA 2009)	245	*201.4*	240
Lewd & libidinous practices	10	*36.2*	19
Indecent/Sexual Assault - Total	*255*	*245.2*	*265*
Prostitution related crime - Total	*21*	*17.6*	*18*
Taking, distribution, possession of indecent photos of children	44	*43.6*	35
Communicating indecently (SOSA 2009)	64	*69.2*	53

Communications Act 2003 (sexual)	30	*25.2*	31
Sexual exposure (SOSA 2009)	21	*17.8*	25
Public indecency (common law)	16	*13.2*	14
Other sexual crimes (SOSA 2009)	114	*125.2*	125
Other sexual crimes (non-SOSA 2009)	9	*12.8*	11
Threatening / Disclosure of intimate image	41	*40.4*	39
Other Group 2 crimes	-	-	-
Other Group 2 crimes - Total	***339***	*347.4*	***333***
GROUP 3: CRIMES OF DISHONESTY	**5 300**	*5 142.2*	**5 488**
Housebreaking (incl. attempts) - dwelling house	151	*156.8*	150
Housebreaking (incl. attempts) - non dwelling	95	*134.6*	111
Housebreaking (incl. attempts) - other premises	94	*94.2*	75
Housebreaking (incl. Attempts) - Total	***340***	*385.6*	***336***
Opening Lockfast Places - Motor Vehicle	59	*77.0*	44
Theft of a motor vehicle	220	*195.2*	185
Theft from a Motor Vehicle (Insecure etc)	174	*217.4*	175
Attempt theft of motor vehicle	15	*16.6*	22
Motor vehicle crime - Total	***468***	*506.2*	***426***
Opening Lockfast Places - NOT Motor Vehicle	57	*63.6*	59
Common theft	1 345	*1 223.8*	1 306
Theft by shoplifting	1 774	*1 748.0*	2 119
Fraud	875	*706.6*	917
Other Group 3 Crimes	441	*508.4*	325
GROUP 4: FIRE-RAISING, MALICIOUS MISCHIEF etc	**1 957**	*1 962.8*	**1 896**
Fireraising	126	*119.8*	100
Vandalism (including malicious mischief)	1 714	*1 731.4*	1 728
Reckless conduct (with firearms)	1	*0.6*	-
Culpable and reckless conduct (not with firearms)	104	*103.2*	60
Other Group 4 Crimes	12	*7.8*	8
GROUP 5: OTHER (PRO-ACTIVITY) CRIMES	**2 907**	*3 190.2*	**3 092**
Carrying offensive weapons (incl. restriction)	47	*48.8*	72
Handling bladed/pointed instrument	81	*100.6*	116
Offensive weapon (used in other criminal activity)	100	*116.6*	129
Bladed/pointed instrument (used in other criminal activity)	92	*89.4*	123
Total offensive/bladed weapons	***320***	*355.4*	***440***
Production, manufacture, or cultivation of drugs	18	*25.2*	26
Supply of drugs (incl. possession with intent)	277	*246.6*	291
Bringing drugs into prison	-	*1.8*	-
Supply of drugs - Total	***295***	*273.6*	***317***
Possession of drugs	1 251	*1 513.2*	1 243
Other drugs offences (incl. importation)	8	*7.2*	10
Total drugs crimes	***1 554***	*1 794.0*	***1 570***
Offences relating to serious and organised crime	3	*1.0*	3

Bail offences (other than absconding)	501	*435.0*	555
Other Group 5 crimes	**529**	***604.8***	**524**
GROUP 6: MISCELLANEOUS OFFENCES	**5 411**	*5 565.2*	**5 693**
Common Assault	2 476	*2 406.2*	2 674
Common Assault (of emergency workers)	435	*424.8*	427
Common Assault - Total	***2 911***	***2 831.0***	***3 101***
Breach of the Peace	177	*198.0*	107
Threatening & abusive behaviour	1 378	*1 506.2*	1 469
Stalking	37	*37.6*	45
BOP, S38 & S39 Crim Just & Lic (S) Act 2010 - Total	***1 592***	***1 741.8***	***1 621***
Racially aggravated harassment/conduct	77	*90.4*	75
Drunk and incapable	1	*0.6*	4
Consume alcohol in designated place local bye-law	83	*76.0*	130
Other alcohol related offences	50	*62.2*	37
Drunkenness and other disorderly conduct (TOTAL)	***134***	***138.8***	***171***
Wildlife offences	2	*4.6*	6
Other Group 6 offences	**695**	***758.6***	**719**
GROUP 7: OFFENCES RELATING TO MOTOR VEHICLES	**3 996**	*5 724.4*	**4 674**
Dangerous driving offences	102	*127.6*	128
Drink, Drug driving offences incl. Failure to provide a specimen	322	*351.0*	364
Speeding offences	311	*1 102.4*	394
Driving while disqualified	51	*71.4*	69
Driving without a licence	207	*275.2*	246
Failure to insure against third party risks	571	*674.2*	657
Seat belt offences	84	*108.6*	84
Mobile phone offences	104	*116.8*	123
Driving Carelessly	489	*514.0*	551
Drivers neglect of traffic directions (NOT pedestrian crossings)	182	*270.0*	211
Using a motor vehicle without test certificate	360	*646.6*	324
Other Group 7 offences	1 213	*1 466.6*	1 523

Detection Rates by group/classification	Year-to-date (April - March)		
	2022/23	5 yr rate	2023/24
TOTAL CRIMES AND OFFENCES (GROUPS 1 - 7)	*66.4*	*70.3*	*65.1*
TOTAL CRIMES; INCLUDING PRO-ACTIVITY (GROUPS 1 - 5)	*54.9*	*57.3*	*52.7*
OVERALL VIOLENT CRIME	*73.6*	*72.9*	*74.9*
TOTAL OFFENCES (GROUPS 6 - 7)	*80.5*	*83.5*	*79.3*
GROUP 1: NON SEXUAL CRIMES OF VIOLENCE	*74.3*	*76.4*	*73.3*
Murder (excluding culpable homicide at common law)	*100.0*	*109.1*	*100.0*

Culpable homicide (at common law)	100.0	100.0	x
Culpable homicide (under statute including RTA, sec. 1)	x	100.0	x
Attempted murder	100.0	100.0	100.0
Serious assault	94.2	93.8	90.5
Robbery and assault with intent to rob	95.5	88.1	87.8
Domestic Abuse (of female)	72.1	x	73.9
Domestic Abuse (of male)	50.0	x	66.7
Domestic Abuse (Total)	**71.3**	**x**	**73.4**
Cruel & Unnatural treatment of children	85.0	64.9	105.0
Threats and extortion	12.9	19.9	5.2
Other group 1 crimes	62.8	64.9	86.8
GROUP 2: SEXUAL CRIMES	**54.7**	**57.4**	**55.5**
Rape	60.2	55.6	45.3
Assault w/i to rape or ravish	50.0	61.5	50.0
Rape and attempted rape - Total	***59.8***	***56.0***	***45.7***
Sexual assault (pre-SOSA 2009)	x	81.6	33.3
Sexual assault (SOSA 2009)	55.1	58.0	54.6
Lewd & libidinous practices	10.0	66.3	21.1
Indecent/Sexual Assault - Total	***56.5***	***60.0***	***51.7***
Prostitution related crime - Total	***95.2***	***90.9***	***94.4***
Taking, distribution, possession of indecent photos of children	86.4	89.0	91.4
Communicating indecently (SOSA 2009)	56.3	54.9	58.5
Communications Act 2003 (sexual)	20.0	30.2	38.7
Sexual exposure (SOSA 2009)	81.0	67.4	80.0
Public indecency (common law)	81.3	83.3	107.1
Other sexual crimes (SOSA 2009)	36.8	48.4	51.2
Other sexual crimes (non-SOSA 2009)	66.7	68.8	72.7
Threatening / Disclosure of intimate image	22.0	29.7	38.5
Other Group 2 crimes	x	x	x
Other Group 2 crimes - Total	***49.3***	***54.3***	***59.2***
GROUP 3: CRIMES OF DISHONESTY	**36.4**	**41.2**	**35.1**
Housebreaking (incl. attempts) - dwelling house	43.7	42.6	44.7
Housebreaking (incl. attempts) - non dwelling	30.5	27.6	22.5
Housebreaking (incl. attempts) - other premises	46.8	36.9	48.0
Housebreaking (incl. Attempts) - Total	***40.9***	***36.0***	***38.1***
Opening Lockfast Places - Motor Vehicle	15.3	32.7	9.1
Theft of a motor vehicle	54.1	49.2	45.4
Theft from a Motor Vehicle (Insecure etc)	23.0	20.0	10.3
Attempt theft of motor vehicle	53.3	33.7	31.8
Motor vehicle crime - Total	***37.6***	***33.6***	***26.5***
Opening Lockfast Places - NOT Motor Vehicle	35.1	19.8	28.8
Common theft	26.8	28.5	24.1
Theft by shoplifting	52.7	63.8	52.1
Fraud	13.4	22.2	16.7

Other Group 3 Crimes	*41.0*	*34.2*	*29.8*
GROUP 4: FIRE-RAISING, MALICIOUS MISCHIEF etc	*29.7*	*29.4*	*30.0*
Fireraising	*26.2*	*32.6*	*25.0*
Vandalism (including malicious mischief)	*27.8*	*27.8*	*29.5*
Reckless conduct (with firearms)	*100.0*	*100.0*	*x*
Culpable and reckless conduct (not with firearms)	*68.3*	*55.0*	*48.3*
Other Group 4 Crimes	*0.0*	*7.7*	*62.5*
GROUP 5: OTHER (PRO-ACTIVITY) CRIMES	*101.6*	*97.3*	*93.1*
Carrying offensive weapons (incl. restriction)	*76.6*	*88.9*	*90.3*
Handling bladed/pointed instrument*	*90.1*	*95.0*	*94.0*
Offensive weapon (used in other criminal activity)	*94.0*	*76.2*	*68.2*
Bladed/pointed instrument (used in other criminal activity)	*92.4*	*78.5*	*83.7*
Total offensive/bladed weapons	*90.0*	*83.8*	*83.0*
Production, manufacture, or cultivation of drugs	*83.3*	*95.2*	*96.2*
Supply of drugs (incl. possession with intent)	*89.2*	*95.8*	*81.8*
Bringing drugs into prison	*x*	*0.0*	*x*
Supply of drugs - Total	*88.8*	*95.1*	*83.0*
Possession of drugs	*110.1*	*100.3*	*96.5*
Other drugs offences (incl. importation)	*50.0*	*72.2*	*10.0*
Total drugs crimes	*105.7*	*99.4*	*93.2*
Offences relating to serious and organised crime	*66.7*	*100.0*	*100.0*
Bail offences (other than absconding)	*95.6*	*98.1*	*96.2*
Other Group 5 crimes	*102.3*	*98.3*	*97.9*
GROUP 6: MISCELLANEOUS OFFENCES	*74.1*	*75.5*	*73.6*
Common Assault	*66.2*	*65.9*	*69.4*
Common Assault (of emergency workers)	*99.3*	*99.4*	*97.9*
Common Assault - Total	*71.2*	*71.0*	*73.4*
Breach of the Peace	*102.3*	*98.2*	*93.5*
Threatening & abusive behaviour	*75.0*	*78.5*	*73.2*
Stalking	*67.6*	*73.9*	*84.4*
BOP, S38 & S39 Crim Just & Lic (S) Act 2010 - Total	*77.9*	*80.6*	*74.8*
Racially aggravated harassment/conduct	*94.8*	*90.0*	*84.0*
Drunk and incapable	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*
Consume alcohol in designated place local bye-law	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*
Other alcohol related offences	*100.0*	*100.3*	*100.0*
Drunkenness and other disorderly conduct (TOTAL)	*100.0*	*100.1*	*100.0*
Wildlife offences	*50.0*	*47.8*	*66.7*
Other Group 6 offences	*70.8*	*74.7*	*64.8*
GROUP 7: OFFENCES RELATING TO MOTOR VEHICLES	*89.0*	*91.3*	*86.2*
Dangerous driving offences	*77.5*	*74.1*	*69.5*
Drink, Drug driving offences incl. Failure to provide a specimen	*106.2*	*95.6*	*104.1*
Speeding offences	*100.3*	*99.6*	*99.5*

Driving while disqualified	100.0	99.4	98.6
Driving without a licence	104.8	100.3	97.2
Failure to insure against third party risks	102.3	99.9	98.3
Seat belt offences	101.2	99.6	100.0
Mobile phone offences	98.1	98.6	100.8
Driving Carelessly	91.0	89.8	92.0
Drivers neglect of traffic directions (NOT pedestrian crossings)	103.3	99.6	97.2
Using a motor vehicle without test certificate	101.4	99.3	99.1
Other Group 7 offences	65.0	73.8	63.9

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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee
DATE	05 September 2024
EXEMPT	No .
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Scottish Fire and Rescue Service - Thematic Report Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals.
REPORT NUMBER	SFR/24/236
DIRECTOR	Andrew Wright, Local Senior Officer, SFRS
CHIEF OFFICER	Andrew Wright, Local Senior Officer, SFRS
REPORT AUTHOR	Gary McArthur, Group Commander, SFRS
TERMS OF REFERENCE	2.20

1.   PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1   The main purpose of this report is to advise members of the impact of Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals on the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) and the business community across Aberdeen City and the effect on this incident type since a Policy change on 01 July 2023.

2.   RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Committee :-

2.1   Consider and note the attached thematic report relating to Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals across Aberdeen City and consider the impact since the SFRS changed their response model on 01 July 2023.

3.   CURRENT SITUATION

3.1   This report provides an overview of the demands placed on the SFRS and the impact on local businesses across Aberdeen City due to Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals. The SFRS have attended 512 UFAS Incidents in Aberdeen City from 01 July 2023, which is a 61% reduction when considered against 804 Non-Attendance calls for the same period. This has realised a number of benefits not only for the SFRS but for the business community in Aberdeen City, including the following:

•   The number of unnecessary blue light journeys have been significantly reduced. This has also reduced the road risk around these journeys and carbon emissions from our fire appliances.
•   SFRS Crews have had more time available for critical training and prevention initiatives.

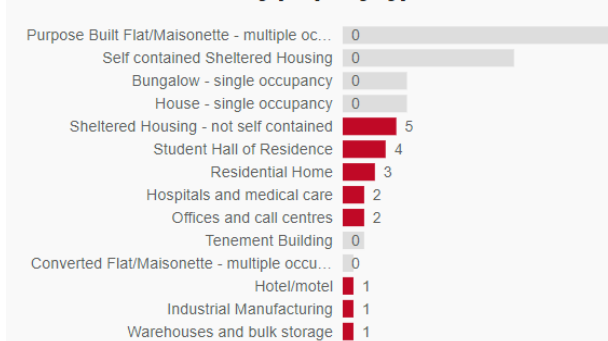- Dutyholders / occupiers have taken more ownership of the alarm activations within their premises or site.
- The time lost by businesses while waiting for SFRS to arrive and verify a false alarm and been greatly reduced.

The report provides the opportunity for members to maintain scrutiny of Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals, to ensure positive outcomes for the businesses within Aberdeen City.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no significant financial implications for the Council.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no significant legal implications for the Council.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Not applicable

7. RISK

Not applicable

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic Risk				Yes/No
Compliance				Yes/No
Operational				Yes/No
Financial				Yes/No
Reputational				Yes/No
Environment / Climate				Yes/No

8. OUTCOMES

COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN 2024-2025	
	Impact of Report
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement	n/a

Working in Partnership for Aberdeen	
Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-26	
Prosperous Economy Stretch Outcomes	Whilst not specific to any Stretch Outcome, the paper seeks contribution to fire safety which will assist achieve a safer place to live, work and visit.
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	The proposals within this report support the delivery of the following LOIP Stretch Outcomes 10. 25% fewer people receiving a first ever Court conviction and 2% fewer people reconvicted within one year by 2026. 11. Healthy life expectancy (time lived in good health) is five years longer by 2026. The paper seeks contribution to the Strategic Plan to reduce instances of deliberate fire setting and improve fire safety and prevention.
Prosperous Place Stretch Outcomes	Whilst not specific to any Stretch Outcome, the paper seeks contribution to fire safety which will assist achieve a safer place to live, work and visit.
Regional and City Strategies	n/a

9.   IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Not applicable

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	No Assessment required
Data Protection Impact Assessment	No Assessment required
Other	

10.   BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1   none

11.   APPENDICES (if applicable)

11.1   Scottish Fire and Rescue Service - Thematic Report Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals.

12.   REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Thematic Report

Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (UFAS) in Aberdeen City

Safety. Teamwork. Respect. Innovation.

1.   Purpose

1.1   This report provides an overview of the demands placed on the SFRS and the impact on local businesses across Aberdeen City due to Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals (UFAS). The report reflects on the effect of this incident type since the implementation of a new response model adopted by the SFRS on 01 July 2023.

1.2   The report provides the opportunity for Committee members to maintain scrutiny of UFAS incidents, to ensure positive outcomes for the businesses within Aberdeen City.

2.   Background

2.1   Within Aberdeen City there are several sources of fire alarms, both automatic (signal goes to an alarm receiving centre 24hrs a day) and manual (once the alarm has activated a 999 call is made from the premises).

2.2   As highlighted through previous SFRS Performance Reports to the Committee, there has been a significant volume of calls and mobilisation of SFRS resources to attend such actuations. A large percentage of these calls have subsequently been deemed to be UFAS due to the actuation being determined as a false alarm.

2.3   The five main premises types for these activations within Aberdeen City are:

01 April 2019 to 31 March 2023	01 July 2023 to 30 June 2024
1. Hospitals / Medical Care	1. Residential Homes - Nursing / Care
2. Residential Home – Nursing / Care	2. Hospitals / Medical Care
3. Education (Infant/Primary School)	3. Student Halls of Residence
4. Offices and Call Centres	4. Hotels / Motels
5. Education (Secondary School)	5. Sheltered Housing (not self-contained).

2.4   The five main causes of the unwanted actuations within Aberdeen City are:

01 April 2019 to 31 March 2023	01 July 2023 to 30 June 2024
Human – Accidentally/carelessly set off	1. Human – Cooking/burnt toast
2. Smoke alarm - Fault	2. Human – Accidentally/carelessly set off
3. System – Fault	3. Smoke alarm - Fault
4. Contaminants - Dust	4. Apparatus – Unknown cause
5. Human – Cooking/burnt toast	5. System – Fault

2.5   Historically, the SFRS responded to all AFA system actuations. However, there is no legal responsibility for us to respond to these systems to establish

if there is a fire. It is the legal responsibility of dutyholders to take appropriate action in the event of an AFA activation, including the safe evacuation of persons within, investigate the cause of the alarm and to notify us of any fire. This should be informed from an appropriate Fire Risk Assessment as required by Part 3 of the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005.

3.   New UFAS Mobilisation Procedure

3.1   In order to address the unnecessary mobilisations, the SFRS went to public consultation in 2021 on a change of policy / response model. Following approval of recommendations by the SFRS Board (December 2021), an extensive communication strategy, including working with those who would be affected by the change to prepare them for implementation, commenced early 2022. Subsequently, after this significant lead in period, the new response model went live on 01 July 2023.

3.2   The main differences were: -

- The SFRS will not automatically respond to an Automatic Fire Alarm (AFA) unless there is a confirmed fire or sign of fire, or where the premises is one where people sleep;
- All calls received to the SFRS as a consequence of an AFA activation will be subject to a call challenge process to determine the level of attendance necessary in line with the UFAS response model;
- The SFRS will treat any fire alarm as a sign of fire, other than from a single smoke alarm. Other signs of fire include: visual flame/smoke, smell of burning, or any other fire alarm signal.

3.3   In this regard, the procedure details a sequence of effective actions which are considered measured, appropriate and includes a process of continuous monitoring.

3.4   The change of procedure only relates to non-domestic premises. It will not affect the way SFRS responds to alarms activating in a domestic setting or linked through a domestic telecare provider. We are only changing how we respond to false alarms in workplaces (non-domestic premises) that have fire safety responsibilities under Fire (Scotland) Act 2005.

3.5   By implementing the procedure, SFRS aimed to:

- Deliver a consistent UFAS procedure that can be applied across Scotland, thereby removing and rescinding previous local arrangements;
- Reduce the overall number of mobilisations to UFAS incidents;
- Filter calls generated by fire alarm systems, thus ensuring an appropriate operational response is always dispatched;
- Identify premises that create demand and implement a robust system to reduce future UFAS incidents;

- Engage with stakeholders in order to advise them of the actions which may be taken by themselves and the SFRS to manage UFAS incidents; and
- Support Fire Safety Enforcement activities.

3.6   When SFRS Operations Control (OC) receive a call from non-exempt premises advising of an alarm activation, OC will 'call challenge' to establish whether there is a fire or signs of fire:

- If the call is from an Alarm Receiving Centre (ARC) or a 999 call and they are unable to confirm if there is a fire or signs of fire, then OC will request that an investigation is carried out to establish this and to call back. At this point, no response will be made by the SFRS;
- Should a subsequent call be received via an ARC or 999 advising there is no fire or signs of fire, this call is logged and closed as 'No Attendance';
- If an ARC / 999 Call is unable to confirm if a sleeping risk exists, OC will mobilise an appropriate Pre-Determined Attendance (PDA).

On all occasions, if a fire or signs of fire has been confirmed, then a full PDA will be immediately mobilised.

4.   SFRS - AFA Statistics

4.1   The SFRS have attended 512 UFAS Incidents in Aberdeen City from 01 July 2023, which is a 61% reduction when considered against 804 Non-Attendance calls for the same period. A breakdown of this information can be found in Appendix A.

4.2   The graph below shows an overview of the SFRS attendance at UFAS Incidents in Aberdeen City over the past several years. There was a notable decrease in UFAS incidents during the COVID19 pandemic, due to many premises being un-occupied due to lockdown; this mitigating the human factor contributions to false alarms. There is also a significant reduction following the implementation of the SFRS UFAS Policy and Procedure, from July 2023.

UFAS Incidents by Fiscal Quarter
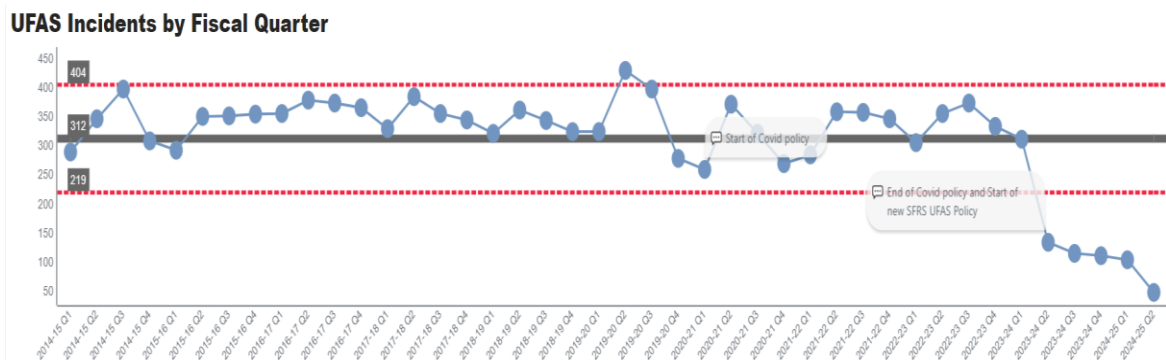
4.3   In the table below you will note the number of UFAS Incidents attended in the Aberdeen City area by Year / Quarter. Again, the significant decrease in UFAS Incidents attended from Q2 of 2023/24 is due to the procedural change.

UFAS Incidents by year/quarter

Fiscal Yr	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
2024-25	104	48			152
2023-24	311	134	115	111	671
2022-23	305	355	373	333	1,366
2021-22	284	358	357	346	1,345
2020-21	259	371	321	269	1,220
2019-20	324	429	397	278	1,428

4.4 The table below shows the number of UFAS Incidents, for Aberdeen City, not attended by the SFRS since the implementation of the changes. These are the calls which have been challenged by our Operations Control, with the staff / dutyholders having carried out an inspection and determined that the actuation is a false alarm.

Non attended UFAS Incidents

229	169	155	169
2023-24 Q2	2023-24 Q3	2023-24 Q4	2024-25 Q1
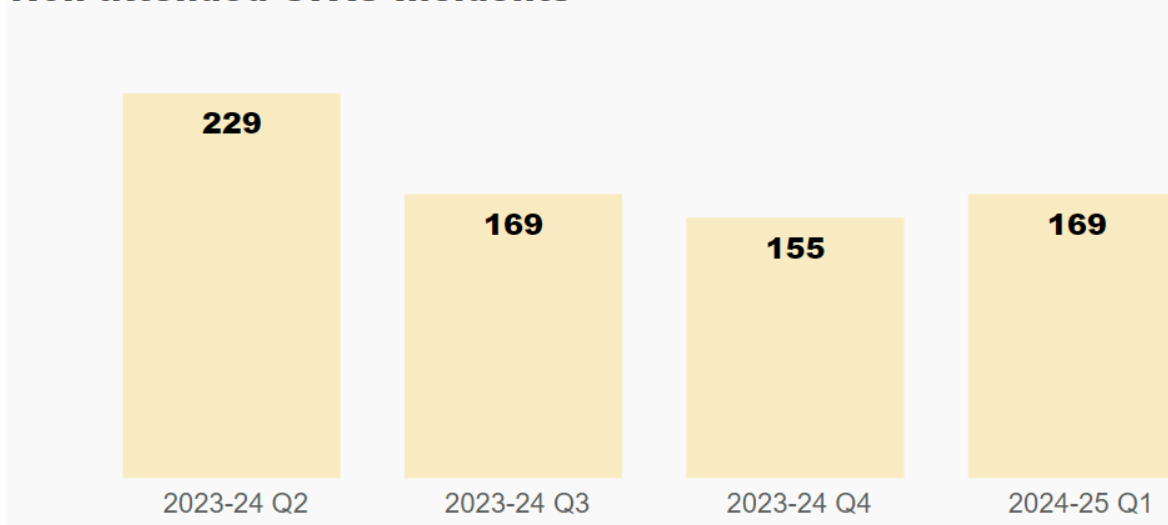
4.5 This has realised a number of benefits not only for the SFRS but for the business community in Aberdeen City, such as

- The number of unnecessary blue light journeys have been significantly reduced. This has also reduced the road risk around these journeys and carbon emissions from our fire appliances;
- SFRS Crews have had more time available for critical training and prevention initiatives;
- Dutyholders / occupiers have taken more ownership of the alarm activations within their premises or site;

- The time lost by businesses while waiting for SFRS to arrive and verify a false alarm and been greatly reduced.

4.6 As highlighted in the tables below, there have been 13 instances within relevant (typically non-domestic) premises in Aberdeen City since the implementation of the new procedure until 30th June 2024, where a call source to an incident was an Automatic Fire Alarm (AFA), and the incident turned out to be a fire. These have all been designated as care risk and sleeping risk premises and the SFRS have attended automatically as part of our pre-determined attendance (PDA). The SFRS will always attend an incident where there is an AFA activation and the premise is one where people sleep. The other 3 instances (1 Warehouse, 1 Industrial Manufacturing, 1 Office / Call Centre) where the call source turned out to be a mobile phone / 999 call to our OC in addition to the alarm being raised via the AFA system and where the SFRS attended automatically as part of our PDA.

Fires where call source was AFA

Fiscal Yr	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
2024-25	1	2			3
2023-24	3	9	3	1	16

AFA call source fires by property type

Property type	Count
Purpose Built Flat/Maisonette - multiple oc...	0
Self contained Sheltered Housing	0
Bungalow - single occupancy	0
House - single occupancy	0
Sheltered Housing - not self contained	5
Student Hall of Residence	4
Residential Home	3
Hospitals and medical care	2
Offices and call centres	2
Tenement Building	0
Converted Flat/Maisonette - multiple occu...	0
Hotel/motel	1
Industrial Manufacturing	1
Warehouses and bulk storage	1

5. How the SFRS Contributes to Reducing UFAS in Aberdeen City

5.1 The key focus of activity in the SFRS is to prevent UFAS incidents happening in the first place. Across Aberdeen City, this includes working closely with local dutyholders / business owners and large organisations such as the Local Authority and NHS Grampian to ensure they are aware of their responsibilities.

5.2 SFRS Fire Safety Protection Officers give advice while auditing premises and through consultations regarding alarm systems, including the positioning and type of detection, to reduce the likelihood of false alarms.

6. Conclusion

6.1   This report provides the Committee with an overview of the UFAS Incidents attended by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service within the Aberdeen City Area.

6.2   The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service will continue to contribute towards reducing the number of Unwanted Fire Alarm Signals by engaging and supporting dutyholders to have appropriate management procedures / systems in place.

6.3   The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service will continue to deliver against prevention, protection and response priorities, to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the communities throughout Aberdeen City.

Appendix A – Aberdeen City

Since the introduction of the new UFAS policy on 1st July 2023....

Data shown is from 1st July to date, includes all control tagged non-attended UFAS and only IRS Incidents that has been completed and is therefore **subject to change**.
If you require quarterly data in this format please contact the BI team who have prepared SFRS UFAS PowerPoint slides.

Attended UFAS Incidents

512

Since the introduction of the new UFAS policy on 1st July 2023, SFRS has **attended** 512 **UFAS Incidents.**

Unattended UFAS

804

Control had tagged 804 UFAS Incidents as **non attended**.
This is an **average** of 2 **calls per day**.

Reduction in UFAS Incidents

61%

The **reduction in UFAS** attendance over this time is time is 61%

(% of non attended calls against total UFAS calls, which is calculated by adding non attended and attended Incidents)

Average UFAS Incidents attended per day

2

The **daily average number of UFAS** Incidents is now 2 compared to previous 5 year daily average 4 Incidents.

Care Premises

60.9%

60.9% of UFAS Incidents occurred in **care and hospital premises**

Sleeping Premises

27.7%

27.7% of UFAS Incidents occurred in **sleeping premises**

Non-Sleeping Premises

11.3%

11.3% of UFAS Incidents occurred in **Non-Sleeping premises**

UFAS % of all Incidents

16.6%

UFAS Incidents are now 16.6% **of all SFRS attended Incidents** compared to 35.3% in previous 5 years.

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee
DATE	5th September 2024
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Update on the Progress of the Aberdeen City Retailers' Charter for the Responsible Sale of Tobacco and Vaping Products ("the Charter")
REPORT NUMBER	CORS/24/242
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	Andy MacDonald
CHIEF OFFICER	Vikki Cuthbert
REPORT AUTHOR	Graeme Paton
TERMS OF REFERENCE	2.5

1. **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 This report seeks to update Elected Members on the progress made by officers of the Trading Standards Service ("the Service") to address the issue of "proxy purchasing" of tobacco and Nicotine Vaping Products (NVPs), particularly the latter, in Aberdeen City, the plan for which was set out in Committee Report Number RES/23/258, dated 5th September 2023.

2. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

That the Committee:

2.1 Note the contents of the report and the positive outcome of the Charter.

3. **CURRENT SITUATION**

3.1 In short, this initiative has been a success as it has resulted in the Service receiving only one complaint in 2024 alleging "proxy purchasing" was taking place in the city centre.

3.2 Members will recall from the original committee report referenced above that the purpose of this Charter was to address the issue of "proxy purchasing" of tobacco and NVPs, which had begun to manifest across the city, and particularly in the city centre. This is the scenario where people under the age of 18 approach adults in the street to ask them to go into a shop and buy tobacco or NVPs on their behalf because they cannot legally buy them for themselves. To be clear, it is a criminal offence under the Tobacco and Primary Medical Services (Scotland) Act 2010 for a person aged 18 or over to knowingly purchase, or attempt to purchase, tobacco or NVPs on behalf of a person under

the age of 18, and the statutory enforcement duty falls to Aberdeen City Council.

3.3   After permission was granted by this Committee in September 2023, officers from the Service carried out 35 visits to city centre businesses selling tobacco products and NVPs – predominantly in the Union Street area between the Castlegate and Bridge Street – to encourage them to sign up to the Charter. In some cases, convincing businesses to participate required significant effort. Businesses that agreed to display the Charter signs were already aware of the issue of proxy sales and were keen to participate, as the signs appeared to deter problematic situations and customers. Anticipating the introduction of the Charter, two businesses voluntarily displayed signs restricting tobacco and NVPs sales to 'card only' before they were provided with the Aberdeen City Council branded materials because they saw this as a solution.

3.4   It is predominantly small and medium sized businesses who have seen the benefits the Charter could bring. By contrast, national chains saw the scheme as detrimental to their business. These larger companies did not perceive proxy purchasing to be a significant issue as they believed their existing systems and staff training were sufficient to handle such situations (complaints and intelligence reports bear out this position). Consequently, they were less inclined to participate.

3.5   Whilst these results are clearly welcome, officers will remain vigilant. They will continue to encourage those businesses who have signed up to the Charter to continue to follow its principles whilst outlining to those city businesses who have not signed up the benefit of doing so.

3.6   It does not mean that the issue of proxy purchasing has been permanently addressed but it does mean that officers have an effective tool to use to combat the issue should it arise again for NVPs or any other age-restricted product.

3.7   These results may encourage other Trading Standards authorities facing similar issues to adopt the Charter.

3.8   The dramatic fall in reports of proxy purchasing should not be confused with under-18s attempting to buy tobacco and NVPs themselves. The Service continues to receive complaints and intelligence alleging the commission of such offences, which officers assess and respond to accordingly.

3.9   Although the immediate legal intention of the Charter is to prevent persons aged 18 or over committing criminal offences of knowingly purchasing, or attempting to purchase, NVPs on behalf of a person under the age of 18, the overarching impact is to prevent children and young people accessing, and becoming addicted to, nicotine.

4.   **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

4.1   There are no direct financial implications for the Trading Standards Service.

4.2   The cost of the materials associated with the Charter have been met by the Society of Chief Officers of Trading Standards in Scotland (SCOTSS).

5.   LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1   Initial concerns that the Charter would be challenged by adult customers unhappy that they could no longer buy NVPs in cash proved to be unfounded. No such concerns have been reported to Trading Standards.

6.   ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1   Any measure which reduces the consumption of NVPs, particularly single-use versions, will have environmental benefits in terms of the disposal and recycling.

7.   RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic Risk	No significant risks identified			**N/A**
Compliance	None	Originally identified was the risk associated with adults complaining they could not buy tobacco and NVPs using cash in shops complying with the Charter. No such complaints have been received.	M	**Yes**
Operational	No significant risks identified	This work became an integral part of the age-restricted sales prevention work already undertaken by the Service.	L	**Yes**
Financial	No	External funding available.	L	**Yes**
Reputational	Various risks were identified in the original	As the outcome has been positive, this could have a similar reputational outcome for	L	**Yes**

	report depending upon the outcome of the Charter.	the authority as being the first to develop a strategy for combatting proxy purchasing.		
Environment / Climate	No significant risks identified			**N/A**

8. OUTCOMES

Council Delivery Plan 2024	
	Impact of Report
Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-26	
Local Outcome Improvement Plan	
Prosperous Economy Stretch Outcomes	The original report cited "the overarching purpose here is to encourage businesses to open and establish themselves in the city: *'Aberdeen Prospers is committed to improvement activity around providing the correct support for those wishing to start or expand their own business.'* Retail businesses are predominantly small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) who require practical advice on how to comply with their legal obligations and avoid breaching the criminal law. This proposed Charter seeks to provide detailed compliance advice in respect of tobacco and vaping products and increase business confidence in this area of law. It also seeks to improve links between ACC and the business community, so ACC is seen as an adviser and a partner rather than an enforcer." Given the overwhelmingly positive response from businesses to the Charter and the positive outcomes, this has been and is being achieved.
Prosperous People (Adults) Stretch Outcomes	The original report cited "the intention of this proposal is to impact upon stretch outcome *11. Healthy life expectancy (time lived in good health) is five years longer by 2026,* encourage the adoption of healthier lifestyles, and *Reduce tobacco smoking by 5% overall by 2023.* This proposal is directed at limiting the availability of tobacco and vaping products to those too young to buy and consume them. The obvious extension

	from that is the prevention of nicotine addiction moving into adulthood."
	This Charter is aimed at limiting the availability of tobacco and NVP to those under-age by means of proxy purchasing by an adult and, going by the evidence, this has been achieved. It also avoids the criminalisation of adults who would agree to buy such products for children and young people. It remains to be seen if the longer-term impact is that of reduced consumption in those under-age. The evidence is that the Service continues to receive complaints and intelligence that under-18s continue to attempt to buy tobacco and NVPs in person.
Prosperous People (Children and Young People)	The original report identified the following:
	"Our stretch outcomes reflect the importance of… the need to invest in the health, including mental health, of our children and young people. Critically we want our children to be safe and protected from harm.'
	As well as assisting businesses, this proposal protects our young people by stopping them from accessing tobacco and vaping products. Preventing them from the harm of addiction to tobacco and nicotine and the potential detrimental long-term impacts that can have on their health."
	Whilst the Charter has helped city businesses, evidence of the laudable aim of preventing the negative health impacts of addiction remain to be seen.
Regional and City Strategies	The proposals in this and the original report have no impact on Regional or City Strategies.

9.   IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	Previous Integrated Impact Assessment relating to the impact of the Aberdeen City Retailers' Charter for the Responsible Sale of Tobacco and Vaping Products has been reviewed and no changes are required.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required.
Other	None

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 Original Committee Report of 5th September 2023: Aberdeen City Retailers' Charter for the Responsible Sale of Tobacco and Vaping Products; Report Number RES/23/258

11. APPENDICES

11.1 None

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee
DATE	5th September 2024
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Update on the Progress in the Establishing of a Trusted Trader Scheme in Aberdeen City
REPORT NUMBER	CORS/24/241
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	Andy MacDonald
CHIEF OFFICER	Vikki Cuthbert
REPORT AUTHOR	Graeme Paton
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1.2 and 1.1.5

1. **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 This report seeks to update Elected Members on the progress made by officers of the Trading Standards Service ("the Service") in establishing the Aberdeen City Trusted Trader Scheme ("the Scheme"), the plan for which was set out in Committee Report Number RES/23/272 and approved by this Committee on 5th September 2023.

2. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

That the Committee:

2.1 Notes the contents of the report and the progress made and welcomes the forthcoming launch of the Scheme.

3. **CURRENT SITUATION**

3.1 The current position is that the Scheme will launch during the Scottish Trusted Trader Week scheduled for 1-7th September 2024, organised by the Society of Chief Officers of Trading Standards in Scotland (SCOTSS) Trader Directory Services (TDS), and coordinated through the Media Team in Aberdeen City Council (ACC). There are 18 city businesses who have been vetted, or are going through the vetting process, which will form the initial tranche of members.

3.2 Elected Members will recall from the original committee report referenced above that the purpose of the Scheme was to provide city residents with access to a list of city-based home maintenance and improvement businesses who are vetted by Trading Standards to confirm that they are aware of their rights and responsibilities under consumer protection and trading standards law, and those of the consumer. The intention is to promote good business practice; increase consumer confidence through access to a list of trusted traders in a

market that has been, and continues to be, a difficult one for consumers to navigate; and with the benefit to member businesses of an increase in market size and business opportunities.

3.3   After permission was granted by this Committee in September 2023, an officer was tasked with leading on this project. Most of their time has been spent communicating the purpose and benefits of the Scheme to the business community to encourage membership. This has involved either direct contacts with businesses via email; targeted Social Media campaigns; seeking the support of trade associations such as the Federation of Small Businesses in advising their members; and garnering the support of colleagues at Business Gateway, the City Growth Team, and Police Scotland to do likewise.

3.4   Officers have also sought to coordinate the development and promotion of the ACC Scheme with colleagues at Aberdeenshire and Moray Councils who are developing their own Schemes, along with SCOTSS. This is to ensure consistent methods of engagement with and vetting of businesses, along with advertising materials and publicity.

3.5   As anticipated, it can be difficult to attract members as there is no history of such a Scheme in Aberdeen. Officers have also found that several businesses have full order books for months in advance, and so have no compelling business reason to join the Scheme. That said, officers will continue to explore opportunities to publicise the Scheme with a view to attracting new members. We will do so in concert with the Media Team, TS colleagues locally and across Scotland, in concert with SCOTSS.

3.6   The home improvements market is still an issue for consumers and businesses alike. This remains one of the most complained about sectors in the local economy. On average, Trading Standards receives approximately 190 complaints per year from consumers, with approximately 90 complaints having been received this calendar year already. The long-term hope is that this Scheme will have a positive impact on these complaint levels.

4.   **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

4.1   The financial implications for this Service remain the same as was set out in the original report: there is no financial burden on the TS budget in terms of maintaining and supporting the Scheme.

4.2   The only change was that we expanded the offer of reduced membership fee from the first 10 applicants to the first 20 for their first year. This was in the hope it would encourage more businesses to sign up, which has encouraged an additional 8 businesses to sign up. This means foregoing £1400 in income instead of the original £700.

4.3   A total of 18 city businesses have joined, or are in the process of joining, the Scheme. This leaves two reduced rate memberships still to be taken up after which the Service will generate £70 income for each new member.

4.4   Although there is no financial commitment from the TS budget, use can be made of the income generated from membership fees to promote the Scheme locally to increase membership whilst also working with SCOTSS to secure external sources of funding promotion, which they have been successful at doing in the past.

5.   LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1   A contract with TDS to provide the platform and back-office administration of the Scheme remains in place.

6.   ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1   There are no direct environmental implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

7.   RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic Risk	No significant risks identified			**N/A**
Compliance	No significant risks identified			**N/A**
Operational	The risk is the scheme creates a demand for TS officer time.	This has already proven to be the case as the officer leading the development of the Scheme has dedicated more and more of their time over the past year on task of setting up the Scheme. However, it is anticipated that once the Scheme is in place, the only requirement on officer time will be the process of vetting new applicants. As with the impending launch, it is	L	**Yes**

		anticipated that TDS and SCOTSS will lead on the promotion of the Scheme Scotland-wide.		
Financial	The risk is the scheme does not become self-sustaining	There is no financial commitment from the ACC Trading Standards budget to support the Scheme, only officer time in terms of vetting new members. As has been the case in other authorities, Schemes have become self-sustaining.	L	**Yes**
Reputational	The risk of the scheme not being used by either traders or residents, and the scheme fails.	This was identified as a risk in the original report, and it remains so. Officers continue to work with partners to ensure the Scheme is widely publicised. The launch of the ACC Scheme and those of other new members during the week 1-7th September 2024 will help promote the Scheme to city residents and businesses. No such TS-led Scheme has failed in Scotland.	L	**Yes**
Environment / Climate	No significant risks identified			**N/A**

8. OUTCOMES

Council Delivery Plan 2024	
	Impact of Report
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement **Working in Partnership for Aberdeen**	The proposals within this report support the delivery of the following aspects of the policy statement: Seek to make Aberdeen Safer City by promoting confidence in the householder when they are choosing a tradesman to work in their home.
Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-26	

Prosperous Economy Stretch Outcomes	As was stated in the original report, the impact of this Scheme meets the overarching ends of the Prosperous Economy section of the LOIP because it is primarily aimed at increasing consumer confidence in a problematic sector of the economy. If this is successful, it should increase market demand and increase business opportunities for reputable businesses, particularly those who are members of the scheme. The scheme empowers consumers to make informed decisions when contracting with traders within the home improvements sector by providing access to a list of local businesses who have been vetted by Trading Standards. This vetting process promotes regulatory compliance so that member businesses are fully aware of their rights and responsibilities when contracting with customers. With higher levels of consumer confidence comes increased demand and more business opportunities for scheme members. These consumer informed choices will also reduce the risk of having to carry out equally expensive remedial action where a job goes wrong. And if it does, contracting with a Scheme member means that the consumer has a dispute resolution (ADR) mechanism to fall back on. With better information on reliable, legally compliant businesses, consumers will be more confident in entering a market they may previously have been wary of.
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	N/A
Prosperous Place Stretch Outcomes	N/A
Regional and City Strategies	Trusted Trader Schemes were promoted as a scam prevention tool in the Scottish Government's (SG) 2021 Scams prevention, awareness, and enforcement strategy. https://www.gov.scot/publications/scams-prevention-awareness-enforcement-strategy-2021-2024/ Developing an ACC Scheme adds to the network in Scotland and helps achieve the aims of the SG's scam prevention strategy.

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	The original Integrated Impact Assessment relating to the establishing of the Scheme in Aberdeen City has been reviewed and no changes are required.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	A DPIA assessment was completed for the original report submitted in September 2023.
Other	None

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 Original Committee Report of 5th September 2023: Establishing a Trusted Trader Scheme in Aberdeen, Report Number RES/23/272

11. APPENDICES

11.1 None

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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COMMITTEE	Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee
DATE	5 September 2024
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Communities, Housing and Public Protection Performance Report
REPORT NUMBER	CORS/24/238
DIRECTOR	Andy MacDonald
CHIEF OFFICER	Martin Murchie
REPORT AUTHOR	Louise Fox
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1.3

1.   PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1   To present Committee with the status of appropriate key performance measures relating to services falling within its remit.

2.   RECOMMENDATION(S)

2.1   That the Committee note the report and provide comments and observations on the performance information contained in the report Appendix.

3.   CURRENT SITUATION

Report Purpose

3.1   This report is to provide members with appropriate key performance measures in relation to certain Operations and Customer services as expressed within the 2024/25 Council Delivery Plan.

Report Structure and Content

3.2   Performance Management Framework Reporting against in-house delivery directly contributing to, or enabling delivery against, the city's Local Outcome Improvement Plan, (LOIP) has informed development of successive Council Delivery Plans, including the 2024/25 Council Delivery Plan agreed by Council on 6th March 2024.

3.3   The Council's Performance Management Framework, supporting and enabling scrutiny against progress of the Council Delivery Plan and its key measures, establishes a robust performance management and reporting system which encompasses single and multi-service inputs, outputs and outcomes.

3.4   The refreshed Performance Management Framework for 2024/25 was approved at the meeting of Council on 21 August 2024.

3.5   Service standards against each function/cluster, associated with Council delivery planning, offer continuous insight into the effectiveness, and

accessibility of core service provision to the Council's stakeholders and city communities.

3.6 Where appropriate, data capture against these standards is now directly incorporated within the suite of metrics contained within Appendix A and will be reported against on either a monthly, quarterly or annual basis.

3.7 The Performance Management Framework provides for a consistent approach within which performance will be reported to Committees. This presents performance data and analysis within four core perspectives, as shown below, which provides for uniformity of performance reporting across Committees.
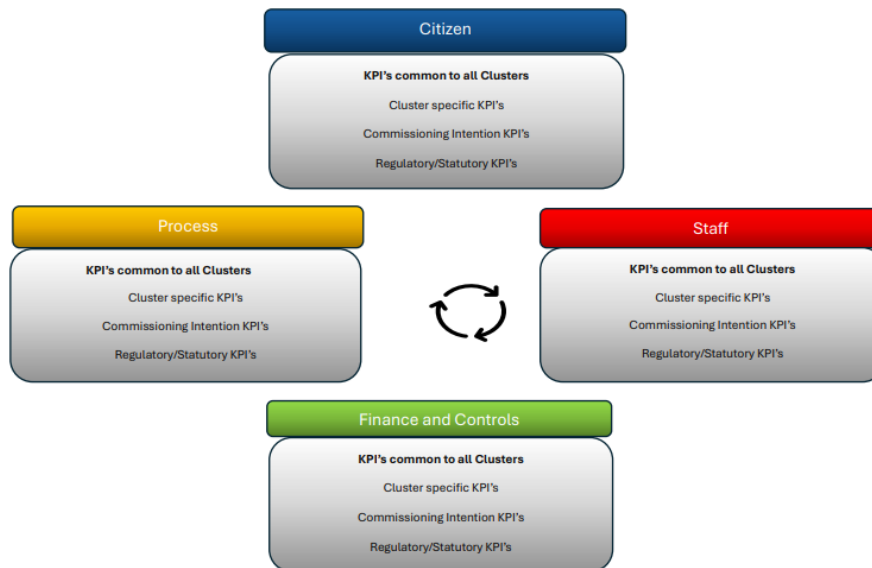
3.8 This report, as far as possible, details performance up to the end of June 2024 or Quarter 1 2024/25, as appropriate.

3.9 Appendix A provides an overview of performance across certain appropriate services, with reference to recent trends and performance against target. Further analysis is also provided of several performance measures which have been identified as of potential interest in terms of either performance implications or data trends. These are listed below:

- % of External Quality Assurance reported results that were satisfactory
- YTD % of statutory homeless decisions reached within 28 Days Unintentional RRTP
- YTD Average length of journey in days for applicants assessed as unintentionally homeless (RRTP)
- Rent loss due to voids - Citywide - YTD average

3.10 Within the summary dashboard the following symbols are also used:

Performance Measures

Traffic Light Icon

✅ On target or within 5% of target

⚠️ Within 5% - 20% of target and being monitored

🛑 More than 20% below target and being actively pursued

📈 Data only – target not appropriate

Where narrative analysis of progress against service standards is provided and has been attributed with a RAG status by the relevant Service Manager, these are defined as follows:

RAG Status

- **GREEN** – Actions are on track with no delays/issues emerging

- **AMBER** – Actions are experiencing minor delays/issues emerging and are being closely monitored

- **RED** - Actions are experiencing significant delays/issues with improvement measures being put in place

4.   FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications arising out of this report.

5.   LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct legal implications arising out of this report.

6.   ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct environmental implications arising out of this report.

7.   RISK

The assessment of risk contained within the table below is considered to be consistent with the Council's Risk Appetite Statement.

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic	None	NA	NA	NA

Compliance	No significant legal risks.	Publication of service performance information in the public domain ensures that the Council is meeting its legal obligations in the context of Best value reporting.	L	Yes
Operational	No significant operational risks.	Oversight by Elected Members of core employee health and safety/attendance data supports the Council's obligations as an employer	L	Yes
Financial	No significant financial risks.	Overview data on specific limited aspects of the cluster's financial performance is provided within this report	L	Yes
Reputational	No significant reputational risks.	Reporting of service performance to Members and in the public domain serves to enhance the Council's reputation for transparency and accountability.	L	Yes
Environment / Climate	None	NA	NA	NA

8.   OUTCOMES

COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN	
	Impact of Report
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement	**None**
Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan	
Prosperous Economy Stretch Outcomes	The Council aims to support improvement in the local economy to ensure a high quality of life for all people in Aberdeen. This report monitors indicators which reflect current economic activity within the City and actions taken by the Council to support such activity.
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	The Council is committed to improving the key life outcomes of all people in Aberdeen. This report monitors key indicators impacting on the lives of all citizens of Aberdeen. Thus, Committee will be

	enabled to assess the effectiveness of measures already implemented, as well as allowing an evaluation of future actions which may be required to ensure an improvement in such outcomes.
Prosperous Place Stretch Outcomes	The Council is committed to ensuring that Aberdeen is a welcoming place to invest, live and visit, operating to the highest environmental standards. This report provides essential information in relation to environmental issues allowing the Committee to measure the impact of any current action.
Regional and City Strategies	None

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	No Assessment is required for this report. I confirm this has been discussed and agreed with Martin Murchie, Chief Officer, Data Insights (HDRCA) on 5th August 2024
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required
Other	None

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Council Delivery Plan 2024/25 – COM/24/060
Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-2026 (April 2024 Refresh)
Performance Management Framework – COM/23/168

11. APPENDICES

Appendix A – Performance Summary Dashboard

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee Performance Report Appendix A

Corporate Landlord

Building Services

1. Citizen – Building Services

Performance Indicator	Apr 2024		May 2024		Jun 2024		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
*The year to date percentage of repairs appointments kept	Data cannot easily be extracted from the current system, the Service has commissioned a long term solution and are working with Data and Insights and Digital and Technology to identify a short term interim solution to aid reporting. It is hoped that this interim solution will be in place for the November meeting of Committee.						90%	▬
Percentage of tenants who have had repairs or maintenance carried out in the last 12 months satisfied with the repairs and maintenance service (year to date).	84.62%	✅	84.38%	✅	86.3%	✅	80%	⬆

Performance Indicator	Q3 2023/24		Q4 2023/24		Q1 2024/25		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
Total No. complaints received (stage 1 and 2) - Building Services	113	📈	109	📈	96	📈		⬆
% of complaints resolved within timescale stage 1 and 2) - Building Services	81.4%	✅	79.8%	✅	89.6%	✅	75%	⬆
% of complaints with at least one point upheld (stage 1 and 2) - Building Services	23.9%	📈	22.9%	📈	26%	📈		⬆
*Total No. of lessons learnt identified (stage 1 and 2) - Building Services	1	📈	1	📈	0	📈		▬

*Lessons learnt referred to throughout this Appendix are lasting actions taken/changes made to resolve an issue and to prevent future re-occurrence for example amending an existing procedure or revising training processes. When a complaint has been upheld, action would be taken in the form of an apology or staff discussion/advice, but these actions are not classified as lessons learnt.

2. Processes – Building Services

Performance Indicator	Apr 2024		May 2024		Jun 2024		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
*The year to date average length of time taken to complete emergency repairs (hrs)	Data cannot easily be extracted from the current system, the Service has commissioned a long term solution and are working with Data and Insights and Digital and Technology to identify a short term interim solution to aid reporting. It is hoped that this interim solution will be in place for the November meeting of Committee.						4.1	▬
*The year to date average length of time taken to complete non-emergency repairs (days)							8.3	▬
*The year to date percentage of reactive repairs carried out in the last year completed right first time							90%	▬
*The percentage of Repairs Inspections completed within 20 working day target (year to date)							100%	▬

3. Staff – Building Services

Performance Indicator	Q3 2023/24		Q4 2023/24		Q1 2024/25		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
Accidents - Reportable - Employees (No in Quarter - Building Services)	1	📈	1	📈	0	📈		⬆
Accidents - Non-Reportable - Employees (No in Quarter - Building Services)	5	📈	5	📈	3	📈		⬆

Performance Indicator	Apr 2024		May 2024		Jun 2024		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
*Sickness Absence – Average Number of Days Lost - Building Services	6.31	✅	6.44	✅	6.50	✅	10	⬇

Performance Indicator	Apr 2024		May 2024		Jun 2024		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
**Average number of working days lost due to sickness absence per FTE employee, monthly	1.11	📈	1.11	📈	0.93	📈		▬
Establishment actual FTE	414.06	📈	406.39	📈	406.05	📈		▬

*Absence data throughout this report reflects robust calculations of FTE based absence but with recognition that minimal variances in accuracy can arise in longitudinal and service comparisons where part time/variable hours working contracts are more common. The impact of this technical/statistical issue has been assessed as producing a marginal inflationary effect on absence levels within Services where a greater proportion of these types of contract are appropriate to effective service delivery.

** This indicator calculates the working days lost due to sickness per month per employee. This is calculated by dividing the total number of days lost due to sickness during the respective month by the average of all the FTE staff employed during the same month.

4. Finance & Controls – Building Services

Performance Indicator	Apr 2024		May 2024		Jun 2024		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
Staff Costs - % Spend to Date (FYB)	7.9%	✅	16.2%	✅	26.1%	✅	100%	▬

Facilities Management

1. Customer – Facilities Management

Performance Indicator	Q3 2023/24		Q4 2023/24		Q1 2024/25		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
Total No. complaints received (stage 1 and 2) - Facilities	3	📈	3	📈	1	📈		⬆
% of complaints resolved within timescale (stage 1 and 2) - Facilities	100%	✅	66.7%	⚠	100%	✅	75%	⬆

Performance Indicator	Q3 2023/24		Q4 2023/24		Q1 2024/25		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
% of complaints with at least one point upheld (stage 1 and 2) - Facilities	33.3%	📈	33.3%	📈	0%	📈		🔼
Total No. of lessons learnt identified (stage 1 and 2) - Facilities	1	📈	0	📈	0	📈		➖

Performance Indicator	Q3 2023/24		Q4 2023/24		Q1 2024/25		2024/25 Q1 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
*Number of school lunches served in the year - Primary (YTD)	1,414,134	✅	2,015,903	✅	588,741	✅	578,000	🔼

*The expansion of free school meal provision and increasing pupil rolls at schools across the city have combined to see more school meals being served in our Primary schools. The service will continue to monitor pupil rolls and meal uptakes as we work through the year and will revise targets appropriately.

Performance Indicator	Current Status	2024/25 Target
All meals served to children and young people in our schools will meet The Nutritional Requirements for Food and Drink in Schools (Scotland) Regulations 2020	🟩	100%
The Nutritional Requirements for Food and Drink in Schools (Scotland) Regulations 2020 came into effect from April 2021. Our School Catering service aims for 100% compliance with the regulations to ensure that whilst in school, our children and young people are receiving the nutrition they require to be effective learners. We have set this as a service standard particular to Aberdeen City Council's school Catering Service and there is no comparative benchmarking information which we can use to compare performance with other local authorities. Performance is not reported as a metric, but the intention of the measure is to highlight to Committee any reports received on nutritional non-compliance from Education Scotland's school inspection visits.		

2. Processes – Facilities Management

Performance Indicator	Apr 2024		May 2024		Jun 2024		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
% Fly tipping alerts at housing multi-storey blocks responded to within 60 hours	100%	✅	77.6%	🔴	94.1%	⚠️	100%	🔼

Performance Indicator	Apr 2024		May 2024		Jun 2024		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
% Response cleaning alerts responded to within priority timescales	100%	✅	85.7%	⚠️	86.7%	⚠️	100%	⬇️
% Void cleaning alerts responded to within priority timescales	93.8%	⚠️	74.7%	🔴	95.8%	✅	100%	⬆️

Performance Indicator	Q3 2023/24		Q4 2023/24		Q1 2024/25		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
% Local bus service registration changes reviewed and responded to within the prescribed 28-day period	100%	✅	100%	✅	100%	✅	100%	▬
% Mainstream Transport Applications assessed within target timescale	100%	✅	100%	✅	98.9%	✅	100%	▬
% ASN/Exceptional Applications processed within target timescale	100%	✅	100%	✅	100%	✅	100%	▬
% School Transport Contracts Spot Checked within time period	45.9%	✅	53.3%	✅	14.5%	✅	12.5% (Q1)	▬

Performance Indicator	Current Status	2024/25 Target
We will deliver 39 weeks contracted school cleaning to the standards set in our generic specification.	🟩	95%
Cleaning service is delivered by the in-house team at all non-3Rs schools in the city, for the 190 days of the school session plus the 5 annual in-service days. We will use this measure to highlight any instances where a school has been unable to open due to our inability to provide a satisfactory cleaning service.		

Performance Indicator	Current Status	2024/25 Target
We will deliver cleaning services within all (non-school) operational properties to the standards set in our generic specification.	🟩	95%
Cleaning service is delivered by the in-house team throughout the year at all other operational properties across the city, on all weekdays minus public holidays (a limited number of properties also receive service over weekends). We will use this measure to highlight any instances where a property has been unable to open due to our inability to provide a satisfactory cleaning service.		

Performance Indicator	Current Status	2024/25 Target
We will provide janitorial support to every (non 3Rs) primary school for a minimum of 4 hours per day when the school is open to pupils.	🟩	100%
Janitorial service is delivered by the in-house team at all non-3Rs Primary schools in the city, throughout the year. For the 190 days of the school session plus the 5 annual in-service days, a minimum of 4 hours of Janitors input will be provided at each Primary School. Input may be less than 4 hours per day during school holiday periods. We will use this measure to highlight any instances where a Primary school has been unable to open to pupils due to our inability to provide a satisfactory janitorial service.		

Performance Indicator	Current Status	2024/25 Target
We will provide janitorial support to every (non 3Rs) secondary school between 07:00 and 18:00 on each day when the school is open to pupils.	🟩	100%
Janitorial service is delivered by the in-house team at all non-3Rs Secondary schools in the city, throughout the year. For the 190 days of the school session plus the 5 annual in-service days, janitorial service will be provided between 07:00 and 18:00 at each Secondary School. Input may be for a shorter duration during school holiday periods. We will use this measure to highlight any instances where a Secondary school has been unable to open to pupils due to our inability to provide a satisfactory janitorial service.		

3. Staff – Facilities Management

Performance Indicator	Q3 2023/24		Q4 2023/24		Q1 2024/25		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
Accidents - Reportable - Employees (No in Quarter)	0	📈	0	📈	1	📈		⬇️
Accidents - Non-Reportable - Employees (No Quarter)	4	📈	10	📈	3	📈		⬆️

Performance Indicator	Apr 2024		May 2024		Jun 2024		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
Sickness Absence – Average Number of Days Lost - Facilities	16.44	🔴	15.13	🔴	13.87	🔴	10	⬆️
Average number of working days lost due to sickness absence per FTE employee, monthly	2.08	📈	2.54	📈	2.24	📈		➖
Establishment actual FTE	521.46	📈	424.17	📈	521.24	📈		➖

Performance Indicator	Apr 2024		May 2024		Jun 2024		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
Establishment actual FTE (Catering)	173.23	📈	174.14	📈	171.82	📈		▬
Establishment actual FTE (Cleaning)	234.11	📈	235.67	📈	235.06	📈		▬
Establishment actual FTE (Janitorial)	64.67	📈	64.67	📈	64.67	📈		▬
Establishment actual FTE (Office & Building Management)	14.89	📈	14.89	📈	14.89	📈		▬
Establishment actual FTE (Passenger Transport Unit)	32.46	📈	32.7	📈	32.7	📈		▬

4. Finance & Controls - Facilities Management

Performance Indicator	Apr 2024		May 2024		Jun 2024		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
Inspection - Number of overdue corrective actions requests as at month end	0	✅	0	✅	0	✅	0	▬
Staff Costs - % Spend to Date (FYB)	9.2%	✅	18.1%	✅	27.1%	✅	100%	▬

Governance

Protective Services

1. Citizen – Protective Services

Performance Indicator	Q3 2023/24		Q4 2023/24		Q1 2024/25		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
Total No. complaints received - Protective Services	12	📈	3	📈	2	📈		⬆️
% of complaints resolved within timescale - Protective Services	83.3%	✅	33.3%	🔴	100%	✅	75%	⬆️

Performance Indicator	Q3 2023/24		Q4 2023/24		Q1 2024/25		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
% of complaints with at least one point upheld (stage 1 and 2) - Protective Services	8.3%	📈	0%	📈	0%	📈		⬆
Total No. of lessons learnt identified (stage 1 and 2) - Protective Services	0	📈	0	📈	0	📈		➖

<div style="background:orange">

2. Processes - Protective Services

</div>

Performance Indicator	Apr 2024		May 2024		Jun 2024		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
Non-Domestic Noise % responded to within 2 days	100%	✅	100%	✅	100%	✅	100%	⬆
High Priority Pest Control % responded to within 2 days	98.7%	✅	100%	✅	98.4%	✅	100%	⬆
High Priority Public Health % responded to within 2 days	98.8%	✅	100%	✅	96.2%	✅	100%	⬆
Dog Fouling - % responded to within 2 days	100%	✅	100%	✅	100%	✅	100%	⬆

Performance Indicator	Q3 2023/24		Q4 2023/24		Q1 2024/25		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
% of Samples reported within specified turnaround times (Aberdeen Scientific Services Laboratory)	56.1%	🔴	78.7%	✅	74.4%	⚠️	80%	⬆
*% of registered tobacco retailers visited to give Business Advice on compliance with tobacco legislation - Year to Date	45.3%	📈	48.6%	✅	11.3%	📈		➖
*% of registered tobacco retailers subjected to Test Purchasing for retailer compliance with age restrictions - Year to Date	16.2%	📈	16.2%	✅	0%	📈		➖
*% of registered Nicotine Vapour Products retailers visited to give Business Advice on compliance with legislation - Year to Date	45.1%	📈	51.2%	✅	11.7%	📈		➖
*% of registered Nicotine Vapour Products retailers subjected to Test Purchasing for retailer compliance with age restrictions - Year to Date	31.5%	📈	35.8%	✅	0%	📈		➖
% of scheduled food service premises inspections (where access was possible) carried out on time, in line with Food Regulatory Service Plan	100%	✅	100%	✅	100%	✅	100%	➖

*The Scottish Government (SG) has set targets for all local authority Trading Standards Services to carry out test purchasing from retail premises to test for compliance with the age restriction on the supply of tobacco and nicotine vaping products (e-cigarettes) set out in the Tobacco and Primary Medical Services (Scotland) Act 2010. The requirement is that 10% of registered tobacco and e-cigarettes retailers in each jurisdiction should be tested on an annual basis. Accordingly, at the beginning of each financial year Aberdeen City Council Trading Standards service plans this work so that these targets are achieved (along with the related PI of visiting 20% of each to provide Business Advice). This work is dependent upon the availability of 16 year old volunteers to work alongside officers. That notwithstanding, this service regularly achieves these targets, which are reported to the SG via the Society of Chief Officers of Trading Standards in Scotland (SCOTSS).**

2. Processes – Community Safety

Performance Indicator	Apr 2024		May 2024		Jun 2024		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
YTD Percentage of anti-social behaviour cases reported which were resolved	90.8%	⚠️	89.1%	⚠️	91.9%	⚠️	100%	▬
YTD % of calls attended to by the ASBIT Team within 1 hour	88.9%	⚠️	90.5%	✅	86.4%	⚠️	95%	⬇️

3. Staff - Protective Services

Performance Indicator	Q3 2023/24		Q4 2023/24		Q1 2024/25		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
Accidents - Reportable - Employees (No. In Quarter - Protective Services)	0	📊	0	📊	0	📊		▬
Accidents - Non-Reportable - Employees (No. In Quarter - Protective Services)	0	📊	0	📊	0	📊		▬

Performance Indicator	Apr 2024		May 2024		Jun 2024		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
Sickness Absence – Average Number of Days Lost – Protective Services	4.32	✅	4.29	✅	4.31	✅	10	▬
Average number of working days lost due to sickness absence per FTE employee, monthly	0.98	📊	0.83	📊	0.97	📊		▬
Establishment actual FTE	63.47	📊	63.49	📊	61.53	📊		▬

4. Finance & Controls - Protective Services

Performance Indicator	Q3 2023/24		Q4 2023/24		Q1 2024/25		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
% of External Quality Assurance reported results that were satisfactory (Aberdeen Scientific Services Laboratory)	93.9%	✅	97.4%	✅	79.5%	⚠️	95%	⬇️

% of External Quality Assurance reported results that were satisfactory (Aberdeen Scientific Services Laboratory)

Q1 2024/25 result

0%   76%   90.3%   100%   79.5%

OPS2522PSV % of External Quality Assurance reported results that were satisfactory (Aberdeen Scientific Services Laboratory)

Q2 2023/24   Q3 2023/24   Q4 2023/24   Q1 2024/25

■ Quarters — Target (Quarters)
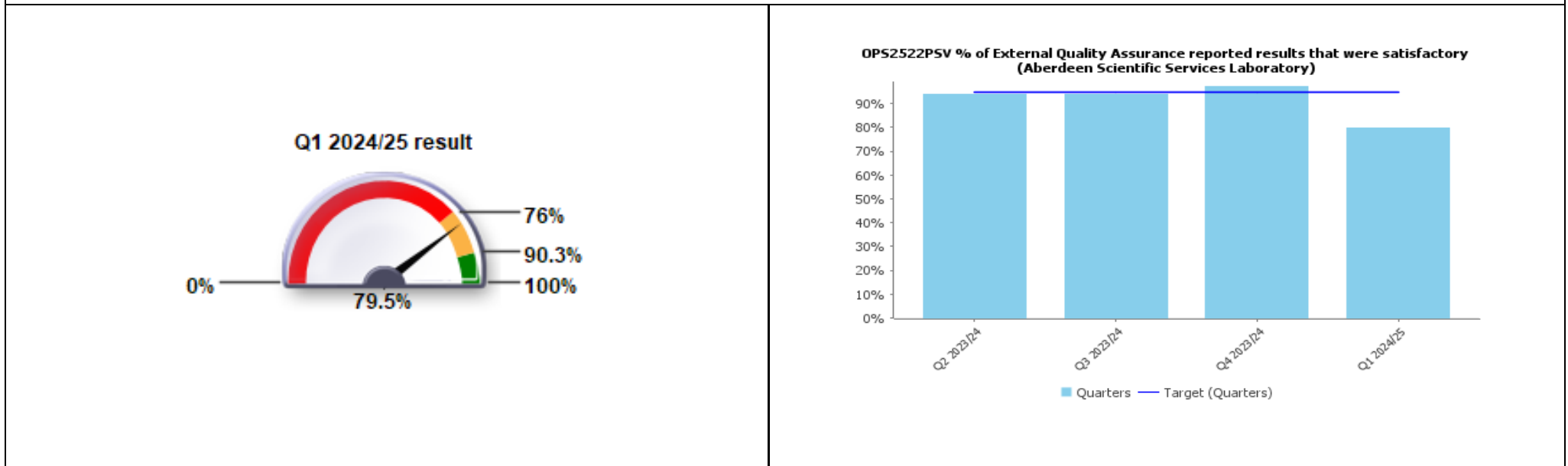
Why is this important?

External quality assurance is an essential part of the quality control checks within the laboratory, helping ensure that accurate results are reported. It is also used to demonstrate compliance with the ISO17025 standard and thus supporting the maintenance of the laboratories accreditation.

Benchmark Information:

This is a local measure and is not currently benchmarked. As of the end of Q1 during 2023/24 performance for this measure was 83.7%.

Target:

The target for 2024/25 has been set at 95%.

This is what the data is saying:

Performance for this measure has remained around target or above for the previous 3 quarters, with a significant drop of 8% in Q1 of 2024/25. 79.5% is the lowest level of performance recorded since reporting of this KPI commenced in 2016/17.

This is the trend:

Until Q1 of 2024/25, performance had seen a consistent upward trend since Q4 of 2023/24.

This is the impact:

The reduction in performance was primarily due to the manner in which the supplier requires results to be reported, which differs from that commonly used within the field. When results are recalculated using summation, as specified by the supplier, the performance of the laboratory meets the targets set. As the laboratory does not report any results using this summation method there was therefore no impact on the quality of the results being reported and the methods continued to perform as required. In addition, a major piece of equipment developed a fault during this period, meaning that our normal quality control checks and repeated measurements could not be carried out, which also impacted the quality of some of EQA results reported. As no results were sent to clients without these control checks in place, there was therefore no reduction in the quality of the reports issued by the laboratory during this time.

These are the next steps we are taking for improvement:

A procedure has been written detailing how external quality assurance samples should be handled and reported, and additional training is being provided to all staff involved in reporting results. The failed instrument has now been repaired.

Responsible officer: **Last Updated:**

Laura Cruickshank   June 2024

Performance Indicator	Apr 2024		May 2024		Jun 2024		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
Staff Costs - % Spend to Date (FYB)	8.9%	✅	17.8%	✅	26.5%	✅	100%	▬

Corporate Services

People & Citizen Services

<table>
<tr><td style="background-color:#29ABE2">1.   Citizen – People & Citizen Services</td></tr>
</table>

Performance Indicator	Q3 2023/24		Q4 2023/24		Q1 2024/25		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
*Total No. complaints received – People & Citizen Services	89	📈	129	📈	121	📈		▬
*% of complaints resolved within timescale – People & Citizen Services	93.6%	✅	96.1%	✅	94.2%	✅	75%	▬
*% of complaints with at least one point upheld (stage 1 and 2) – People & Citizen Services	33.7%	📈	34.1%	📈	29.8%	📈		▬
*Total No. of lessons learnt identified (stage 1 and 2) – People & Citizen Services	1	📈	5	📈	2	📈		▬

Performance Indicator	Apr 2024		May 2024		Jun 2024		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
Financial Inclusion - No of open cases per month	228	📈	192	📈	163	📈		⬇
Financial Inclusion - No of enquiries per month	148	📈	171	📈	177	📈		⬆

*Data for Q3 and Q4 not directly comparable to that for Q1. Reflects an amalgamation of data for pre-restructure clusters Customer Experience and People & Organisational Development.

<table>
<tr><td style="background-color:#F7A000">2.   Processes – People & Citizen Services</td></tr>
</table>

Performance Indicator	Apr 2024		May 2024		Jun 2024		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
Average number of days to process new Housing Benefit claims	15.52	✅	15.13	✅	15.18	✅	25	⬆
Average number of days to process change of circumstances in relation to Housing Benefit claims	6.29	✅	5.94	✅	5.87	✅	12	⬆

Performance Indicator	Apr 2024		May 2024		Jun 2024		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
Correct amount of Housing Benefit paid to customer (monthly)	96.05%	✅	96.79%	✅	97.23%	✅	95%	⬆
% Customer Contact Centre calls answered within target timescale (180 seconds)	73.9%	⚠	79.96%	✅	79.51%	✅	80%	⬆
% Copy birth, death, marriage and civil partnership certificates issued within target timescale (7 days)	99.11%	✅	100%	✅	98.69%	✅	100%	⬆
Welfare Rights - % of Successful Appeals	75%	📈	100%	📈	100%	📈		⬆

Performance Indicator	2021		2022		2023		2024/25 Target	Long Trend - Annual
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
*% Accuracy Rate - Registration of Births, Marriages and Deaths - annual (calendar year)	99.1%	✅	99.1%	✅	98.8%	✅	100%	➖

*This is an annual measure based on calendar year calculations.

Performance Indicator	Q3 2023/24		Q4 2023/24		Q1 2024/25		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
% Crisis Grant applications processed within 2 working days	99.2%	✅	96.27%	✅	Data yet to be released by Scottish Government		90%	⬆
% Community Care Grant applications processed within 15 working days	73.08%	✅	67.8%	✅			50%	⬇

3. Staff – People & Citizen Services

Performance Indicator	Q3 2023/24		Q4 2023/24		Q1 2024/25		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
*Accidents - Reportable - Employees (No in Quarter – People & Citizen Services)	0	📈	0	📈	0	📈		➖

Performance Indicator	Q3 2023/24		Q4 2023/24		Q1 2024/25		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
*Accidents - Non-Reportable - Employees (No in Quarter – People & Citizen Services)	0	📈	0	📈	0	📈		➖

*Data for Q3 and Q4 not directly comparable to that for Q1. Reflects an amalgamation of data for pre-restructure clusters Customer Experience and People & Organisational Development.

Performance Indicator	Apr 2024		May 2024		Jun 2024		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
Sickness Absence – Average Number of Days Lost – People & Citizen Services	5.05	✅	4.77	✅	4.44	✅	5	⬆️
Average number of working days lost due to sickness absence per FTE employee, monthly	0.93	📈	1.00	📈	0.94	📈		➖
Establishment actual FTE	346.91	📈	346.63	📈	352.68	📈		➖

4. Finance & Controls – People & Citizen Services

Performance Indicator	Apr 2024		May 2024		Jun 2024		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
Council Tax Cash Collected (In Year) - monthly	£16.4m	✅	£29m	✅	£41.6m	✅	£42.7m	➖
Staff Costs - % Spend to Date (FYB)	7.5%	✅	15.4%	✅	23.5%	✅	100%	➖
Financial Inclusion - Total Financial Gains Achieved per month	£386,345	📈	£424,769	📈	£408,335	📈		⬆️

Digital and Technology

1. Citizen – Digital and Technology

Performance Indicator	Q3 2023/24		Q4 2023/24		Q1 2024/25		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
Total No. complaints received – Digital and Technology	0	📈	0	📈	1	📈		🔽
% of complaints resolved within timescale – Digital and Technology	No complaints Q3/Q4				100%	✅	75%	🔼
% of complaints with at least one point upheld (stage 1 and 2) – Digital and Technology					0%	📈		▬
Total No. of lessons learnt identified (stage 1 and 2) – Digital and Technology					0	📈		▬

2. Processes – Digital and Technology

Performance Indicator	Apr 2024		May 2024		Jun 2024		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
Percentage of Critical system availability - average (monthly)	99.5%	✅	99.5%	✅	99.5%	✅	99.5%	▬
% Incidents logged by IT Helpdesk (including Self-Serve) resolved right first time	80.4%	✅	76.3%	✅	78.6%	✅	70%	🔽
% Priority 1 and 2 incidents closed in timescale	80%	🔺	66.7%	🔴	80%	🔺	99.5%	🔼
% Priority 3 – 5 incidents closed in timescale	78.5%	🔺	81.8%	🔺	84.2%	🔺	95%	🔼

3. Staff – Digital and Technology

Performance Indicator	Q3 2023/24		Q4 2023/24		Q1 2024/25		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
Accidents - Reportable - Employees (No in Quarter – Digital and Technology)	0	📈	0	📈	0	📈		▬
Accidents - Non-Reportable - Employees (No in Quarter – Digital and Technology)	0	📈	2	📈	0	📈		▬

Performance Indicator	Apr 2024		May 2024		Jun 2024		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
Sickness Absence – Average Number of Days Lost – Digital & Technology	1.60	✅	1.73	✅	1.62	✅	5	▬
Average number of working days lost due to sickness absence per FTE employee, monthly	0.60	📈	0.75	📈	0.45	📈		▬
Establishment actual FTE	91.82	📈	95.03	📈	91.82	📈		▬

4. Finance & Controls – Digital and Technology

Performance Indicator	Apr 2024		May 2024		Jun 2024		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
Staff Costs - % Spend to Date (FYB)	7.6%	✅	15.4%	✅	23%	✅	100%	▬

Families & Communities

Housing

1. Citizen – Housing

Performance Indicator	Q3 2023/24		Q4 2023/24		Q1 2024/25		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
*Total No. complaints received – Housing	72	📈	59	📈	73	📈		▬
*% of complaints resolved within timescale - Housing	76.38%	✅	81.36%	✅	78.1%	✅	75%	▬
*% of complaints with at least one point upheld (stage 1 and 2) - Housing	22.2%	📈	34.73%	📈	26%	📈		▬
*Total No. of lessons learnt identified (stage 1 and 2) - Housing	0	📈	0	📈	1	📈		▬

*Data for Q1 is not directly comparable to that for Q3 and Q4 being extracted from existing Early Intervention and Community Empowerment data with the removal of services no longer forming part of the Housing cluster.

Performance Indicator	Apr 2024		May 2024		Jun 2024		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
Percentage of tenants satisfied with the standard of their home when moving in YTD	76.2%	✅	81.8%	✅	84.6%	✅	75%	⬆
Satisfaction of new tenants with the overall service received (Year To Date)	76.2%	⚠	84.8%	✅	84.6%	✅	85%	⬆

2. Processes – Housing

Performance Indicator	Apr 2024 Value	Apr 2024 Status	May 2024 Value	May 2024 Status	Jun 2024 Value	Jun 2024 Status	2024/25 Target	Long Trend
YTD % of cases reassessed as being homeless or potentially homeless within 12 months* of a previous case being closed. (Data Provided by Scottish Government on a Quarterly Basis)	4%	✅	4%	✅	4%	✅	4%	➡️
YTD % of statutory homeless decisions reached within 28 Days Unintentional RRTP	48.9%	🛑	50.6%	🛑	50.3%	🛑	100%	⬆️
YTD Average length of journey in days for applicants assessed as unintentionally homeless (RRTP)	116.9	⚠️	117.6	⚠️	130.2	🛑	100	⬇️
Number of Statutory Homeless Households Residing in Temporary Accommodation at Month End	440	📈	425	📈	432	📈		⬆️
The YTD number of Legal repossessions following decree (Arrears) - Citywide	9	📈	10	📈	14	📈		➡️
Housing Applications processed 28 days YTD %	95%	⚠️	95.56%	✅	96.46%	✅	100%	⬆️
Statutory Customer Service Actions - Decisions/Outcomes within statutory timescale	83.8%	⚠️	93.8%	⚠️	90.5%	⚠️	100%	➡️
The YTD Average time taken to re-let all properties (Citywide - days)	186.3	✅	202.7	✅	215.3	✅	210	⬇️
Voids Available for Offer Month Number - Citywide	2,067	📈	2,024	📈	2,000	📈		➡️

YTD % of Unintentional homeless decisions reached within 21 Days (RRTP)

June 2024 result

0% — 50.3% — 80% — 95% — 100%
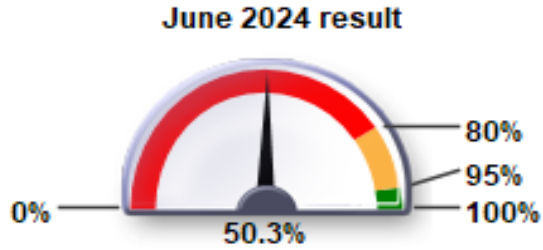
HOUKPIHL3a YTD % of statutory homeless decisions reached within 28 Days Unintentional RRTP

■ Months — Target (Months)

Why is this important?

The Scottish Social Housing Charter was introduced by the Housing (Scotland) Act 2010, which requires Ministers to set standards and outcomes that social landlords should be achieving for tenants and customers through their housing activities.

Charter outcome **12** – Homeless People - stipulates that local councils perform their duties to homelessness people so that;
Homeless people get prompt and easy access to help and advice; are provided with suitable, good-quality temporary or emergency accommodation when this is needed; and are offered continuing support to help them get and keep the home they are entitled to.

National Policy – Transitioning towards a rapid rehousing approach is part of Scotland's strategy to end homelessness where one of the four key priorities is that 'homeless households are provided a settled, mainstream housing outcome as quickly as possible.'

This indicator, along with others, monitors whether we are achieving our desired outcomes and are committed to 'Sustain/improve performance in respect of the key priorities set out above.

Benchmark Information:

2023-24
- The YTD **%** of Unintentional homeless decisions reached within 28 Days was **45.4%.** This is a local measure, and no benchmarking is available.

Target:

2024-25
- The % of Unintentional homeless decisions reached within 28 days target is **100%.**

This is what the data is saying:

As of 30th June 2024, there have been **511** homeless decisions reached and of those **386** (**75.5%**) households assessed as unintentionally homeless. Of these **50.3%** (**194**) were assessed within the Scottish Government statutory recommended timescale of 28 days. The average days to reach decision currently stands at **37.0** days, **9** days over target.

To date there has been an **8.5%** (**35**) increase in homeless applications compared with the same period last year.

This is the trend:

There have been **448** homeless applications recorded as of 30th June which is the highest seen since the same period in 2010/11. A large proportion of growth has occurred during the last 3 years where applications have risen by over a quarter since 2020/21, however since April, demand has started to decline with a **15%** reduction witnessed in June.

During this period, the average time taken to reach an unintentional decision has increased from **9.1** days in 2020/21 where Aberdeen City recorded the best time among all local authorities across Scotland, to **37.0** days this year, **16** days above the national average reported for 2022/23.

Although an improvement over the first 3 months of the year, there has been a decline in the last 3 years of households being assessed within target where records show that in 2021/22 **100%** of unintentional decisions reached met target compared to **79%** in 2022/23, **45.3%** in 2023/24.

The increased decision times impact upon the average rapid rehousing homeless journey time which has risen from **104** days in 2021/22 to **130.2** days this year.

This is the impact:

- Risk of failing to deliver on the key strategic outcomes set within the Local Outcome Improvement Plan and Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan.
- People experiencing homelessness spend longer periods in transition which prolongs the homeless journey.
- People experiencing homelessness spend longer periods of time in temporary accommodation which can exacerbate existing demands and associated costs.
- The Council are now breaching our duties in accordance with the Unsuitable Accommodation Order, by having households in unsuitable accommodation for longer than 7 days.
- Increase costs to the Council in providing temporary accommodation for more households and for longer periods of time.

These are the next steps we are taking for improvement:

- Working with community planning partners and as part of the Homewards programme to identify and progress further prevention activity. Across the key areas of reframing perception of homelessness, universal prevention of homelessness and addressing root causes and adequate supply.
- Undertaking prevention activity to reduce new homelessness demand, this includes a Private Landlord Support Officer post to help support private tenants remain the private sector where possible, and our Housing & Support model to help tenants sustain their tenancy, alongside our commissioned support services to support individuals with a medium to longer term housing support need.
- The introduction of fortnightly case reviews of all applications awaiting a decision, to ensure additional support for more complex cases and a focus on reducing the time taken to reach a decision.
- Continued focus on regular training, and mentoring for new and existing employees within the service to support decision making as the complexity within this area has continued to grow.
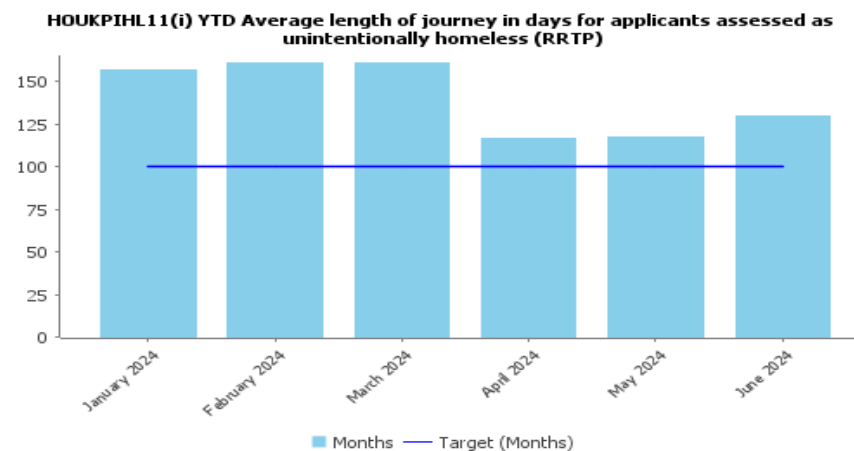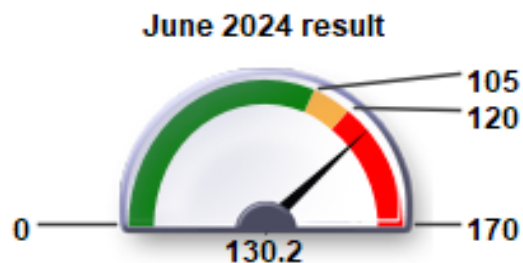
Responsible officer:	Last Updated:
Rachel Harrison	June 2024

YTD Average length of journey in days for applicants assessed as unintentionally homeless (RRTP)

June 2024 result

0 — 130.2 — 170
105
120

HOUKPIHL11(i) YTD Average length of journey in days for applicants assessed as unintentionally homeless (RRTP)

January 2024, February 2024, March 2024, April 2024, May 2024, June 2024

■ Months — Target (Months)

Why is this important?

The Scottish Social Housing Charter was introduced by the Housing (Scotland) Act 2010, which requires Ministers to set standards and outcomes that social landlords should be achieving for tenants and customers through their housing activities.

Charter outcome **12** – Homeless People - stipulates that local councils perform their duties to homelessness people so that;
Homeless people get prompt and easy access to help and advice; are provided with suitable, good-quality temporary or emergency accommodation when this is needed; and are offered continuing support to help them get and keep the home they are entitled to.

National Policy – Transitioning towards a rapid rehousing approach is part of Scotland's strategy to end homelessness where one of the four key priorities is that 'homeless households are provided a settled, mainstream housing outcome as quickly as possible.'

This indicator, along with others, monitors whether we are achieving our desired outcomes and are committed to 'Sustain/improve performance in respect of the key priorities set out above.

Benchmark Information:

2023-24
- The average homeless journey (from date of application – outcome) during the financial year 2023/24 was **161.2 days.** Scotland benchmarking figures are currently not available yet.

Target:

2024-25
- The average homeless journey target is **100** days for this financial year.

This is what the data is saying:

- The average homeless journey is currently operating at **130.2 days**.
- Year to date there has been **293** cases closed where the applicant has had a permanent rehouse duty. Of these **133 (45%)** met the 100 days target set.
- The performance in the 2 key stages of the homeless journey this year show that.
  - The average time taken from application to decision for closed cases is **37.0 days** and is higher than the **28-day** average target timescale for this stage.
  - The average time taken from decision to outcome for closed cases is **93.1** days.
- Current case closure rates are **31%** lower than levels of new homeless demand.
- This has led to an increase in open homeless cases where there are currently **398** households waiting to be permanently rehoused.

This is the trend:

- Up until last year the homeless journey had been accelerating, falling from an average of **200 days** in 2015/16 to **114.3 days** in 2022/23. However, in 2023/24 the journey time increased by **46.9 days** to an average of **161.2 days,** this trend has seen a change in 2024/25 where the average time to date has decreased by **31 days** to **130.2 days.**

- Since 2020/21 the number of cases closed within 100 days has been in decline. To date **45%** of cases closed in 2024/25 have recorded a homeless journey of less than 100 days. This is an increase of **13%** on levels achieved in 2023/24 (**32%**) but a decline of **20%** on 2022/23 (**65%**).

- Aberdeen City Council is the primary supplier of housing to homeless households in the city. There was a slight increase in demand in 2023/24, resulting in only **9** fewer homeless households allocated a general need property than in 2022/23. However, the percentage ratio of general needs lets to homeless households dropped from **46.3%** in 2022/23 to **40.1%** in 2023/24. Year to date Aberdeen City Council has let **216** (**41.7%**) general need properties to homeless households.

This is the impact:

- Risk of failing to deliver on the key strategic outcomes set within the Local Outcome Improvement Plan and Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan.
- People experiencing homelessness spend longer periods in transition which prolongs the homeless journey.
- People experiencing homelessness spend longer periods of time in temporary accommodation which can exacerbate existing demands and associated costs.
- The Council are now breaching our duties in accordance with the Unsuitable Accommodation Order, by having households in unsuitable accommodation for longer than 7 days.
- Increase costs to the Council in providing temporary accommodation for more households and for longer periods of time.

These are the next steps we are taking for improvement:

- Increasing supply and options, through working with Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) to increase the number of properties let to households experiencing homelessness. Using available routes to refer a statutorily homeless household to an RSL for housing, and an improved nomination process with our RSL partners to maximise these options.

- Increasing supply through continued prioritisation of work on void properties (across both temporary and mainstream stock) by Building Services, alongside the procurement of additional contractors to increase the return rate of void stock. However, recognising that there may be limitations on the availability of stock for people experiencing homelessness due to the multiple demands on our pool of stock, including but not limited to the rehoming exercise for residents impacted by RAAC.

- Undertaking prevention activity to reduce homelessness and prevent repeat homelessness, this includes a Private Landlord Support Officer post to help support private tenants remain in the private section where possible, and our Housing & Support model to help tenants sustain their tenancy, alongside our commissioned support services, to support individuals with a medium to longer term housing support need.

- Working with community planning partners and as part of the Homewards programme to identify and progress further prevention activity. Across the key areas of reframing perception of homelessness, universal prevention of homelessness and addressing root causes and adequate supply.

Responsible officer:	Last Updated:
Rachel Harrison	June 2024

3. Staff – Housing

Performance Indicator	Q3 2023/24		Q4 2023/24		Q1 2024/25		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
Accidents - Reportable - Employees (No in Quarter - Housing)	0	📈	0	📈	0	📈		▬
Accidents - Non-Reportable - Employees (No in Quarter – Housing)	0	📈	1	📈	0	📈		▬

*Data for Q1 is not directly comparable to that for Q3 and Q4 being extracted from existing Early Intervention and Community Empowerment data with the removal of services no longer forming part of the Housing cluster.

Performance Indicator	Apr 2024		May 2024		Jun 2024		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
Sickness Absence – Average Number of Days Lost – Housing	7.73	✅	7.12	✅	6.55	✅	8	⬆
Average number of working days lost due to sickness absence per FTE employee, monthly	1.06	📈	0.80	📈	0.90	📈		▬

Performance Indicator	Apr 2024		May 2024		Jun 2024		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
Establishment actual FTE	91.57	📈	94.16	📈	91.69	📈		➖

4. Finance & Controls – Housing

Performance Indicator	Apr 2024		May 2024		Jun 2024		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
Staff Costs - % Spend to Date (FYB)	10.3%	✅	20.6%	✅	33.3%	✅	100%	➖
Gross rent Arrears as a percentage of Rent due	16.91%	🔴	17.9%	🔴	17.31%	🔴	TBC	⬆️
Rent loss due to voids - Citywide - YTD average	8.84%	🔴	8.51%	🔴	8.42%	🔴	4.62%	⬆️

Rent loss due to voids - Citywide - YTD average

June 2024 result

4.85% — 5.54%

0% — 11%

8.42%
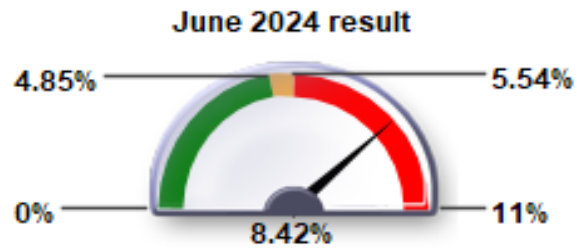
HOUCHI18 Rent loss due to voids - Citywide - YTD average

Months — Target (Months)
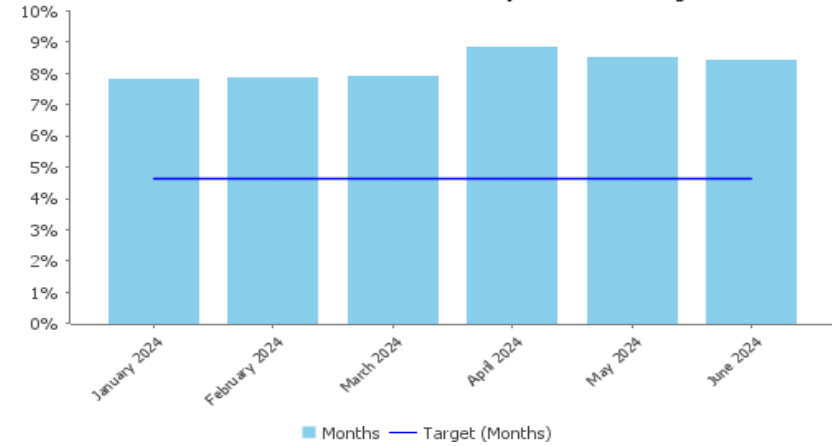
Why is this important?

The Scottish Social Housing Charter (SSHC) was introduced by the Housing (Scotland) Act 2010, which requires Ministers to set standards and outcomes that social landlords should be achieving for tenants and customers through their housing activities.

Charter Outcome **4** – Quality of Housing stipulates that Social Landlords ensure that:
'tenants' homes, as a minimum, meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) when they are allocated; are always clean, tidy and in a good state of repair; and also meet the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESSH) by December 2020.

Charter Outcome **10** – Access to Housing – stipulates that Social Landlords ensure that:
People looking for housing find it easy to apply for the widest choice of social housing available and get the information they need on how the landlord allocates homes and their prospects of being housed.

Charter outcome **13** – Value for Money - stipulates that Social Landlords manager their business so that: *Tenants, owners and other customers receive services that provide continually improving value for the rent and other charges they pay*

Benchmark Information:

2023/24
- Void Rent Loss was **5.70%**. The Scottish Average won't be available until 31st August when the Scottish Housing Regulator publishes the data.

Target:

2024/25
- The 2024/25 target is currently under review. The 2023/24 target was 4.62%.

This is what the data is saying:

The YTD Void Rent Loss figure for 2024/25 is **£2,206,267** this equates to **8.42%** of the gross debit (rent due) a significant increase when compared with the same period last year where the figure stood at **£1,859,314** (**7.68%**).

Of the **£2,206,267** Void Rent Loss **£455,083** (**20.6%**) is attributed to the properties that were being held and then relet to Ukrainian Displaced Persons and properties held for tenants affected by Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete.

The number of properties available for relet as at the 30th June 2024 was **2,000** with an average of **246** days void. When compared to the same period last year this is an **22.4%** increase, where the number of void properties available for relet was **1,634** with an average day's void of **197** days.

There has been **615** properties relet YTD showing an average days from being void to let of **215** days. This is an increase on the same period last year where only **486** had been relet, however the average days void of those properties was **249** days.

Of the **615** properties, **143** were let to Ukrainian Displaced Persons and properties held for tenants affected by Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete showing an average of **260** days. If we exclude these lets the average days is **202**.

This is the trend:

Void Rent Loss has steadily increased year on year from **3.66%** (**£3,355,121**) in 2021/22, **5.70% (£5,271,632)** in 2022/23 and **7.91% (7,805,806)** in 2023/24.

The high number of void properties currently sitting at **2,000** and the lengthy relet times has a direct impact on the substantial increase in the void rent loss.

This is the impact:

Some of the consequences of this performance are:
- Loss of rental income to the Council
- People experiencing Homelessness are spending longer periods of time in temporary accommodation.

These are the next steps we are taking for improvement:

A Housing Board has been established to oversee progress in housing outcomes. The Board has agreed an agile High Level Plan to guide focus on areas of vulnerability identified. Significant time is currently being invested in establishing the data architecture we require to enable more effective real time monitoring, this will better enable the Council to take more timeous action based on emerging trends.

Ownership of the Improvement Plan will be split across the Housing & Corporate Landlord clusters and contains an extensive range of actions intended to transform performance. Actions include;.

- Clarification of role and responsibilities in decision making (Corporate Landlord, Housing & Capital clusters).
- Reviewing leadership structures of both Housing and Corporate Landlord to ensure joint leadership of operational teams to improve void performance.
- Focus on using existing full set properties to accelerate the RAAC rehousing programme – 128 properties
- A continued concentration on letting the new build developments at Cloverhill and Kaimhill which will positively impact on average relet times.
- Use of digital technologies to support more efficient processes.
- Review of void pathways and process mapping which will include additional and more robust inspection of properties to minimise properties returned in poor condition at termination. Other considerations will include earlier scheduling and programming of work, creating further efficiency within the overall process.
- Development of a Void Management Policy to clearly document the Council's approach and processes and introducing demand led prioritisation of voids work

Responsible officer: **Last Updated:**

Martin Smith/Graham Williamson	June 2024

Housing Revenue Account

1. Staff – Housing Revenue Account

Performance Indicator	Apr 2024		May 2024		Jun 2024		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
Establishment actual FTE	185.74	📈	184.81	📈	185.74	📈		▬

4. Finance & Controls – Housing Revenue Account

Performance Indicator	Apr 2024		May 2024		Jun 2024		2024/25 Target	Long Trend
	Value	Status	Value	Status	Value	Status		
Staff Costs - % Spend to Date (FYB)	8%	✅	16%	✅	24.2%	✅	100%	▬

Corporate

1. Citizen – Corporate

Performance Indicator	Q3 2023/24 Value	Q3 2023/24 Status	Q4 2023/24 Value	Q4 2023/24 Status	Q1 2024/25 Value	Q1 2024/25 Status	2024/25 Target	Long Trend
No. of Non-complex Subject Access Requests received	71	📈	68	📈	110	📈		⬆️
% Non-complex Subject Access Requests responded to within 1 month	81.7%	✅	88.2%	✅	90.9%	✅	80%	⬆️
No. of Complex Subject Access Requests received	7	📈	17	📈	13	📈		⬆️
% Complex Subject Access Requests responded to within 3 months	14.3%	🔴	23.5%	🔴	53.8%	🔴	70%	⬆️
No. of Environmental Information Regulation requests received	89	📈	114	📈	98	📈		➖
% of Environmental Info Requests replied to within 20 working days - Corporate	89.9%	✅	92.1%	✅	85.7%	✅	85%	⬇️
No. of Freedom of Information requests received	303	📈	344	📈	300	📈		➖
% of Freedom of Information requests replied to within 20 working days - Corporate	83.2%	✅	89.5%	✅	83.3%	✅	85%	➖
No. of Access to School Records requests received	4	📈	4	📈	4	📈		➖
% Access to School Records requests responded to within 15 school days	100%	✅	75%	🔴	100%	✅	100%	⬆️
No. of Data Protection Right requests received	4	📈	6	📈	3	📈		➖
% Data Protection Right requests responded to within 1 month	100%	✅	100%	✅	100%	✅	100%	➖

PI Status	
🔴	Alert (figure more than 20% out with target)
🔺	Warning (figure between 5% and 20% out with target and being monitored)
✅	OK (figure within target or better)
📈	Data Only

Long Term Trends	
⬆️	Improving/Increasing
➖	No or Limited Change/Stable
⬇️	Getting Worse/Decreasing

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Communities Housing and Public Protection
DATE	05 September 2024
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Housing (Scotland) Bill 2024
REPORT NUMBER	F&C/24/247
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	Eleanor Shepard
CHIEF OFFICER	Jacqui McKenzie
REPORT AUTHOR	Mel Booth
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1.1

1.   PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1   To raise awareness of the Housing (Scotland) Bill 2024 currently working through the parliamentary process and the potential implications of the new legislation for Aberdeen City Council.

2.   RECOMMENDATION(S)

That Committee:

2.1   notes the contents of this report and the intentions of the Housing (Scotland) Bill;

2.2   instructs the Chief Officer – Housing to provide a report or Service Update, as that Chief Officer deems appropriate, on the Bill as it progresses through Stage 2 of the parliamentary process; and

2.3   instructs the Chief Officer – Housing to report to this Committee with a full Implementation Plan when the Bill has progressed through Stage 3 of the parliamentary process.

3.   CURRENT SITUATION

3.1   **Background**

3.1.1   The Scottish Government introduced a consultation on the Housing (Scotland) Bill in March 2024. A response led by Housing, involving key stakeholders, was submitted on 17 May 2024.

3.1.2   The Bill is currently at stage 1 of the parliamentary process and deals mainly with rented, particularly private rented accommodation, and homelessness prevention. The Scottish Government states that the package of reforms, "will help ensure people have a safe, secure, and affordable place to live while

contributing to the ambition to end homelessness in Scotland." On 24 April 2024, Parliament agreed that consideration of the Housing (Scotland) Bill at stage 1 be completed by 29 November 2024.

3.1.3 The Bill is a significant piece of legislation that will have implications for many Council services and partners. In view of this, it is the intention for the Bill to be considered on a collaborative and integrated basis. Inevitably there will be changes to the Bill as it progresses through the parliamentary process and officers will be tracking these to inform our planning for this legislation.

3.2 Overview of the Bill

3.2.1 **Part 1** relates to rent paid by private tenants. It includes:
- Duties on local authorities to assess rent conditions in their area, at least once every five years.
- Powers for Scottish Ministers to designate rent control areas. In rent control areas, rent increases would be restricted for existing and new tenancies with some exceptions made for new to market properties.
- Limits on how often rent can increase during a tenancy both in and outside of rent control areas.
- Powers for local authorities to gather information on rents and other information about properties on the private landlord register.

3.2.2 **Part 2** of the Bill deals with evictions. It places a duty on the First-tier Tribunal for Scotland and the courts to consider whether to delay when an eviction can be carried out. It also changes how damages for unlawful eviction are calculated.

3.2.3 **Part 3** introduces new rights:
- For private and social housing tenants to request to keep a pet
- For private housing tenants to make changes to the property they are renting.

3.2.4 **Part 4** makes changes to other matters affecting tenants, including:
- Allowing unclaimed tenancy deposits to be used to provide support to private tenants across Scotland
- Changing how a joint private residential tenancy can be ended by allowing a single joint tenant to end a joint tenancy after giving notice to the other tenant(s)
- Giving Scottish Ministers the power to convert assured tenancies into private residential tenancies.

3.2.5 **Part 5** of the Bill relates to homelessness prevention. Proposed changes include:
- Placing duties on relevant bodies, such as health boards or the police, to ask if an individual is homeless or at risk of homelessness, and requires them to take action if they are - the aim being to make homelessness prevention a shared responsibility across the public sector

- Requiring local authorities to act sooner to prevent homelessness by providing support to households threatened with homelessness up to 6 months before homelessness appears imminent rather than the current 2 months
- Making social landlords put in place support for tenants if they are overdue on rent due to domestic abuse
- Requiring social landlords to have a policy which sets out how they will support tenants who are at risk of homelessness due to domestic abuse.

3.2.6 **Part 6** deals with other housing matters including:
- Changing the way mobile home pitch fees are presumed to be calculated so increases follow the Consumer Prices Index (CPI) rather than the Retail Prices Index (RPI)
- Changing the reporting and consultation requirements in the Fuel Poverty (Targets, Definition and Strategy) (Scotland) Act 2019, removing some limits on the operating costs of the Scottish Fuel Poverty Advisory Panel and allowing the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (who investigates, reports on and helps settle complaints) to share information with the New Homes Ombudsman for the UK.

What does this mean for Aberdeen City Council?

3.3 **Part 1: Rent**

3.3.1 The Bill proposes to remove the rent pressure zone provisions from the Private Housing (Tenancies) (Scotland) Act 2016 and replace them with Rent Control Area (RCA) provisions. The Bill sets out how an RCA can be designated. There are roles for local authorities, the Scottish Government and the Scottish Parliament in this process. To summarise this process:

- Local authorities would be required to carry out an assessment on rent conditions (rent levels and rent increase) in their area and prepare a report in relation to the assessment.
- The first report must be sent to the Scottish Government by 30 November 2026 (this can be changed by regulations) and then every 5 years.
- The report must include details of the assessment of rent conditions and state whether or not the Authority recommends that the Scottish Ministers should designate all or part of their area as a Rent Control Area to safeguard the "social and economic" interest of tenants.
- The Scottish Government can only designate a Rent Control Area if they are satisfied that it is both "necessary and proportionate for the purpose of protecting the social and economic interests of tenants in the area and is a necessary and proportionate control of landlords' use of their property in the area."
- The Scottish Government must consult with the local authority and representatives of tenants and landlords in the area affected before designating a Rent Control Area.
- If the Scottish Government decides to introduce a Rent Control Area, the decision will need to be approved by the Scottish Parliament in regulations.

3.3.2   Given the timescales set out in the Bill, assuming the first local authority reports are received by the Scottish Government at the end of November 2026, it would appear to be at least mid-2027 before any Rent Control Area could be operational. The Housing Service will need to identify significant resources to complete the assessments, and the Financial Memorandum does not yet appear to take full account of these costs. The exact resources cannot be determined at this time as the Bill does not yet provide sufficient detail on the exact requirements for each local authority.

3.3.3   Section 15 of the Bill proposes to give local authorities powers to request information from landlords and tenants of homes on the private landlord register. This would help local authorities to comply with their duty to assess rent conditions in their area. Section 15 (2) sets out the range of information that local authorities can request, the rent and details of the previous rent increase, the size of the house, the type of house, e.g. whether the property is a semi-detached, flat etc. There will be additional resource implications to manage the administrative burden of accessing this information and making applications to the First-tier Tribunal where a Landlord fails to provide information. By way of illustration, on 16 September 2019 changes were made to the information a landlord must provide as part of the landlord registration process. Between 16 September 2019 and June 2024, 8,559 landlords have been contacted to enable an application to be progressed. This highlights the volume of work that flows from additional information being required from landlords because whilst there is a requirement, not all landlords initially adhere to the request for additional information.

3.4   **Part 2: Evictions**

3.4.1   An unlawful eviction is when a landlord does not follow the correct procedures for ending a tenancy. For example, if a private landlord changed the locks when the tenant was out of the house or harassed a tenant into leaving their home without serving the appropriate notices and getting an eviction order from the Tribunal. Section 28 of the Bill would reform the provisions in the Housing (Scotland) Act1988 on how damages for unlawful eviction would be calculated.

3.4.2   The Bill proposes that the court or the Tribunal may award damages of between 3 and 36 months' rent. The award may be less than three months' rent but only if the court or Tribunal considers it appropriate in all the circumstances. The Bill would also place an additional requirement on the Tribunal to inform: i) the relevant local authority and police where a private landlord has been found to have unlawfully evicted a tenant; and ii) the Scottish Housing Regulator, where a social landlord is found to have unlawfully evicted a tenant.

3.4.3   This would have limited direct implications for Aberdeen City Council. It may mean that tougher sanctions for landlords would reduce the number of unlawful evictions which should in turn, mean that fewer households present to the Council for housing following an unlawful eviction.

3.5   **Part 3: New Rights For Tenants**

3.5.1   The Bill introduces two new rights for tenants, the first of which is the right to request to keep a pet and for tenants' requests not to be unreasonably refused by the landlord. The Bill extends this right to tenants in both private and social sectors.

3.5.2   Currently, private rented tenants with a Private Residential Tenancy (PRT) are only allowed to keep pets with explicit written agreement from the landlord. It is up to the landlord whether they agree to a tenant having a pet. The Bill aims to give tenants greater flexibility to have a pet by introducing a right to request to keep a pet, and for tenants' requests not to be unreasonably refused. Some landlords are concerned about this provision. There is a perception that over-regulation, continuing regulatory change (including changes made by the UK Government to the tax regime for private landlords), and uncertainty are causing private landlords to leave the market with investor confidence in the build to rent market stalling. Aberdeen City Council will closely monitor the situation and will continue to provide support to landlords. Data shows that there are 18.5% fewer Private Rented Sector properties in the city now than in 2019.

3.5.3   In the social rented sector, the Model Tenancy Agreements include a clause for keeping pets, but this is discretionary. In practice, each landlord sets their own criteria relating to pets, including whether pets are allowed, the type and number of allowed pets, and any criteria applied to the keeping of pets in a property. Aberdeen City Council has a number of developments which do not allow pets which means this policy will need to be reviewed.

3.5.4   Currently, private landlords are usually responsible for the decoration of a let property, and properties can be let furnished or unfurnished. Tenants with a Private Residential Tenancy are free to negotiate their own terms around decoration and personalisation of their home. In practice, some landlords will agree specific terms that allow tenants to make certain changes to the let property or stipulate restrictions, for example tenants may be restricted from putting up pictures that will damage the walls.

3.5.5   Measures in the Bill aim to give tenants with a Private Residential Tenancy greater discretion to personalise their home. These measures include allowing tenants to be able to make certain minor modifications without the consent of the landlord (called Category 1 modifications– e.g. putting up pictures and posters.) Tenants would also have the right to request certain other modifications (Category 2 – e.g. painting walls) that a landlord could not unreasonably refuse after they have lived in the let property for 6 months or more. This will not have any direct impact on Aberdeen City Council as tenants in the social sector can already personalise their homes.

3.6   **Part 4: Other Matters Affecting Tenants**

3.6.1   Part 4 of the Bill relates to changes of other matters and proposes that any tenancy deposits lodged with an approved tenancy deposit scheme which have not been claimed after five years can be repaid to the Scottish Ministers

or into another fund so that they can be used to provide support to private tenants across Scotland. It is unclear if and how Aberdeen City Council will benefit from these changes.

3.6.2 The Bill proposes to change how a joint private residential tenancy could be ended. It would allow one joint tenant to end a joint tenancy without the agreement of all joint tenants after giving the other joint tenants at least two months' pre-notice that they will be giving the landlord notice. This will be of benefit to those who experience domestic abuse who are currently unable to end their joint tenancy without the agreement of the other party. Aberdeen City Council has a Domestic Abuse Policy in place which will need to be updated in line with any proposed changes.

3.6.3 The Bill gives Scottish Ministers powers to convert assured tenancies into PRTs. This will not have any implications for Aberdeen City Council.

3.7 **Part 5: Homeless Prevention**

3.7.1 Part 5 of the Bill proposes to place a duty on relevant bodies, such as local authorities, health boards and the police, to ask if an individual is homeless or at risk of homelessness, and to take action if they are referred to as the 'ask and act duty'. The relevant bodies defined in the Bill are:

- Health Boards including special health boards
- Integration Joint Boards
- Local authorities
- Police Scotland
- Registered social landlords
- Scottish Ministers in so far as they have functions relating to prisons and young offenders institutions and the persons detained in them.

3.7.2 If the relevant body, when it is assessing the needs of a person in the exercise of its functions, has reason to believe that the person may be homeless, or threatened with homelessness, the body must ask the person:

- whether the person is homeless or threatened with homelessness
- If the person is aware of any application having being made to a local authority for homelessness assistance
- Whether the person consents to the body making such an application to a local authority if appropriate.

3.7.3 If the relevant body is satisfied that it is appropriate and it has the person's consent, it must make a homelessness application to the appropriate local authority. This duty does not apply if a homelessness application has already been made and the application is under consideration.

3.7.3 If the person is threatened with homelessness the relevant body must take action it considers appropriate to remove that threat within its own existing powers, or, where that is not possible, to minimise it (other than by making a homeless application to the local authority).

3.7.4 If the relevant body is satisfied that it is unable to take action itself to remove the threat, it must also make a homelessness application to the appropriate local authority but only if satisfied that this is appropriate and that it has the person's consent.

3.7.5 The intention is that a referral to the local authority should not be the default action, but that it should be considered alongside other actions that can be taken within the relevant bodies' existing powers.

3.7.6 The primary concern for Aberdeen City Council is that the 'ask' element is likely to create a surge of demand, particularly given the lack of clarity in the Bill on actions expected of other public bodies. The monitoring of data across different systems will be key to determining the impact of this potential change.

3.7.7 Most local authorities have a variety of different systems/databases already in place for the recording of information. Without a connection across these, there would be a concern that a person at risk of experiencing homelessness is not identified across multiple local authority systems and therefore the prevention activity is not adequately tracked.

3.7.8 There could be difficulty regarding the monitoring of prevention activity across various organisations, and a shared understanding that whatever action that has been taken by a relevant body has gone on to prevent homelessness or remove the threat of homelessness to allow partners to take account of learning being gleaned. The data sharing power outlined in the Bill – a relevant body may share information with any other relevant body - appears to limit sharing to a case-by-case operational level and this limitation could hamper our ability to take a whole system preventative approach. This also would bring in to play practical questions about the use of identifiers for data linkage across systems, as outlined above.

3.7.9 The Bill proposes to extend the time in which someone is considered threatened with homelessness from two months to six months. This will ensure local authorities act up to 6 months before homelessness occurs and will clarify what 'reasonable steps' they are expected to take when supporting households that are threatened with homelessness. The support provided will vary by household and may include actions similar to those adopted through the Housing Options approach in Scotland in recent years e.g., income maximisation, debt advice, family mediation. Local authorities will continue to have the duty to house those assessed as being homeless.

3.7.10 Aberdeen City Council will need to ensure that consideration is given around the changes that are required at an operational level to implement and monitor the impact of these duties. There will be resource implications to implement the changes.

3.7.11 Further changes to existing legislation will be made to update the definition of domestic abuse as it applies within a housing context and to require social landlords to develop and implement a domestic abuse policy to support their tenants who are at risk of homelessness as a result of domestic abuse.

Aberdeen City Council has a Domestic Abuse Policy in place which will be reviewed as the Bill progresses and further detail emerges.

3.7.12 The Bill proposes that a local authority's local housing strategy should include an assessment of the needs of persons and the availability of housing support services, including in relation to homelessness. Aberdeen City Council is currently refreshing the Local Housing Strategy and will ensure that this assessment is included.

3.8 **Part 6: Other Housing Matters**

3.8.1 Part 6 - The Fuel Poverty (Targets, Definition and Strategy) (Scotland) Act 2019 ("the 2019 Act") set targets relating to the eradication of fuel poverty; reporting provisions; and includes the establishment of the Scottish Fuel Poverty Advisory Panel ("the SFPAP") amongst other matters. The Bill proposes minor technical amendments to the 2019 Act. The policy objective is to strengthen the fuel poverty governance under the 2019 Act, ensuring that consultation and preparation requirements are streamlined and improved; and that the operating costs for the SFPAP are sufficient to allow its operations and scrutiny function to be carried out effectively. There is no change to the current policy or direction. This will not have any direct implications for Aberdeen with regards to fuel poverty targets.

3.9 **Impact on Social Determinants of Health**

3.9.1 Social determinants of health are the collective set of conditions in which people are born, grow up, live and work. These include housing, education, financial security, and the built environment as well as the health system.

3.9.2 It is widely accepted that these social determinants are responsible for significant levels of unfair health inequalities. Scotland has the worst health inequalities in western and central Europe. The gap in life expectancy between the most and least deprived areas in Scotland is roughly 13 years for males and 10 years for females and the gap in healthy life expectancy (the number of years lived in good health) is even greater - roughly 23 years for males and 24 years for females.

3.9.3 The fundamental causes of health inequalities are an unequal distribution of income, power and wealth. Inequalities in income, wealth and power can lead to poverty and marginalisation and also influence the distribution of wider environmental influences on health, such as the availability of work, education, and good quality housing.

3.9.4 The implementation of the Bill may have positive and negative impacts on the social determinants of health. An initial assessment on the links between the Bill and health determinants has been undertaken and are described in Appendix 1, these will be further considered as the Bill progresses through the parliamentary process.

4.   FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1   A Financial Memorandum was issued alongside the Bill. It is widely accepted that this underestimates the required resources to implement the Bill which will have financial implications for Aberdeen City Council. The extent of the financial implications is currently unknown as there is still a lot of detail around how the Bill will operate and be implemented that is yet to be determined. This will continue to be assessed as the Bill progresses through the parliamentary process.

5.   LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1   There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report, although the Bill proposes some significant legislative changes.

6.   ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1   There are no direct environmental implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

7.   RISK

The assessment of risk contained within the table below is considered to be consistent with the Council's Risk Appetite Statement.

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic Risk	No significant risks identified	N/A	N/A	N/A
Compliance	Aberdeen City Council has existing duties in relation to private sector housing and homelessness	Duties are monitored through Scottish Housing Regulator	Low	Yes
Operational	Additional resources will be required to deliver the operational aspects of the Bill	To be monitored as the Bill passes through Parliament	Low	Yes
Financial	There are no significant financial risks from this report at this stage. As noted above, should the Bill become enacted, there could be	To be monitored as the Bill passes through Parliament	Low	Yes

	significant financial implications around its implementation			
Reputational	Failure to deliver on the aspects of the Bill will have a reputational impact on the Council	Work is ongoing to plan for implementation as the Bill progresses through Parliament	Low	Yes
Environment / Climate	There are no environmental risks associated with this report	N/A	N/A	N/A

8.   OUTCOMES

Council Delivery Plan 2024	
	Impact of Report
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement **Working in Partnership for Aberdeen**	The proposals within this report support the delivery of the following aspects of the policy statement: Ensure that sufficient resources are available for the monitoring and landlord registration and HMO licensing, work to support tenants in private rented housing and work with private landlord to improve housing standards across the city.
Local Outcome Improvement Plan	
Prosperous Economy Stretch Outcomes	The proposals within this report, if implemented, may support the delivery of LOIP Stretch Outcome 1 – 20% reduction in the percentage of people who report they have been worried they would not have enough food to eat and/ or not be able to heat their home by 2026.
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	The proposals within this report, if implemented, may support the delivery of Stretch Outcome 10 - Healthy life expectancy (time lived in good health) is five years longer by 2026.
Prosperous Place Stretch Outcomes	The proposals within this report, if implemented, may support the delivery of LOIP Stretch Outcome 12 – Reduce homelessness by 10% and youth homelessness by 6% by 2026, ensuring it is rare, brief and non-recurring with a longer term ambition to end homelessness in Aberdeen City.

Regional and City Strategies	The proposals within this report support the Aberdeen City Local Housing Strategy.

9.   IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	No assessment required at this stage. I confirm this has been discussed and agreed with Jacqui McKenzie, Chief Officer Housing on 18 July 2024. Any subsequent IIA(s) will be prepared to assess any impacts on the implementation at a later stage.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required
Other	Not required

10.   BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1   Not applicable

11.   APPENDICES

11.1   Appendix 1, Housing Bill Implications

12.   REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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F&C/24/247: Appendix 1, Housing Scotland Bill Implications

The Housing (Scotland) Bill was introduced on 26 March 2024 and requires Royal Assent. It is expected that Royal Assent will be given at Stage 3.

Housing (Scotland) Bill 2024	Relevant Summary/Extract	What does this mean for Aberdeen City Council?	Next Steps?	Links with Social Determinants of Health
Part 1 – Rent	Duties on local authorities to assess rent conditions in their area, at least once every five years	The Bill provides a framework for rent control. There is still detail to be provided in secondary legislation, such as the method by which rent increases would be restricted, exemptions and circumstances in which rents could increase above any limits.

Resources will be required to assess rent conditions. It is widely accepted that the Financial Memorandum associated with the Bill underestimates the required resources for local authorities. | Consideration to be given around the changes that need to be implemented at an operational level to implement and monitor the impact of these duties.

Local authorities would be required to assess and report on rent conditions (rent levels and rent increase) in their area.

The first assessment of rents must be sent to the Scottish Government by November 2026 (this can be changed by regulations) and then every 5 years.

Monitor the Bill as is passes through the various stages of Parliament. | Rent controls may positively impact on the affordability of homes for tenants but so far this has had unintended consequences in that Private Rented Sector rents have increased significantly in both Aberdeen and across Scotland since rent controls were introduced. Affordability of housing as a social determinant of health is well established. |
| | Powers for Scottish Ministers to designate rent control areas. In rent control areas, rent increases would be | As above. | Monitor the Bill as is passes through the various stages of Parliament. | As above. |

	restricted for existing and new tenancies with some exceptions made for new to market properties.			
	Limits on how often rent can increase during a tenancy both in and outside of rent control areas.	No direct impact but may affect the number of landlords who remain in the sector. Data shows there has been an 18.5% reduction in the number of PRS properties since 2019.	Monitor the Bill as is passes through the various stages of Parliament.

Continue to provide support to private landlords through the Private Sector Housing Unit and Private Landlord Support Officer | As above. |
	Powers for local authorities to gather information on rents and other information about properties on the private landlord register.	As above – this will have resource implications for Private Sector Housing Unit if the data is to be gathered through Landlord Registration	Monitor the Bill as is passes through the various stages of Parliament.	As above.
Part 2 – Evictions	Places a duty on the First-tier Tribunal for Scotland and the courts to consider whether to delay when an eviction can be carried out. It also changes how damages for unlawful eviction are calculated.	No direct impact but may affect the number of landlords who remain in the sector. Data shows there has been an 18.5% reduction in the number of Private Rented Sector properties registered in Aberdeen since 2019.	Monitor the Bill as is passes through the various stages of Parliament.	Reduction in supply can lead to an increase in rents in the Private Rented Sector which can impact on affordability.
Part 3 – New Rights for Tenants	For private and social housing tenants to request to keep a pet	Private - No direct impact but may affect the number of landlords who remain in the sector. Data shows there has been an 18.5% reduction in the number of Private Rented Sector	Amend Pet Policy in line with the changes.	Pets can reduce stress, anxiety and depression, and can also reduce feelings of loneliness and isolation and encourage exercise.

| | | properties since 2019. Many landlords do not want to manage the risk that pet ownership brings. Reduction in Private Rented Sector properties can increase rents as part of the economics surrounding supply and demand. Social – ACC have a pet ownership guide and do have some developments that have historically been classified as 'pet ban' This list should be reviewed, and our approach considered. Pet ownership | Aberdeen City Council | Monitor the Bill as is passes through the various stages of Parliament. | |
| | For private housing tenants to make changes to the property they are renting. | No direct impact but may affect the number of landlords who remain in the sector. Data shows there has been an 18.5% reduction in the number of Private Rented Sector properties since 2019.

Some landlords are concerned about an 'anti-landlord' attitude in the government and there is a perception that over-regulation, continuing regulatory change (including changes made by the UK | Monitor the Bill as it passes through the various stages of Parliament. | The ability to create a home can have positive impacts on mental health, security and well-being. |

		Government to the tax regime for private landlords), and uncertainty are causing private landlords to leave the market with investor confidence in the build to rent market stalling.		
Part 4 – Changes to other matters	Allowing unclaimed tenancy deposits to be used to provide support to private tenants across Scotland	No known direct impact for Aberdeen City Council. The Bill proposes that the fund can be used for the provision of: • advice, information or assistance to private tenants in relation to their rights as tenants • other services or facilities that promote or support the interests of such tenants • preventing private tenants from becoming homeless • reasonable administrative costs.	Monitor the Bill as it passes through the various stages of Parliament.	Not known at this stage but likely to have positive impacts for those who benefit from the fund.
	Changing how a joint private residential tenancy can be ended by allowing a single joint tenant to end a joint tenancy after giving notice to the other tenant(s)	No direct impact but will be of benefit to those experiencing domestic abuse.	Amend Domestic Abuse Policy in line with the changes. Monitor the Bill as it passes through the various stages of Parliament.	Positive impact on mental health, anxiety and well-being as the proposal will allow those fleeing domestic abuse to be able to end a joint tenancy without

				agreement of the other tenant.
	Giving Scottish Ministers the power to convert assured tenancies into private residential tenancies.	No direct impact.	Monitor the Bill as it passes through the various stages of Parliament.	Not known at this stage.
Part 5 – Homeless Prevention	Placing duties on relevant bodies, such as health boards or the police, to ask if an individual is homeless or at risk of homelessness and requires them to take action if they are - the aim being to make homelessness prevention a shared responsibility across the public sector.	There is a challenge in articulating the impact at this time. It may also change over time as public bodies' awareness of this duty increases. The impact across different services within ACC will also be different. There will be a need for staff training/ development. The potential initially is for an increased resource within the Housing Options Team to manage what may be an increased surge in referrals from public bodies, as the Act may be interpreted as a duty to refer. Lack of clarity that will have to be explored relating to how a person's journey and interaction with a variety of	Consideration to be given around the changes that need to be implemented at an operational level to implement and monitor the impact of these duties • practical/process changes • data gathering • system recording across each different public body These will need to be implemented and where oversight of these changes will sit – it could route through the established Ending Homelessness Steering Group/OIG given the partners present – but still needs to be discussed and formalised.	Experiencing homelessness has a negative impact on a person's health; people who experience homelessness often also experience difficulties with their mental health and/or substance use. If certain actions detailed in the 2018 Ending Homelessness Together action plan (such as personal housing plans) were developed and progressed as part of the implementation of this Bill these would have a positive impact on the overall health and wellbeing of people experiencing homelessness. The ambition that sits behind this Bill for a cohesive and multi-agency approach

		public bodies will be tracked/captured, and therefore a true understanding of the impact of the introduction of this duty and its application by all bodies.	Monitor the Bill as it passes through the various stages of Parliament.	towards the prevention of homelessness will also promote further development of a holistic person/family first approach to situations, with a focus on addressing the cause of homelessness.
	Requiring local authorities act sooner to prevent homelessness by providing support to households threatened with homelessness up to 6 months before homelessness appears imminent rather than the current 2 months	There will be a need for an increased resource within the housing options team to ensure this additional period allows for a proactive approach to prevent homelessness. Resource will also be required around the development of approach, consideration of introduction of personal housing plans/wellbeing assessments – system changes required for recording.	Monitor the Bill as it passes through the various stages of Parliament.	As above.
	Making social landlords put in place support for tenants if they are overdue on rent due to domestic abuse	Access to support is in place, and a case conference approach already operational if arrears increase which is used to identify any underlying factors that may be contributing to the situation and allow for appropriate support to be considered.	Monitor the Bill as it passes through the various stages of Parliament.	The provision of housing support for tenants experiencing domestic abuse and having difficulties paying their rent, will have a positive impact on the social determinants of health.

	Requiring social landlords to have a policy which sets out how they will support tenants who are at risk of homelessness due to domestic abuse	Domestic Abuse Policy is in place and was recently reviewed - Domestic Abuse Council Housing Policy	Aberdeen City Council. Policy to be reviewed as the Bill progresses.	Monitor the Bill as it passes through the various stages of Parliament.	The provision and implementation of a domestic abuse policy has a positive impact on the social determinants of health.
Part 6 – Other housing matters	Changing the way mobile home pitch fees are presumed to be calculated so increases follow the Consumer Prices Index (CPI) rather than the Retail Prices Index (RPI)	Not applicable – no mobile pitches provided.	Not applicable.	Not applicable.
	Changing the reporting and consultation requirements in the Fuel Poverty (Targets, Definition and Strategy) (Scotland) Act 2019, removing some limits on the operating costs of the Scottish Fuel Poverty Advisory Panel and allowing the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (who investigates, reports on and helps settle complaints) to share information with the New Homes Ombudsman for the UK.	No direct impact.	Monitor the Bill as it passes through the various stages of Parliament.	The impact of living in cold, damp homes is well documented. Those on lower household incomes are more likely to be at risk of fuel poverty, contributing to social and health inequalities.

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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Communities, Housing and Public Protection
DATE	05 September 2024
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Aberdeen City's Affordable Housing Delivery Programme
REPORT NUMBER	F&C/24/248
DIRECTOR	Eleanor Sheppard
CHIEF OFFICER	Jacqui McKenzie
REPORT AUTHOR	Mel Booth
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1.1

1. **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 To provide an update on Aberdeen City's Affordable Housing Delivery Programme.

2. **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

That the Committee:

2.1 Note the progress on delivery of Aberdeen City's Affordable Housing Delivery Programme.

3. **CURRENT SITUATION**

3.1 Affordable Housing Supply Programme

3.1.1 £16.041m was allocated to Aberdeen City Council in 2023/24 through the Scottish Government's affordable housing supply programme.

3.1.2 In 2023/24 there were 806 affordable housing completions which is the highest number of affordable homes delivered in Aberdeen through the affordable housing supply programme. 8 of these homes were fully wheelchair accessible. As of August 2024, 162 affordable housing completions have taken place across the city, with 371 homes being projected for completion in 2024/25.

3.1.3 The table below shows the location, housing provider, and type of affordable homes completed in 2023/24. It shows that Aberdeen City Council contributed to the delivery of an additional 484 affordable homes.

Location	Housing Provider	Type	No. of units
Council Buy Backs	ACC	Social Rent	100
Cloverhill	ACC	Social Rent	174
Summerhill	ACC	Social Rent	183
Tillydrone	ACC	Social Rent	30
Falkland Avenue	Hillcrest	Social Rent	59
Falkland Avenue	Hillcrest	Mid-Market Rent	24
Newton of Charleston	Hillcrest	Mid-Market Rent	10
Countesswells	Osprey	Social Rent	1
Friarsfield Avenue	Places for People	Mid-Market Rent	8
Riverside	Places for People	Mid-Market Rent	14
Donside	Sanctuary	Social Rent	61
North Anderson Drive	Sanctuary	Social Rent	118
Persley Den	Sanctuary	Social Rent	24
Total			**806**

4.   FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1   There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

5.   LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1   There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

6.   ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1   All new affordable homes must meet the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESSH) which was introduced in 2014. As a result, homes in the social rented sector are now some of the most energy efficient in Scotland which has a positive impact on the environment; the provision of affordable housing contributes to this positive impact.

7.   RISK

7.1   The assessment of risk contained within the table below is considered to be consistent with the Council's Risk Appetite Statement.

Category	Risk	Target Risk Level (L, M, H)	Mitigation	Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic Risk	Failure to deliver affordable housing.	L	The Council and RSL partners have ambitious	Yes

			new build programmes to deliver affordable housing across the city.	
Compliance	Provision of affordable housing ensures compliance with the council's duty to house households. Failure to deliver may result in there being insufficient housing to meet the demand.	M	Ongoing delivery of affordable housing would help to prevent this from occurring.	Yes
Operational	Provision of affordable housing is a priority for residents of Aberdeen City Council. Failure to deliver may result in housing need and demand levels not being met.	M	Ongoing delivery of affordable housing would help to prevent this from occurring.	Yes
Financial	Failure to consider appropriate funding may result in need not being met.	L	Ensure discussions on funding are held at the appropriate times.	Yes
Reputational	Failure to fully utilise funds may harm the council's reputation when affordable housing is much needed across the city.	L	Ongoing delivery of affordable housing would help to prevent this from occurring.	Yes
Environment / Climate	Failure to provide affordable housing which is built to current building regulations and has a reduced carbon footprint may result in increased carbon emissions from housing.	L	Ongoing delivery of affordable housing would help to prevent this from occurring.	Yes

8.   OUTCOMES

Council Delivery Plan 2024	
	Impact of Report
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement **Working in Partnership for Aberdeen**	The proposals within this report support the delivery of the following aspects of the policy statement: We will work with partners to improve the stock and variety of Council and social housing across the city, ensuring it meets the varying needs of our citizens and provides more choice for our older citizens.
Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan	
Prosperous Economy Stretch Outcomes	The proposal within this report supports the delivery of LOIP Stretch Outcome 2 – 74% employment rate for Aberdeen City by 2026. The affordable housing programme represents significant investment in the city which contributes to a prosperous economy and relates to 1.1 of the LOIP.
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	The proposal within this report supports the delivery Stretch Outcome 10 - Healthy life expectancy (time lived in good health) is five years longer by 2026.
Prosperous Place Stretch Outcomes	The proposals within this report support the delivery of LOIP Stretch Outcome 13 – Addressing climate change by reducing Aberdeen's carbon emissions by 61% by 2026 and adapting to the impacts of our changing climate.
Regional and City Strategies	The proposals within this report support the City Region Deal, Aberdeen City Local Housing Strategy, and the Local Development Plan through the delivery of affordable housing.

9.   IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	No assessment required. I confirm this has been discussed and agreed with Jacqui McKenzie, Chief Officer – Housing, on 30/07/2024.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required.
Other	

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 Previous committee reports in relation to this are detailed below:

CGR PLA/18/061 18 September 2018
CGR PLA/19/318 26 September 2019
CGR COM 20/181 28 October 2020
CGR COM 21/169 25 August 2021
CGR COM 22/197 21 September 2022
CGR COM/23/322 14 November 2023

11. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Communities, Housing and Public Protection
DATE	5 September 2024
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Aberdeen's Future Library and Information Service Model
REPORT NUMBER	F&C/2/4240
DIRECTOR	Eleanor Sheppard
CHIEF OFFICER	Shona Milne
REPORT AUTHOR	Eleanor Sheppard
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1.2

1. **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 At the Communities, Housing and Public Protection meeting of 23 January 2024 (CUS/24/019), officers were instructed to continue to collaborate with stakeholders in designing a strategic vision and model for the Library and Information Service, and asked to report back with a proposed vision and service delivery model on 5 September 2024. Council (December 2023) instructed that the feedback and mitigations detailed in CUS/23/386 be taken into account as this work was progressed.

1.2 Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee also instructed that a consultation (including by means of newspaper advertisement) on the proposed Library and Information Services Management Rules be undertaken, with results reported back to seek a decision on whether such Rules should be made, all in accordance with section 112 of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982.

2. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

That the Committee:-

2.1 Note the work undertaken to develop a new model for Library and Information Services which aligns more deliberately to "education and lifelong learning" as a determinant of population health;

2.1 Endorse the working vision for the Library and Information Services outlined at paragraph 3.32;

2.2 Endorse the Future Model of Library and Information Services presented at paragraphs 3.33 – 3.38;

2.3   Instruct the Executive Director Families and Communities to present a detailed phased Implementation Plan which reflects plans for internal zoning of the Central Library and testing of the Library and Information Service as an integral part of the emerging model of Family Support to the next meeting of the Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee;

2.4   Note the feedback on the Library and Information Service Management Rules;

2.5   Agree not to make Library Management Rules; and

2.6   Agree to refer the previous income targets set against the library service to the budget setting process (para 3.50).

3.   **CURRENT SITUATION**

3.1   The Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee, at its meeting on 23rd January 2024 (CUS/24/019), considered a range of consultation feedback on the provision of library services and asked that this insight be used to inform a future model for the Library and Information Service. The Integrated Impact Assessments presented to Council in December 2023 (CUS/23/386) had exemplified how the age demographic and disability descriptors of library users differed from community to community and that access to community based services was important to those who had engaged. Both of these data sets have helped inform our 'discovery' phase.

3.2   The Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee of January 2024 instructed Officers to use people-centred design principles to help shape both a proposed vision and potential operating model for consideration by Members in September 2024. The Design Thinking Process has been adopted to guide our work.
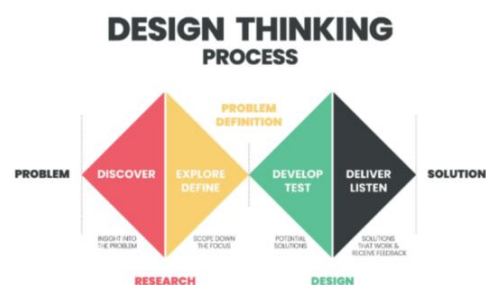
3.3   In March 2024, the Council agreed a new Operational Structure aligned to the determinants of population health in response to growing levels of inequality across the city. This change guides an organisational focus on prevention and earlier intervention in order to realise improved outcomes across all of the determinants of health. This signals a need for more joined up working to ensure that we maximise the impact of available resources, co-design services with those most in need of them and be open to very different ways of working.

3.4   This structural change sees the Library and Information Service join the Education and Lifelong Learning Cluster as part of the Families and Communities Function. The alignment of all 'learning' within one Cluster

presents an opportunity to look at how well the sum of all 'learning parts' across the Education and Lifelong Learning Cluster is impacting on educational outcomes (as a key determinate of employability) across the city. Levels of literacy were thought to be of particular relevance to the development of a Future Libraries Model given that research tells us that low levels of literacy are associated with adverse health outcomes, due in part to associated poor health literacy (with health being a key determinant), and restrict employment opportunities (another key determinant). We also know that low levels of literacy in parents and carers can impact parental confidence in supporting their child's literacy development which can make it hard to address the intergenerational gap and the gradient of the gap. A summary of the available evidence around levels of literacy was commissioned from the Health Determinants Research Collaborative (Appendix A).

3.5   The inclusion of the Cluster within the Families and Communities Function provides an opportunity to look at the role the Library and Information Service could play in the provision of Family Support. The new Families and Communities Function has responsibility for the development and delivery of evidence based Family Support in keeping with The Promise. In real terms, the needs of children and families are now more complex and any design and delivery of services requires a coordination of the work of the wider Aberdeen City Group, including the Council ALEOs, to maximise our collective impact and demonstrate best value. As a result of this, a wide range of stakeholders have been engaged in the co-design process.

3.6   In April 2024, the refreshed Local Outcome Improvement Plan and associated Locality Plans were published. These key documents provide a clear steer on the priorities identified by those living in individual localities, particularly around long term health outcomes and the inequalities evident at locality level. Since publication of the Locality Plan, Module 1 of the UK Covid-19 Enquiry has been published. It provides further weight to the need to address inequality stating that,

'as the UK entered the Covid-19 pandemic, there were "substantial systematic health inequalities by socio-economic status, ethnicity, area-level deprivation, region, socially excluded minority groups and inclusion health groups". Professors Clare Bambra and Sir Michael Marmot, expert witnesses on health inequalities, stated that catastrophic shocks brought about by emergencies such as pandemics expose and amplify pre-existing health inequalities. Covid-19 was not an "equal opportunity virus". It is therefore important to place inequality central to any future model.

3.7   Given that a Future Library and Information Service model is likely to look different from the model currently in place, it is important that we look outwards, and learn from others both nationally and internationally. A review of current best practice has been undertaken and summarised to help guide thinking (Appendix B).

3.8   All of the information referenced in paragraphs 3.1 to 3.7 has been used to inform the 'discovery phase' of our Design Thinking.

3.9 **THE DISCOVERY PHASE**
What have citizens already told us?
The adult and children and young people's consultations undertaken by the Library and Information Services (CUS/24/019), provide a clear indication of the value placed on a local library service by respondents, of their frequency of visits and most popular locations for accessing services. Footfall information available for each library shows that the Library and Information Service has limited reach in areas of deprivation, with Central and Airyhall being the most popular locations. The 1470 respondents gave an indication of when they were most likely to access library provision and of the services, such as book borrowing and ability to collect 'green bags' they valued. The responses also indicated a desire from some for longer opening hours and a higher number of locations offering Library and Information services.

3.10 The consultations highlighted that some services were not well known about, such as the Home Library Service, and the range of non-traditional services that drew citizens to libraries (such as the 14% of respondents who used libraries as warm spaces, 36% who reported using libraries to photocopy, print and scan and 44% who visited to collect 'green bags'). Comments from respondents suggested that there was an appetite for a broader range of services to be offered in library locations, for a Community Hub feel and for more social/exhibition spaces.
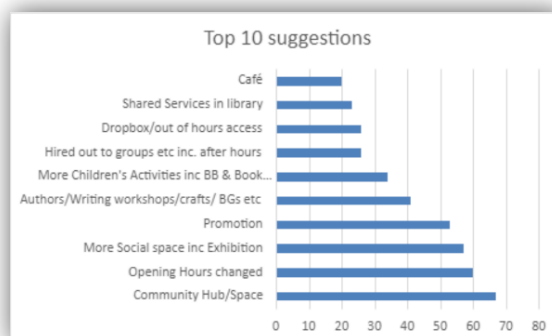
3.11 Responses from the 122 children and young people who responded to a Library and Information Services survey (CUS/24/019), showed that the majority of children visit libraries to borrow books, and that 60% of respondents rely on parents and carers being able to take them.

Figure 6
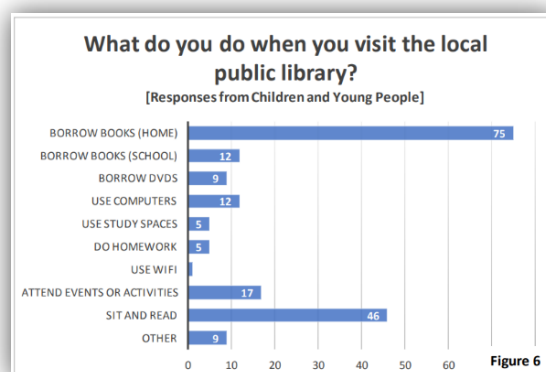
3.12 The consultation with children and young people drew a number of conclusions which require to be taken into account as we develop our Future Model. These include:

> The need to actively involve children and young people in the co-design of services, and particularly more young person friendly physical spaces
> Review membership, policy and procedures to improve accessibility
> Develop mechanisms to support participatory budgeting to address concerns raised about the quality and quantity of stock
> Encourage participation in volunteering to help challenge perceptions of library services
> Build the capacity of staff to better support children and young people

> ➢ Continue to work with partner organisations in communities to support the promotion of services, resources and activities for different age ranges.

3.13 Current data on footfall evidences that visits to libraries have not yet reached pre-pandemic levels and that there has been a long term decline from 2010, this suggests that the Library and Information Service is an underutilised resource. The Library and Information Service reviewed a number of customer journeys to help identify where improvements to services and library user experience could be made. This highlighted the extent to which library rules/restrictions, fines and perceptions of the intact model deters people from making physical visits to libraries. Many people choose to visit the library virtually instead of (in many cases as well as) in person. There is a need to remove financial barriers (library fines) which can deter people from making physical visits to libraries and ensure that we take account of those who visit virtually in our thinking around a new model.
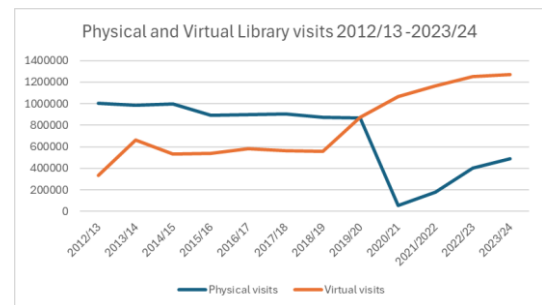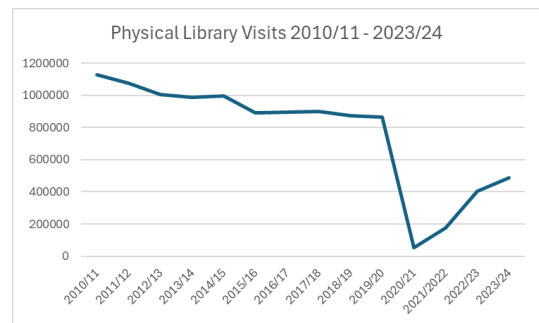
3.14 **What do we know about levels of literacy across the city?**
Literacy is a key skill and asset for individuals, families, communities and societies. Literacy enables people to access, process, and produce information, knowledge and ideas in various domains and contexts. Literacy also enables people to communicate, collaborate, and participate in various social and civic activities. Literacy has a significant impact on various outcomes, such as personal, social, and economic outcomes. Parents and carers with higher levels of literacy skill feel more confident in supporting their child's literacy development. We also know that 11% of those resident in the city do not have English as their mother tongue.

3.15 Historically, Aberdeen is a city that has a high level of literacy as per the findings of the Scottish Survey of Adult Literacies (SSAL) 2009. However, Aberdeen also faces challenges and inequalities, such as poverty, unemployment, social exclusion and health issues that accurately affect the literacy levels and outcomes of some groups and communities. The information available in Appendix A evidences that our current system is not yet effectively addressing the literacy gap and gradient between more vulnerable groups/communities and their peers. The Future Model of Library and Information Services could help support improvement in this area, particularly if designed to address the skill 'gradient' as well as 'the gap' by working with partners to address skills gaps at community level and establishing a whole system plan.

3.16 There is an opportunity to address some of these challenges by thinking about the provision of literacy support in a more holistic and collaborative way, and as an integral part of our model of Family Support (F&C/24/191).

3.17 **What do our communities tell us they need to thrive?**
Recent collaborative work with Communities to refresh the Local Outcome Improvement Plan and develop associated Locality Plans has evidenced that the priorities identified across each locality differ, with locality priorities being reflective of distinct needs at locality level. The differences outlined in agreed Locality Plans (outlined at a high level below) are not yet fully taken into account in our Library and Information Services offer. It is important to consider how a Library and Information Services model could support the delivery of these outcomes given that the 'information needs' across different communities are quite different, this would also help address some of the misinformation now readily available on social media. It is thought that the information provided through the Library and Information Service could help build better community understanding of prevalent community health issues, such as how to keep yourself well if at risk of Type 2 Diabetes for example.

3.18 There is a need to ensure that any future Library and Information Services model is directly influenced by Locality Plans, emerging multi-agency data and what the communities themselves deem to be important to them. There is also a need to ensure that on-going engagement with communities drives the local offer.

Locality Plan	Economy	People	Place	Community
Central	Reduce the number of people living in poverty	Improve the mental health and wellbeing of the population Ensure people can access services timely through a person centred approach Create safe and resilient communities	Maximise the use of spaces in communities to create opportunities for people to connect and increase physical activity	Increase the number of people and groups involved in making improvements and decisions in their communities
South	Reduce the number of people living in poverty Improve and create employment opportunities	Support children and young people Focus on early intervention, prevention and re-enablement actions	Identify and maximise the use of green space	Increase the number of people and groups involved in making improvement and decisions in their community
North	Reduce the number of people living in poverty	Improve the physical health and wellbeing of people Support local volunteering Early intervention approach	Maximise use of unused outdoor space	Increase the number of people and groups involved in making improvement and decisions in their community

3.19 **How do other future library models operate?**
International best practice guides us to ensure that we have a strong digital offer and to consider the establishment of a more progressive on-line learning offer, an example of which is being operated in Bristol as part of their work to be a City of Learning. The accessibility of services is also a key consideration.

3.20 Consideration of European best practice guides us to see libraries as places to offer cultural and creative/experiential opportunities in order to support stronger

mental health, wellbeing and resilience. Releasing creativity at community level could help improve the engagement and participation of our citizens and help create an inspirational Civic Hub in our library spaces. Some European libraries have demonstrated that they are not only repositories of books and information, but also platforms of innovation, creativity, and community.

3.21 **What does the published research tell us?**

Appendix C, supported by the Health Determinants Research Collaborative, summarises current thinking on the influences of population health and how best to how address it. 50% of outcomes can be traced back to post code and 30% associated with poor health behaviours. This triggers a need to consider if a community based model could be shaped to address these factors.
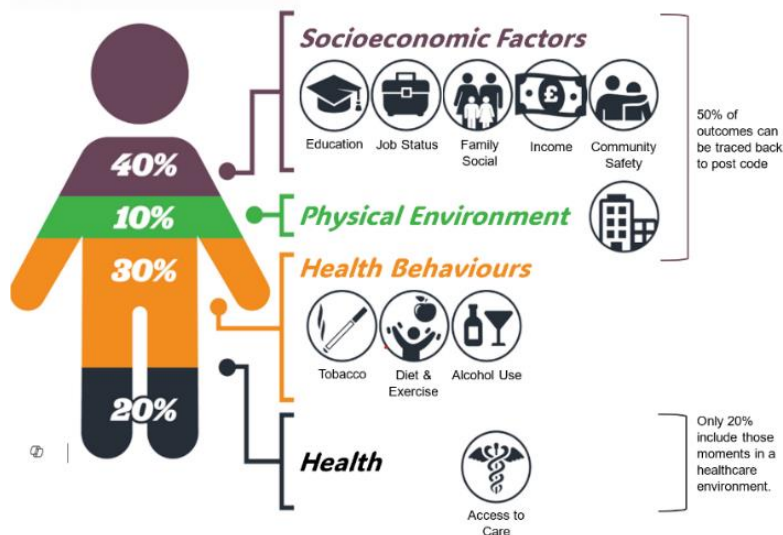
3.22 Despite considerable national and local efforts to address socioeconomic factors, benefits have not been felt equally. Across Aberdeen City there continues to be considerable variation in outcomes at community level, with different communities with a similar SIMD profile, having quite different outcomes. Professor Marmot suggests that this variation triggers the need to consider if all communities need the same universal and targeted support (and therefore the same library and information services), or if they would be better served by 'proportionate universalism' in keeping with the profile of need across a community. This would mean that there would be a generic (or universal) Library and Information Services offer based on city wide themed needs (to help address the health behaviours shown above), supported by more bespoke offers at community level tailored to the particular needs and wants of the community (proportionate universalism) with the aim of creating more equal outcomes. In real terms this would see those who need the most support be able to access information and support more easily at community level, and the onus would be on all linked services (such as health (both physical and mental health), employability, housing and financial inclusion services for example) to work closely together to support community needs and wants.

3.23 The likelihood of poor outcomes is compounded and more pronounced when an individual is impacted by more than one of the factors impacting outcomes. This can lead to weakened

psycho-social pathways resulting in low levels of resilience and feelings of loneliness and social isolation.

3.24   Psycho-social factors have a direct impact on both physiological impacts and health behaviours. There is a need to carefully consider a model that will offer the connection and information services required to address the determinants of health, give our citizens more control and build their agency.
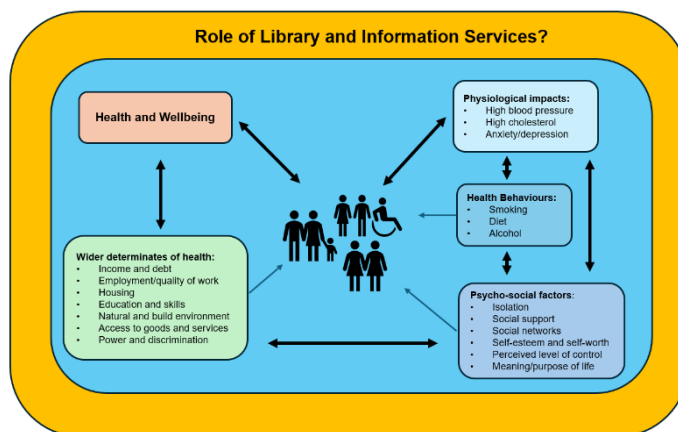
3.25   The need to focus on prevention is widely recognised as the means of best supporting those we serve. Prevention is about keeping people healthy and avoiding the risk of poor health, illness, injury and early death. There is a need to consider how our Future Model can support prevention more effectively.

Primary prevention	Early intervention	Responding to harm
Invest in the building blocks of health to stop problems from happening in the first place	Intervening when a problem is detected to reduce the level of harm	Minimising the negative consequences of harm

High — Impact on population health — Low
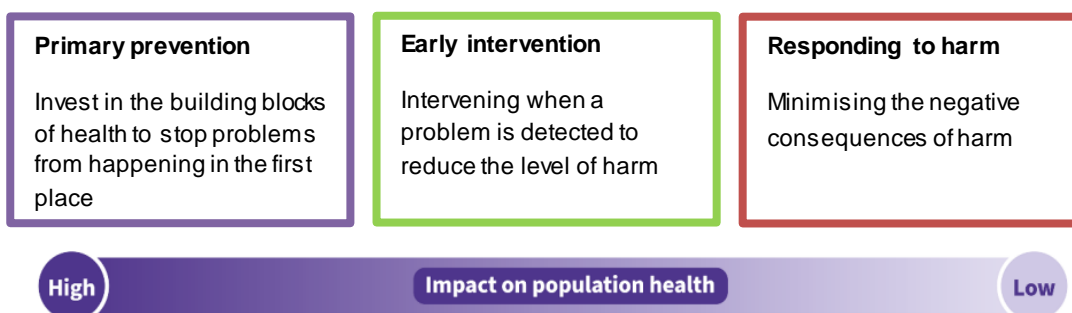
3.26   **CONCLUSIONS FROM THE DISCOVERY PHASE**
We can conclude that there is less demand for traditional library services now than in the past, making the current library model less sustainable due to low footfall and an inability to demonstrate best value in addressing population health. This trend is not unique to Aberdeen and is mirrored nationally and internationally. More innovative international library models now offer vibrant and creative spaces to empower communities and build agency and civic engagement in order to improve population health as well as more traditional library and information services. In many best practice examples, this is realised through the co-location of a range of services who work together to support the needs and wants of communities.

3.27   The most used libraries in the city are not located in the communities with the highest levels of inequality, however, all communities have unmet needs. Library rules/restrictions, fines and perceptions deter people from making

physical visits to libraries. There is a need to reshape our offer around the challenges, needs and wants of our communities today and focus on prevention in order to measure demonstrable impact. The future model should consider how best to work with partners to develop literacy and health literacy skills through 'proportionate universalism', and have a planned approach to developing agency, community connection and voice.

3.28 DEVELOPING THE PROBLEM STATEMENTS

Working through the 'Discovery Phase' helped draw some key problems out for consideration through the Co-Design phase. A wide range of stakeholders, including library users, children and young people, Council Clusters, The Children's Services Board, ALEOs and Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership participated in the Co-Design phase.

3.29 The questions explored included:

- How can the Library and Information service better meet the health and economic needs of different communities?
- How can ACC, the ACC Group and Community Planning Partners better coordinate an approach to developing literacy, health literacy and digital skills?
- How can ACC, the ACC Group and Community Planning Partners co-locate to offer a wider range of preventative and earlier intervention approaches in buildings housing libraries?
- Can we remove the library rules and restrictions that put people off from visiting a library?
- How can we further enhance our on-line offer to citizens and use it to develop employability skills?
- Can we change what we are measuring so that we can see if we are making a difference to tackling inequality ?
- How can we make sure that the scale of investment can be clearly seen in the outcomes of our citizens?
- How can we ensure that the library service builds agency by developing creativity skills and civic engagement?
- How can we position our library service as central to our emerging model of Family Support?
- How can our library service best support those impacted by poverty?

3.30 23 Co-Design sessions were held in total. Each session encouraged different stakeholder groups to explore the questions posed. The output of the Co-Design process, for each stakeholder group, is available in Appendix D.

3.31 Although there were some subtle differences in priorities identified by each group engaged in Co-Design, there was considerable commonality . Recurring themes included the benefits of co-location and collaboration, the need to rethink the environment to ensure it is welcoming and more family friendly, the need for trusted adults to help visitors navigate the offer, physical space and information, the need to have more flexible opening hours, the need for a range of learner pathways and general desire to expand the programme of events on offer. It is thought that our spaces should advertise what can be done, rather than displaying posters advising of what can't be done. This common ground

has been used to help shape a working vision for the Library and Information Service.

3.32 THE WORKING VISION

Our future model should strive to realise equal long term outcomes for our citizens by better addressing the health gradient in order to address the gap in outcomes evident across the city. In real terms, this means that different communities should have access to what they need to build agency and improve outcomes across all of the determinants of health.

Equality – everyone gets the same resources	**Equity** – everyone gets the same outcomes, with resources distributed according to need	**Equal outcomes** – through the removal of structural barriers
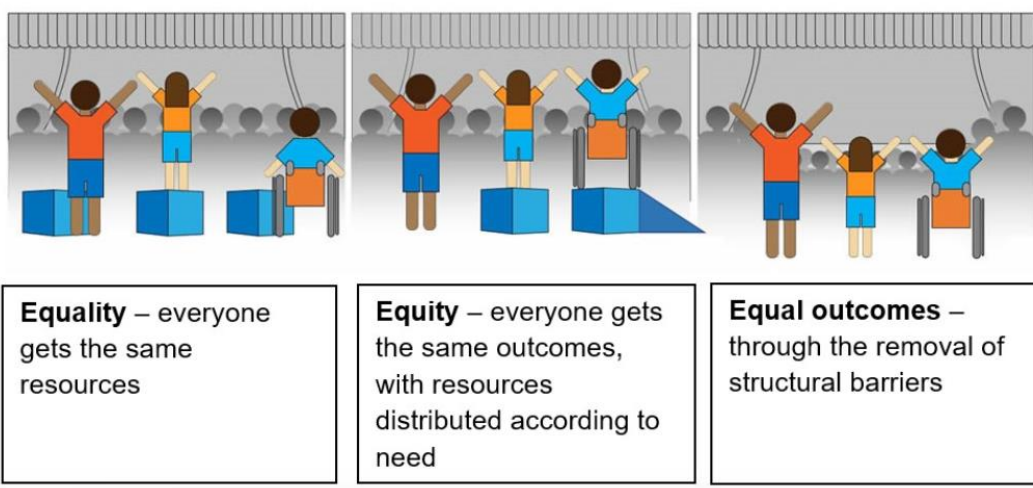
3.33 THE PROPOSED MODEL FOR TESTING

The output of our Co-Design work guides the establishment of city wide universal offer based on city wide needs and a linked Community Hub Model offering support designed around the needs and wants of individual communities.
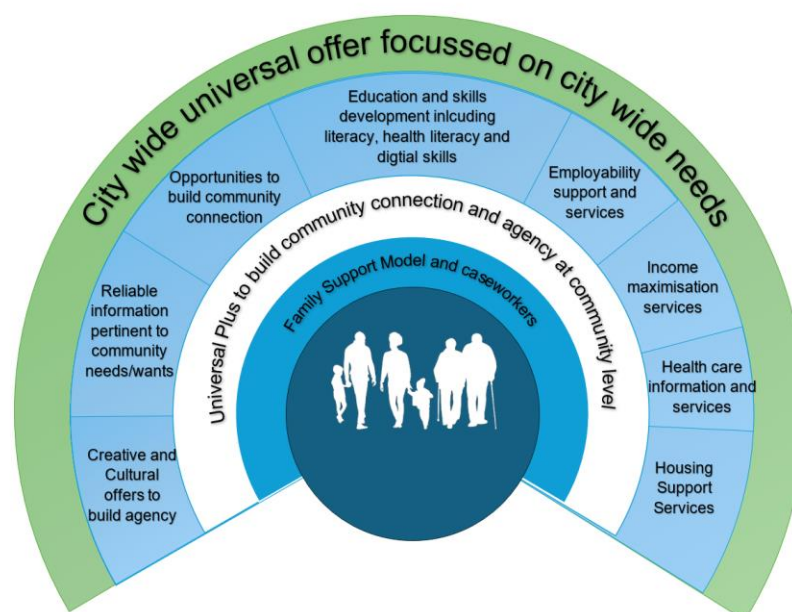
3.34 **Universal Offer (prevention at a city wide level)**
The city wide universal offer, based at the Central Library, and through a dynamic on-line presence, would enable our citizens to access traditional and non-traditional services in a less constrained and more vibrant library environment. The restrictive Library and Information Management Rules should be removed with a focus on what can be done in library spaces. This triggers the need to look at the use of physical space in the central library to ensure it offers a welcoming environment that can be used for a wider range of purposes. There is also a need to think of spaces that families can access together. This should include opening the café space, ensuring there is a suitable mix of quiet and more social zones for different purposes and ensuring that the use of private rooms across the Central Library are considered. The participation of library users in this process will be important.

3.35 Additional supports available will be maximised through collaboration with partners to take a whole systems approach in order to offer more comprehensive programmes and activities for all age groups. It is thought that the offer available would broadly reflect the areas of focus in the visual above:

- City wide creative and cultural offers (and exhibitions) which could be linked to the ACC Cultural Investment Framework
- Reliable information (including about city wide needs such as smoking cessation and healthy diet)
- Opportunities to connect with others, develop participation and voice in order to create a Civic Engagement Hub
- Education and skills information and signposting
- Employability information and signposting
- Income maximisation information
- Health care information
- Information on housing support services and signposting

3.36 **Universal Plus, a Place Based approach (described as proportionate universalism by Marmot)**
A Community Hub model is proposed to prioritise strengthening agency and community connection for communities with higher levels of need in order to deliver the proportionate universalism Professor Marmot describes. This would see a range of multi-agency partners co-locate in communities with a significant health gradient and work collaboratively to address the gradient through delivery of a shared plan based on the needs and wants of the community. The level of programmed support available would be relative to the challenges facing communities and the co-location of services would make extending library opening hours more feasible.

3.37 A bespoke programme, co-designed with the community to address community needs and wants would operate from the Community Hub. The programme would ultimately be designed to address the health gradient and gap evident across the community. In addition to a traditional library service, areas of focus for the programme are likely to include partnership and whole system delivery of:

- Access to support and reliable information around particular needs across a community, including planned programmes of support (for example diabetes, healthy diet)
- Frequent opportunities to connect with others to build agency, voice and a sense of control. Creative and cultural offers will be utilised to build agency and the insight gleaned used to inform the local programme, develop participation and a sense of community connection/activism.
- Education and skills information and support, including programmes with a particular focus on literacy, health literacy and digital skills
- Employability information and support through the delivery of tailored programmes
- Income maximisation support
- Health care information and delivery of targeted programmes
- Housing support
- More bespoke home service, for example the offer for residents in care homes etc.

3.38 As agency is developed in members of the community, they would be encouraged to develop skills through a planned programme of volunteering. It is thought that some of those community volunteers would be offered opportunities for further training to support their progression into the paid role of 'Case Worker' linked to our Family Support Model. Case Workers would have a key role in helping members of a community navigate the supports available to them, which would complement the work of the Library and Information Service staff. The research would suggest that the use of those with lived experience can be a powerful means of supporting those most in need of our help.

Placed Based Approach

Place based plans are designed based on community outcome data and community insights. A bespoke programme is put in place for each community and delivered by Community Planning and Third Sector partners in collaboration with and the communities themselves.

Strengthen agency & community

People come together to identify local issues, devise solutions and build and deliver sustainable local actions.

Central to this strand is building community capacity to enable community members to take action and control. This capacity building may include support from Community Learning and Development, the Library and Information Service and others to build agency by using creativity and engagement with the local cultural offer to build a strong sense of community identify.

This strand will also see a focus on working in partnership to build social networks to address feelings of isolation.

This would see the co-production of projects, participatory budgets and leading of community- based initiatives.

Volunteer and peer roles

As agency develops, some individual community members will be able to offer advice, information and support to others. As a result, community members will be able to use their own life experience and social connections to reach out to others. Models could include:

- peer support
- peer education
- health trainers to support ill health prevention
- health champions
- community navigators
- befriending and volunteer schemes such as health walks
- networks of groups (such as first-time mums or support to age well etc.)

Community resources

Opportunities to engage with community-based resources (either located full time or part time) in Community Hubs. This could include access to:

- Social prescribing based on community need
- Library and Information Services
- Health professionals
- Employability support and programmes
- Financial advice
- Physical activity
- Skills development including digital skills development
- Social connection supported through informal café style places
- Support to access Housing Support

Family Support

Access to caseworkers for those in need of a short-term bespoke intervention.

3.39 **Family Support Model (Early intervention)**
The Case Workers would act as a key link into our Family Support Model (F&C/24/191).

3.40 **Implications**
Research and insight from the Co-Design suggests that there are considerable benefits to be realised through the implementation of the proposed Future Model. However, this would be a significant departure from current practice. As a result, it is proposed that work progresses on the development of the Central Library as a Civic Hub, and that one single community be identified to test the Community Hub Model. Given the links to the Family Support Model, it is proposed that Whole Family Wellbeing resource be used to support initial set up costs and that this test be aligned to the Family Support Model testing to ensure more robust evaluation of our preventative model.

3.41 A period of testing would allow a test and learn approach to be taken. A testing phase would be supported through a pre-determined evaluative framework to gather local evidence of impact. This evaluation would help inform how best to spread or adapt the model in the longer term. It is thought that this approach would give Members maximum oversight of the impact of changes made at single community level to inform longer term decision making at the end of the testing phase.

3.42 There are a number of practical considerations, some of which are detailed below, to ensure that the model is successful. These will require careful planning, phasing and oversight to ensure that all possible benefits are realised.

3.43 **Estate**: The current ACC Group estate is considerable and could offer opportunities to pool resources. There are opportunities to pool resources to allow shared investment in well positioned buildings. Releasing resource from buildings that cannot support delivery of the model would allow investment in Community Hub environments that are young person/older person friendly and support more flexible and varied use. Environments that are accessible, encourage empowerment, social cohesion, sense of belonging, social relationships and social capital may look different from some of the spaces our services, including the Library and Information Service, currently utilise. This presents an opportunity to make our physical spaces more accessible for groups, for example by making spaces dementia/Autism Spectrum Condition friendly. If the test evidences that this model more effectively supports our test community, it will be important to consider the implications on our multi-agency estate in the longer term. Providing services from a shared estate would help the library service offer longer and more flexible opening hours.

3.44 **Workforce:** We need to establish an operational team for the test and identify leaders with a growth mindset to lead this potentially transformative way of working not only for ACC staff but for the partnership workforce. Leaders need to build relationships and culture across the multi-agency partnership and with communities before we move to the implementation phase. We need to ensure that we have an implementation team in place, who have the capacity and

capability to gather the evidence base and routinely report progress. It will also be important to engage with Trade Unions representatives as we undertake the test.

3.45 **Vision, data and evaluation:** We need to establish an evaluation framework (including capturing qualitative data) linked to an agreed theory of change that allows us to review the impact on those more likely to have poor outcomes. We need to ensure sufficient capacity to routinely review the data to ensure that we pivot our approach based on the insight we glean. We need to establish a data dashboard to support our planning and implementation. Therefore the operational team will need to be enabled and supported by a central team who can assist in addressing any barriers to change.

3.45 **Digital:** A high proportion of library users can access library digital content on-line, however our on-line users must physically register in a library rather than doing so automatically. Our on-line presence could be more dynamic and feature a more extensive digital lending offer. There is a need to think about how our digital presence can better support citizens. Our digital equipment is dated and doesn't mirror how most citizens access the internet. We need to rethink our approach to digital literacy development. There is a need to look at this as a whole system to determine how best to progress this area and agree a range of accessible pathways, linked to the skills agenda, for our citizens.

3.46 **Literacy skills:** Our libraries don't currently evidence their contribution to literacy skills development. There is a need to look at this as a whole system to determine how best to progress this area and agree a range of accessible pathways for our citizens by utilising the learning in Appendix A.

3.47 **Health literacy:** Health Literacy is critical in enabling our citizens to access the information they require to live long and happy lives. The concerning level of misinformation available on line, makes knowing where to access reliable information and support critical. There is a need to look at this as a whole system to determine how best to progress this area. Given what we know about the key health behaviours significant to the development of chronic disease, this is likely to see a universal offer around smoking, healthy weight, physical activity and nutrition in our priority areas. This area requires to be fully scoped with health partners. There are considerable opportunities to support the ageing well agenda, e.g. reducing social isolation and making sure our carers a network of support.

3.48 **Next steps**
Given the potential of the model to genuinely transform how we support our citizens, it is proposed that a detailed and phased implementation plan be developed and presented to the next meeting of the Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee. The plan should be aligned with a similar Family Support Model Plan and provide Members with a clear indication of how Committee will be kept informed of progress to inform decision making.

3.49 There is strong anecdotal evidence from the Co-Design sessions that Library and Information Management Rules are barriers to access, and negative perceptions to rules in general. 5 responses were received from members of the public on the previously proposed Library and Information Service Management Rules. Feedback suggested that aspects of the rules present

barriers to the public, and do not project the positive interactions that are vital in progressing the Future Library Model. It is recommended that the previously proposed Library and Information Service Management Rules are not implemented and instead the Library and Information Service will apply the Unacceptable Actions Policy ahead of the anticipated single policy combining Zero Tolerance, Violence and Aggression, and Unacceptable Action. Terms and Conditions will be created for library memberships and people centred guidance on library use will be available to citizens. As a result, it is proposed that the previously proposed Library and Information Service Management Rules are not implemented at this time.

3.50   The Chief Education Officer will consider waiving fees in the short term.

4.   FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1   Resource from the Whole Family Wellbeing will help fund the set up costs for the testing phase, officers will also try to secure appropriate grants.

4.2   The waiving of fees is likely to result in a cost pressure. This will be monitored carefully over the coming months, with efficiencies found to ensure balanced finances.

4.3   More detailed financial information will be included in the Implementation Plan to be considered at the next meeting of Communities, Housing and Public Protection meeting.

5.   LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1   Under section 163(2) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, the Council has a duty to secure the provision of adequate library facilities for all persons resident in the Council area.

5.2   Section 112 of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 permits local authorities to make management rules to regulate the use of, and the conduct of persons while on or in, any land or premises owned, occupied or managed by the authority to which the public have access. Before such rules can be made, the authority must place an advertisement in a local newspaper and consider any objections timeously received by the authority and give any objector an opportunity to be heard by the authority. The setting of such rules is discretionary.

6.   ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1   There are no direct environmental implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

7.   RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic Risk	Risk that the library and Information service is financially unsustainable in the longer term due to current levels of footfall.	Research has guided the development of the proposed plan. The use of a 'testing' phase will enable consideration of the effectiveness of the model prior to scaling up.	L	**Yes**
Compliance	Failure to secure the provision of adequate library facilities for all persons resident in the Council area.	Aberdeen's Future Library and Information Services Model has the potential to make provision more accessible.	L	**Yes**
Operational	Failure to get operational teams working to a new model restricts impact.	A pre-launch period will enable operational teams to come together around a common purpose and take ownership of implementation.	L	**Yes**
Financial	Potential for the model to exceed available resource	The use of WFW fund resource will support the testing phase, with opportunities for efficiencies to be realised in the longer term to	L	**Yes**

		aid the sustainability of the model.		
Reputational	Risk that citizens perceive a reduction in library and information services	To be mitigated by having a strong digital and central library presence, and associated Community Hub during the testing phase. Mitigated through longer term planning.	L	**Yes**
Environment/Climate	No significant risks identified			

8.   OUTCOMES

COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN 2023-2024	
	Impact of Report
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement	This policy would positively contribute to the majority of commitments in the Aberdeen City Policy Statement. Supporting people with the cost of living – through providing access to financial inclusion services through the proposed model. A city of opportunity – through providing access to employability services and support through the proposed model. A vibrant city - through providing access to increased opportunities to be creative and access the cultural offer the proposed model. Building a greener and sustainable city – by exploring co-location which will allow the estate to be rationalised in the longer term. Empowering communities- by giving them a strong voice in what in what is offered through Community Hub programmes. A prosperous city – by providing employment opportunities. An active city – by providing locally based community services which can be easily accessed.

| | A caring city – by prioritising and supporting those most at risk of poor outcomes

A council that listens and works – by working with the Northfield community to design the local offer they need and want. |
|---|---|
| | |

Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-26

Economy	Stretch outcome 1 (poverty) and 2 (employment) will be supported through this policy.
Children and young people	All stretch outcomes for children and young people could be positively impacted by delivery of this policy.
Adults	All stretch outcomes for adults could be positively impacted by delivery of this policy
Community empowerment	Stretch outcome 16 (Community Empowerment) will be positively impacted by this policy.

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	An Integrated Impact Assessment has helped inform the development of the Future Library and Information Services Model. This will be further developed if Committee instructs more detailed planning.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	A DPIA has been completed as part of the engagement on Aberdeen's Future Library and Information Service Plan

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 Meeting of Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee, Thursday, 6th July, 2023 10.00 am (Item 12.)

10.2 Agenda for Council on Thursday, 14th December, 2023, 10.30 am (aberdeencity.gov.uk)

10.3 Fair Society, Healthy Lives (known as the Marmot Review)

10.4 Aberdeen Planning Guidance - Health Impact Assessments

11. APPENDICES

Appendix A – Literacy

Appendix B – National and International best practice

Appendix C – The Determinates of Health

Appendix D – Output of the Co-Design Sessions

12.   REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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Appendix A – Literacy skills

Introduction

Literacy is the ability to read, write, communicate and use numeracy skills in everyday life. It is essential for personal, social and economic development, as well as for civic participation and democracy. Literacy is also a key factor for health, well-being and employability.

Literacy levels in Scotland

The most recent and comprehensive assessment of literacy levels in Scotland was conducted by the Scottish Government Social Research in 2009. Scottish Survey of Adult Literacies (SSAL) 2009 involved a random sample of 1927, 16–65-year-olds in Scottish households.

The key findings of SSAL 2009 are that:

- 73.3% of the Scottish working age population have a level of literacies that is recognised internationally as appropriate for a contemporary society;
- around one quarter of the Scottish population (26.7%) may face occasional challenges and constrained opportunities due to their literacies difficulties, but will generally cope with their day-to-day lives; and
- within this quarter of the population, 3.6% (one person in 28) face serious challenges in their literacies practices.
- Literacy levels varied significantly by age, gender, education, occupation, income and region. For example, younger adults (16-24) had higher literacy scores than older adults (55-65), women had higher literacy scores than men, and those with higher qualifications had higher literacy scores than those with lower qualifications.

According to the SSAL 2009 survey report, poverty is identified as a key factor associated with lower literacy skills, as adults residing in the top 15% most deprived areas in Scotland are more prone to having lower literacy skills.

There is considerable evidence to suggest that the events of the last few years have influenced literacy in various and complex ways, affecting reading habits, writing skill, and digital literacy among children and adults. The COVID-19 pandemic exposed and exacerbated the inequalities and gaps in literacy which is further impacting on outcomes for those with both protected characteristics and those impacted by poverty.

Challenges and opportunities for improving literacy

Scotland faces several challenges in improving literacy outcomes among its adult population. Some of the key issues are:

- Addressing the gap between the low-skilled and the high-skilled, and ensuring that all adults have the literacy skills they need to participate fully in society and the economy.
- Supporting the literacy development of older adults, who are more likely to have low literacy levels and face barriers to learning and accessing services.

- Enhancing the literacy skills of non-native English speakers, who may face linguistic and cultural challenges in accessing education, employment and public services.
- Improving the quality and availability of literacy provision for adults, and ensuring that it is relevant, flexible and responsive to the needs and aspirations of learners.
- Strengthening the links between literacy and other key policy areas, such as health, well-being, employability, social inclusion and digital inclusion.
- Encouraging a culture of lifelong learning and a positive attitude towards literacy among individuals, families, communities and employers.

There is a need to consider the role of the library services in helping to improve outcomes in literacy, wellbeing and employability.

Factors influencing literacy development in Aberdeen

Literacy development is a complex and lifelong process that is influenced by a range of factors, such as individual, family, community, and societal factors. This section highlights some of the key factors that affect literacy development in Aberdeen, and how they relate to the existing data and evidence on literacy levels in the city.

- **Individual factors:** These include the cognitive, affective, and motivational aspects of learning, such as intelligence, memory, attention, self-efficacy, interest, and goals. These factors can vary from person to person, and can change over time. Individual factors can affect literacy development by shaping the acquisition, retention, and application of literacy skills. For example, a person who has a high level of self-efficacy and interest in literacy may be more likely to engage in literacy activities, seek feedback, and use strategies to improve their skills, than a person who has a low level of self-efficacy and interest in literacy. There is evidence that the challenges experienced over the last few years have impacted on levels of efficacy in citizens.

- **Family factors:** These include the home environment, parental education, parental involvement, and family literacy practices, such as reading, writing, and talking together. These factors can affect literacy development by providing the foundation, resources, and support for learning, as well as by modelling and reinforcing literacy behaviours and values. For example, a child who grows up in a home that has a rich and stimulating literacy environment, where parents have high levels of education and involvement, and where literacy activities are frequent and enjoyable, may be more likely to develop strong and positive literacy skills, than a child who grows up in a home that has a poorer literacy environment, where parents have low levels of education and involvement, and where literacy activities are rare. The need for a strong foundation in children from pre-birth should be taken into account.

- **Community factors:** These include the school environment, teacher quality, curriculum, assessment, and intervention, as well as the wider social and cultural context, such as peers, media, and norms. These factors can affect literacy development by providing the opportunities, expectations, and feedback for learning, as well as by shaping and reflecting literacy identities

and practices. For example, a pupil who attends a school that has a supportive and challenging literacy environment, where teachers are highly effective, and where curriculum, assessment, and intervention are aligned and responsive, may be more likely to develop high and consistent literacy skills, than a student who attends a school that has a lax literacy environment, and where curriculum, assessment, and intervention are mismatched and inadequate. There is a need to strongly consider how our communities differ to ensure that our localised literacy offer best reflects the needs of the community.

- **Societal factors:** These include the economic, political, and historical factors that affect the availability, accessibility, and quality of literacy resources, services, and policies, as well as the recognition, reward, and demand for literacy skills, in the society. These factors can affect literacy development by creating the conditions, incentives, and pressures for learning, as well as by defining and measuring literacy standards and outcomes. For example, a citizen who lives in a society that has a high level of investment, innovation, and integration of literacy resources, services, and policies, and where literacy skills are valued, rewarded, and required, may be more likely to develop advanced and diverse literacy skills, than a citizen who lives in a society that has a low level of investment, innovation, and integration of literacy resources, services, and policies, and where literacy skills are devalued, ignored, and optional. There is a need to clearly articulate the Community Planning Partnership's vision for literacy to help creative the conditions required.

Impact of literacy on various outcomes in Aberdeen

Literacy is not only an outcome of learning, but also a means of learning. Literacy skills enable people to access, process, and produce information, knowledge, and ideas, in various domains and contexts. Literacy skills also enable people to communicate, collaborate, and participate, in various social and civic activities. Literacy skills, therefore, have a significant impact on various outcomes, such as personal, social, and economic outcomes.

- **Personal outcomes:** These include the outcomes that affect the individual's well-being, such as health, happiness, and self-esteem. Literacy skills can affect personal outcomes by enhancing the individual's ability to access, understand, and use health information and services, to cope with stress and challenges, and to express and fulfil their potential and aspirations. For example, an adult who has high levels of literacy skills may be more likely to have good or very good health, to be satisfied or very satisfied with their life, and to have high or very high self-esteem, than an adult who has low levels of literacy skills. There is a need to consider how we can offer a bespoke service to support improvement in personal outcomes.

- **Social outcomes:** These include the outcomes that affect the individual's relationships, such as family, friends, and community. Literacy skills can affect social outcomes by enhancing the individual's ability to communicate, cooperate, and contribute, in various social and civic contexts, such as family, work, and leisure. For example, an adult who has high levels of literacy skills may be more likely to have a partner or spouse, to have close or very close

friends, and to participate in various social and civic activities, such as volunteering, voting, or joining a group, than an adult who has low levels of literacy skills. There is a need to carefully consider social outcomes given the considerable variation from community to community across the city with some communities facing greater levels of social isolation.

- **Economic outcomes**: These include the outcomes that affect the individual's income, employment, and education, such as earnings, occupation, and qualification. Literacy skills can affect economic outcomes by enhancing the individual's ability to acquire, apply, and adapt, in various educational and occupational contexts, such as school, college, or work. For example, an adult who has high levels of literacy skills may be more likely to have a higher income, to have a higher-skilled occupation, and to have a higher level of qualification, than an adult who has low levels of literacy skills. There is a need to strengthen the alignment of library services to employability services.

Conclusion

Literacy is a key skill and asset, for individuals, families, communities, and societies. Literacy enables people to access, process, and produce information, knowledge, and ideas, in various domains and contexts. Literacy also enables people to communicate, collaborate, and participate, in various social and civic activities. Literacy has a significant impact on various outcomes, such as personal, social, and economic outcomes and our current system is not effectively addressing the gap between more vulnerable groups and their peers.

Aberdeen also faces challenges and inequalities, such as poverty, unemployment, social exclusion, and health issues, that affect the literacy levels and outcomes, of some groups and areas, in the city. There is an opportunity to address some of these challenges by thinking about the provision of library services in a more holistic and collaborative approach and as an integral part of our model of Family Support. There is a need to fully take account of, and utilise, the high proportion of residents who are bilingual.

Such an approach would require the involvement and contribution of various stakeholders and actors, such as learners, teachers, parents, schools, colleges, libraries, organisations, businesses and library services. This may be best progressed through the development of a multi-agency Literacy Plan for the city to clearly articulate an overarching aim and set of measurable priorities to encourage higher levels of innovation and experimentation.

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Appendix B – International and National Innovation

Innovative Library Services: A Global Perspective

Libraries are essential institutions that provide access to information, education, culture, and entertainment for millions of people. However, libraries are facing many challenges in the 21st century, such as the rapid development of digital technologies, the changing expectations of users, the competition from other sources of information, and the budget constraints. To survive and thrive in this environment, libraries need to innovate and offer new and improved services that meet the diverse and evolving needs of their users.

Digital Lending

Digital lending is the service of providing access to e-books, e-audiobooks, e-magazines, e-newspapers, and other digital materials through online platforms. Users can borrow, download, read, and return these materials using their devices, such as computers, tablets, smartphones, or e-readers. Digital lending allows users to access a wide range of materials anytime and anywhere, without the physical limitations of space and time. Digital lending also reduces the costs and environmental impacts of printing, storing, and transporting physical materials.

Some examples of libraries that offer digital lending services are:
- The National Library of Norway, which has digitized its entire collection of books, newspapers, journals, manuscripts, maps, pictures, and music, and made them available online for free. Users can search, browse, read, and download these materials, as well as create their own collections and share them with others.
- The National Library Board of Singapore, which has a service called NLB Mobile, which allows users to borrow and read e-books and e-audiobooks from the library's collection using their smartphones. Users can also access other library services, such as online databases, e-learning courses, and events, through the app.

Online Learning

Online learning is the service of providing access to educational resources, courses, and programs through the internet. Users can learn new skills, acquire knowledge, and earn credentials from various sources, such as libraries, universities, organisations, and experts. Online learning enables users to learn at their own pace, place, and time, and to choose from a variety of topics and formats, such as videos, podcasts, webinars, quizzes, and assignments. Online learning also fosters lifelong learning and professional development for users of different ages, backgrounds, and interests.

Some examples of libraries that offer online learning services are:

- The Library of Congress, which has a service called Learning Page, which provides access to thousands of primary sources, lesson plans, activities, and tools for teachers and students. Users can explore the library's collections,

learn about historical events and themes, and create their own projects using the library's resources.

- The National Library of Australia, which has a service called Trove, which is a platform that connects users to millions of resources from libraries, museums, archives, and other organizations across Australia. Users can search, discover, access, and use these resources for research, learning, and enjoyment. Users can also contribute to Trove by adding tags, comments, corrections, and lists.
- The Qatar National Library, which has a service called QNL Online, which offers access to over 500 online courses and 25,000 video lectures from leading universities and institutions around the world. Users can enrol in these courses and earn certificates and degrees in various fields, such as business, engineering, health, humanities, and science.

Mobile Libraries

Mobile libraries are the service of delivering library materials and services to users who are unable to visit the library premises due to distance, mobility, or other barriers. Mobile libraries can take various forms, such as buses, vans, trucks, boats, bikes, or carts, and can carry books, DVDs, CDs, computers, internet access, printers, scanners, and other equipment. Mobile libraries can also offer programs and activities, such as storytimes, workshops, games, and exhibitions. Mobile libraries aim to reach out to underserved and marginalized communities, such as rural areas, remote islands, refugee camps, prisons, and hospitals, and to promote literacy, inclusion, and social cohesion.

Some examples of libraries that offer mobile library services are:

- The Biblioburro, which is a mobile library that operates in the rural areas of Colombia. The library consists of two donkeys, Alfa and Beto, that carry books and other materials to the children and adults who live in the remote villages. The library also offers reading sessions, homework help, and cultural activities.
- The Epos, which is a mobile library that operates in the coastal areas of Norway. The library is a ship that sails along the fjords and islands, and stops at 150 ports every year. The library carries over 6,000 books and other materials, as well as a cinema, a cafe, and a stage for performances and events.
- The Camel Library Service, which is a mobile library that operates in the arid areas of Kenya. The library consists of four camels, each carrying a metal box with 200 books. The library visits nomadic schools and communities, and provides books and other materials, as well as literacy and environmental education.

Consideration of international best practice guides us to ensure that we have a strong digital offer and consider the establishment of a city wide on-line learning offer. The accessibility of services is also a key consideration, and consideration should be given to how to ensure libraries are accessible and how to take the library service, for example through the Home Service, to those who need it.

Innovative Library Services: A European Perspective

Libraries are not only places where people can access books, information, and knowledge, but also spaces where they can engage in social, cultural, and educational activities. Increasingly, libraries can also play a role in fostering innovation, creativity, and community development.

Oodi Library: The Oodi Library, opened in 2018, is a modern and multifunctional library that aims to be a living meeting place for the citizens of Helsinki. The library is located in the heart of the city. The library occupies three floors, each with a different theme and function. The first floor, called the "ground floor", is a flexible and open space that hosts events, exhibitions, and workshops. The second floor, called the "book heaven", is a traditional library space with a collection of 100,000 books, magazines, and newspapers. The third floor, called the "attic", is a creative and experimental space that offers various facilities and equipment, such as studios, workstations, 3D printers, sewing machines, and musical instruments. The Oodi Library is designed to be a user-cantered and participatory library, where the visitors can co-create, learn, and enjoy themselves.

Dokk1 Library: The Dokk1 Library, opened in 2015, is a dynamic and interactive library that aims to be a cultural and civic hub for the city of Aarhus. The library covers six floors, each with a different theme and atmosphere. The ground floor, called the "urban media space", is a lively and open space that connects the library with the city, hosting events, performances, and debates. The first floor, called the "open square", is a flexible and playful space that offers various activities and services for children and families, such as games, toys, and storytelling. The second floor, called the "study space", is a quiet and cozy space that provides various resources and facilities for students and researchers, such as books, journals, and databases. The third floor, called the "meeting space", is a collaborative and creative space that supports various forms of learning and working, such as workshops, courses, and meetings. The fourth floor, called the "citizen space", is a social and inclusive space that promotes civic engagement and participation, offering various services and information for citizens, such as legal advice, health care, and language courses. The fifth floor, called the "skyline", is a panoramic and inspirational space that offers a spectacular view of the city and the sea. The library is also committed to innovation and diversity, using digital technologies, art installations, and multicultural programs.

Birmingham Library: The Birmingham Library, opened in 2013, is a majestic and impressive library that aims to be a world-class destination for the city of Birmingham. The library consists of four stacked blocks, each with a different function and design. The lower block, called the "base", is a solid and transparent space that contains the main entrance, the reception, and the exhibition halls. The middle block, called the "rotunda", is a circular and colourful space that contains the main library collection, the reading rooms, and the study areas. The upper block, called the "crown", is a metallic and reflective space that contains the archives, the special collections, and the Shakespeare Memorial Room. The top block, called the

"skyline", is a glass and green space that contains the roof gardens, the terraces, and the observatory. The library also has a theater, a gallery, and a music library. The Birmingham Library is designed to be a spectacular and elegant library, where the visitors can enjoy, admire, and appreciate.

Idea Store: The Idea Store, launched in 2002, is an innovative and accessible library that aims to be a learning and information centre for the borough of Tower Hamlets. The Idea Store has four branches, located in Whitechapel, Chrisp Street, Bow, and Canary Wharf. The Idea Store branches are designed to be bright and inviting spaces, with large windows, colourful furniture, and open layouts. The Idea Store branches offer various services and facilities for the local community, such as books, DVDs, newspapers, computers, internet access, printing, scanning, and photocopying. The Idea Store branches also offer various courses and activities for adults and children, such as languages, arts, crafts, music, dance, yoga, fitness, health, and well-being. The Idea Store branches also host various events and programs, such as talks, workshops, exhibitions, and performances. The Idea Store branches are designed to be user-friendly and community-oriented libraries, where the visitors can access, learn, and participate.

Copenhagen Model: Copenhagen has a number of cultural centres that have special offers and opportunities for children or young people at different life stages.

Consideration of European best practices guides us to see libraries as places to offer cultural and creative/experiential opportunities. Releasing creativity could help improve the engagement and participation of our citizens and help create an inspirational Civic Hub.

Public Health approaches to the provision of library service

Public health is the science and art of preventing disease, prolonging life, and promoting health through the organised efforts of society. Some library and information service approaches are known to better support the prevention agenda

The Healthy Libraries, Healthy Communities project in Scotland aimed to improve the health literacy and health outcomes of the population, by providing health information, health promotion, and health education services and programs in public libraries. The project involved training library staff on health topics and skills, developing health information resources and materials, and delivering health events and activities in collaboration with local health organizations and professionals. The project reported increased awareness, knowledge, and confidence of library users and staff on health issues, as well as increased access and use of health information and services.

The Books on Prescription scheme in England which aimed to improve the mental health and well-being of the population, by providing bibliotherapy services and programs in public libraries. Bibliotherapy is the use of books and reading to support the treatment and recovery of mental health conditions, such as depression, anxiety, and stress. The scheme involved developing a list of recommended books on common mental health problems, and making them available for loan in public

libraries. The scheme also involved providing guidance and support for library users and staff on how to use the books, and linking them with other mental health services and resources. The scheme reported improved mood, coping, and self-management skills of library users who used the books, as well as reduced stigma and isolation associated with mental health problems.

The Healthy Living Library project in Australia which aimed to improve the physical health and well-being of the population, by providing physical activity and nutrition services and programs in public libraries. The project involved creating a designated space in the library for physical activity and nutrition resources and equipment, such as exercise mats, weights, resistance bands, and cookbooks. The project also involved delivering physical activity and nutrition events and activities in collaboration with local health organizations and professionals, such as fitness classes, cooking demonstrations, and health screenings. The project reported increased participation, motivation, and enjoyment of library users and staff in physical activity and nutrition behaviours, as well as increased awareness and knowledge of the benefits of physical activity and nutrition for health.

We can conclude that Library professionals can contribute to the prevention of diseases, the promotion of health, and the reduction of health inequalities. Library professionals can also collaborate with other sectors and stakeholders, such as health care, education, social services, environment, and civil society, to address the complex and interrelated factors that influence health.

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Appendix C – The Determinants of Health

What Determines Outcomes?

Outcomes are determined by the conditions in which we born, grow, age, live and work. These conditions influence opportunities for good health, and how we think, feel and act, and this shapes our mental health, physical health and wellbeing. As a result, the social determinants of health include:

- housing
- education
- employment
- social support
- family income
- our communities
- childhood experience
- access to health services.

The visual below shows to extent to which these factors impact on individuals.
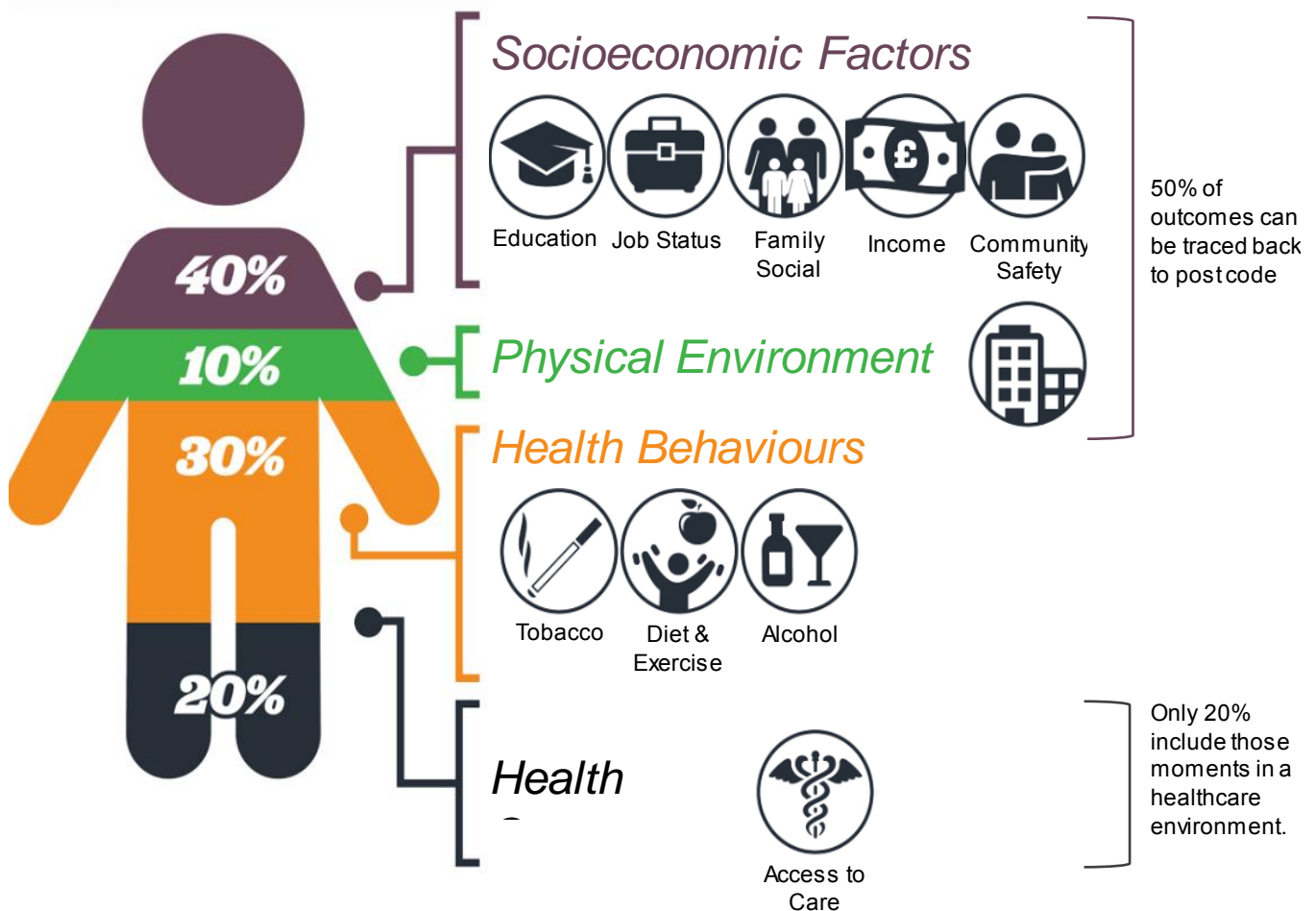
In Fair Society, Healthy Lives (known as the Marmot Review), Marmot explored how the social determinates of health could be addressed. He concluded that there is a social gradient in health – the lower a person's social position, the worse his or her health and that health inequalities result from social inequalities.

Marmot noted that focusing solely on the most disadvantaged will not reduce health inequalities sufficiently. To reduce the steepness of the social gradient in health, actions must be universal, but with a scale and intensity that is proportionate to the level of disadvantage. Marmot calls this this 'proportionate universalism'.

Reducing health inequalities will require action on six policy objectives:
- Give every child the best start in life
- Enable all children young people and adults to maximise their capabilities and have control over their lives
- Create fair employment and good work for all
- Ensure healthy standard of living for all
- Create and develop healthy and sustainable places and communities
- Strengthen the role and impact of ill health prevention

Marmot concluded that delivering these policy objectives will require action by central and local government, the NHS, the third and private sectors and community groups, Marmot is of the view that national policies will not work without effective local delivery systems focused on health equity in all policies. Effective local delivery requires effective participatory decision-making at local level. This can only happen by empowering individuals and local communities.

Variation in Outcomes Across our Communities

The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation measures levels of deprivation by looking across seven domains: income, employment, education, health, access to health services, crime and housing, and so closely mirrors the wider determinates of health.

Despite considerable national and local efforts to address poorer outcomes based on deprivation, benefits have not been felt equally across the population as exemplified Public Health data held for Aberdeen City.
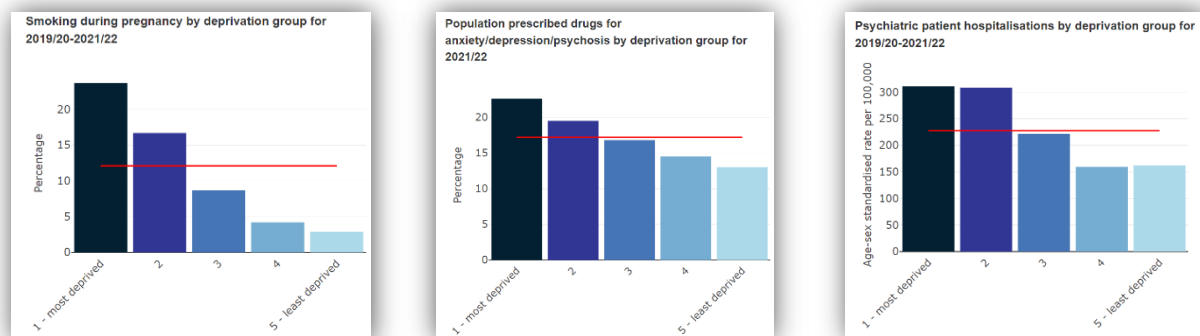
There continues to be considerable variation in outcomes at community level, with different communities with a similar SIMD profile, having quite different outcomes.

% Improvement for Five Most Vulnerable Communities compared to Aberdeen City Average
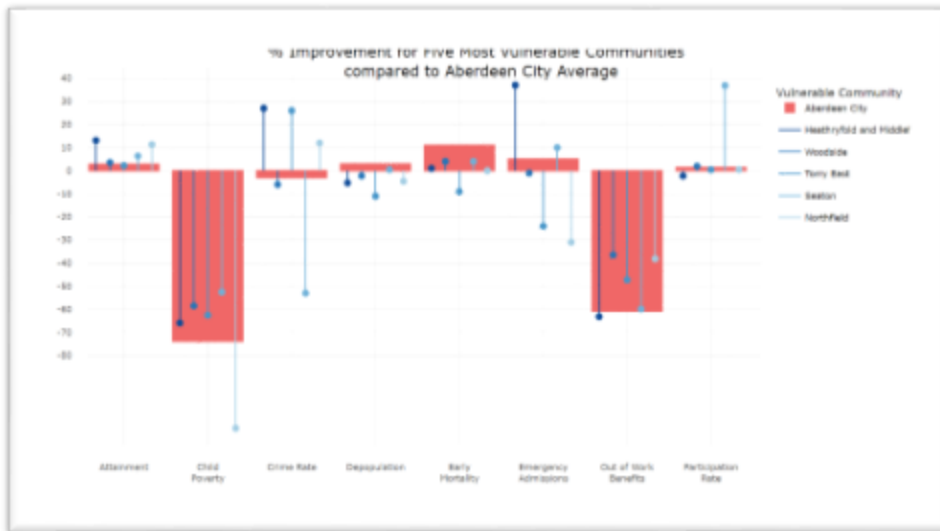
As Marmot suggested, this variation triggers the need to consider if all communities need the same universal and targeted support, or they would be better served by something more bespoke and 'proportionate universalism' and in keeping with the profile of need across a community.

Factors Impacting on Variation

Some groups living in communities, such as the homeless or those with protected characteristics, experience even more pronounced inequality.

The cumulative impact of more than one factor being experienced by some families is considerable and leads to the considerable inequality of outcomes locally.

Figure 1 - Factors impacting inequality of outcomes
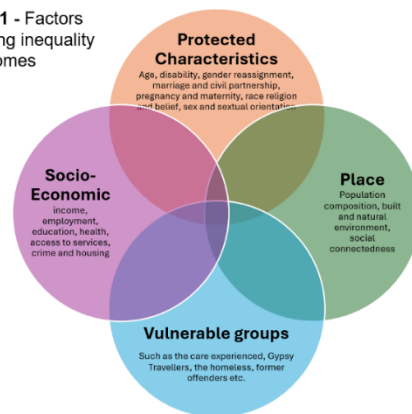
Consultation on the recently approved Local Outcome Improvement Plan and associated Locality Plans strongly suggests that many citizens do not feel safe in their community. Feelings of safety are often linked to people feeling unconnected. This suggests a need to strengthen the sense of community to increase levels of resilience and self-efficacy.

The connection between the health determinates, psycho-social factors, physiological impacts and health behaviours on the health and wellbeing of citizens and communities is shown in the visual below.
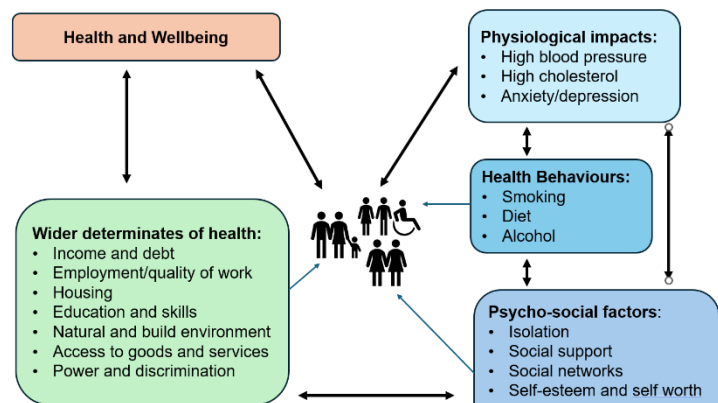
Research overwhelmingly suggests that strengthening psychosocial pathways can increase resilience and tackle feelings of loneliness and social isolation. Could our Library and Information services help drive this sense of connection?

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How to Improve Psychosocial Pathways?

A range of psychosocial problems exist in Scotland and are triggering a concerning rise in reported mental health needs.

A Scotland-wide stress survey, commissioned by the Mental Health Foundation, found that almost three quarters of adults (74%) have at some point over the past year felt so stressed they felt overwhelmed or unable to cope. The findings exemplify how prevent psychosocial issues are, and how differently the issues are felt by different groups.

74% of Scottish adults have felt so stressed at some point over the last year they felt overwhelmed or unable to cope.
- 80% of women said this compared to 68% of men
- 83% of 18-24 year-olds said this compared to 66% aged 55 and over

35% of adults said they had experienced suicidal feelings as a result of stress
- 35% of women said this compared to 34% of men
- 33% of 18 to 24 year-olds said this compared to 26% aged 55 and over

16% of adults said they had self-harmed as a result of stress
- 21% of women said this compared to 11% of men
- 24% of 18 to 24 year-olds said this compared to 7% aged 55 and over

Research suggests that psychosocial pathways can be increased by shifting systems to focus on the wider determinants of health at community level, routinely reviewing progress and applying a Health in All Policies, this also requires a well informed workforce. This work is currently being progressed through implementation of the new Organisational Structure, but there is a need to take more of a community focus rather than look at misleading city wide data.

There is a need to focus on prevention by having a good understanding of community level data, to enable a clear focus on protective and risk factors. Systems can best address the effects of adverse factors (shown in Figure 1 above) at a scale and intensity that is proportionate to the community. This is helpfully described as 'proportionate universalism' by the Institute of Health Equity and Marmot. Taking this approach would enable those living in different communities to access support in a way that works for them based on local need.

The built, natural and social environment is important. Environments to encourage empowerment, social cohesion, sense of belonging, social relationships and social capital may look different from some of the spaces our services, including the Library and Information Service, currently utilise.

Prevention is known to be an effective means of supporting whole populations.

Primary prevention	Early intervention	Responding to harm
Invest in the building blocks of health to stop problems from happening in the first place	Intervening when a problem is detected to reduce the level of harm	Minimising the negative consequences of harm

High) — Impact on population health — (Low
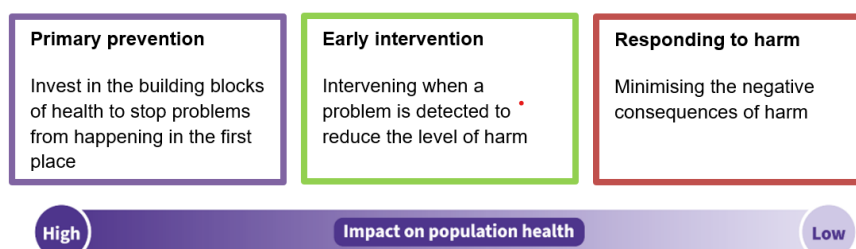
What do we want to achieve?

Our future model should strive to realise equal long term outcomes for our citizens by addressing the health gradient. In real terms, this means that different communities should have access to what they need to build agency and improve outcomes across all of the determinates of health. This relies on having clear community level data and accountability to help shape the offer to the community.

Equality – everyone gets the same resources

Equity – everyone gets the same outcomes, with resources distributed according to need

Equal outcomes – through the removal of structural barriers
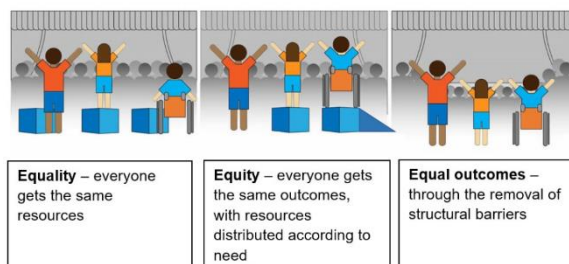
How do we focus on Place?

Consideration of Marmots 6 policy objectives, guides the establishment of a Community Hub Model.

The Community Hub model would prioritise strengthening agency and community, building community capital, providing access to a range of community resources and provide access to more targeted Family Support. Programmes and approaches would be designed in collaboration with the communities being served, resulting in the proportionate universalism Marmot describes.

Placed Based Plans

Place based plans are designed based on community outcome data and community insights. A bespoke programme is put in place for each community and delivered by Community Planning and Third Sector partners in collaboration with and the communities themselves.

Strengthen agency & community

People come together to identify local issues, devise solutions and build and deliver sustainable local actions.

Central to this strand is building community capacity to enable community members to take action. This capacity building may include support from Community Learning and Development, the Library and Information Service and others to build agency by using creativity and engagement with the local cultural offer to build a strong sense of community identity.

This strand will also see a focus on working in partnership to build social networks to address feelings of isolation.

This would see the co-production of projects, participatory budgets and leading of community- based initiatives.

Volunteer and peer roles

As agency develops, some individual community members will be able to offer advice, information and support to others. As a result, community members will be able to use their own life experience and social connections to reach out to others. Models could include:

- peer support
- peer education
- health trainers to support ill health prevention
- health champions
- community navigators
- befriending and volunteer schemes such as health walks
- networks of groups (such as first-time mums or support to age well etc.)

Community resources

Opportunities to engage with community-based resources (either located full time or part time) in Community Hubs. This could include access to:

- Social prescribing based on community need
- Library and Information Services
- Health professionals
- Employability support and programmes
- Financial advice
- Physical activity
- Skills development including digital skills development
- Social connection supported through informal café style places
- Support to access Housing Support

Family Support

Access to caseworkers for those in need of a short-term bespoke intervention.

Working to integrate services within shared spaces and defined places, and communities of culture and interest, is important for many reasons, including:

- it enables combined focus around the needs of individuals and families, rather than the separate needs of individual services
- it enables the rationalising of overlaps and duplication – bad for our citizens and bad for system efficiency
- it enables gaps and barriers to be identified and overcome
- it makes sound financial sense

It is critical, particularly with health inequalities in mind, that the purpose of the integrating process is to make access of services easier for the end user to enable increased uptake for those who need it most.

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https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a74d3e440f0b65f613228d7/Psychosocial_pathways_and_health_equity.pdf

Fair Society, Healthy Lives (instituteofhealthequity.org)

Inclusive services for adult learners

Collaborate to ensure that libraries are recognised as safe and inclusive spaces for individuals of all ages with low literacy levels, train more spotters and refers across CPA.

Family learning activity

Programme Family Learning Holiday in the City programmes connected to libraries, in partnership with library staff to maximise library resources.

Harness community involvement and creativity
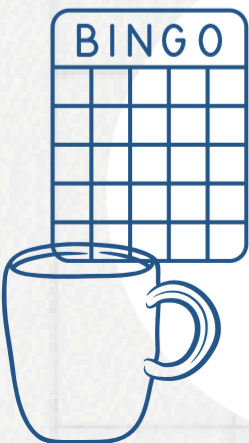
Encourage community led events and programmes in libraries; Bingo, tea and tech, school or community take overs, board game clubs, dating in the library, borrow a granny...programmes that support socialisation and encourage self-motivated engagement beyond scheduled sessions.

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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee
DATE	05 September 2024
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Annual Assurance Statement
REPORT NUMBER	F&C/24/243
DIRECTOR	Eleanor Sheppard
CHIEF OFFICER	Jacqui McKenzie
REPORT AUTHOR	Martin Smith
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1.1

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To seek approval for the Council's Annual Assurance Statement for the year 2024/25, which must be submitted to the Scottish Housing Regulator by 31 October 2024.

2. RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee: -

2.1 Note the work undertaken to address areas listed in the Housing Regulator Engagement Plan (April 2023) to date;

2.2 Note the self-assessment against Regulatory standards contained in Appendix B; and

2.3 Approve the Annual Assurance Statement (Appendix A) report for submission to the Scottish Housing Regulator by 31 October 2024.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) has an established Regulatory Framework relating to housing services' performance. The Regulatory Framework includes the need for social landlords to:

- Submit an Annual Return against the Charter (ARC) in May of each year
- Publish an Annual Assurance Statement (AAS) by the end of October of each year and make it available to tenants and other service users
- Undertake a Customer Satisfaction Survey at least every three years
- Notify the Regulator in year of any material changes to the assurance in its Annual Assurance Statement.

3.2   The SHR wrote to all Registered Social Landlords on 26 March 2024 to request that landlords confirm whether they meet all duties in relation to tenant and resident safety. In particular, that they have obtained appropriate assurance on their compliance with all relevant safety requirements within the AAS for 2024.

3.3   In addition, the Regulator has also asked that any landlords who have identified Reinforced Autoclave Aerated Concrete (RAAC) in their homes highlight if they do not have a plan in place to manage this in the yearly return.

HOW THE REGULATOR GAINS ASSURANCE

3.4   Under the Housing (Scotland) Act 2010 the Scottish Housing Regulator is responsible for monitoring, assessing, and reporting on how well social landlords, individually and collectively, achieve the Charter's outcomes. In May of each year, Scottish social landlords are required to report on a suite of performance measures through the Annual Return on the Charter (ARC). The ARC provides information across standard core housing service performance indicators, contextual information and data gathered from tenant surveys. Completion of the ARC supports the Housing Service to self-evaluate its own effectiveness and compliance, and therefore identify areas for improvement.

3.5   The Regulator requires all social landlords to prepare and publish an Annual Assurance Statement (AAS) to confirm to tenants and the Regulator that they are meeting their statutory requirements and how well they are delivering against the Scottish Social Housing Charter (which essentially sets the standards and outcomes that all social landlords should aim to achieve when performing their housing activities) by October of each year. The AAS provides assurance that a robust system of governance is in place and helps the Regulator determine if there is a culture of continuous assurance and improvement.

3.6   Material changes reported by social landlords to the Regulator out with the established framework, such as Aberdeen City Council reporting of the identification of RAAC in properties, are assessed by the Regulator on a case-by-case basis.

3.7   Any areas of non-compliance reported are subject to on-going engagement between the Housing Regulator and Social Landlord until the risk is reduced or removed. For example, the last Aberdeen City Council Assurance Statement (2023) indicated that Aberdeen City Council was not compliant with the regulatory requirements around minimum site standards and fire obligations for our Gypsy/Traveller site at Clinterty. In February 2024, the Gypsy/Traveller site was re-opened following closure for extensive development and is now fully compliant with regulations. As a result, this area is no longer subject to engagement with the Regulator.

3.8   Having reviewed all information available to them, the Regulator proportionately engages with different landlords depending on their risk and performance profile. The Regulator publishes individual Engagement Plans by April of each year to share the areas they wish to engage with social landlords on. This year, based on returns submitted over 2023, the Regulator's Engagement Plan for Aberdeen City Council has identified the following areas for engagement with the Regulator.

- Homelessness (and use of temporary accommodation);

- Tenant satisfaction, void management, rent arrears and tenancy sustainment;
- Electrical safety requirements; and
- RAAC.

3.9 The Housing Service has completed a self-assessment of compliance to inform the Annual Assurance Statement for 2024/25 (Appendix B) and the draft Annual Assurance Statement is available in Appendix A. Undertaking this process has helped validate the need to continue to focus on the areas contained in the Regulator Engagement Plan and captured in the Agile Housing Board Plan. An update on progress towards the areas for improvement published in the Regulator Engagement Plan is provided in paragraphs 3.10 to 3.29.

3.10 **REGULATOR ENGAGEMENT - HOMELESSNESS**

Despite delivery against the Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan, over the last year Aberdeen City Council has experienced the highest number of homeless applications since 2010/11. This is thought to be due to post pandemic movements, increasing rents in the private sector and economic uncertainty in the city. 1,778 homeless applications were received in 2023/34, which is 8 more than the previous year (an increase of 0.5% and the second consecutive annual rise recorded). Work is now being driven through engagement with the Royal Foundation's Homewards programme. The fifty-five partners, who bring a wealth of expertise and insight, act as members of the Homewards Aberdeen Coalition. The coalition has identified three drivers to guide work to combat homelessness:

- **Focusing on reframing perceptions of homelessness** – recognising that there are many diverse types of homelessness, beyond street homelessness, including hidden homelessness, progressing towards developing a shared language and understanding.
- **Universal prevention of homelessness and addressing root causes** – reaching people at an earlier stage, prior to a crisis, increasing learning and understanding about the causal factors and touch points for intervention.
- **Ensuring adequate supply of housing across all tenures and homes are the right size, type, and in the right location** – recognising the importance of a safe settled home and the value of choice.

3.11 The increase in homelessness during 2023/24 has again resulted in the Council using hotels to supplement its temporary accommodation provision. In summary, the Homeless Persons (Unsuitable Accommodation) (Scotland) Order 2014 states that Local Authorities may provide as unsuitable accommodation (as defined by Article 5 of the Order), such hotels, to people experiencing homelessness, but for no longer than 7 days. Aberdeen City Council breached that Order on 529 occasions during 2023/24. New procedures have been put in place around the management of hotel places alongside the establishment of the reducing hotel use action plan and weekly monitoring meetings.

3.12 There has been a slight decline in the number of applicants assessed as homeless that have failed to sustain their tenancy for less than a year (reducing from 116 in 22/23 to 99 in 23/24). Of the people who had previously experienced homelessness and did not sustain their tenancy, data indicates that in a number of cases, it was due to support being provided to move to alternative housing. A variety of support options are offered at the point of presentation for people

experiencing homelessness and the council is committed to this support being available from day one to ensure a person has access to the required support and includes access to furnishing options to try and enable a good start in their new home. The Housing First programme continues in the city, for those that have been in cyclical homelessness and often have multiple and complex needs.

3.13   Most homelessness in Aberdeen occurs from people being asked to leave unsuitable living arrangements with family and friends, and therefore harm is potentially already occurring prior to presenting as homeless. People who present as homeless have complex lives, and there should be no presumption of simple solutions. This learning exemplifies the need to consider homelessness as part of the Model of Family Support and take a test and learn approach.

3.14   The Homewards Aberdeen Coalition is now overseeing the development of a number of Improvement Project Charters to test different approaches to addressing this complex problem. Progress will be overseen by the Community Planning Aberdeen Board, and reported to the Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee through the Housing Board Bi-Annual progress reports. Performance data will continue to be reported through the routine Performance Reports. The service continues to keep the Regulator informed of progress.

3.15   **REGULATOR ENGAGEMENT - TENANT SATISFACTION, VOID MANAGEMENT, RENT ARREARS & TENANCY SUSTAINMENT**
A Chief Officer Housing role was established in April 2024 within the Families and Communities Function to focus exclusively on improvements across Housing. The re-organisation also brought Facilities Management and Building Services into the Corporate Landlord Cluster helping realise a reduction in the number of Clusters directly supporting Aberdeen City Council's tenants. In real terms, this has reduced the number of decision makers across Aberdeen City Council's housing stock and created clearer accountability.

3.16   Work undertaken to understand voids has illustrated a need for better data to support decision making and a data system, linked to the established Housing Data Management System, has been commissioned to help better track work on voids across the Corporate Landlord and Housing Clusters and alert tenants to appointment dates and times. This will ensure that both Clusters (Housing and Corporate Landlord) work to a shared data set and provide opportunities for greater efficiency and effectiveness.

3.17   Some of the systems put in place to improve tenant satisfaction, such as introduction of the Minimum Letting Standard (MLS), have inadvertently led to an increase in the length of time a property remains void. Work is underway to evaluate the impact of the MLS as part of the evaluation of Choice Based Letting.

3.18   Challenges recruiting to trades continues to impact work on voids. The Corporate Landlord continues to engage with colleagues in People and Organisation to address this vulnerability. Tenants report only 45.66% satisfaction with housing repairs, despite repairs performance being above the national average.

3.19 Feedback from tenants suggests there is a clear link between the level of tenant satisfaction, and the age of home. The complexity of repairs required to properties, influenced by the age and profile of our stock, impacts on the time taken to complete repairs or that a building remains void. Whilst the number of repairs completed have reduced, the time and cost of repairs has increased. Work is currently progressing on the development of an Asset Management Plan. A comprehensive Asset Management Plan will enable evidence-based decision making around which properties should be prioritised for investment. Investment in homes continues, as evidenced by SHQS (Scottish Housing Quality Standard) compliance increasing from 77.16% in 2022/23 to 90.43% in 2023/24. This sits above the Scottish Local Authority average for SHQS (77.95%).

3.20 Despite the challenges faced, there has been an increase in lets this year compared to last, with lets now at a 5 year high (an increase of 11% from last year.) This can be partially attributed to the new build programme with 484 new build properties completed in 2023/24, this includes 100 properties purchased through the buy-back scheme.

3.21 The Council undertook a tenant satisfaction survey in April/May 2024. The three yearly statutory survey was administered digitally for the first time, and the Housing & Support Officers put in place a range of mechanisms to mitigate against a lack of digital access or capacity to respond. Despite these mitigations, there was a far lower response rate and less positive responses than previous three-year surveys administered.

3.22 A number of factors are thought to have contributed to both the low response and lower satisfaction levels reported. The need to divert resource from other areas to focus on the RAAC rehousing programme has led to delays in some areas of work being progressed, such as responding to an earlier survey of tenants in multi-storey homes. Since the last survey was undertaken in 2021, the Housing & Support Model was established. We are currently concluding an evaluation of the early implementation of the Model to inform next steps to improve overall tenant satisfaction.

3.23 Improvement activity will continue to be undertaken in collaboration with tenants to ensure it is having the desired effect, given recent successes in supporting tenant groups to co-design and co-deliver shared action plans. As part of the tenant satisfaction survey, 850 tenants expressed an interest in tenant participation. A review of tenant participation is currently underway to ensure that every opportunity is maximised to amplify tenant participation and voice.

3.24 Collaborative work with the Health and Social Care Partnership has realised improvements in arrangements to adapt properties resulting in 946 adaptations completed on properties in 2023/24, an increase on the 899 in the previous year.

3.25 Whilst there are more Stage 1 & Stage 2 complaints, there is a significant reduction in response times because of the concerted effort of the team.

3.26 The responsibility for rent arrears was transferred into a dedicated Corporate Debt team in 2022/23. Processes and procedures were reviewed to ensure they were fit for purpose, and this included reviewing how court actions were undertaken. In

2023/24, the new recovery processes were implemented, and court work recommenced. This resulted in an increase in the number of evictions for non-payment of rent. It should also be noted that court actions are still below pre-pandemic levels.

3.27 Gross rent arrears have increased by an average 3.1% each year to 17.41% in 2022/23. Although the gross arrears has risen to 18.25% in 2023/24 this has now stabilised, and the increase has reduced to 0.84%. Work continues across services to improve early intervention with the aim of preventing rent arrears occurring. The officer led Performance Board is reviewing the rent arrears performance to help realise improvement. Some changes made to date include:

- Commencement of case conferences for individual tenants with Housing & Support Officers and Financial Inclusion team to maximise tenants' income.
- A review of the Direct Debit process for tenancy signings. This has delivered an increase in Direct Debits as the payment of choice by over 10%, from 37.1% in 2022/23 to 41.2% in 2023/24.
- Ensuring that the availability of Discretionary Housing Payments is maximised.
- A program of cross service staff training on Universal Credit.
- 'Self-serve' rent arrears translation service introduced.
- Design and delivery of a Rent Assistance Fund.

3.28 Like the gross rent arrears, former tenancy arrears processes have been reviewed. Former Tenancy Arrears has increased from £4.7m 2022/23 to £6.1m in 2023/24. Rather than writing off a significant amount of this debt, outstanding monies are pursued. One of the initiatives that has been utilised is to use the Council's debt collection service (Sheriff Officers) to help collect outstanding monies. The success of this project will be reviewed and fed back into the decision-making process going forward.

3.29 **REGULATOR ENGAGEMENT - ELECTRICAL SAFETY**
Inspections have been demand led with all properties requiring an EPC (Energy Performance Certificate) being surveyed for SHQS at the same visit by Aberdeen City Council's in-house survey team, although there are a number of surveys from individual tenant request. The surveys are continual and are conducted by staff experienced in SHQS property survey and all are accredited Domestic Energy Assessors. This programme will be enhanced as the Asset Management Plan is updated in 2024/25. Corporate Landlord can face challenges gaining access to properties which hampers progress and steps are being taken to address this. The Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) showed there are 1,137 properties (4.90%) non-compliant at the time of the Charter return in April 2024. The most recent report (July) indicates that 1,124 properties (4.85%) remain non-compliant. Steps to address this will continue.

3.30 **REGULATOR ENGAGEMENT - RAAC**
Following the discovery of RAAC within 366 homes owned by Aberdeen City Council in late 2023, a rehoming programme is underway for Aberdeen City Council households occupying these. This unplanned need for stock has led to, in agreement with the Scottish Government, some flexibility around the use of 31 of the 500 properties that had initially been reserved for Ukrainian Displaced People,

supporting efforts to try and balance the housing need across the various demands. Managing this risk has been prioritised by the Service.

3.31 **SECURING CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT**

A Housing Board has been established to oversee progress of housing outcomes. The Board has agreed an agile High-Level Plan to guide focus on areas of vulnerability identified. Significant time is currently being invested in establishing the data architecture that is required to enable more effective real time monitoring, which will better enable Aberdeen City Council to take more timeous action based on emerging trends.

3.32 The needs of tenants continue to change, needs are far more complex now than pre-pandemic. Mental health needs are particularly prevalent. Given the changing landscape, it is of critical importance that an evaluation of the impact of current arrangements is carried out to ensure that the approaches best meet the needs of Aberdeen City Council's tenants today. Several evaluations are currently being prepared to support decision making. As a result, the Housing Board Plan is subject to regular review and each completed evaluation will trigger a review of the Plan.

3.33 Progress against the Housing Board Plan will be reported in detailed bi-annual Housing Board reports to the Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The requirement for Annual Assurance Statements is set out in statutory guidance issued by the Scottish Housing Regulator under the Housing (Scotland) Act 2010. The recommendations of this report will enable the Council to comply with that requirement.

6. ENVIROMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct environmental implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

7. RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?

Strategic Risk	There is a risk that we do not effectively discharge our duties as a social landlord	This risk is mitigated by undertaking regular self-evaluation/assessments to identify areas of the charter we should focus on to secure continuous improvement.	L	Yes
Compliance	If the Council does not submit the Annual Assurance Statement by 31st October 2024, the Council will not meet regulatory requirements, the Council must comply with the law.	This risk is mitigated by seeking approval for the Annual Assurance Statement and submitting it to the Regulator within stipulated timescales. Regular self-assessment and monitoring against the regulatory requirements helps the service identify areas of vulnerability that can be prioritised for improvement. The establishment of stronger data architecture will support this area further.	L	Yes
Operational	There is a risk that the service does not work to the Scottish Social Housing Charter	This risk is mitigated by undertaking regular self-evaluation against the Charter to identify where further focus is required to help shape operational delivery.	L	Yes
Financial	There are risks that the Council cannot demonstrate 'best value'	This has been mitigated by identifying the need for an Asset Management Plan to help guide our decision making around long-term investment in our housing stock and by evaluating the impact of the Housing and Support Model to inform next steps.	L	Yes
Reputational	There is a risk that we do not perform well as a social landlord.	Regular self-evaluation is helping the service to identify areas for improvement based on a robust evidence base. In collaboration with tenants, this is helping the service identity the priorities for improvement.	L	Yes

Environment / Climate	There are no significant risks identified			Yes

8. OUTCOMES

COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN	
	Impact of Report
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement	*A number of areas within 'Homes for the Future' will be positively impacted by this report. Of particular impact on the policy statement are:* • *The development of an Asset Management Plan* • *The number of adaptions made to homes* • *Work to realise net zero targets* • *Increasing choice for tenants*
Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan	Stetch Outcome 12 aims to '*Reduce homelessness by 10% and youth homelessness by 6% by 2026, ensuring it is rare, brief and non-recurring with a longer-term ambition to end homelessness in Aberdeen City'.*
Regional and City Strategies	Data gathered as part of self-evaluation has helped inform the development of our Local Housing Strategy.
UK and Scottish Legislative and Policy Programmes	This report ensures that we are compliant with the regulatory requirements set out by the Scottish Housing Regulator.

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Impact Assessment	No assessment required at this stage. I confirm this has been discussed and agreed with Jacqui McKenzie, Chief Officer Housing on 02 August 2024.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required
Other	None

10.   BACKGROUND PAPERS

Scottish Housing Regulator – Regulation of Social Housing in Scotland
Scottish Housing Regulator – Statutory Guidance
Scottish Housing Regulator – Annual Assurance Statement

11.   APPENDICES

A - Draft Annual Assurance Statement
B - Self-Assessment of Compliance against Regulatory Framework
C – Housing Board Action Plan

12.   REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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Appendix A

Aberdeen City Council complies with the regulatory requirements set out in Chapter 3 of the Regulatory Framework, and have obtained appropriate assurance on compliance with all relevant safety requirements with the following exceptions:

- Services for people who are homeless/the provision of unsuitable accommodation - (as defined by Article 5 of the Homeless Persons (Unsuitable Accommodation) (Scotland) Order 2014 has been breached on 529 occasions during financial year 2023/24. We will continue to support the implementation of the improvement charters aligned to the Homewards programme and implement an established Reducing Housing Use Action Plan to reduce the use of temporary accommodation.

- Tenant & Resident Safety (partially compliant) - We did not hold a valid Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) certificate for 1124 properties, due largely to tenants refusing entry. Although performance has improved from April 2024 (4.90%) to present day (4.85%), we will continue with the actions that are in place to address all overdue cases and continue to engage with the Regulator on progress.

Following a robust assessment against the Scottish Social Housing Charter for tenants, people who are homeless and others who use our services, we have identified areas for continuous improvement and have appropriate plans in place:

The customer/landlord relationship:
- We plan to review current arrangements to determine if our current approach meets the changed needs of tenants by undertaking an evaluation of the Housing and Support Model.
- We plan to work with tenant groups to better understand how to maximise returns to the statutory tenant satisfaction survey.
- We plan to continue to work with tenants to amplify their voices and opportunities for participation.

Housing quality and maintenance:
- We plan to continue developing, and then publish an Asset Management Plan to determine how best to ensure adequate provision of appropriate housing stock that meets all building quality standards.
- We will be continuing our work to increase the number of completed EICR and properties meeting SHQS.
- Having streamlined accountability for voids, we will now work to reduce them. This will include consideration of any unintended consequences of the Minimum Letting Standard.

Neighbourhood and community:
- We will commission and implement a digital system, linked with the current housing system, to help improve communication with tenants on when repairs will be completed.

- We will collaborate with colleagues in social work and Violence against Women and Girls Partnership to ensure that those who have been the victims of domestic violence are well supported.

Access to housing and support:
- We will complete our evaluation of Choice Based Letting to identify next steps.
- We will continue to work with the Royal Foundation Homewards programme to help prevent homelessness and improve services for the homeless.
- We will continue to keep the criteria for our Rent Assistance fund under review.

Getting good value from rent and service charges:
- We will take decisions on our housing stock following publication of an Asset Management Plan.
- We will continue to implement our planned Improvement Project to help address rent arrears and reverse the trend.
- There is evidence from the complaints system that tenants feel a two-tier system has developed because of new housing developments. There is a need to consider this more fully as we review our Rent Policy.

We will continue to engage with the Regulator as we implement our planning rehoming programme for those impacted by RAAC.

I confirm Aberdeen City Council has seen and considered appropriate evidence in approving this Annual Assurance Statement at our Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee on 05 September 2024.

Councillor Miranda Radley
Convener – Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee
Aberdeen City Council

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APPENDIX B

Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) – Annual Assurance Statement (AAS) Self-Assessment of Compliance 2024/25

Regulatory Requirements		
Assurance and Notification	**Evidence**	**Next steps**
Prepare an AAS in accordance with SHR published guidance, submit it to the SHR between April and the end of October each year, make it available to tenants and other service users.	The Annual Assurance Statement (AAS) has been drafted and informed by our engagement with tenants. The AAS will be made available to tenants online following approval by Committee. All tenants will be signposted to an electronic copy of the statement through Newsbite, our tenant magazine, alongside details of how to request a hard copy. *Our assessment is that we fully comply.*	Maintain current arrangements.
Notify the SHR of any material changes to the assurance in the AAS during the year.	Over the year the Council has notified the regulator of material changes to the AAS. These have included: • The Council is now compliant with regulatory standards at our Gypsy/Travelling Persons Site at Clinterty, with the site reopening in February 2024. • The Council advised SHR of the identification of RAAC in our properties and has ensured that the SHR is aware of, and comfortable, with our rehousing programme and other potential impacts. *Our assessment is that we fully comply.*	Maintain current arrangements.
Have assurance and evidence that all legal obligations associated with housing and homelessness services, equality and human rights, and tenant and resident safety are being met.	The Council's system of governance provides assurance on our compliance with legal and statutory obligations at management level. It also ensures that Elected Members have effective oversight through Committee structures, and many participate in officer/Member working groups. Council Committee papers are all available through our Council website. A programme of internal audits, which are risk-based, identify any control failures including legal compliance in various areas such as rent management, void properties, and complaints management. In addition, the Council reports quarterly to the Scottish Government on Homelessness presentations and outcomes for scrutiny.	Take steps to comply with the duty to offer suitable temporary or emergency accommodation for people experiencing homelessness.

The Council have a corporate system for reporting Health and Safety incidents and report appropriately to agencies such as the Health and Safety Executive as required.

The Council has a mechanism for reporting on hate crimes.

The Council's Health and Safety Team undertake Fire Risk Assessments in our sheltered housing complexes annually and in mainstream multi-storey buildings every three years.

The Council Health and Safety Team also undertake routine compliance checks of housing related services as part of its corporate programme.

Through established governance arrangements, Elected Members:
- Scrutinise service delivery at the Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee
- Consider the outcome of Internal and External Audit reports on Housing and homelessness at the Audit Risk and Scrutiny Committee
- Participate in Member/Officer working groups around housing.

The Corporate/Extended Corporate Management team:
- Chair a Housing Board to oversee improvements in Housing Services
- Chair a Performance Board to oversee progress against agreed Improvement Charters and oversee any recommended improvement actions from external inspection
- Signs off the Annual Governance Statement, including any significant issues (control failures) which have occurred over the year.
- Corporate Management Team also receives notifications of health and safety contraventions, and resulting improvement plans, which would include health and safety issues affecting housing and homelessness services.

At Management level:
- Risk Registers are regularly reviewed and updated
- The Risk Control team undertakes site visits to ensure compliance with health and safety requirements including compliance with the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012 and Electricity at Work

Regulations 1989

- A contract log is in place which identifies responsibilities for different elements of compliance along with contract manager and contractor details. Whether delivered in house or externally, compliance is checked through scheduled compliance meetings. 'Gas-Safe' systems are used for gas compliance and MODUS for asbestos management
- Strategies, policies and procedures are reviewed in keeping with national/locally agreed timescales and expectations.These include the Aberdeen City Local Housing Strategy and Allocations Policy.

RAAC - An Options Appraisal was presented to Council in August 2024 for consideration by Elected Members and the rehoming programme is underway. A verbal update is provided to each meeting of the Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee.

The Housing Board monitors the delivery of housing related commissioning intentions and oversees performance against agreed service standards and KPIs. The Board will lead on the delivery of the Council's response to emerging issues e.g. managing the presence of Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) following the immediate response phase and agreement by Council on how to proceed in August.

Non-compliance identified:
The increase in homeless presentations during 2023/24 has again resulted in the Council using hotels to supplement its temporary accommodation provision. In summary, the Homeless Persons (Unsuitable Accommodation) (Scotland) Order 2014 states that Local Authorities may provide as unsuitable accommodation (as defined by Article 5 of the Order), such hotels, to people experiencing homelessness – but for no longer than 7 days. Aberdeen City Council breached that Order on 529 occasions during 2023/24. New procedures have been put in place around the management of our hotel places alongside the establishment of the reducing hotel use action plan and weekly monitoring meetings

Our assessment is that we partially comply.

3

Notify the SHR of any tenant and resident safety matters which have been reported to or are being investigated by the Health and Safety Executive, or reports from regulatory or statutory authorities, or insurance providers, relating to safety concerns.	No health and safety matters have been reported to the Health and Safety Executive in the last 12 months. ***Our assessment is that we fully comply.***	Maintain current arrangements.
The Engagement Plan must be made easily available and accessible to tenants and service users, including online.	The 2023/24 Engagement Plan was made available to tenants and is on the SHR website. The Council's Engagement Plan from the Scottish Housing Regulator is published on the Council's website. A hard copy newsletter provided to tenants includes information on how to access the Plan. The Autumn / Winter 2024 edition of Newsbite, our tenant newsletter, will notify tenants how to access the 2023 Engagement Plan. Information on the Engagement Plan is included in information packs for households. ***Our assessment is that we fully comply.***	Maintain current arrangements
Scottish Housing Charter Performance	**Evidence**	**Next steps**
Submit an Annual Return on the Charter to the SHR each year in accordance with the published guidance.	The Annual Return on the Charter (ARC) has been completed and returned to the SHR each year since this requirement was introduced in 2013/14. The last ARC return was submitted on 31 May 2024. This will be published in due course by the SHR on their website along with the data for all social landlords in Scotland.	Maintain current arrangements.

| Involve tenants, and, where relevant, other service users, in the preparation and scrutiny of performance information. The landlord must:
• agree its approach with tenants ensure that it is effective and meaningful
• publicise the approach to tenants
• ensure that it can be verified and be able to show that the agreed approach to involving tenants has happened
• involve other service users in an appropriate way
• report its performance in achieving or progressing towards the Charter outcomes and standards to its tenants. It must agree the format of performance reporting with tenants, ensuring that it is accessible for tenants and other service users, with plain and jargon- free language. | A budget of £106,000 is available for tenant participation and tenants determine how to best utilise the resource to help amplify their voice and participation.

The Housing Service Review Group (comprising tenants and residents) participates in the preparation and scrutiny of performance information on a monthly basis, most recently on 25 July 2024. The Group receives routine reports on our performance against the Charter outcomes and standards and all reports are published on our website. The Group also participates in developing our annual performance report, this includes reviewing performance trends, benchmarking against our peers and identifying areas for improvement. The Group has access to senior officers.

The Housing Service Review Group has recently completed a review of Tenant & Resident Participation and made recommendations for improvement which are being progressed. Recommendations from the Group have been embedded into our processes, for example their recommendations to use a video in addition to a written report when making Housing Performance public and offering Community Walkabouts. Resident Led Inspections take place twice a year in all our multi storey blocks.

We continue to keep tenant participation under review and officers are developing our Tenant Participation procedures and recording mechanisms, to expand on the work being carried out by Housing and Support Officers. This will include more rigorous reporting from each Tenant and Resident Organisation to ensure there is greater clarity of all actions being progressed in collaboration with tenants. A range of approaches to eliciting tenant voice are used, including tenant surveys, focus groups, and regular partnership working with tenant organisations e.g. NETRALT.

Officers continue to seek opportunities to learn from national best practice through attendance at a range of networks and forums e.g. Scottish Rent Forum, Scotland's Housing Network and North and Islands Housing Hub.

The Housing Allocation Policy, approved by Committee on 14 March 2023 resulted in the implementation of Choice Based Letting (CBL) on 27 June 2023. An evaluation of CBL is currently underway to inform the next steps. | Maintain current arrangements and continue to seek opportunities to increase participation and voice. |

Tenant and user redress	Evidence	Next steps
Make information on reporting significant performance failures available to tenants, including SHR leaflet.	The Council have published the Scottish Housing Regulator's 'Significant Performance Failure' leaflet on our website and the reporting form is also available. Information on how to report performance failures is also made available to all tenants through the newsletter and through tenant information packs. Information is available online and can be accessed easily by those who use assistive technology. Accessibility guidelines are also adhered to for hard copy documents, which are available in alternative formats where required. ***Our assessment is that we fully comply and at the same time wish to further amplify tenant voice and participation.***	Maintain current arrangements.
Provide tenants/other service users with the information they need to complain and seek redress, and respond to tenants within service standard timescales, in accordance with guidance from the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO).	The Council follow the Model Complaints Handling Procedure set out by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO). The Council was a test local authority for the child friendly complaints process and has now fully rolled this out. Information on our Complaints Handling Procedure, including how to make a complaint, is published on our website and a complaints leaflet is available at all offices. A person can make a complaint by using our online form or in person at any council office. Alternatively, they may contact us in writing or by telephone. ***Our assessment is that we fully comply.***	Maintain current arrangements.
Ensure effective arrangements in place to learn from complaints and from other tenant/service user feedback, in accordance with SPSO guidance.	Complaints performance data and tenant feedback on services is used to inform service improvement through lessons learned approaches. Upon closure of every complaint, responding officers systematically identify any learning points. This is particularly important where complaints are upheld, but even a complaint which is not upheld can highlight the need for change. For example, complaints have highlighted where we need to improve communications and change some of our internal procedures.	Maintain current arrangements.

| | A Complaints Feedback Team is in place and this team implements control processes for the effective resolution and analysis of complaints.

Complaints performance data is routinely reported to and scrutinised at the Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee.

Our assessment is that we fully comply. | |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Whistleblowing** | **Evidence** | **Next steps** |
| Have effective arrangements and a policy for whistleblowing by staff and elected members, which it makes easily available and which we promote. | An updated Whistleblowing Policy was put in place in November 2023. A copy of the policy is available online. The policy applies to all employees and workers including persons contracted to personally provide services to the Council, persons undergoing training or work experience as part of a training course, elected members, and agency workers.

The Whistleblowing policy is included in staff induction and policy refresh activity.

Our assessment is that we fully comply. | Maintain current arrangements. |
| **Equalities and Human Rights** | **Evidence** | **Next steps** |
| Have assurance and evidence that it considers equality and human rights issues properly when making all of its decisions, in the design and review of internal and external policies, and in its day-to-day service delivery. | Aberdeen City Council has agreed an Equalities Outcome Mainstreaming Plan to promote and embed equality in our services from 2021 to 2025. Our Equality Outcomes as a service provider are to ensure:
• EO 1 - All people with protected characteristics will access information, goods and services knowing that social and physical barriers are identified and removed, with a focus on Age, Gender reassignment and Disability.
• EO 2- Diverse communities in Aberdeen will have an increased sense of safety and belonging within their neighbourhood and City, with a focus on Race (including Gypsy/Travellers), Religion and Sexual Orientation.
• EO 3 – Representation in civic participation of people with protected characteristics will be improved by ensuring our leaders, staff and organisation champion the equality agenda in the city, with a focus on Disability, Race and Sex. | Maintain current arrangements. |

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| | In April 2024, the Council agreed an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, which replaced the existing Diversity and Equality Policy. Tenants and Residents helped to shape the policy.

The Council uses Integrated Impact Assessments (IIAs) to understand the impact of any proposed changes on equality, human rights, children's rights and socio-economic disadvantage. The Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) process guides officers to systematically consider relevant evidence to determine if there may be an unfair or unequal effect on different groups of people within the community or the workforce because of a policy or proposal. It then guides officers to consider the actions required to mitigate any disadvantage identified. As part of our continuous review and improvement, the IIA will also now guide consideration against the Consumer Duty and environmental impacts.

Documents, information, and written communications are available in alternative formats and translation panels included. Interpreter services are arranged for face-to-face contact where required.

Our assessment is that we fully comply. | |
| To comply with these duties, landlords must collect data relating to each of the protected characteristics for their existing tenants, new tenants, people on waiting lists, governing body members and staff. Local authorities must also collect data on protected characteristics for people who apply to them as homeless. Landlords who provide Gypsy/Traveller sites must | The Council's approach to collecting and recording data on protected characteristics varies across services. Work is ongoing with the equalities team to develop an approach that enables standard data capture that can be applied within the Housing Service (for existing and new tenants, people experiencing homelessness and people who use the Gypsy/Traveller site) enabling greater consistency.

Data on housing staff is collected corporately and meets requirements.

Data Privacy Statements are used appropriately. Aberdeen City Council's data controller registration number is Z5018566

Information sharing protocols are in place for sharing sensitive personal data (e.g. MAPPA, Serious Offenders Liaison Officer (SOLO). | Maintain current arrangements |

| collect data on protected characteristics for these service users. | Personal mandates are required for sharing of personal data where information sharing protocols are not in place.

The Council are appropriately registered with the Information Commissioner's Office.

Our assessment is that we partially comply. | |

Self-evaluation against the Scottish Housing Charter

Housing (Scotland) Act 2010, section 31 states that: 'Ministers must set out standards and outcomes which social landlords should aim to achieve when performing housing activities. The document in which those standards and outcomes are set out is to be known as the "Scottish Social Housing Charter".' As a result, the service has reviewed each standard to identify next steps to secure continuous improvement and also shown how this assessment has informed the development of our Local Housing Strategy Outcomes.

Charter Outcome	Next steps in securing continuous improvement
THE CUSTOMER/LANDLORD RELATIONSHIP Social landlords perform all aspects of their housing services so that: they support the right to adequate housing every tenant and other customer has their individual needs and rights recognised, is treated fairly and with respect, and receives fair access to housing and housing services.	There were 946 adaptations completed on properties in 2023/24, an increase on the 899 in the previous year. We will continue to work in collaboration with Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership to ensure that appropriate adaptations are in place. 805 affordable homeshomes were completed in 2023/24, which comprises 484 homes for Aberdeen City Council. This is in addition to the 278 completed in 2022/23. Our Local Housing Strategy is being refreshed and will include the following strategic outcomes: - We will support a sufficient supply of housing to meet the varying needs of the people of Aberdeen. - We are committed to a multi-agency approach, to enable the people of Aberdeen to live as independently as possible, for as long as possible, in their community.
Social landlords manage their businesses so that: tenants and other customers find it easy to communicate with their landlord and get the information they need about their landlord, how and why it makes decisions and the services it provides.	We will conclude the interim evaluation of the Housing and Support Model. We will continue to consider the need to provide information in alternative formats to ensure accessibility.

Social landlords manage their businesses so that: tenants and other customers are offered a range of opportunities that make it easy for them to participate in, and influence their landlord's decisions at a level they feel comfortable with.	The digital approach to surveying tenants elicited a disappointing return rate (1,339 from a total of 13,580 tenants surveyed). Tenant satisfaction with the quality of home is currently sitting at 40.01%, a decrease on the 2022/23 figure of 56.18%. This is lower than our comparator social landlords and the lowest percentage recorded locally. We recognise that the need to divert resources in response to RAAC will have an impact on how our tenants respond, we can also identify that tenants who live in some older home types is lower than those in new homes. There is a need to continue to engage with tenant groups to understand the survey results more fully. There is also a need to review our approach to the statutory survey of tenants.

Despite the range of tenant participation opportunities, the survey results showed a decrease in tenant satisfaction in being given the opportunity to participate in the decision-making process from 33.04% to 31.62%, where the Scottish Local Authority average is 80.40% (albeit showing a national downward trend). We will continue to review tenant participation with tenants to identify further opportunities to amplify their voice.

We will continue to invest resource (finance and personnel) in this important area. |
| **HOUSING QUALITY AND MAINTENANCE**

Social landlords manage their businesses so that: tenants' homes, as a minimum, when they are allocated are always clean, tidy and in a good state of repair, meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS), and any other building quality standard in place throughout the tenancy; and also meet the relevant Energy Efficiency and Zero Emission Heat Standard | Performance on the number of properties meeting EESSH compliance was maintained over 2023/24 at 94.20%. SHQS compliance increased from 77.16% in 2022/23 to 90.43% in 2023/24, this sits above the Scottish Local Authority average for SHQS (77.95%). We will continue to increase the number of completed EICR and properties meeting SHQS.

We will develop and publish an Asset Management Plan to help us devise and implement a sustainable means of meeting all building quality standards.

We will build on the work we have done to streamline accountability for voids and work to reduce them. This will include consideration of the unintended consequences of the Minimum Letting Standard.

Our Local Housing Strategy is being refreshed and will include the following strategic outcomes: |

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	• We are committed to improving the condition of existing homes, across all tenures, for the people of Aberdeen. • We are committed to improving the energy efficiency of Aberdeen's homes, alleviating fuel poverty, and addressing climate change by reducing carbon emissions in order to support a just transition to Net Zero.
NEIGHBOURHOOD AND COMMUNITY Social landlords manage their businesses so that: tenants' homes are well maintained, with repairs and improvements carried out when required, and tenants are given reasonable choices about when work is done.	Repairs performance continues to be above the national average. Over 2023/24 emergency repairs were carried out within 3.83hrs, (Local Authority average is 4.29hrs), non-emergency repairs within 8.48 days (Local Authority average 10.03 days) and reactive repairs completed right first time 91.20% (Local Authority average 89.33%). Despite this positive data, repairs satisfaction levels have dropped from our last 3-year survey from 70.06% to 45.66% in 2023/24. The Local Authority average for this indicator is 87.24%. The commissioning and implementation of a digital system, linked with the current housing system and with the ability to issue notifications to tenants, will help improve communication with tenants on when repairs will be completed. It is thought that this will help address levels of satisfaction.
Social landlords, working in partnership with other agencies, help to ensure as far as reasonably possible that: tenants and other customers live in well-maintained neighbourhoods where they feel safe.	Just under 28% of tenants who responded to a recent survey feel that their neighbourhood is well managed. This is lower than other Local Authority landlords where the figure stands at 80.11%, down on the previous year. The percentage of anti-social behaviour cases reported in the last year which were resolved saw an increase from 99.59% to 99.88%. This sits above the national average of 92.44%. We will continue to work with the Community Safety Partnership to address anti-social behaviour. We will work with colleagues in Aberdeen City Health and Social Care Partnership to ensure our response to those who have been the victims of domestic violence are well supported and continue to implement our Policy. Our Local Housing Strategy is being refreshed and will include the following strategic outcome:

	• We will use a place-based approach, which focuses on the unique circumstances of a particular place across existing and new communities and involves local people in decision making.
ACCESS TO HOUSING AND SUPPORT Social landlords work together to ensure that: people looking for housing get information that helps them make informed choices and decisions about the range of housing options available to them tenants and people on housing lists can review their housing options. Social landlords have a role to prevent homelessness and should ensure that: people at risk of losing their homes get advice and information on preventing homelessness.	In working with partners, we have seen an increase in the number of households referred to RSL's for housing from 11.70% in 2022/23 to 16.14% in 2023/24, however this is still lower than the Local Authority average of 29.22%. We will complete our evaluation of Choice Based Letting to identify the next steps. We will work with the Royal Foundation Homewards programme to help prevent homelessness and improve services for the homeless. We will continue to invest in the Financial Inclusion Service and ensure tenants benefit from easy access to support. Our Local Housing Strategy is being refreshed and will include the following strategic outcomes: • We will support a proactive housing options approach and will work collaboratively to provide a person-centred service to make homelessness rare, brief, and non-recurring.
Social landlords ensure that: people looking for housing find it easy to apply for the widest choice of social housing available and get the information they need on how the landlord allocates homes and on their prospects of being housed.	The average time to relet properties has increased from 178.71 days in 2022/23 to 237.41 days in 2023/24., The time to re-let is higher than comparator social landlords where the Scottish Local Authority average is 72.56 days (an increase on previous years). There is a need to address this through our planned on-going review of void management arrangements and timing of when 'catch-up' with capital improvements are undertaken. This will include consideration of any unintended impact of the Minimum Letting Standard and continuing to address the shortage of trades. There has been a levelling off of the number of prospective tenants who refuse offers made (56.1%), a reduction of over 2% on last year (Scottish Local Authority average is 36.51%). This reduction is thought to be due to the amount of choice given through Choice Based Letting. There is evidence that those who bid for properties are far

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	more likely to accept properties than those who are auto awarded properties. Our evaluation of Choice Based Letting will provide us with some clear next steps for continuous improvement.
	We will continue to make information available through our existing networks and promote housing online usage.
Social landlords ensure that: tenants get the information they need on how to obtain support to remain in their home; and ensure suitable support is available, including services provided directly by the landlord and by other organisations	Tenancy sustainment rates for 2023/24 were 89.33%, a slight decrease on the 89.57% reported in 2022/23. Early indications show that the national Local Authority average for 2023/24 is 91.11%, no change on the previous year.

We will continue to evaluate the impact of our Housing and Support Model to identify next steps.

We will continue to keep the criteria for our Rent Assistance fund under review. |
| Councils perform their duties on homelessness so that: people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness get prompt and easy access to help, advice and information; are provided with suitable, good-quality temporary or emergency accommodation when this is needed; and are offered continuing support to help them get and keep the home they are entitled to | The total number of lets in 2023/24 was 2,123 and of those 727 (34.24%) were to homeless households.

Tenancy sustainment rates where the applicant was statutory homeless were 86.68% in 2023/24 which is a slight increase on the 2022/23 figure of 85.99%. This differs from the declining national trend.

We will continue to support the implementation of the improvement charters aligned to the Homewards programme. |
| **GETTING GOOD VALUE FROM RENT AND SERVICE CHARGES**

Social landlords manage all aspects of their businesses so that: tenants, owners and other customers receive services that provide continually improving value for the rent and other charges they pay. | Satisfaction from factored owners dropped from 56.90% in 2022/23 to 44.44% in 2023/24.

We will take decisions on our housing stock following publication of an Asset Management Plan. |

Social landlords set rents and service charges in consultation with their tenants and other customers so that: a balance is struck between the level of services provided, the cost of the services, and how far current and prospective tenants and service users can afford them tenants get clear information on how rent and other money is spent, including details of any individual items of expenditure above thresholds agreed between landlords and tenants.	Gross rent arrears as a percentage of rent due was sitting at 18.25% when reported to the Regulator in April, a slight increase on the previous year (17.41%). The Scottish Local Authority average is sitting at 6.17%. Rent arrears have been rising steadily over many years. There is emerging evidence that the rising trend has now steadied. We will continue to implement our improvement project to help address rent arrears and reverse the trend. Rent collected as a percentage of rent due was 96.57%, a decrease on the 98.43% in 2022/23. The amount of void rent oss for 2023/24 was 7.91%, an increase on the 2022/23 figure of 5.70%. We received Direct Housing Costs (Housing Benefit, Universal Credit) for 14,695 households which equates to 72.33% of the 20,316 tenancies, with a value of £44,845,713, an increase on the 12,793 in 2022/23. This is reflective of the need we see in our tenants in light of the cost of living crisis and downturn in the local economy. This needs to be considered as we develop our model of Family Support. The provision of financial advice will continue. Only 38% of tenants who responded to a recent survey feel that their property represents value for money (this is lower than our comparator social landlords and lower than previous survey responses). There is evidence from the complaints system that tenants feel a two-tier system has developed as a result of new housing developments. There is a need to consider this more fully as we review our Rent Policy.
OTHER CUSTOMERS Local councils and social landlords with responsibility for managing sites for Gypsy/ Travellers should manage the sites so that: sites are well maintained and managed and do not fall below the minimum site standards set in Scottish Government guidance.	Satisfaction with the Clinterty Site is 100%. We will continue to support Clinterty.

Additional evidence requested by the Regulator

Requirement	Evidence
Gas Safety	100% compliant with checks carried out within 12 months of the last safety check. **We assess that we are fully compliant.**
Electrical Safety including EICR	Each property receives a full safety check during any void period Over the year, there has been a reduction in EICR failures, but we now have a larger number of non-compliant properties due to issues gaining access to properties. A number of failures relate to void properties which will be captured as part of the void process and form part of a wider plan to meet compliance targets over the coming year, We have appointed two external contractors to supplement the in-house team to increase capacity to carry out the remaining EICR's. **We assess that we are partially compliant.**
Water Safety	Appropriate arrangements are in place with regards to water safety, Monthly temperature testing and quarterly cleaning is carried out at all our Very Sheltered and Sheltered buildings. The testing is carried out by a dedicated in-house team. **We assess that we are fully compliant.**
Asbestos	A centralised database (Modus) is used to record all areas within a property that contains asbestos. This is a live database which is accessible by all staff who carry out work within the properties. **We assess that we are fully compliant.**
Damp & Mould	Inspectors have undergone training and a specific Schedule of Rates code for damp and mould work developed to enable data reporting and monitoring. A webinar was delivered to Housing & Support Officers for awareness raising of how to report instances of damp and mould. **We assess that we are fully compliant.**
Lift Safety	All lifts receive a monthly safety check and quarterly service. **We assess that we are fully compliant.**

Appendix C- Housing Board Agile Action Plan

Areas of focus	Outcomes sought	Actions required	By when?
Improved data management through the establishment of a Housing Data Dashboard.	Improved access and oversight of data to enable real time monitoring of performance at city and community level.	Agree data requirements for Housing dashboard (including high level voids, evictions, capital programme, planning maintenance, repair and response times, homelessness applications, use of hotels etc.)	Complete
		Identify sources of data for the Housing dashboard, the required frequency of updates and data flows to ensure that this live data feeds the Housing Board Dashboard in real time.	In progress.
	Improved use of evaluation to amend arrangements based on local learning.	Create and publish the Housing dashboard and agree roles and responsibilities for maintaining and monitoring data	In progress.
	Improved ability to predict further demand based on emerging trends.	Commission a digital system that helps to maintain a live profile of the condition, repair history, adaptions and demand of all property stock.	Subject to approval at F&R
Better co-ordination of Housing Strategy (Housing Needs and Demand Assessment (HNDA), Local Housing Strategy (LHS), The 30 year HRA Plan) to ensure decision making is consistent and helps secure improvement in the longer term.	High quality Local Housing Strategy (LHS) in place which has sufficient detail to support short and longer term planning	Detailed research and consultation with stakeholders to enable the presentation of high level LHS Outcomes to Committee for approval.	Complete
		Supporting information for each of the LHS strategic outcomes drafted, informed by the recent Housing Need and Demand Assessment and incorporating social determinants of health.	In progress
	Improved information on the current and future needs of our tenants informing our Asset Management Plan and 30 year HRA Plan.	Public consultation on the LHS, subject to Strategy Board and Communities Housing and Public Protection Committee approval.	Jan-Mar 2025
		Final LHS to the Strategy Board and then Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee for approval in early 2025.	Apr/May 2025
		Interim HRA 30 Year Business Plan to be presented to Council (the interim Plan will be reviewed following completion of the Housing Asset Management Plan)	Oct 2024

	30 year HRA Plan in place that reflects the known needs of our tenants	Commissioning of support to develop a Housing Asset Management Plan	Complete
		Housing Board session to help shape the product ACC requires	Complete
		Data collection and interpretation	In progress
	Housing Asset Management Plan in place to guide decision making	Presentation of draft Asset Plan to Strategy Board, Housing Board and then to Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee for approval.	TBC
Improved tenancy management and tenant participation.	Maximise the impact of Choice Based Letting	Evaluate the impact of Choice Based Lettings to determine next steps	In progress
		Develop and implement an improvement charter on Rent Arrears	In progress
	Reduced levels of rent arrears Increased tenancy sustainment	Develop, secure approval for and implement a Rent Assistance Fund and keep the eligibility criteria under routine review	Complete
		Evaluate the impact of the Housing Support Model to inform next steps	In progress
	Improved tenant participation and satisfaction	Map and evaluate the impact of existing tenant participation / engagement activity and determine next steps with tenants (including approach to surveys)	In progress
Improvement in stock management to ensure an effective end to end process	Reduction in void rent loss	Evaluate impact of Minimum Letting Standard to conclude whether benefits are proportionate to cost and determine next steps.	In progress
	Utilisation of small scale testing prior to full implementation helps mitigate against risks	Clarify roles and responsibilities in decision making (Corporate Landlord, Housing and Capital Clusters)	Complete
		Responsibility for voids risk management is recognised as a joint risk between Housing and other relevant clusters in the risk register	Complete
		Create and agree end-to-end processes for work undertaken to Housing stock i.e. response repairs; planned maintenance, capital works; void work	In progress
		Develop a business case for the management and maintenance of city centre multi-storeys, for submission to committee	TBC

		Develop a strategic outline case for non-traditional property types and then full business case, for submission to committee	TBC
		Review of refusals to capital work upgrades and develop an action plan to improve take up	In progress
		Differentiation in policy and process around the different types of Buy Backs and what happens to them going forward.	In progress
		Put a clear plan in place to work towards net zero targets and include on-going reporting of progress to the Regulator with ECIR implementation.	In progress
		Review leadership structures of both Housing and Corporate Landlord to ensure effective joint leadership of operational teams to improve void performance	In progress
		Culture and team building exercises for teams to build relationships and establish collaborative working	TBC
		Review of process to engage with private owners for upgrade to communal areas etc.	TBC
		Evaluate the impact of approach to current checks prior to transfers to determine next steps	TBC
		Development of a void management approach to support demand led prioritisation of voids work.	TBC
Delivery of Partnership Plan focused on preventing homelessness in Aberdeen.	Reduce homelessness by 10% and youth homelessness by 6% by 2026, ensuring it is rare, brief and non-recurring with a longer-term ambition to end homelessness in Aberdeen City	Form the Homewards Coalition	Complete
		Agree primary drivers for work around homelessness	Complete
		Develop, in partnership, Project Charters, for each of the improvement projects subject to approval by the Homewards Steering Group and Community Planning Aberdeen Management Board.	In progress

	Reframing perceptions of homelessness Universal prevention of homelessness and addressing root-causes Ensuring adequate supply of housing across all tenures and homes are the right size, type and location	Develop, test and refine change ideas included within each of the project charters.	TBC
RAAC	Delivery of person-centred support and keep tenants safe	RAAC Governance Board in place	Complete
		Engagement with tenants to progress through the rehoming process	On-going
		Options appraisal commissioned to help determine long term plans	Complete
		Presentation of options to Council for decision	Complete
		Implement Council decision	In progress
Capital works	Successful delivery of capital programme Successful delivery of new build programme	Deliver agreed capital programme	In progress
		Deliver agreed new build programme	In progress

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Communities Housing & Public Protection Committee
DATE	5 September 2024
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Homewards Programme Update
REPORT NUMBER	CORS/24/246
DIRECTOR	Eleanor Sheppard
CHIEF OFFICER	Jacqui McKenzie
REPORT AUTHOR	Rachel Harrison
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1.1

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To provide Committee with an update on the Homewards Programme in Aberdeen, specifically on the formation of the Aberdeen coalition and the progress made on the development of the local action plan. The report also seeks approval for a Co-Leader to join the International Mayors Council on Homelessness.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee: -

2.1 Note the progress made during the first year of the Homewards programme.

2.2 Note the programme is governed through Community Planning Aberdeen; and

2.3 Nominate and approve the appointment of a Council Co-Leader to join the International Mayors Council on Homelessness.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1   Since 2017/18 Aberdeen has been developing a response to homelessness focused on being housing led, and reducing the length of time that any households need to spend in temporary accommodation. The Aberdeen City approach is aligned to the recommendations made to Scottish Government by the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Action Group (HARSAG) in 2018 and their subsequent request for all Local Authorities to develop a Rapid Rehousing Transition Plan (RRTP)

3.2   The 5-year RRTP (2019 to 2024) set out the actions Aberdeen City proposed to take to reduce the amount of time that a household experienced homelessness, improve temporary accommodation and attempt to stop the cycle of homelessness re-occurring through projects such as Housing First.

3.3   Despite the considerable focus on Homelessness aligned to the RRTP Aberdeen City experienced the highest number of homeless applications since 2010/11 due to post pandemic movements, increasing rents in the private sector and economic uncertainty in the city. There was a recognition of the need to think differently and draw on a wider range of partners to support efforts to reduce and eliminate homelessness.

3.4   Aberdeen's expression of interest to The Royal Foundation was led by Aberdeen City Council, alongside Aberdeen Foyer, Turning Point Scotland, and the Centre for Homelessness Impact. In it we set out how our progress to deliver the RRTP had stalled during 2022/23 and expressed some of the challenges being faced. We recognised that most homelessness in Aberdeen occurs from people being asked to leave unsuitable living arrangements with family and friends, and therefore harm is potentially already occurring, by households living in insecure arrangements before presenting as homeless. This learning had exemplified that we needed to take a more preventative approach.

3.5   Making an application to join Homewards was also thought to be of considerable value given proposed new Scottish Government legislation, which will place to a duty on all public bodies to Prevent Homelessness. The proposed legislative change, which is currently working through the parliamentary process, will trigger new considerations for partners in recognition that no one public body can prevent homelessness alone.

3.6   Prince William launched Homewards in June 2023, a new initiative from The Royal Foundation of the Prince and Princess of Wales. Homewards aims to demonstrate that it is possible to end homelessness by working in collaboration with others.

3.7   On 27th June 2023, Prince William visited Tillydrone Community Campus to announce that Aberdeen had been selected as one of six UK locations to participate in the 5-year programme. The other five locations are Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole; Lambeth in London; Newport; Northern Ireland and Sheffield.

3.8   In considering Aberdeen's expression of interest, the expert panel established by The Royal Foundation, found that there are strong relationships and high levels of trust across both statutory agencies and the voluntary sector, from senior leaders down to frontline staff and that data sharing processes and co-location was already in place. The ability of The Royal Foundation to bring further partners into the coalition was highlighted as a key opportunity.

3.9   It is clear that a cross-sector and multi-disciplinary approach is required to tackle homelessness. As a result, it was determined that Community Planning Aberdeen would offer strong governance and discipline to support the programme.

3.10. KEY EVENTS

The table below highlights the key events that have taken place during the convening and planning stages of the programme.

Event	Purpose
Homewards Townhall	Introducing the local delivery lead and the Homewards programme to Aberdeen to gather local support across all sectors.
Inaugural coalition meeting	To identify organisations and partners interested in the delivery of programme.
ARUP prevention workshop	To bring together Chief Executives from the fields of, Health, Housing and Local Authority from the six locations to undertake a prevention mapping exercise and share learnings.
LOIP Workshop	To develop Stretch Outcome 12.
Launch of the Homewards Fund	A £500,000 fund for Aberdeen was launched, the application window opens quarterly during the 5-year period, all applications must be aligned to the activity identified and route via the project teams, with endorsement from the Steering Group.
First Steering Group Meeting	The first meeting of the leadership group and finalising of the draft Stretch Outcome 12 to align with Community Planning Aberdeen LOIP refresh.
Initial Working Group Meetings	The first meetings to bring together stakeholders securing ongoing commitment for the delivery of each key driver.
Theory of Change session facilitated by Homewards evaluation and learning partner.	Bringing together the leadership and senior operational group to develop the underpinning framework for the Homewards action plan.
Data Stories session	To support stakeholders to understand the picture of homelessness in the city, using qualitative and quantitative data trends held by partner organisations.

3.11 These key events have enabled those delivering the programme to:
- **Form a strong local coalition in Aberdeen** by building on strong existing partnerships and bringing new partners, some of whom are engaging with homelessness for the first time.
- **Secure partnerships**, for example through Homebases commitment to provide Home Starter packs.
- **Generate systems change** by shifting the focus to prevention through, for example, the delivery of a programme of webinars to share best practice and learning across the system.
- **Work together to shift the narrative**, by improving understanding about the different forms of homelessness, partially through the upcoming launch of an exhibition at the Saatchi Gallery in August which young people from Aberdeen will be attending.

3.12 Through the workshop, theory of change session and existing activity in the city, Stretch Outcome 12 has been developed. By working together, we hope to: '***Reduce Homelessness by 10% and youth homelessness by 6% by 2026, ensuring it is rare, brief and non-recurring with a longer-term ambition to end homelessness in Aberdeen City***'.
See Appendix 1 for the full details on Stretch Outcome 12.

3.13 The Coalition has identified three key drivers to shape our local plans:
- **Focusing on reframing perceptions of homelessness** – recognising that there are many diverse types of homelessness, beyond street homelessness, including hidden homelessness, progressing towards developing a shared language and understanding.
- **Universal prevention of homelessness and addressing root causes** – reaching people at an earlier stage, prior to a crisis, increasing learning and understanding about the causal factors and touch points for intervention.
- **Ensuring adequate supply of housing across all tenures and homes are the right size, type, and location** – recognising the importance of a safe settled home and the value of choice.

3.14 Aligned to these key drivers are a total of nine improvement project aims, see Appendix 1 for further details, with lead partners being drawn from across the sector. Each project aims to target different populations ranging from young people to city wide and directed towards different tiers of intervention, with a key focus on early intervention and prevention.

3.15 The strategic oversight of the programme will be provided by the Homewards Aberdeen Steering Group (Homelessness Outcome Improvement Group) which will continue to meet quarterly. The delivery of the improvement projects will be supported by a senior operational delivery group which will be attended by the leads of the project teams who will meet monthly.

3.16   The Homewards Aberdeen Coalition consists of fifty-five organisations and individuals in total, including, public sector organisations, housing associations, faith networks, third sector organisations and the local football club.

3.17.   NEXT STEPS

Project leads are currently preparing to present their draft charters to the Homelessness Outcome Improvement group/steering group on the 17 September 2024 for consideration.

3.18   Project charters will thereafter be presented to the Community Planning Aberdeen Management Group on 30 October 2024 for comment and the Community Planning Aberdeen Board for final sign off.

3.19   The Homewards action plan for Aberdeen will be further developed and be shared with the steering group for consideration.   This action plan will have areas of alignment with the stretch outcome and improvement project aims contained within, alongside potential additional areas of focus.

3.20   The Homewards action plan for Aberdeen will be widely published following a constructive review process with input from the wider Homewards partnership of the expert panel, sector partner and activators, by the end of October 2024.

3.21   Throughout the second year of the programme Aberdeen Homewards Coalition will be delivering solutions against the action plan, with a steady flow of tangible local and national impact creating optimism and shifting perceptions. Evidence and learning will continuously be produced, captured, and shared across the six locations.

3.22   INTERNATIONAL MAYORS COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS.

Through the partnership with Homewards an invitation for the Co-Leader to join the International Mayors Council on Homelessness has been received on behalf of the United Nations Human Settlement Programme (Un-Habitat) and Institute of Global Homelessness (IGH). The supporting documentation specifically requested the attendance of the Council Co-Leader.

3.23   The International Mayors Council on Homelessness brings together high-level elected officials who are committed to preventing and reducing homelessness and creates a forum to discuss the most pressing challenges, share what works and develop recommendations and priorities for homelessness policy.

3.24   Representation from around the world including Finland, Canada, Brazil, and the UK are already members of the Council, representation from Aberdeen would provide an opportunity to share and learn on a global scale to continue to support efforts to tackle the issue of homelessness.

3.25   As a member of the Council the Co-Leader would be invited to attend virtual meetings 2-3 times a year and contribute to specific discussions within

meetings, inform recommendations developed by the Council on homeless policy and amplify social media campaigns on homelessness as relevant.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no legal implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 No negative environmental impacts have been identified.

7. RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve. Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *Taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic Risk	No Significant Risk identified	N/A	N/A	N/A
Compliance	No Significant Risk identified	N/A	N/A	N/A
Operational	No risks identified	N/A	N/A	N/A
Financial	No risks identified	N/A	N/A	N/A
Reputational	Risk that the Council suffers reputations damage by failure of	Proactive Programme Management and strong governance arrangements in	L	Yes

	Homeward programme.	place to support progress.		
Environment / Climate	There are no environmental risks associated with this report.	N/A	N/A	N/A

8. OUTCOMES

Council Delivery Plan 2024	
	Impact of Report
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement Working in Partnership for Aberdeen	This Homeward programme will support the delivery of the following areas of this policy statement. • Do everything in our power to end homelessness.
Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan	
Prosperous People Strech Outcomes.	The high-level action plan for the delivery of preventative activity in relation to Homelessness in the city will support the delivery of stretch outcome 12 - Reduce homelessness by 10% and youth homelessness by 6% by 2026, ensuring it is rare, brief and non-recurring with a longer-term ambition to end homelessness in Aberdeen City.
Regional and City Strategies.	The proposals within this report support the Aberdeen City Local Housing Strategy.

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	No assessment required at this stage. I confirm this has been discussed and agreed with Jacqui McKenzie, Chief Officer Housing on 1 August 2024.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required at this stage.
Other	None

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Further information on Homewards can be found on their website: https://homewards.org.uk/

Further information on the Institute of Global Homelessness (IGH) can be found on their website: https://ighomelessness.org

11. APPENDICES

11.1 Appendix 1 Stetch Outcome 12

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

Name	Rachel Harrison
Title	Housing Access and Support Manager
Email Address	raharrison@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Tel	01224 067891

Stretch Outcome	Key Drivers	Improvement Project Aim	Baseline Trend Data	Target Population/ Intervention Tier
12. Reduce homelessness by 10% and youth homelessness by 6% by 2026, ensuring it is rare, brief and non-recurring with a longer term ambition to end homelessness in Aberdeen City.	Reframing perceptions of homelessness.	12.1 Increase % of people who feel more informed about preventing homelessness and % of people who feel able to 'ask and act'.	To be established as part of the project	City Wide Prevention
		12.2 Improve the effectiveness of an increased number of public, private, third and faith sector organisations contributing to preventing homelessness in Aberdeen.	15 partners (Ending Homelessness Group)	City Wide Prevention
		12.3 Increase % of decisions which impact on preventing homelessness are informed by and co-produced by people with lived experience.	To be established as part of the project	People with lived experienced of homeless Prevention
	Universal prevention of homelessness and addressing root-causes	12.4 Integrate housing, employment, employability and mental health support pathways for young people to support prevention of homelessness.	To be established as part of the project	Young people at risk of homelessness Early Intervention
		12.5 Increase % of housing option assessments undertaken using an integrated, multi-agency, person centred approach.	To be established as part of the project	City Wide Prevention
		12.6 Reduce the no. of evictions and increase % of people supported to sustain their tenancy across private and social landlords.	To be established as part of the project	Social and private tenants Prevention
		12.7 Increase no. of families supported with conflict resolution	To be established as part of the project	Families at risk Early Intervention
		12.8 Increase education and skills relating to tenancy management and housing rights for young people	To be established as part of the project	Young people Prevention
Responsible Outcome Improvement Group: Homelessness Outcome Improvement Group	Ensuring adequate supply of housing across all tenures and homes are the right size, type and location	12.9 Increase accessibility to a wider range of housing options to people at risk of homelessness	To be established as part of the project	Social and private tenants Early Intervention

Note: This stretch outcome is subject to amendment as a result of further work taking place with the Royal Foundation as part of the Homewards Aberdeen Coalition.

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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Communities Housing and Public Protection
DATE	5 September 2024
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	New Housing Capital Programme Delivery: Projects Update
REPORT NUMBER	RES/24/246
DIRECTOR	Gale Beattie
CHIEF OFFICER	John Wilson
REPORT AUTHOR	John Wilson
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1.1

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to summarise the general progress of delivery of key capital expenditure projects identified within the approved Capital Programme from the Housing Revenue Accounts.

1.2 The report highlights matters considered worthy of particular note in relation to Council led new build housing sites at Summerhill, Craighill, Kincorth, Tillydrone, Kaimhill, Greenferns and Greenferns Landward and the Developer-led new build housing site at Cloverhill.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Committee:-

2.1 Notes the progress to deliver the programme of social housing sites across the city.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

Background

3.1 At the Finance & Resources Committee meeting held on Wednesday 13 March 2024 within report RES/24/070, the Chief Officer – Capital advised in paragraph 3.2, that the delivery of the new housing developments (under construction) would be reported to the Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee. This is with the understanding that any contractual/financial issues would continue to be reported to the Finance & Resources Committee.

3.2 The report follows the same reporting content/style as submitted to the Finance & Resources Committee but only in regard to key project updates within the approved Housing Capital Programme.

Housing Revenue Account (HRA) – Capital Programme

3.3 With regard to the Council-led new housing sites, works have continued to progress at the Summerhill, Kaimhill and Tillydrone projects such that they have achieved practical completion. Works are still suspended at the Craighill and Kincorth Council-led development sites however re-design development continued to try and identify savings.

1

3.4   The other two projects worthy of note are the new proposed complex care 8-bed facility at Stoneywood and the works to bring into use the flats at 206 Union Street.

Summerhill New Build Housing

3.5   All of the units have now been handed over with the final block handed over in Spring 2024. All phases of this project have achieved practical completion. Snagging works are being carried out as issues emerge.

Tillydrone New Build Housing

3.6   The southern section of the site of 30 units was handed over in Q1 2024. The remaining 40 units on the northern side was handed over in Q2 2024. All phases of the project have now achieved practical completion.

Kaimhill New Build Housing

3.7   Handover of all 35 units took place during early Summer 2024. All phases of the project have now achieved practical completion.

Kincorth and Craighill New Build Housing

3.8   During Summer 2023, a committee decision was taken to pause the award of the construction works and to review where savings could be made through value-engineering to try and deliver a more cost-effective capital cost for each project.

3.9   Officers can advise that the enabling works for both projects are complete and all contractual payments with respect to the enabling works are agreed. Design works have progressed and revised planning applications for both sites were lodged in Q4 2023 with planning consent granted Q2 of 2024 for Craighill and anticipated in Q3 for Kincorth.

3.10   Within the tender for both projects, consideration is being given to phasing their development and delivery over a longer period to reduce the short-term impact on the capital budget by spreading costs over a longer period.

3.11   The expectations for both sites, allowing for due diligence, is that construction works for one will commence in Summer 2024 with the other following in the latter part of 2024.

Craighill New Build Housing

3.12   As previously reported, the enabling works (ground works) are complete, value engineering has been carried out, and a new planning application was submitted and approved which required re-design of tender documentation for the outstanding construction works.

3.13   The tender documents have since been issued to the market and, following completion of the tender process, CHAP Construction were appointed as the Principal Contractor. The final contract documents are now being put in place with a site start likely to be in Q3 2024.

        This project will deliver 87 new units.

Kincorth New Build Housing

3.14   As previously reported, the enabling works (ground works) are complete, value engineering has been carried out, new planning application submitted and approved which required re-design of tender documentation.

        The tender documents will be issued in the coming weeks, and allowing for due diligence the expectation is for works to commence in Winter 2024/2025.

2

Cloverhill New Build Housing

3.15 The project continues to progress well on site with the latest 35 houses handed over as part of Phase 4 in July 2024. A total of 203 units have been handed over to ACC with the next handover being for 10 units in October 2024.

206 Union Street Refurbishment

3.16 Agreement has been reached with Ogilvie Construction Ltd to be appointed as Principal Contractor and undertake the external and internal works to upgrade the property. This will include a new roof, windows, fabric repairs and the provision of up to 28 new one-bedroom social rent apartments.

3.17 Final agreement has now been reached on the scope of the project and the intention is that all 28 refurbished units will be provided. The final contract documentation has been signed.

Complex Care

3.18 The Strategic Business Case for the project was approved at Finance and Resources Committee in December 2022 with the Outline Business Case approved at Finance and Resources Committee in March 2023.

3.19 Capital funding was approved at the Integration Joint Board meeting on 6 February 2024.

3.20 Officers with external support have developed the design information to RIBA Stage 4. Tenders have been assessed and the Principal Contractor Ogilvie Construction Ltd have been appointed to undertake the management and delivery of the construction phase. Construction commenced in early summer 2024.

3.21 Works are progressing on site with sub structure, foundation and utility connections moving forward.

3.22 Negotiations remain ongoing with external parties to confirm the extent, if any, of grant funding which can be provided. Scottish Government are currently undertaking a technical review of the proposals.

3.23 Delivery of the project is expected in early 2025.

Clinterty Travellers Site

3.24 The site is now fully operational. A successful official opening event was held on 29 April 2024. Paul McLennan MSP, Scottish Government Minister for Housing also carried out a site visit on 10 July 2024 gathering positive feedback from residents. The works are now practically complete following delays with utility connections and the weather. Tenants started returning to the site from early February 2024.

4. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 Notwithstanding all of the above, the Chief Officer – Capital continues to review the approved Capital Programme in light of external pressures, such as, but not limited to;

- Inflation;
- Energy supply and cost;
- Covid 19 impacts;
- War in Ukraine and
- Brexit.

4.2 There is still a significant risk that costs will increase for those projects under construction and also those in the future pipeline. Close collaboration is being maintained with finance colleagues.

3

4.3   Members are aware that the Council are obliged to deliver its obligations within a balanced budget. In the context of the approved Capital Programme, and bearing in mind paragraphs 4.1 and 4.2 above, regular consideration needs to be carried out on whether to delay, pause or cancel any projects which are still not legally committed.

4.4   Throughout the financial year, the Chief Officer - Finance monitors the budget and uses various controls and tools to ensure a balanced budget is delivered.

4.5   In a similar context, the Chief Officer - Capital is tasked with delivering the approved Capital Programme whilst ensuring that sufficient budgetary provision exists.

4.6   In addition, consideration also needs to be given to funding the necessary Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) related works at Balnagask, following the Council decision at its meeting on Wednesday 21 August 2024.

5.   LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1   There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

6.   ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1   There are no direct environmental implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

7.   RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic Risk	Failure to manage Council finance and resources could lead to failure to achieve strategic objectives.	Regular financial reporting and monitoring activities, to incorporate financial resilience to address financial pressures arising in year is maintained and monitored.	M	Yes
Compliance	Failure to be able to comply with project requirements	Increase site visits and monitoring of the construction works. If required, review alternative options as soon as possible.	L	Yes
Operational	Balancing the pressures of finite resources both internal and external to the Council	Regular engagement between relevant Clusters within the Council along with ongoing engagement with Framework hosts, Suppliers, Procurement & Services re alternative products or delivery methods.	M	Yes

4

| Financial | Escalation of costs | Development of suitable price mechanisms.

Use of Business Intelligence to predict market changes/trends.

Price Increase Request Process. | M | Yes |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Differing market conditions depending on commodity/service | Market engagement/use of business intelligence to assist in predicting market changes and trends. | M | |
| Reputational | Programmes/projects being delayed or stopped | As above. | M | Yes |
| Environment / Climate | Failure to consider sustainable options due to costs. | Ensure all contracts consider environmental considerations, and early market engagement is conducted to seek market intelligence. | M | Yes |

8.   OUTCOMES

COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN 2022-2023	
	Impact of Report
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement **Working in Partnership for Aberdeen**	Reviewing the approved Capital Programme in light of the cost pressures resulting from external drivers, will enable the Council best to meet and prioritise the delivery of its capital funded programmes /projects.
Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-26	
Prosperous Economy Stretch Outcomes	The recommendations outlined within this report have included consideration of the current stage of programme/project delivery.
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	The recommendations outlined within this report have included consideration of the current stage of programme/project delivery.
Prosperous Place Stretch Outcomes	The recommendations outlined within this report have included consideration of the current stage of programme/project delivery.
Regional and City Strategies	Reviewing the approved Capital Programme in light of the cost pressures resulting from external drivers, will enable the Council best to meet and prioritise the delivery of its capital funded programmes /projects to align with its regional and city strategies.

5

9.   IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	For the purpose of this report which is an update on the overall Capital Programme and delivery of key projects within it, it is confirmed by Chief Officer John Wilson that no Integrated Impact Assessment is required.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required
Other	Not required

10.   BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1   None

11.   APPENDICES

11.1   Appendix A – Supporting Project Annex Information

12.   REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

Name	John Wilson
Title	Capital Programme Delivery: Projects Update
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Appendix A – Supporting Project Annex Information

ACC Summerhill Project Update

The project is to construct 369 housing units across 8 blocks with a mix of one, two and three bedroom flats. The site is brownfield, formerly the location of Summerhill Academy. The Principal Contractor for the works is Chap Construction Ltd.

1. Update since last report provided in March 2024

   The project is complete with all blocks handed over to the Council. Last block was handed over in Q2 2024. The completed project provided 369 new units for the Council.

2. Planned progress in next reporting period (consider 3 months)

   Any snagging works, if applicable.

3. Spend to end of Period 4 2024/25

Gross Budget	Spend to Date
£57.8m	£61.46m

   Note: Spend to date does not include for Grant income of circa. £21m

4. Interdependencies

   None.

5. Progress Photographs

Tillydrone Project Update

The proposed new development is located on the former St Machar Primary School in the Tillydrone area of Aberdeen. The site is bound on the North by Aberdon Court, the East by Tillydrone Avenue, the South by Harris Drive and the West by Conningham Terrace and the boundary with the new Riverbank Primary School site.

CHAP Construction have been appointed as the Principal Contractor responsible for construction, with works commencing in November 2021.

1. Update since last report provided in March 2024

   The project was completed in Q2 2024 with the final 40 units being handed over. A total of 70 units have been provided on site.

2. Planned progress in next reporting period (consider 3 months)

   Any snagging works, if applicable.

3. Spend to date

   Spend to end of Period 4 2024/25 is as follows:

Gross Budget	Spend to Date
£24.7m	£22.570m

4. Interdependencies

   N/A, project is complete.

5. Progress Photographs

Kaimhill Project Update

The project is to construct a mix of 35 no. bungalow's/housing units across 9 blocks and also include a new community play park and community green space.

1. Update since last report provided in March 2024

   The project was completed in Q2 2024 with all units being handed over.

2. Planned progress in next reporting period (consider 3 months)

   Any snagging works, if applicable.

3. Spend to end of Period 4 2024/25 date

Gross Budget	Spend to Date
£13.8m	£13.602m

4. Interdependencies

   None

5. Progress Photographs

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Craighill Project Update

The site is the former Craighill Primary School at Kincorth and was being developed for social housing. However, the original design of 99 No. units cannot be delivered within the planned budget, such that the project was paused following completion of the enabling works.

Following the pause on the original proposal, a value engineering / redesign process has been carried out which has resulted in a potential 2-phase layout of the site.

The combined phasing consists of 87 No units.

1. Update since last report to Committee in March 2024;

   A re-tender exercise has been completed and CHAP Construction have been appointed as Principal Contractor.

2. Planned progress in next reporting period (consider 3 months)

   It is anticipated that the site will re-commence works in Q3 2024 with all units to be constructed in a single phase.

3. Spend to date

   Spend to end of Period 4 2024/25:

Contract Sum	Spend to Date
£26m	£6.506m

4. Site Progress Photographs

   External Project Images

Kincorth Project Update

The site is the former Kincorth Academy site at Kincorth, and was being developed for social housing. However, the original design of 212 No. units cannot be delivered within the planned budget, such that the project was paused following completion of the enabling works.

Following the pause on the original proposal, a value engineering / redesign process has been carried out which has resulted in a potential 5-phase layout of the site.

The combined new phasing consists of 195 No units.

1. Update since last report to Committee in March 2024;

   A new planning application has been lodged for the scheme and planning consent should be issued Q3 2024.

2. Planned progress in next reporting period (consider 3 months)

   The project is now back out to tender and it is anticipated that a new contractor will be appointed to allow site commencement in Winter 24/25.

3. Spend to date

   Spend to end of Period 4 2024/25:

Contract Sum	Spend to Date
£59.36m **(to be confirmed following tender)**	**£7.039m**

4. Site Progress Photographs

   External Project Images

Cloverhill Project Update

The Cloverhill site forms part of the wider Aberdeen City Council Housing Programme to deliver council homes to those in need. Cloverhill provides a total of 536 units, 3 commercial units, community centre, football pitch and public park areas in the Bridge of Don area of the city.

Cloverhill is a Developer led scheme presented by Bancon Homes Limited comprising of 536 units. Bancon started on site on the 7th February 2022, the Practical Completion date for the Project is the 14th August 2026. The Project will be delivered over phases as follows;

Section 1 Build -   Flats (36 units, 3 shops) - Delivered

Section 2 Build -   Semi/terrace Mix (31 units) - Delivered

Section 3 Build -   Flats & Semi/terrace mix (10 + 48 units) incl comm hall - Delivered

Section 1A Build -   Semi/terrace mix (43 units) – Delivered 2024

Section 7 Build -   Semi/terrace mix (30 units) – Summer 2026

Section 8 Build -   Semi/terrace mix (23 units) – Autumn 2026

Section 5A Build -   Semi/terrace mix (34 units) & Sports Pitch – Summer 2026

Section 4 Build -   Semi/terrace mix (35 units) – Autumn 2024

Section 2A Build -   Semi/terrace mix (36 units) – Summer 2025

Section 5 Build -   Semi/terrace mix (58 units) – Summer 2025

Section 6 Build -   Semi/terrace mix (70 units) – Winter 2025

Section 3A Build -   Flats, Semi/terrace mix (24 +21 units) – Autumn 2024

Section 4A Build -   Semi/terrace mix (37 units) – Winter 2025

1. Update since last report to Committee in March 2024;

    Additional units have been handed over in line with the schedule above.

2. Planned progress in next reporting period (consider 3 months)

    The project remains on programme and the handover of the next phase of units is in line with the information stated above.

3. Spend to date

    Spend to end of Period 4 2024/25:

Contract Sum	Spend to Date
£137.5m	£90.245m

4. Site Progress Photographs

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External Project Images

206 Union Street Project Update

The project will see the refurbishment and upgrade of the upper floors of the property at the above address. This is above the Co-op convenience store on Union Street.

The project is the refurbishment of the existing upper floors (and roof) for 28 No existing flats. There have been numerous attempts to tender this project; inclusive of both internal and external contractors, all without success.

The project team have now negotiated a tender and works commenced in Q2 2023.

The initial works covered roof replacement, external window replacement on Union Street and external fabric repairs along with 28 one bed social rent units.

The initial letter of intent that has been issued covers the main roof works, external windows. The number of units to be created will be dependent on the budgetary constraints once the main external works have been completed.

1. Update since last report to Committee in March 2024;

    The Principal Contractor Ogilvie Construction Ltd has been appointed and the contract document is signed.

2. Planned progress in next reporting period (consider 3 months)

    Works continue on site with an anticipated completion date of Q1 2025.

3. Spend to date

    Spend to the end of Period 4 2024/25:

Gross Budget	Spend to Date
£3.7m	£1.1m

4. Interdependencies

    None

5. Progress Photographs

Complex Care

Individuals with learning disabilities and complex care needs require the provision of suitable, robust accommodation, which is currently unavailable within our existing housing stock. Unsuitable environments can lead to challenges in the management of need and communication, often resulting in challenging behaviour. This requires the development of sustainable and robust accommodation which will meet the profile of need for those with complex care requirements. These requirements are evidenced through good practice and wider learning on a local and national basis.

This project aims to deliver:

- 8 No. individual homes which meets the environmental specifications for individuals with complex care needs through a new build delivery approach as considered within the project options appraisal. In addition, this accommodation will provide adequate office/respite space for care provider employees who will provide 24/7 onsite support.

- Adequate community and service links to allow individuals with complex care needs to integrate and participate in their local community.

- Learning and a model for further development for unmet and future need that will allow the operating model to be as flexible as possible for the unknowns' future delivery.

1. Update since last report to Committee in March 2024;

   Works have commenced on site with sub structure foundation and utility connections are progressing.

2. Planned progress in next reporting period (consider 3 months)

   Progress over the next period should see the substructure works drawing to a conclusion and the commencement of the erection of the timber kits.

3. Spend to date

   Spend to end of Period 4 2024/25:

Gross Budget	Spend to Date
£5.6m	£0.510m

4. Interdependencies

   None

5. Progress Photographs

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ACC Greenferns

The Greenferns site is a 73.6ha site located on the eastern boundary of the city between Bucksburn and Sheddocksley. The Greenferns site is included as an Opportunity Site (Ref: OP 33 & 28) within the adopted Aberdeen Local Development Plan (2017) (ALDP).

The allocation establishes the principle of developing the site as an extension of the city boundary for around 1,470 homes and 10 hectares of employment land. The site is owned by ACC. The site forms an important contribution to the city's future housing and employment land requirements ensuring the area has enough new homes and employment land requirements.

It is anticipated that the overall development of the site will take place over a number of years depending on demand for private housing sites from housing developers, but it is anticipated that this location will positively contribute to the continued growth of the city over the next decade and beyond.

As part of the housing programme ACC identified the opportunity to provide additional social housing and have identified the opportunity to bring forward around 350 new social rented homes as part of the overall development in the early phases of the project with the potential for further social rented units being provided as part of the subsequent phases of the development.

1. Update since last Report in March 2024

   Planning permission in principle was granted in Q2 2024 subject to conditions within the agreement. A legal agreement has been drafted to regularise the future development of the site when further detailed planning applications are lodged in due course. This agreement will cover the outstanding roads conditions as well as other developer contributions. It is anticipated this will be concluded in Q3 2024.

2. Planned progress in next reporting period (consider 3 months)

   The design work on the phase 1 is progressing well with the layout and unit designs agreed. It is anticipated that the design works will be concluded to allow a submission of the planning application in the Q3 2024 which should link with agreeing the final terms of the legal agreement for the overall Planning Permission in Principle. The final design works on Phase 1 will be completed by end of Q2 2024.

Site Photograph

ACC Greenferns Landward

The Greenferns Landward site extends to approximately 69.6ha and is located in the Newhills area to the northwest of Aberdeen. The site is predominantly in agricultural use at the present time.

The Greenferns Landward site is included as an Opportunity Site (Ref: OP22) within the adopted Aberdeen Local Development Plan (2017). This establishes the principle of developing the site for around 1,500 new homes. The site therefore forms an important contribution to meeting the City's housing land requirements, ensuring the area has enough new homes to meet demand.

It is anticipated that the overall development of the site will take place over a number of years depending on demand for private housing sites from housing developers, but it is anticipated that this location will positively contribute to the continued growth of the city over the next decade and beyond.

As part of the housing programme ACC identified the opportunity to provide additional social housing and have identified the opportunity to bring forward around 150 new social rented homes as part of the overall development in the early phases of the project with the potential for further social rented units being provided as part of the subsequent phases of the development.

1. Update since last report provided in March 2024

   The Planning Permission in Principle application was lodged in Q2 2024. As part of the review of the application, additional information around flooding has been requested from SEPA. This work is currently being undertaken and will be completed Q3 2024. It is anticipated that the consent will be granted subject to conditions and a legal agreement being required Q4 2024.

2. Planned progress in next reporting period (consider 3 months)

   Design work on the first phase of Social Housing has now commenced and this will be for approximately 108 units. The design work will continue over the coming 3 months with an anticipation that an application will be lodged in Q4 2024 after completion of the PPiP for the larger scheme. Formal consent will be due Q1 2025.

Site Photograph

Clinterty Travellers Site Project Update

The site redevelopment will increase caravan capacity whilst retaining the provision of 21 individual plots. A mixture of plot sizes has been will be provided to ensure the site meets the needs of the travelling community.

Each plot has an amenity building providing cooking, washing and storage spaces.

The proposed development has been designed to meet the Scottish Government Interim Site Design Guide for Gypsy/Traveller Sites in Scotland.

The Contractor for the works was the Council's Building Services.

Update since last report provided in March 2024.

The works were practically complete in early February 2024 with tenants returning to site thereafter. The official opening event was held on 29 April.

1. Planned progress in next reporting period (consider 3 months)

   Commence close out reporting and participate in Scottish Government post project evaluation tasks as part of Grant Funding conditions. Attend to minor defects.

2. Spend to date
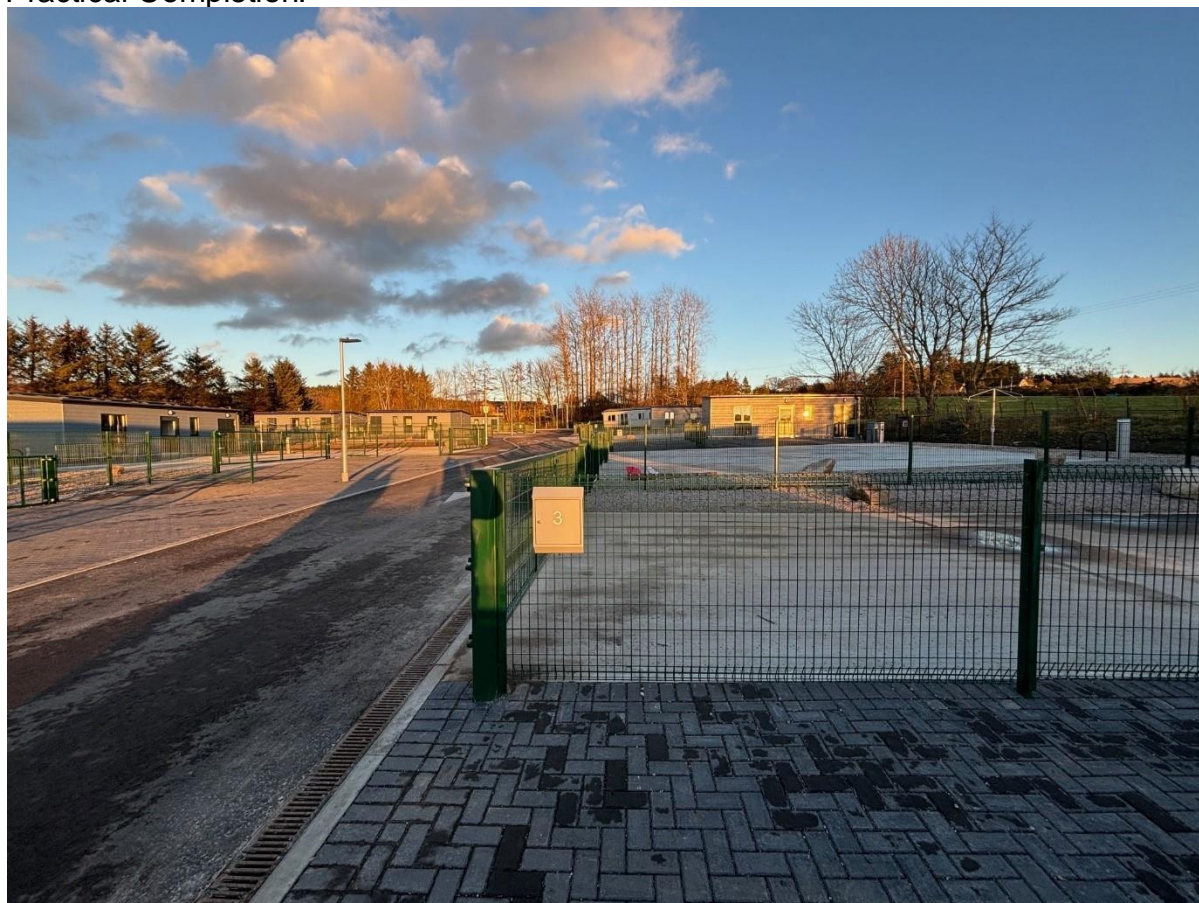
   Spend to the end of Q4 2024/25 :

Gross Budget	Spend to Date
£6.48m	£6.03m

3. Interdependencies

   None.

4. Progress Photograph

   Practical Completion.

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Communities Housing and Public Protection
DATE	5 September 2024
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Busking Code of Conduct
REPORT NUMBER	CORS/24/239
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	Andy MacDonald
CHIEF OFFICER	Vikki Cuthbert
REPORT AUTHOR	Mark Wilson
TERMS OF REFERENCE	1.1.5

1.   **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1   This report provides an update on the work undertaken by the Community Safety Partnership to establish a Busking Code of Conduct for Aberdeen City centre.

2.   **RECOMMENDATION**

That the Committee :-

2.1   notes the Community Safety Partnership's update in this report on developing a Busking Code of Conduct for Aberdeen City Centre;

2.2   approves the draft Busking Code of Conduct for Aberdeen City centre contained in Appendix 1; and

2.3   instructs the Interim Chief Officer - Governance to implement the Code of Conduct.

3.   **CURRENT SITUATION**

3.1   The Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee on 14 November 2023 approved a Notice of Motion by Cllr Macdonald, thereby instructing the Chief Officer – Early Intervention and Community Empowerment to ensure that city centre buskers, businesses, Police Scotland, elected members, community councils, residents and other city centre partner organisations are consulted in developing a Busking Code of Conduct for Aberdeen City centre and report back to the January 2024 Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee with an update on the progress of the proposed Busking Code of Conduct.

3.2   The Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee on 23 January 2024 instructed the Chief Officer – Early Intervention and Community Empowerment to:

- *continue the development of a Busking Code of Conduct that promotes a harmonious and respectful busking environment considering those that live and work in the City Centre.*

- *report back to Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee seeking approval of the Busking Code of Conduct.*

3.3   Community Safety has been realigned to the Governance Cluster and the Interim Chief Officer - Governance is now responsible for fulfilling the instructions issued on 23 January 2024.

3.4   The Busking Code of Conduct – Proposal Outline which was developed with Police Scotland and shared as part of the consultation process is available in **Appendix 1**. This document also sets out some of the changes that have been made in response to consultation feedback as set out in section 3.11 of this report. These changes have been marked in red.

Consultation

3.5   An online public consultation took place from 18 March 2024 to 30 June 2024. The consultation was promoted on the Council's website, social media and the City Wardens engaged with buskers on the street.

3.6   There were 222 responses to the consultation.   A summary report of the responses is available in **Appendix 2.** Respondents were broken into groups specifically, busker or street performer, resident in the city centre, business owner or employee in the city centre, community council representative, visitor or shopper in the city centre and Other.

3.7   It was not mandatory to answer all questions on the consultation. Of the respondents that did answer specific questions, it was noted that approximately:
- 65% of respondents felt busking had a positive impact on the City Centre
- 50% of respondents were positive that the proposed Code of Conduct would help to create a harmonious and respectful busking environment 14% had neither agreed or disagreed and a further 23% disagreed
- 50% of respondents were positive the Code of Conduct would protect the rights and interests of buskers, residents, businesses and visitors 11% neither agreed or disagreed and a further 27% disagreed
- 39% of respondents were positive the Code of Conduct would enhance the cultural vibrancy and attractiveness of the city centre 16% neither agreed or disagreed and 31% disagreed.

3.8   Respondents were offered the opportunity to make comments and suggestions as part of the consultation. Through the comments section, respondents expressed some mixed sentiments towards busking, with many supporting the

cultural vibrancy it brings while advocating for clear guidelines and enforcement to ensure harmony. Reoccuring comments suggested that resident, business and visitor groups found that busking volume to be excessive which included performances during the day and night time periods. Other suggestions included increasing the amount of busking areas in the Code of Conduct with reoccuring suggestions to include the Green, Union Terrace Gardens and Guild Street. There were also requests to extend the operational time, although there were comments from residents regarding the impact of late night noise from busking.

3.9   Approximately 40% of those that answered that they disagreed, made comment/suggestions relating to the permitted busking operating times and/or the locations.

Conclusion

3.10   The consultation has been mostly supportive of the implementation of the proposed Code of Conduct.

3.11   Reflecting on the feedback received as part of the consultation some changes have been made to the Busking Code of Conduct:

- Locations – across the respondent groups there is support for an increase in the number of busking areas. Union Terrace Gardens, Guild Street and Belmont Street were frequent suggestions and have now been added to the Code of Conduct.
- Times – residents hold mixed views regarding the busking hours. Conversely, visitors and buskers have expressed a favourable stance towards later performance times. In an effort to address the increased demand during weekends and maintain a balance within the community, the hours have been extended on Fridays and Saturdays until 9pm. This adjustment aims to support the vibrant nighttime economy, while still respecting the earlier weekday times for residents. Therefore, the revised busking schedule will be as follows: Sunday to Thursday from 10am to 8pm, and Friday to Saturday from 10am to 9pm, reflecting a balanced approach that considers the varied interests of all stakeholders.

As outlined in section 3.9 of this report around 40% of respondents that noted they disagreed later went on to make a comment/suggestion about changes to the permitted busking times and/or the availability of locations.

3.12   It is recognised that positive street engagement will be key to the success of the Code of Conduct. Aberdeen City Council City Wardens will take a leading role in engagement with buskers in the city centre, providing suitable advice on complying with the Code of Conduct. City Wardens will have the option to escalate any concerns to Police Scotland where the situation potentially requires enforcement.

3.13   The need to enforce restriction featured regularly in comments and suggestions during the consultation. Police Scotland have suitable enforcement powers - under Section 54 of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982. Under this Act,

Police Scotland may require a busker to stop performing if such performing gives another person "reasonable cause for annoyance". Failing to comply with such a requirement is a criminal offence and the Police may report the matter to the procurator fiscal and/or seize the equipment being used. Enforcement is considered to be a last resort with the primary route to address concerns through positive and constructive engagement.

3.14   The finalised Code of Conduct will be made available on the Council's website, promoted via social media with leaflets also produced to support City Wardens' efforts with their engagement activities.

4.   FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1   There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report

5.   LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1   There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendation of this report.

6.   ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1   There are no direct environmental implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

7.   RISK

7.1   The assessment of risk contained within the table below is considered to be consistent with the Council's Risk Appetite Statement.

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic Risk	No significant risks identified		L	**Y**
Compliance	Non-compliance with busking code of conduct	City Wardens will be encouraged to engage with busking acts providing suitable advice both verbally and via leaflets.	L	**Y**

		Where compliance is not achieved through engagement the matter will be escalated to Police Scotland who will assess the proportionality of utilising enforcement powers.		
Operational	No significant risks identified		L	**Y**
Financial	No significant risks identified		L	Y
Reputational	Potential for negative perception with busking acts	The proposed busking code of conduct has been consulted on publicly Online content and leaflet content will be worded in favour of encouraging appropriate busking.	L	**Y**
Environment / Climate	No significant risks identified.		L	**Y**

8. OUTCOMES

Council Delivery Plan 2024	
	Impact of Report
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement **Working in Partnership for Aberdeen**	The proposals within this report support the delivery of the following aspects of the policy statement:- • Refresh tourism and cultural strategies for the city. • Aim to make Aberdeen a premier destination for festivals, productions, conferences, bands and events.

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	New integrated impact assessment has been completed.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	**Not Required**
Other	N/A

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 CUS/24/018 - Update on progress with Busking Code of Conduct – Communities Housing and Public Protection Committee – 23 January 2024. Link to report from 23 January 2024

11. APPENDICES

11.1 Appendix 1 - Busking Code of Conduct – Proposal Outline

11.2 Appendix 2 – Summary of Consultation Responses

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

Name	Mark Wilson
Title	Community Safety and City Warden Manager
Email Address	MarkWilson@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Tel	01224 067418

Aberdeen City Centre

Busker Code of Conduct Proposal Outline

Purpose

Our City Centre is a location where people live, work and visit. Busking enhances the cultural vibrancy of our city and provides a platform for artists to share their talents with the public. This code of conduct aims to promote a harmonious and respectful busking environment for all in Aberdeen City Centre.

1. Locations and Rotations

    - To ensure fairness, buskers are encouraged to rotate their performance locations to allow others a chance to busk in popular spots while taking into account the needs of resident and businesses. A single act should not retain the same position for more than 2 hours.
    - The following locations have been designated as Busking Zones (subject to normal availability) to allow clear areas for busking to take place:

        i. St Nicholas Square – suitable for 1 Act
        ii. School Hill, Outside St Nicolas Centre – suitable for 1 Act
        iii. Union Steet outside Trintiy Centre – suitable for 1 Act
        iv. George Steet outside Bon Accord Centre – suitable for 1 Act

        v. Union Terrace Gardens – suitable for 2 Acts

        vi. Belmont Steet – suitable for 2 Acts

        vii. Guild Street – Suitable for 1 Acts

        viii. Castlegate – Suitable for 1 Act

2. Use of Public Space

    - Buskers should leave street furniture and seating free for other city centre users.
    - Pedestrian access to pavements buildings, transport or emergency services should be kept clear.
    - All city centre users should respect public space as one shared by people who live, work and visit – and who choose to busk there observing the code.

3. Performance

    - Busking is permitted between 10am and 8pm Monday – Sunday. **(revised to Sunday – Thursday 10am – 8pm and Friday – Saturday 10am – 9pm.)**
    - Play at a considerate volume so passers-by can hear but nearby businesses and residents are not disturbed. As a guide, levels should not be so loud that they can be

plainly heard at a distance of 50m (164ft) – approximately the width of a football pitch.

- Acts must not include hate speech, offensive content, or any material that promotes discrimination, harassment, or violence.

4. Safety and Cleanliness

- Performance areas should be kept clean and free from litter.
- Buskers should ensure the safety of their audience and their own safety – for example, avoiding creating trip hazards from cables or placing equipment in a precarious position

5. Engagement

- Acts should be willing to fully cooperate with Aberdeen City Council (including City Wardens) and Police Scotland in respect of any advice, concerns or complaints regarding their act. You may be asked to stop performing or move to another location.

Under section 54 of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982, Police Scotland can request for buskers to stop performing where their performance is disturbing others. In the event of non-compliance, the matter may be referred to the Procurator Fiscal and equipment seized.

Sections marked in bold are to indicated changes that have been made as a result of the public consultation.

Busking Proposed Code of Practice Consultation

https://consultation.aberdeencity.gov.uk/customer/busking-proposed-code-of-conduct-consultation

This report was created on Monday 01 July 2024 at 02:39

The activity ran from 18/03/2024 to 30/06/2024

Responses to this survey: **222**

1: What is your name?

Name

There were 192 responses to this part of the question.

2: What is your email address?

Email

There were 187 responses to this part of the question.
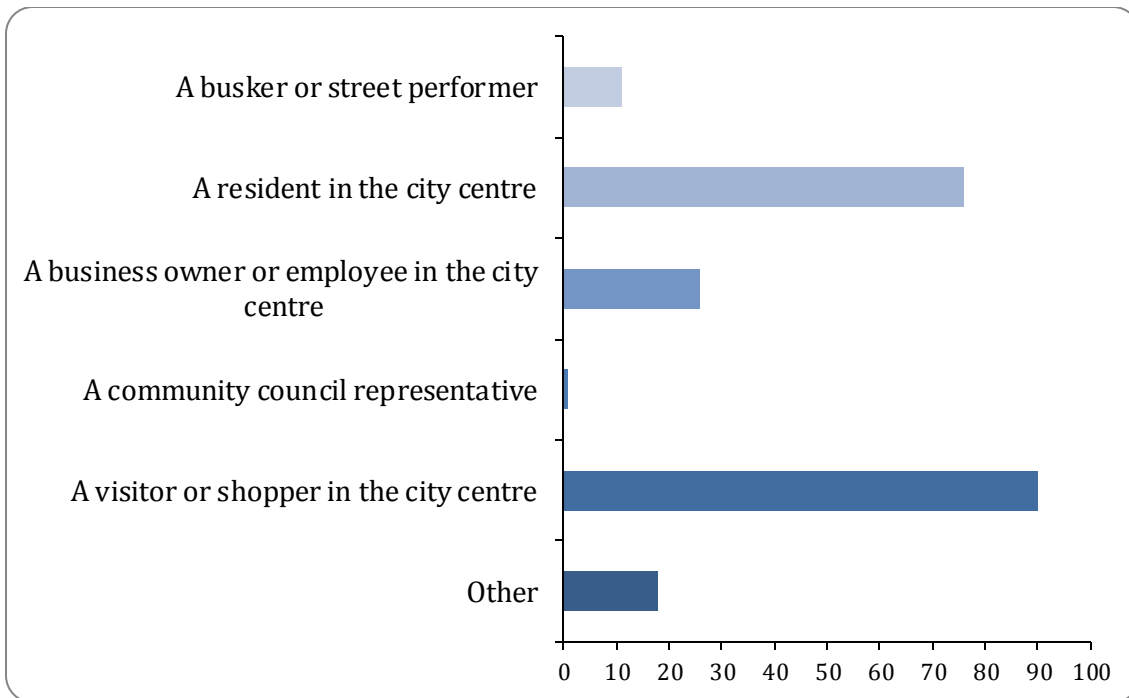
3: What is your organisation?

Organisation

There were 108 responses to this part of the question.

4: Please indicate which of the following best describes you:

Type of Respondent
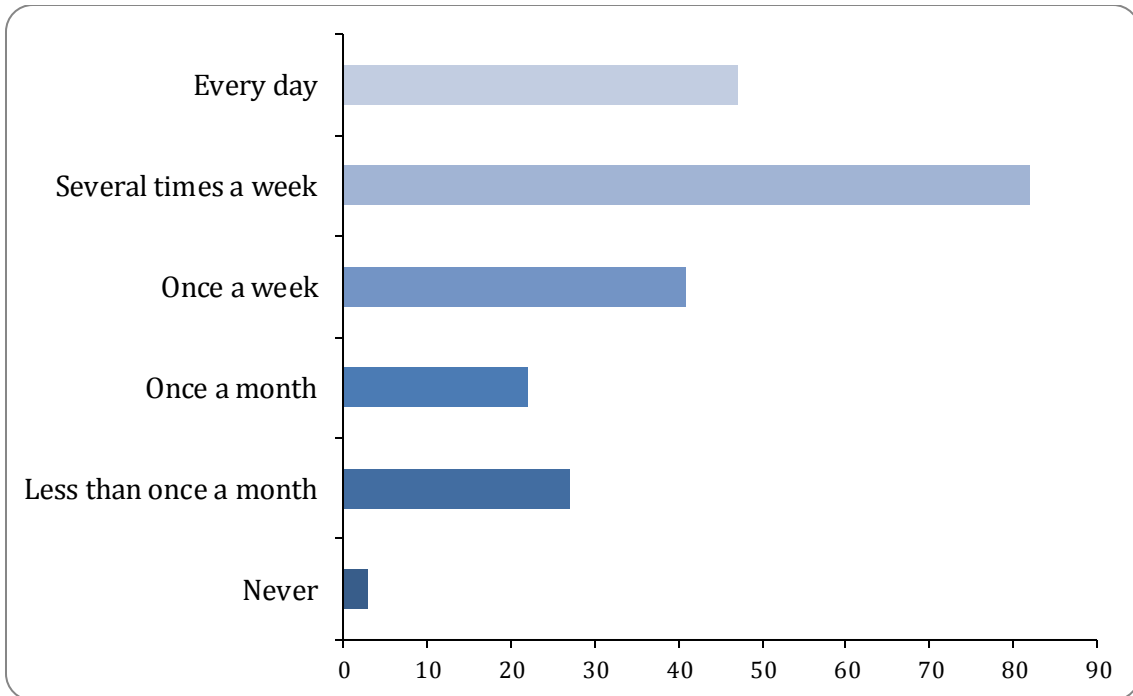
There were 222 responses to this part of the question.

Option	Total	Percent
A busker or street performer	11	4.95%
A resident in the city centre	76	34.23%
A business owner or employee in the city centre	26	11.71%
A community council representative	1	0.45%
A visitor or shopper in the city centre	90	40.54%
Other	18	8.11%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

5: How often do you encounter busking or street performances in the city centre?

Number of Encounters
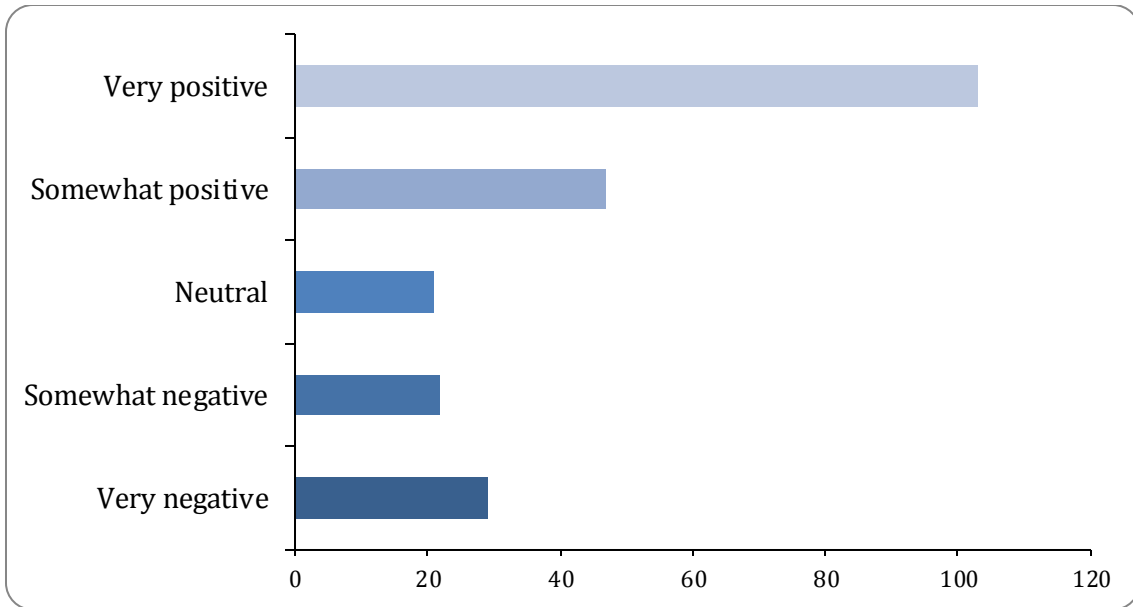
There were 222 responses to this part of the question.

Option	Total	Percent
Every day	47	21.17%
Several times a week	82	36.94%
Once a week	41	18.47%
Once a month	22	9.91%
Less than once a month	27	12.16%
Never	3	1.35%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

6: How do you feel about busking or street performances in the city centre?
Customer Feelings

There were 222 responses to this part of the question.

Option	Total	Percent
Very positive	103	46.40%
Somewhat positive	47	21.17%
Neutral	21	9.46%
Somewhat negative	22	9.91%
Very negative	29	13.06%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

7: Do you agree or disagree with the following statements about the proposed Code of Practice? Please indicate your level of agreement:

Responses - The Code of Practice will help to create a harmonious and respectful busking environment
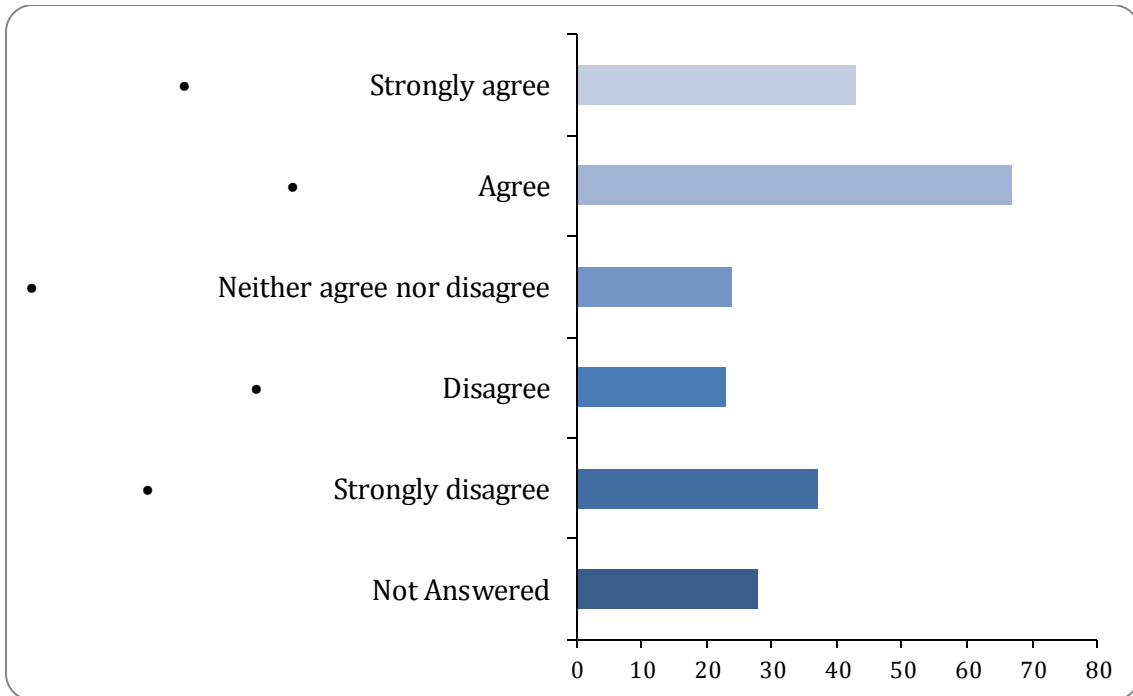
There were 194 responses to this part of the question.
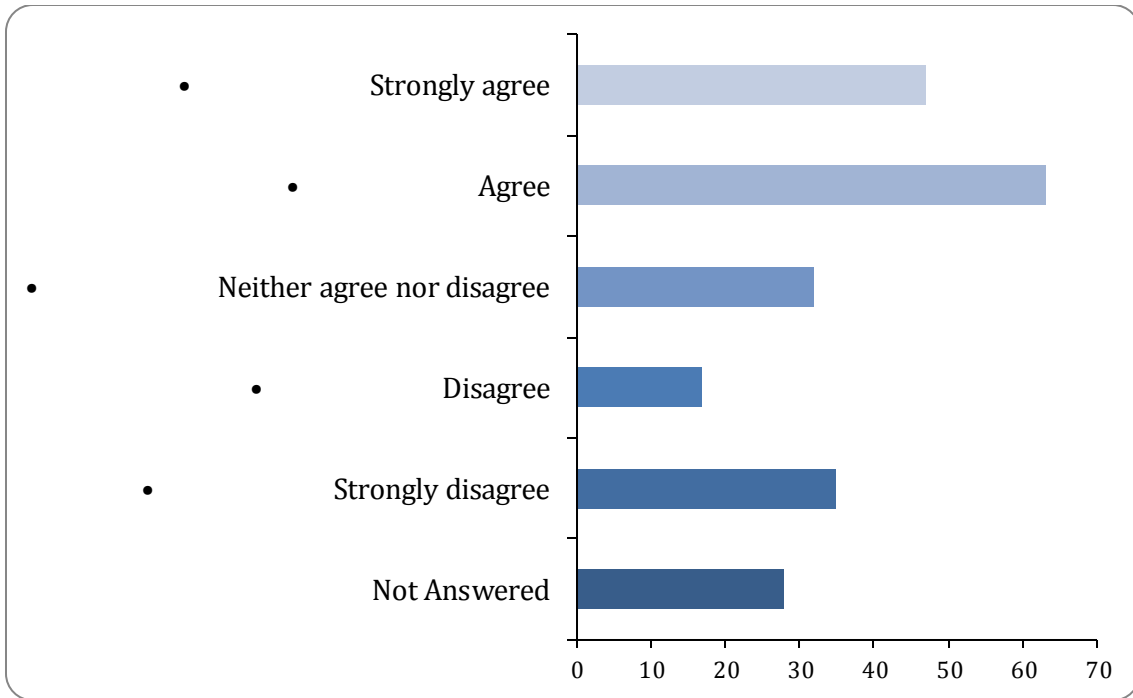
Option	Total	Percent
• **Strongly agree**	47	21.17%
• **Agree**	63	28.38%
• **Neither agree nor disagree**	32	14.41%
• **Disagree**	17	7.66%
• **Strongly disagree**	35	15.77%
Not Answered	28	12.61%

Responses - The Code of Practice will protect the rights and interests of buskers, residents, businesses and visitors
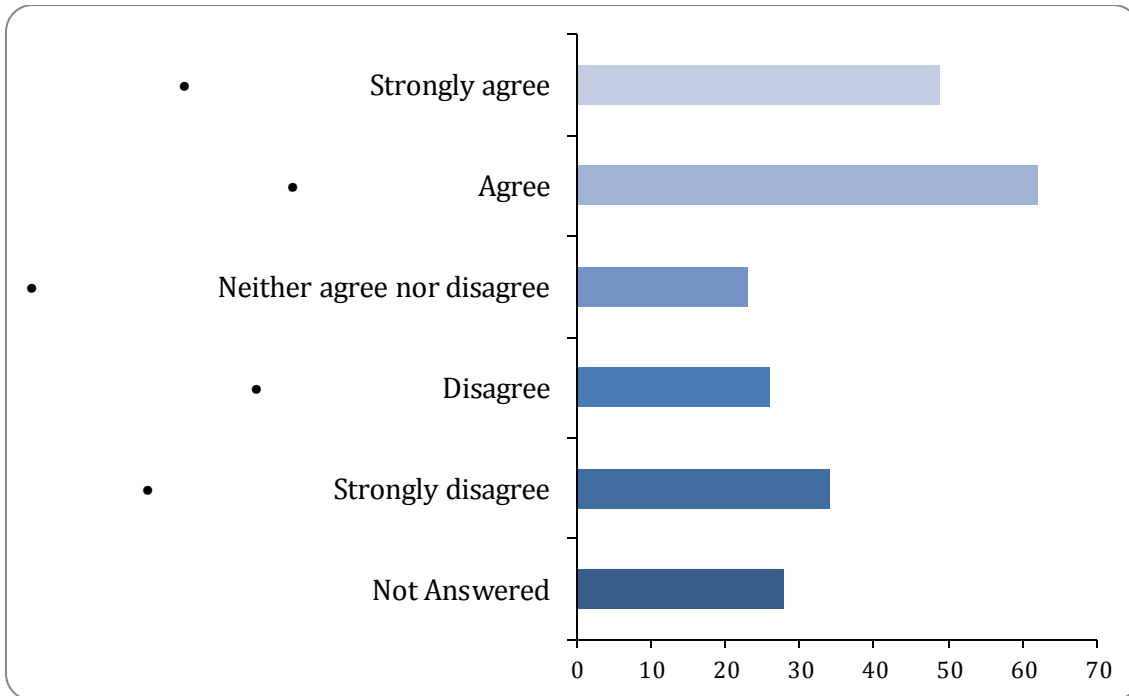
There were 194 responses to this part of the question.

Option	Total	Percent
• **Strongly agree**	43	19.37%
• **Agree**	67	30.18%
• **Neither agree nor disagree**	24	10.81%
• **Disagree**	23	10.36%
• **Strongly disagree**	37	16.67%
Not Answered	28	12.61%

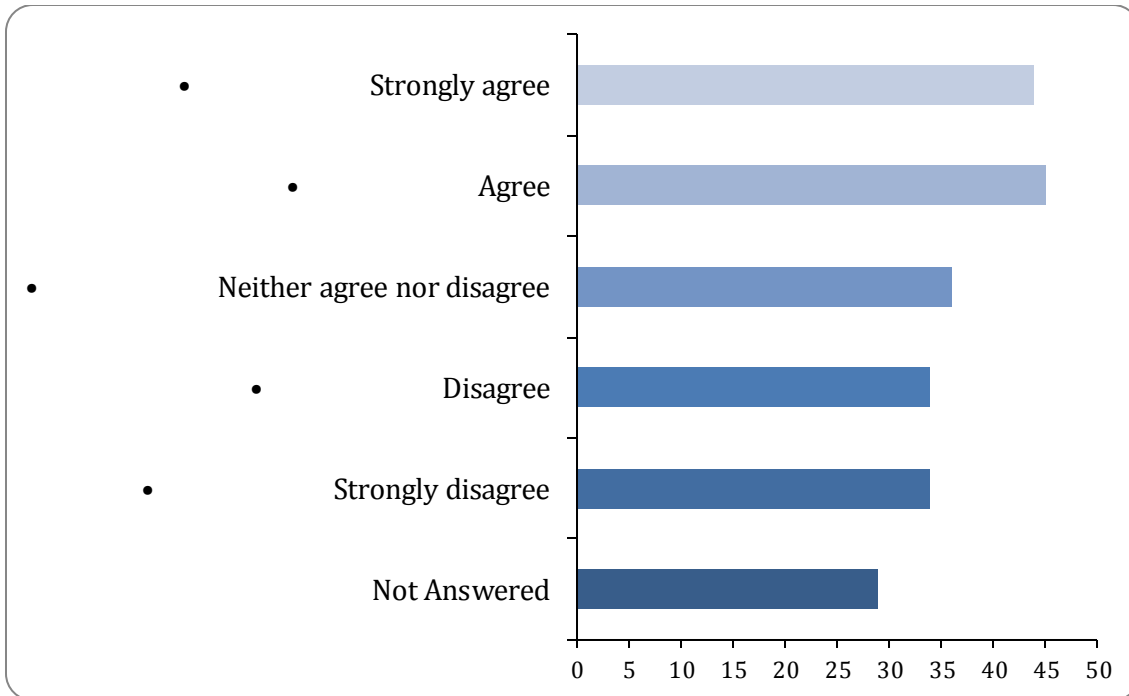**Responses - The Code of Practice will provide clear and consistent guidelines for buskers and street performers**

There were 194 responses to this part of the question.

Option	Total	Percent
• **Strongly agree**	49	22.07%
• **Agree**	62	27.93%
• **Neither agree nor disagree**	23	10.36%
• **Disagree**	26	11.71%
• **Strongly disagree**	34	15.32%
Not Answered	28	12.61%

Responses - The Code of Practice will reduce the potential for conflicts or complaints arising from busking or street performances

There were 193 responses to this part of the question.

Option	Total	Percent
• **Strongly agree**	44	19.82%
• **Agree**	45	20.27%
• **Neither agree nor disagree**	36	16.22%
• **Disagree**	34	15.32%
• **Strongly disagree**	34	15.32%
Not Answered	29	13.06%

Responses - The Code of Practice will enhance the cultural vibrancy and attractiveness of the city centre

There were 191 responses to this part of the question.
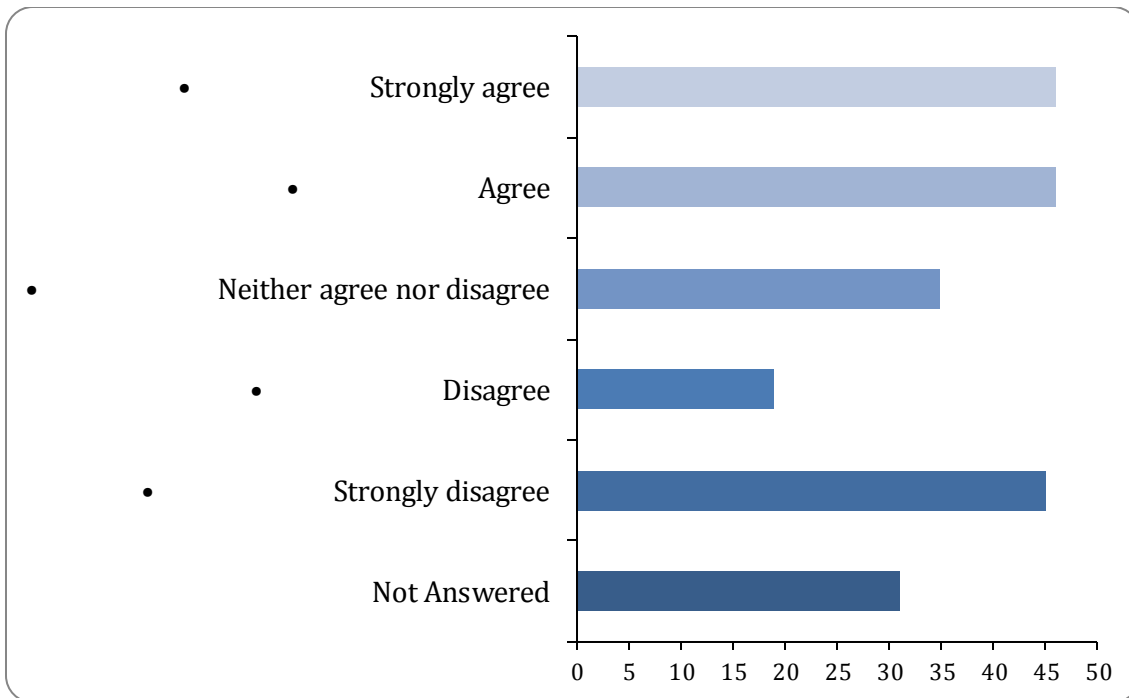
Option	Total	Percent
• **Strongly agree**	46	20.72%
• **Agree**	46	20.72%
• **Neither agree nor disagree**	35	15.77%
• **Disagree**	19	8.56%
• **Strongly disagree**	45	20.27%
Not Answered	31	13.96%

8: Do you have any comments or suggestions on the specific aspects of the proposed Code of Practice, such as the suitable locations, times, noise levels, duration and content of performances?

Comments and Suggestions On Proposed Code of Practice

There were 176 responses to this part of the question.

9: Do you have any other comments or suggestions on the proposed Code of Practice for buskers in Aberdeen city centre?

Any Other Comments

There were 127 responses to this part of the question.