Covid-19

**Organisational Recovery Plan
2021 - 22**

Inverclyde council

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Foreword

At the time of writing, Covid-19 has gone past its one-year anniversary since the World Health Organisations (WHO) declared it a Pandemic.

The country has also marked the anniversary of the first nation-wide lockdown.

For many it was a time of reflection looking back at a year which has been truly unprecedented in our lifetime.

For public services like Inverclyde Council and our Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP), that looking back has been coupled with looking ahead to how we support our communities through recovery and beyond.

Last year we produced two 'Recovery Plans' one an organisation plan and another on how the council and HSCP and a range of other partners through Inverclyde Alliance will support recovery.

This document is a follow up to that original Organisational Recovery Plan and should be read alongside a new version of the Partnership Recovery Plan.

They both build on that work and they map out how we will support our area through recovery from a starting point where the vaccinations programme is starting to show the way out of the Pandemic.

In this plan you will find a range of actions aimed at supporting community and business recovery.

They include how we will support our services to be more agile and in some cases delivering services differently.

It aims to encourage more resilience throughout support for recovery with more jobs opportunities using our position as the largest employer in Inverclyde to lead the way as part of our Inverclyde works jobs and employability programme.

Learning the lessons from Covid-19 means recognising that some areas will need more investment including our capacity to do more activity online and being more digital.

It includes additional support for families by bringing forward universal free school meals for primaries four to seven.

Helping to make sure as an organisation we are protecting our employees and customers while still delivering high quality accessible services will be key priorities.

The council has three directorates covering the vast range of services delivered locally.

This Recovery Plan sets out the actions each of these Directorates singularly and together will deliver to continue to support Inverclyde towards, through and beyond recovery from the worst effects of Covid-19.

Aubrey Fawcett
Chief Executive, Inverclyde Council

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Background

The 2020 Organisational Recovery Plan detailed how Inverclyde Council had responded to the initial wave of the Covid-19 pandemic. Since then we have obviously proceeded through a number of stages of easing and re-imposition of restrictions as the infection rate across the country has ebbed and flowed.

In general Inverclyde Council services have dealt well with these changes and have taken on a number of additional duties as new aspects of the national response have been implemented. These have included increased business support being administered by the council and supporting the roll out of the vaccination programme. Some of the key achievements since the last plan are detailed on page 8 of the plan.

The main focus of this recovery plan however is on the actions required to make Inverclyde Council a more modern and flexible organisation, building on our experience of responding to the pandemic. These actions are detailed from page 12 onwards.

Some of these actions will be completed in the lifetime of the plan but it is likely that a number will continue and the intention is that these will be captured in the normal improvement planning process for the council from 2022 onwards.

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Inverclyde's recovery from Covid-19 and the unique challenges faced by the council as a corporate organisation

Impact of Covid-19

The Organisational Recovery Plan approved in September 2020 detailed many of the impacts of the initial wave of Covid-19 on the community and Inverclyde Council. The subsequent wave of Covid-19 peaked in Inverclyde at the end of December 2020 through to January 2021. The impact was initially very severe in terms of the numbers of cases with Inverclyde briefly having the highest infection rate in Scotland at over 580 cases per 100k. There were a number of contributory factors to this including the new (Kent) variant arriving in Inverclyde at a point just before Christmas when hospitality settings had reopened. Fortunately although the rate peaked at a very high level it also declined more rapidly in Inverclyde than in many adjacent areas.

The new lockdown implemented on 26 December 2020 obviously required a number of services to step back up to support the community as had been the case earlier in the year. It also coincided with the roll out of vaccinations, initially to care home residents and health and social care staff but quickly extending to other groups.

Inverclyde Council, working closely with colleagues in NHSGGC, was also involved in the roll out of asymptomatic testing using lateral flow devices to health and social care settings and schools and then to the wider population through the provision of a testing centre.

The new lockdown involved the majority of pupils being returning to distance learning. This was followed by a phased return of pupils to school culminating in a full return from 19 April 2021 with all of the attendant logistical planning required to accomplish this.

The changes in restrictions in both directions since the last recovery plan has obviously also entailed a great deal of contact to support the community and businesses through the process including the administration of significant sums in both discretionary and non-discretionary business grants.

Inverclyde in comparison with the rest of Scotland

Comparative death rates attributable to Covid-19

The 2020 Recovery Plan highlighted the significant impact of the first wave of the pandemic with Inverclyde having the highest death rate in Scotland through that first wave. Although the area has tragically suffered many more deaths in the second wave these have been at a relatively lower level than in the majority of other areas. For comparison the death rate in the "second wave" in Inverclyde was 11.77 per 100k of population. This placed us 13th out of the 32 Scottish local authorities and at a lower level than all of the other local authorities in the Greater Glasgow and Clyde Health Board area. Overall since the start of the pandemic Inverclyde has suffered a death rate of 27.26 per 100k, the second worst level in the country as a whole.

The reasons for the lower rate in the second wave are not entirely clear however the fact that the rate in Inverclyde, although peaking at a very high level, declined very rapidly means that the overall number of infections in the second wave will have been lower than many other areas. The reasons for the decline are not yet known but factors may include an increased willingness of the population to abide by restrictions given our previous experience and the relatively good availability of testing.

The fact that the 11 worst affected areas in terms of the overall death rates since March 2020 are in the West of Scotland bears out many of the observations in the 2020 Organisational Recovery Plan regarding the impact of inequalities on the progress of the pandemic.

Impact on the economy

There can be no doubt that the Covid-19 pandemic has had an enormous impact on both the public and private sectors. In the case of the former record borrowing has been required to mitigate some of the impacts of Covid-19 and to finance the response.

In the case of the private sector the full impact will not be known for some time however the impact of successive lockdowns on businesses has obviously had a significant effect on both the long term viability of many businesses and the business models of many more.

In support of businesses Inverclyde Council has, at the time of writing dispersed over £23 million in various business support payments over and above the support given by Non Domestic Rates relief in 2020/21 and 2021/22. Plans for further support for the business sector are contained in the Partnership Recovery Plan.

Organisational achievements since the 2020 Recovery Plan

Service delivery

The 2020 plan was written at a time when the Country had emerged from the first lockdown and was looking forward to continued incremental recovery. As we are now all aware the impact of new variants has since led to a variety of restrictions from the tiered regime in the autumn of 2020 through to the lockdown imposed on 26th December 2020 from which we are gradually emerging at the time of writing.

Throughout this many normal services have been delivered and the council and partners have delivered the following additional work streams:

Education, Culture and Sport

- The delivery of remote learning, including the recording of lessons for the West Online School.
- The successful phased opening of educational, cultural and sport buildings.
- 1200 laptops distributed to young people in secondary schools.
- The adaptation of services e.g. library services to online and home delivery of books.
- Grants to Voluntary Organisations funding in place to ensure the financial sustainability of clubs.

Humanitarian

- 7 days a week helpline implemented where Inverclyde residents can access everything from food and medicine to health and wellbeing advice.
- Contact with 99.6% of those shielding to ensure they have all support they require.
- Over 2000 people referred from the Test and Protect line for humanitarian support.
- Community pantry in Grieve Road established with over 300 members.
- Extensive consultation with the community through community and 3rd sector partners.

Economy

- Hardship/Closure Grants - £2.07m of grants awarded to 413 local businesses.
- Taxi Assistance 314 grants allocated to a total of £511k.
- Discretionary Fund - 42 grants allocated amounting to £208k. In addition, a raft of smaller schemes continue to operate and provide smaller levels of support.
- Workforce Refresh scheme introduced in the Council.
- £2.42m top up grants to eligible businesses.
- Advisory programme of visits to all relevant businesses as we proceed through reopening of the economy.

Vaccination

A major aspect of the recovery process to date has been through the ongoing delivery of the vaccination programme. The HSCP and Inverclyde Council have worked with the Health Board on the delivery of the programme. The HSCP has delivered vaccinations to care home residents with Inverclyde being the first Scottish Local Authority area to complete the second dose delivery to this group. The HSCP has also delivered vaccination to the housebound and supported the delivery of vaccination to the over 75s and clinically extremely vulnerable by local GP practices.

Inverclyde Council, together with Inverclyde Leisure, has set up mass vaccination sites at both Greenock and Port Glasgow Town Halls in partnership with Greater Glasgow and Clyde Health Board.

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Objectives of this 2021 Organisational Recovery Plan

Aim

This 2021 plan focusses on continuing to support council services to deliver more on the longer term aspects of recovery with the action plan containing a number of priorities aimed at making the council a more agile organisation going forward.

Principles

The organisational recovery plan is based on the following principals:

• Corporate recovery is consistent with the Scottish Government 'route map' out of Covid-19;

• The plan is 'corporate' and involves collegiate working across all parts of the council;

• It is clear and concise with measurable time specific outcomes;

• The plan places people at the heart of our recovery.

Objectives

The objectives of this plan are:

• To restore services across the council to pre-Covid levels whilst complying with government directives on working methods and embracing positive change that has come about due to Covid, such as flexible working,

• To strategically plan for the short, medium and long term with respect to all service areas,

• To restore fully accessible governance across the council and committees,

• To enhance workforce relations through full engagement with employees and Trade Unions.

Our Organisational Recovery Plan will set a direction for the corporate management of the council for years to come and will impact on all of our Corporate Policies.

Recovery structure remit and governance

The plan is being brought to the Policy and Resources Committee in line with the Governance arrangements established for the 2020 Recovery Plan. This 2021 plan however contains a number of actions which may outlive the lifespan of the plan involving as they do longer term proposals which will impact on the future shape of Inverclyde Council.

It is intended that any actions outstanding at the end of the period covered by this plan, effectively the financial year 2021-22, will be incorporated into the appropriate Corporate Directorate Improvement Plans (CDIPs) or the IJB Strategic Plan for the period 2022-25 which will be developed in the course of the year. These actions will then be monitored by the appropriate service committees going forward.

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Organisation 1 - Workforce - Flexible/Motivated/Effective Workforce.

Outcome	Development Area	Actions/Milestones	Who is Responsible	Timescale	Resources Required	Links to Other Plans
01.1	Review key HR Policies	Review and revise: Agile Working Policy and Procedures including any impacts on Family Friendly Policy, Terms and Conditions and Health and Well Being Policies	Head of Organisational Development, Policy and Communications	September 21	Existing	Health and Well Being Strategy, ICT Strategy, 02 Property
		Approval of revised policies and financial implications factored into the 2022/23 Revenue Budget	Head of Organisational Development, Policy and Communications	September 21	Tbc 2022/23 Budget	2022/23 Revenue Budget Asset Management Plan(Offices)
01.2	Training and Support	Training and support requirements and funding requested as part of the 2022/23 Budget	Head of Organisational Development, Policy and Communications	November 21	Tbc 2022/23 Budget	People and OD Strategy, Health and Well Being Strategy
01.3	Flexible Working Hours Scheme	Review options for the operation of flexible working hours scheme	Head of Organisational Development, Policy and Communications	September 21	Existing	Family Friendly/ Terms and Conditions Asset Management Plan (Offices)
What will success look like?		**Flexible, motivated and effective workforce. Reductions in sickness and reduced turnover in key positions.**				

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Organisation 2 - Property - Efficient use of property and medium term investment decisions which reflect best value.

Outcome	Development area	Actions/milestones	Who is responsible	Timescale	Resources required	Links to other plans
02.1	Office AMP	Identify areas for investment in the campus based on decisions around key HR policies and new ways of working	Interim Head of Property Services	October 21	Existing for proposals	01 Workforce 03 Technology
		Identify costs and timescales and secure increased funding via the 2022/23 Budget	Interim Head of Property Services	December 21	Tbc 2022/23 Budget	2022/23 Budget
02.2	Depots and Other Council Property	Identify modifications required based on the new ways of working	Interim Head of Property Services	October 21	Existing for proposals	01 Workforce 03 Technology
		Identify costs and timescales and secure increased funding via the 2022/23 Budget including revenue implications	Interim Head of Property Services	December 21	Tbc 2022/23 Budget	2022/23 Budget
What will success look like?		**Offices that better reflect the needs of the business and provide flexible working environments. Potential identification of surplus space.**				

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Organisation 3 - Technology - Sustainable ICT investment programme driven by strategic decisions around workforce, technology and governance.

Outcome	Development area	Actions/milestones	Who is responsible	Timescale	Resources required	Links to othpr Plans
03.1	Digital Strategy 2021/24	Approval of a revised 2021/24 Digital Strategy	Interim Service Director Corporate Services and Organisational Recovery	May 21	Existing	ICT Strategy 2021/24
		Develop specific resourced proposals for consideration as part of the 2022/23 Budget	ICT Service Manager	December 21	Tbc 2022/23 Budget	01 Workforce 02 Property 2022/23 Budget
O3.2	Education Digital Strategy	Develop an Education Digital/ICT Strategy which reflects Scottish Government policy and learning from Covid-19	Head of Education	September 21	Existing	Education Service Improvement Plan
		Develop specific resourced proposals for consideration as part of the 2022/23 Budget	Head of Education	November 21	Tbc 2022/23 Budget	ICT Strategy 2021/24 2022/23 Budget
03.3	ICT Strategy 2021/24	Approval of a revised 2021/24 ICT Strategy	Interim Service Director Corporate Services and Organisational Recovery	May 21	Existing	Digital Strategy 2021/24
		Implement Office 365 (including MS Teams)	ICT Service Manager	August 21	Existing	01 Workforce 04 Governance
		Quantify increased funding requirement for expanded and improved ICT estate	ICT Service Manager	October 21	Tbc 2022/23 Budget	01 Workforce 02 Property 2022/23 Budget
		Identify key systems requiring replacement during the ICT Strategy timeframe and secure funding as part of the 2022/23 Budget	ICT Service Manager	December 21	Tbc 2022/23 Budget	01 Workforce 2022/23 Budget
What will success look like?		**An ICT infrastructure which meets the needs of the organisation and is sustainably funded.**				

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Organisation 4 - Corporate Governance - Council Structure and Governance processes that reflect learning from Covid-19, council priorities and the opportunities afforded by technology.

Outcome	Development area	Actions/milestones	Who is responsible	Timescale	Resources required	Links to other plans
04.1	Revise Key Governance Documents	Review and revise Scheme of Delegation, Standing Orders, Financial Regulations in light of the new ways of working	Interim Head of Legal Services/Interim Service Director Corporate Services and Organisational Recovery	December 21	Existing	Review of Committees O5 Council Structure
		Deliver training on revised Documents to all parties	Interim Head of Legal Services/Interim Service Director Corporate Services and Organisational Recovery	March 22	Existing	
04.2	Committee Review	Report on interim Committee delivery proposals	Interim Service Director Corporate Services and Organisational Recovery	June 21	Existing	Business Continuity Recovery
		Proposals for longer term format of Committees	Interim Head of Legal Services/Interim Service Director Corporate Services and Organisational Recovery	September 21	To be Confirmed	02 Property 03 Technology Revision of key Governance Documents
04.3	Planned Restructure 2022	Current interim Structure to be reviewed, proposals approved and implemented	Chief Executive	April 22	Tbc 2022/23 Budget	Best Value Audit post 2022/23
04.4	New Scottish Government Priorities	Review Programme for Government of new Scottish Government and reflect in new structure	Chief Executive	December 21	Existing / New SG Funding	Corporate Plan
04.5	2022/23 Budget	Deliver a balanced 2022/23 Revenue Budget and 2022/25 Capital Programme	Interim Service Director Corporate Services and Organisational Recovery/CMT	March 22	Existing	Corporate Plan Covid Recovery Plans
What will success look like?	**Revised Structure and Updated Governance documents which reflect Council priorities, the new ways of working and opportunities afforded by technology. Committees which give equality of access and make use of the technology available.**					

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Organisation 5 - Business Continuity - Medium Term Outcomes to Support Service Continuation 21/22.

Outcome	Development Area	Actions/Milestones	Who is Responsible	Timescale	Resources Required	Links to Other Plans
05.1	Additional Cleaning	Enhanced cleaning required to June 2022	Head of Culture, Communities and Educational Resources	Schools to June 22. Other to Mar 22	Net Cost Schools £150k Other Buildings £136k	01 Workforce 02 Property
		Cost of materials including sanitiser, wipes PPE etc.	Head of Culture, Communities and Educational Resources	For 2021/22	£100K net based upon 20/21 outturn	01 Workforce 02 Property
		Extra cleaning required to open all public conveniences from 26 April	Head of Culture, Communities and Educational Resources	For 2021/22	£13k for Cornalees and Lunderson Bay	Partnership Recovery Plans
05.2	Continuation of Helpline for 21-22	Continuation of Helpline 21 - 22, Mon - Sat	Interim Head of Service - Public Protection and Covid Recovery	For 2021/22	£45K total 21/22 £42K Salary (45 hours pw at grade 5) Plus £3K supplies	Health and Well Being Recovery Plan
05.3	HR Support for Employees	Increased Occupational Health Provision	Head of Organisational Development, Policy and Communications	For 2021/23	£30k	01 Workforce
		Additional HR Advisor to Support Services	Head of Organisational Development, Policy and Communications	June 21	£95k Salary - two year cost	01 Workforce
05.4	ICT Support for Continued Home Working/ Blended Learning	2 additional Servicedesk technicians for 18 months	ICT Service Manager	June 21	£105k (18 month cost)	01 Workforce 03 Technology
05.5	Phased Return of Employees to Offices and Depots	Phased return plan approved by CMT	CMT	From Jun-21	£100k (Depot)	01 Workforce 02 Property 03 Technology
05.6	Phased Return to Schools and Other Public Facing Council Properties	Phased return plan approved by CMT	CMT	June 21	Contained in existing budget	Health and Well Being Recovery Plan Education, Leisure and Culture Recovery Plan
What will success look like?		**Continued delivery of services including reopening schools and support for home working through 21-22.**				

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Organisation 6 - HSCP - HSCP Inverclyde residents receive effective and efficient HSCP service to meet their needs. Inverclyde Health and Social Care staff are supported to improve their wellbeing.

Outcome	Development Area	Actions/Milestones	Who is Responsible	Timescale	Resources Required	Links to Other Plans
06.1	Service Delivery	Any outstanding actions within HSCP Recovery Plan will merge with the refreshed IJB Strategic Plan	Corporate Director, Health and Social Care Partnership	June 21	No resource requirement	IJB Strategic Plan
		Day Centre provision is reviewed and new model developed in line with social distancing guidance	Head of Health and Community Care	August 21	Within existing budget	IJB Strategic Plan
		Waiting list will be addressed by expansion of Access 1st and Request for Assistance Team so that access to services is easy, well signposted, people receive the right service at the right time	Head of Health and Community Care/Head of Service, Children's and Criminal Justice Services	September 21	£500k (IJB Reserves) Subject to approval from IJB	IJB Strategic Plan
06.2	Staff Wellbeing	Enhanced Staff Wellbeing plan delivered across all Health and Social Care workforce	Corporate Director, Health and Social Care Partnership	By March 22	£50k (existing)	Links to Interim Workforce Plan
What will success look like?	**HSCP will have delivered safe effective and efficient services and staff will feel supported in their wellbeing.**					

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Organisation 7 - Education and Communities - Gaps in learning and experiences will be addressed. Young people will benefit from improved use of technology to enhance their learning.

Outcome	Development Area	Actions/Milestones	Who is Responsible	Timescale	Resources Required	Links to Other Plans
07.1	Schools Education	Additional temporary resources to support pupils with any gaps in learning or experiences	Head of Education	April 21 - June 22	£1.515 million (SG Grant)	Attainment Challenge Plan
07.2	Education Digital Strategy	Develop an Education Digital/ICT Strategy which reflects Scottish Government policy and learning from Covid	Head of Education	April 21 - June 31	Potential SG Funding 2022/23 Budget	03 Technology
07.3	Free School Meals	Earlier implementation of Universal P4-7 School Meals	Director of Education, Communities and OD	Aug 21 - March 22	Recovery Funding up to £192k	Children's Service Plan/ CDIP
What will success look like?		**Young people will be provided with support to catch up on any missed learning supported by appropriate technology.**				

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Organisation 8 - Environment and Regeneration

Outcome	Development Area	Actions/Milestones	Who is Responsible	Timescale	Resources Required	Links to Other Plans
08.1	Job Recovery Plan	Delivery of over 200 employment opportunities within the council and wider community	Interim Service Director Environment and Economic Recovery	March 23	£6.0 million (Already approved)	OD and HR Strategy Economic Recovery
What will success look like?		**Increased opportunities for young people and those from SIMD areas. Cost effective service delivery which benefits from sharing best practice.**				

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Conclusion

The conclusion to the initial 2020 Organisational Recovery Plan highlighted the unprecedented impact of Lock Down on our society and flagged the possibility of subsequent waves of infection with concomitant increases and easing of restrictions. Clearly our experience since September 2020 has very much reflected that. Hopefully the vaccination programme will reduce, even if it cannot eliminate, the risk of further future lockdowns. It is likely however that there will be a need for ongoing contact tracing and potentially regular vaccination boosters to deal with the threat of new variants of the virus.

This plan recognises the ongoing changes to ways of working brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic and the actions in the plan are focussed on, wherever possible, building on the positive aspects which will make Inverclyde Council a more agile organisation. The council's workforce has shown great flexibility in responding to the various challenges arising from the pandemic and will no doubt need to continue to do so as we progress.