

Inverclyde

www.inverclyde.gov.uk

Issue 22 Winter 2015

The Council newspaper for all Inverclyde residents

INVERCLYDE Kinler FESTIVAL

Your FREE guide to what's on this festive season, centre pages **D D**

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Recycling top of the league

Inverclyde Council's hard work on recycling has been rewarded with the area being named as the best performing in Scotland.

The Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) says 56.8% of household waste was recycled in 2014 which is significantly higher than the Scottish average of 42.8%.

Environment and Regeneration Convener Councillor Michael McCormick said: "The figures show we are recycling more than any other council in Scotland which is great news and reflects a lot of hard work over many years and of course the willingness and enthusiasm people in Inverclyde have to protect the environment. When you think about it we recycled over 16,000 tonnes of waste last year. We are blazing a trail for other councils to follow and will keep up the momentum as we continue to drive home the recycling message."

Nationally, less than half of Scotland's household waste was sent to landfill in

2014, the first time it has ever dropped below the 50% mark.

Although 2014 saw more councils recycling most of their household waste, less than half managed to achieve 50%.

Councillor McCormick added: "For more than a decade we have been offering people the option of leaving their recyclable waste at the kerbside for collection.

Our dedicated staff work with households to make sure they make use of every opportunity to recycle and we have invested significant amounts of money to help people recycle.

Education is also crucial to our success and our schools work hard to teach children and young people about recycling and the environment and to encourage them to take that message home to their parents and carers.

We are beginning to make a real difference in Inverclyde and we will continue to work hard to improve."



Inverclyde in UK top 10 best places to live

Inverclyde ranks in the top 10 for best places to live in the UK when it comes to quality of life.

The study assessed 138 local areas for 26 different factors including salaries, disposable household income and the cost of essentials such as fuel, food and energy bills.

The region of Inverclyde, East Renfrewshire and Renfrewshire enjoyed the biggest ranking gain since the last Quality of Life Index in 2013, rising 102 places from 112th to 10th. Edinburgh was top.



Inverclyde's award winning kerbside recycling service is 10 years old and Council bosses want to say a big 'thank you' to residents for their contribution to the success of the initiative.

Councillor Michael McCormick, Convener of Inverclyde Council's Environment and Regeneration Committee is delighted at the improvement in Inverclyde's recycling performance and said: "I find it hard to believe it is 10 years since blue and brown bins were introduced to Inverclyde and it's great to see how far we have come in terms of recycling. It's remarkable, thinking back to early 2005, when we recycled less than 7% of our waste. Now, thanks to the cooperation and support of local people and the hard work and enthusiasm of our staff, more than 56% of Inverclyde's household waste is recycled, making us the top performing Council in Scotland for recycling. I know that residents have really embraced the recycling message and their support has been key to our success.

"I recently discovered that a 10 year anniversary is traditionally known as tin or aluminium which is very apt given that we have recycled more than 2,800 tonnes of cans since 2005. Now that gives us good reason to celebrate!"

Welcome

Welcome to the latest edition of InView



Solid financial footing for budget plans

Earlier this year, there was a little publicised story in the press.

It was based on a report to the Council's Policy and Resources Committee. Full disclosure, I chair that committee and read the report in detail.

It was a report on Inverclyde Council's finances by an independent external auditor.

It is not a headline grabbing story. It's an examination of local government finances by an auditor. How exciting can it be?

But, it is a truly fascinating story. More importantly, it has an impact on every single person who receives a service by Inverclyde Council.

The report highlights the significant progress in the reporting of budget slippage and the successful accelerating of a number of capital projects.

It looked at the Council's focus on transformation, improved effectiveness and efficiency and the area where the Council is performing well such as refuse collection, education and supporting unemployed people into work.

The review highlighted why we should be proud of our record managing public finances through years of uncertainty and budgetary pressures

Our prudence has allowed us to maintain the delivery of high guality services to our communities and, as much as possible, minimising the impact of the financial meltdown of 2008

The auditors have recognised that we are well run and well organised and crucially have met the challenges facing the public sector robustly.

That leads me on to the budget consultation launched this winter.

There are some unpalatable savings being proposed. Some I agree with,

others I don't. You may have a different view of them.

That's why we have launched a budget consultation to find out, for the list of proposals, exactly what you think about them. You will find details on page 8 in this edition of InView.

As a council we worked together across the parties to reach a consensus to bring that budget gap as low as we could get it.

I hope you will take part in the budget consultation and let us know your views.

At the time of writing this, the attacks in the French capital are still very raw.

In Inverclyde we have a strong and long connection with the people of France. The monument to the free French forces stationed here at Lyle Hill is a constant reminder of that and of our solidarity with the people of France.

This festive season, I would like to wish you and everyone you know a happy Christmas and hope you will join with me in wishing people of all nationalities and religions a happy and peaceful New Year.



Customer Service Centres winter opening hours

InView



Customer Service Centres in Clyde Square, Greenock and Princes Street, Port Glasgow will close at 4pm on Thursday 24 Dec 2015 and will reopen again on Monday 4 Jan 2016. Registrars at our Customer Service Centre in Greenock will reopen on Tuesday 29 Dec until Thursday 31 Dec. Customers who require to collect Welfare Fund Payments will also be able to do so on these dates.

Health and Social Care Offices winter opening hours



INVERCLYDE Hector McNeil House Clyde Square, Greenock and Princes House, Port Glasgow will be closed on the following days: Friday 25 and Monday 28 Dec and Friday 1 and Monday 4 Jan 2016

Outwith these days, all Social Care enquiries including Children and Families, Criminal Justice, Advice and Benefits and Community Care can be accessed at following offices:

Hector McNeil House Clyde Square, Greenock Phone 01475 715365

Princes House Princes Street, Port Glasgow Phone 01475 715270

All enquiries out with normal working hours can be dealt with through Glasgow and Partners Emergency Standby Service on 0300 343 1505

Festive bin collections				
Regular day		Revised day		
Fri	25 Dec	Sun 27 Dec		
Sat	26 Dec	Mon 28 Dec		
Sun	27 Dec	Regular collection		
Mon	28 Dec	Regular collection		
Tue	29 Dec	Regular collection		
Wed	30 Dec	Regular collection		
Thu	31 Dec	Regular collection		
Fri	1 Jan	Sun 3 Jan		
Mon	4 Jan	Regular collection		



refuse collections are delayed due to adverse weather, please continue to put your bins out by am each day to allow collection at the earliest opportunity.

Take an hour now to prepare your home for winter.



In case severe weather strikes, everyone should make a plan for their home. Check your pipes and make sure you know how to turn your water and power off

- Collect a few everyday things:
- Emergency phone numbers • A torch and spare batteries
- A radio and spare batteries
- Three days' supply of bottled water and food that won't
- ao off
- Essential medicines, first-aid kit and toiletries

Take an hour to prepare now and save yourself a lot of trouble later. Find out more at readyscotland.org



Search for and apply for public sector jobs online



www.myjobsctland.gov.uk/ inverclyde

City deal is good for Inverclyde

Two Inverclyde-based projects as part of the £1bn City Deal scheme have received official approval.

Strategic business cases for a project to expand Greenock Ocean Terminal and a project to improve the A78 at Inverkip have been approved by leaders operating the City Deal across eight Scottish councils.

Greenock Ocean Terminal is a project, delivered in partnership between Inverclyde Council and Peel Ports, to increase the quayside to further cement Inverclyde as the cruise liner capital of Scotland.

Expansion of the cruise ship business, which reached the 100,000 cruise passenger mark this year, is limited by the existing quayside at Greenock's Ocean Terminal.

Now, as part of the City Deal, Inverclyde Council and Peel Ports, owners of the terminal, have set out the business case for expansion to secure future cruise liners into Scotland and deliver a new visitor facility.

The second project, at Inverkip will open up the former Inverkip power station site for housing. The power station was Scotland's largest free standing structure and was demolished in 2013. The business case, presented to the board, was agreed in October and unlocks funding to develop the design phase of the project.

The business case, developed by

partners Inverclyde Council and Scottish Power, highlights that the project addresses the restricted network and junction capacity on the A78 trunk road at four locations in and around Inverkip.

It will release investment and help secure the development for the brownfield former power station site to deliver 600 new homes and 6,000sqm of commercial space.

The Inverkip infrastructure project also aims to deliver access and safety improvements in Wemyss Bay and Inverkip.

Inverclyde Council Leader, Councillor Stephen McCabe, said: "This is a significant milestone in the delivery of two key strategic projects for Inverclyde. With the support of seven other Scottish councils and both the Scottish and UK Governments, Inverclyde is making sure we are getting benefit for our local area whilst playing a key part in delivering investment and improvements which benefit the west and the rest of Scotland."

In addition to Inverclyde Council, the local authorities participating in the Glasgow and Clyde Valley City Deal are: East Dunbartonshire Council; East Renfrewshire Council; Glasgow City Council; North Lanarkshire Council; Renfrewshire Council; South Lanarkshire Council and West Dunbartonshire Council





Tax collection at 10 year high

Winter 2015

The Council has reported in-year council tax collection as 94.8%. This is the amount of council tax collected by the end of the billing year, as a percentage of the total billed council tax.

Inverclyde Council's collection rate for 2014/15 is at its highest level in Inverclyde for 10 years and has increased from 91.9% 10 years ago.

Register to vote

With Scottish Parliament elections in May next year and local government elections in 2017, it's important to make sure you are registered to vote.

If you've moved house recently, you should check that you're registered to vote at your new address. Even if you pay council tax, you are not automatically registered to vote. Remember, no vote means no voice.

To check that your name is on the register contact the Electoral Registration Officer, The Robertson Centre, 16 Glasgow Road, Paisley PA1 3QF.

Call the Electoral Registration Officer on 0300 300 0150.



Peter Stanton Memorial Trust

Peter Stanton represented his country at both Olympic and Commonwealth Games level for Para-sports.

Peter Stanton was also a coach with the Port Glasgow Otters Swimming Club in Port Glasgow, where he passed on his experience to other disabled swimmers within Inverclyde. The Peter Stanton Memorial Trust was set up in his memory.

The purpose of the trust is to relieve the needs of disabled people within Inverclyde and to encourage, in the interests of social welfare, their participation in recreational or other leisure time activities with the object of improving their conditions of life. In pursuance of this purpose, the Trust considers applications for financial assistance from disabled people to encourage their participation in leisure and recreational activities, and from



organisations whose objects and use of the funds will be used to encourage disabled people to participate in leisure and recreational activities.

Although most applications received by the trust are related to sporting activities, money can also be made available to help disabled people take part in non-sporting activities which are considered to be leisure or recreational activities.

If either your organisation or yourself wish to apply for financial assistance, or you are aware of an organisation or person who may wish to apply for financial assistance, then contact the Trust using the details here.



Write to: Peter Stanton Memorial Trust c/o Legal and Property Services, Inverclyde Council, Municipal Buildings, Greenock, Inverclyde PA15 1LX

Phone to: 01475 712139

e-mail to: psmt@inverclyde.gov.uk

Peter Stanton Memorial Trust is a registered Scottish Charity No <u>SCO21862</u>

Find out who your local councillor is and how you can get in touch on page 11

Invercive Performs Online Petitions

Did you know... Inverclyde Council maintains 366 kilometres of roads and 450 kilometres of footways throughout the area?

During 2014/15, we reconstructed or resurfaced:

- 11% of our roads; an increase of
- one third since the previous year
- 1% of our footways, also an increase on the previous year.

Roads maintenance is a priority for Inverclyde Council. In February 2013 we allocated £17m over three years to maintain carriageways, footways, lighting and structures (for example, bridges).

Did you know... In 2014/15, we emptied more than 7,500 gullies which helped to minimise the effects of heavy rainfall which may cause flooding.

In February 2014, additional funding of £300,000 was approved to tackle roads defects backlog and essential drainage, ditches and gulley work.

We now carry out more preventative or resurfacing work rather than solely responding to emergency pothole repairs or patches to roads. At present activity levels, we expect roads to be resurfaced every 25 years and footways every 133 years.

Did you know... the Council's

Winter Maintenance Service runs from November to March each year? Our gritters and snow ploughs are on stand-by 24 hours a day throughout the winter months to deal with adverse weather conditions.

During the 2014/15 winter we used 3287.25 tonnes of salt/grit. This includes stocking the 362 grit bins located across Invercivde.

Sophisticated weather reports are received three times a day. More detailed information is accessed from the MET office as required.

Fixed gritting routes are pre-planned to ensure that during "routine" winter conditions, priority is given to the main roads in and out of Inverclyde, routes to hospital, ambulance depots, police stations and fire stations, bus routes and access to schools.



www.inverclyde.gov.uk/winter

Helpful hints and tips about preparing for this winter can also be found at:

www.readyscotland.org or follow #readywinter2015



Road upgrades are streets ahead

Invercivde Council is bringing forward £1.4m worth of planned road and footpath repairs.

Earlier this year, the council approved a £4m proposed programme -

including reserve projects – to invest in roads, footways, street lighting and structures.

The accelerated programme will bring forward all of the schemes from this year's reserve list along with a section of Customhouse Place Road in Greenock.

Inverclyde Council is pleased to offer residents a new online petition register.

Individuals over the age of 16 years, residing in Inverclyde and owners of businesses which operate and employ people within Inverclyde, can participate. Submitting a petition gives residents the chance to tell the Council what matters to them

A petition by an individual will need 100 signatures from members of the public for it to be considered. A community group will need 50 signatures and petitions from businesses will need support from 10 further businesses.

The Council will consider a variety of issues raised through your petitions; however, there are restrictions on some subject matters, including planning and licensing applications. Matters already being considered or scheduled to be considered by the council are also excluded.

Once submitted, each petition will be checked to ensure it meets the necessary criteria before being discussed at the newly formed Petitions Committee. The first meeting is due to take place end of January 2016.

Petitions information and online form available at:

www.inverclyde.gov.uk/petitions

Greenock Parking Update

Changes to town centre parking are on the way as Inverclyde Council continues to listen and adapt to the views of local people, visitors and shoppers.

In May on-street parking in the controlled parking zone in Greenock town centre was increased from 30 minutes to 2 hours.

Now, the Waterfront car park has changed to all day free parking, motorists can park in the Bullring for the standard £1 all day charge and a paperless parking permit scheme is being proposed for local residents.

In Gourock, Kempock Street car park will be split into approximately 80 free long-stay spaces and a similar number of 3 hour parking spaces where drivers have to display a disc. This should allow people to park more easily to visit local businesses.

And in Kilmacolm it is proposed to increase waiting times from 30 minutes to 2 hours. Further changes are also being proposed in Port Glasgow, Gourock and Wemyss Bay. A public consultation is currently underway.



apply Monday - Friday, 8am to 6pm



More details can be found at www.inverclyde.gov.uk/parking Environment and Regeneration

Convener Councillor Michael McCormick said: "It is a little over a year since Inverclyde Council took on responsibility for enforcing parking in our towns and villages and we have listened carefully to people's concerns and acted accordingly. The parking rules are designed to assist local businesses to make sure there is a greater turnover of spaces. The aim has always been to strike the right balance between the needs of local people and the demand for people coming into our towns and villages."

Changes to EMA

The Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) thresholds have been increased and these will take effect from January 2016.

The EMA provides financial support to young people remaining in education. The money is paid directly to eligible young people between the ages of 16-19 years old and can be paid for an extra year to students with additional support needs.

- If one dependent child in household - increase in household income threshold rises from £20,351 to £24,421
- If more than one dependent child in household - increase in household income threshold rises from £22,403 to £26,884

If you think you may be eligible, pick up a form at your child's school or at our Customer Service Centre, Clyde Square, Greenock. Alternatively, call 01475 712844 or visit www.inverclyde.gov.uk/ema

Applications must be received by 29 February 2016 in order to have payments back dated to the start of the session in January 2016. We can accept applications up until the end of March 2016; however these payments will not be backdated.

No applications can be accepted after 31 March 2016.



Schools major refurbishment

Another three major projects have been completed as part of Inverclyde Council's £270m investment in new and refurbished schools.

Ardgowan Primary School in Greenock welcomed back staff and pupils after undergoing a £6.2m refurbishment – effectively building a new school within the old sandstone walls of the original building and adding an extension to incorporate a new gym and assembly hall.

St John's Primary in Port Glasgow has been transformed thanks to a £2.8m refurbishment and extension. Staff and pupils returned at the beginning of October.

And a £1.93m programme to install multi-use games areas (MUGA's) and

On your bike!

Have you heard about the new mountain bike centre being built in Greenock?

Contractors 'Back on Track' have now begun construction on mountain biking trails at Rankin Park which is also the location of a new £1.5m football facility.

The design for the centre includes a link track, a balance bike track and an area to practice skills. It also includes a pump track - a system of looping trails and dirt berms to allow for cycling without the rider pedalling - and a coaching area.

A connecting route to Greenock Cut will also be built to open up longer trails in Clyde Muirshiel Park and the rail link with Drumfrochar.

The new facility will be ready in time for next summer and will offer a range

upgrade blaes pitches is benefitting pupils in the majority of Inverclyde's 20 primary schools. Projects to install MUGA's at Kilmacolm, Gourock and Moorfoot Primary schools are ongoing.

The Work Goes On

Staff and pupils at Kilmacolm Primary are settling in to their temporary home in Port Glasgow as a £4.27m refurbishment gets underway. The work is due to be completed in October next year. And building of the brand new £7m St Patrick's Primary in Greenock has started on the original Broomhill Street site following the demolition of the old school. The new school is also due to be completed in October



of opportunities for everyone including social riding, beginners' sessions, adult coaching sessions, a schools programme, after-schools club and holiday coaching.

The project is supported by Sportscotland with a £90,000 grant from the Legacy 2014 Active Places Fund. Inverclyde Council is providing the balance of the funding.

Fostering

Have you ever thought about fostering but thought you might not be suitable?

You might think you are too old, or your need your own home, or you can't work and foster or you need to be in a relationship. People from all walks of life can foster, you don't need qualifications; you just need a spare room and the commitment to make a difference to a young person's life.

There are currently 40 children and young people in foster placements in Inverclyde but increasingly social workers have to look outside the area to find a suitable foster placement. So we really need your help. Chair of Inverclyde HSCP Councillor Joe Mcllwee said: "Our children and young people have already had their lives turned upside down through no fault of their own. A foster home can provide the stability and support a child needs for a better future and a foster carer can help to transform lives."

Call 01475 715367 to chat to our family placement team and request an information pack.



Meeting the attainment challenge

The teacher tasked with closing the attainment gap in Inverclyde's schools believes the building blocks are in place for every child to achieve their full potential.

Inverclyde Council is one of seven in Scotland that has been chosen to pilot a Scottish Government programme to support disadvantaged pupils who, for a range of reasons, can struggle to make good progress in primary school.

Mairi McFarlane has been seconded from her job as head teacher at King's Oak Primary in Greenock to lead the Attainment Challenge in Inverclyde.

She said: "Figures show us that there is an attainment gap despite all of the good work that is already going on in Inverclyde's schools. This project is about targeting support and resources where they are needed most whilst meeting the learning needs of all children. Our focus is on supporting staff in delivering high quality learning and teaching, ensuring that all children make progress from where they currently are in their educational journey and providing support at the



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earliest possibility when children are in need of some extra help or practice, especially in literacy and numeracy."

The Attainment Challenge has key areas: meeting the needs of children through learning and teaching; building the confidence of parents and families through partnership working and leadership development. Effective practice will be shared with other schools and authorities.

Mairi, recently named Scottish Head Teacher of the Year, says it is vital that schools are seen as positive learning environments where children want to come and learn and where they feel nurtured and valued.

"We are targeting support where there is an attainment gap to ensure the gap doesn't widen and will eventually narrow and close without holding other children back."



Free and confidential money, debt and benefit advice available, phone 01475 715299

nView

INVERCLYDE Kinley FESTIVAL

ON STAGE, SCREEN AND SING-A-LONGS!

Beacon Arts Centre

For more information visit www.beaconartscentre.co.uk or call 01475 723 723

11 Dec Aladdin to 1 Jan

Aladdin features a star studded cast including Mark Cox from Still Game and Keria Lucchesi from **River City plus Ryan Fletcher** (Gary Tank Commander) as the eponymous hero!

Waterfront Cinema

For more information visit www.waterfrontcinema.co.uk or call 01475 732 201

Jane Eyre Tue 8 Dec (NTLive) - 7pm

Sun Nutcracker 13 Dec (Bolshoi Ballet) - 3pm

A Winter's Tale Encore Thu 24 Dec (Branagh Theatre) - 2pm

The Albany

For more information visit www.thealbany.info or call 01475 866 100

Tue **Sleeping Beauty** 8 Dec The Panto Company 10am / 1pm / 7pm £5.50 / £7.50



13 Dec Come along to this free event to see local choirs and bands perform festive songs and traditional carols.

Inverclyde Voices

Fri **Guests at Phoenix 11 Dec Choir Concert Royal Concert Hall** Glasgow - 7.30pm

Tue **Inverclyde Voices** 22 Dec **Christmas Concert** St Marys Church Patrick Street, Greenock

School Festivities

Tue 8 Dec

Christmas Music Concert Clydeview Academy - 7pm

Wed **The Nativity** 'The Sleepy Shepherd' 9 Dec Newark Nursery School - 7pm

Wed **Christmas Crackers 16 Dec** Concert Inverclyde Academy and craft fete - 7pm

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SHOPPING AND ACTIVITIES

Oakmall

• Artoons 1 - 4pm by flower stall Sat 12 Dec • Mollie's Miniatures Shetland Pony Christmas outdoor Farmer's Market

Sat Mollie's Miniatures Shetland Pony **19 Dec** • Christmas outdoor Farmer's Market

Clyde Muirshiel

Sun Festive Crafts and **13 Dec Natural Decorations** Greenock Cut Visitor Centre - 1pm £5 per person Escape the urban madness of the Yuletide season, head to the Greenock Cut Centre, slow down for a few hours and make a beautiful Christmas wreath or yule log for your home. Booking is essential, call 01475 529 543

Lunderston Bay

Sat

CLIC Sargent's Boxing Day Dip 26 Dec 12pm

Join CLIC Sargent for their annual sponsored dip to help children with cancer.

Email katie.grier@clicsargent.org.uk or call 01292 692 113

Cardwell Garden Centre

Christmas at Cardwell Lunderston Bay by Gourock www.cardwellnurseries.com

You'll have a claus for celebration this Christmas at Cardwell where you will find a large restaurant, Santa's grotto, a huge selection of Christmas decorations and gifts and, of course, real Christmas trees which have been grown in Scotland!

Gourock

Gourock Town Centre is open for business! The redevelopment of our shopping area is nearly complete. Come and browse our boutiques, stop for a chat and a coffee and shop for that unique Christmas gift!

Libraries

Celebrate National Book Week!

Young People's Services Library Events. South West Library, Animal Tails for Tots (Pyjamas Optional) Thu **19 Nov** 6 - 6.30pm, 0 - 7 years. Booking not required Kilmacolm Library Christmas Crafts 5 - 6pm, 4 - 12 years Mon 7 Dec Call Kilmacolm Library for more information 01475 715621 Thu Port Glasgow Library Christmas Crafts 5.30 - 6.30pm, 4 - 12 years **10 Dec** Call Port Glasgow Library for more information 01475 715629 Gourock Library *Christmas Crafts* 5 - 6pm, 4-12 years Call Gourock Library for more infomation 01475 712340 Mon Port Glasgow Library Bookbug's Bedtime Christmas Cracker! **14 Dec** 6 - 6.30pm, 0 - 7 years. Booking not required Kilmacolm Library Bookbug's 'Twas (almost) the Night Before Mon **21 Dec** Christmas, 6 - 6.30pm, 0 - 7 years. Booking not required

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Inverclyde's budget: Your Council, Your Say

Inverclyde Council is embarking on a budget consultation to bridge a budget gap for 2017/18. Residents and businesses across Inverclyde can have their say through an innovative online budget simulator which sets out the savings and their impact on the overall budget. Visit www.inverclyde.gov.uk/yoursay

Savings proposals

Increase Parking Charges

If the charge for daily parking was increased from £1 a day to £2 a day would generate £70,000 additional income. A £2 daily charge is competitive in comparison to our neighbouring councils.

Burial Grounds and Crematorium Charges Increase

Increase the main burial charges by 2% and cremation charges by 10% over and above the standard 2% uplift for inflation from April 2017.

Non domestic rates (NDR) relief reduced and reduce contribution to Renfrewshire Valuation Joint Board (RVJB)

By better targeting NDR relief, it may be possible to save approximately £20,000 from the budget as at present there are a number of commercial/quasi commercial charities which receive support. The Council pays £531,700 per year to the RVJB. The amount requisitioned across the RVJB has been unchanged for several years and in spite of this the RVJB has reserves of £591,000. It would be proposed to approach the RVJB and ask for details of the impact of a 5% requisition cut from 2017/18 and also request that the reserves be utilised to better effect during this time of severe budgetary pressure.

Reduce Regeneration Funding

Reduction in the level of available physical regeneration funding providing a saving of £77,000.

Reduce / Remove Free Swimming

Three options are being put forward for this savings proposal which could save up £242,000:

- 1) Remove the subsidy entirely
- 2) Reduce the total spend on free swimming by targeting support
- 3) Introduce £1 per swim charge.

Removal of Small Repairs Service

This is a subsidised small repairs service currently operated by external contractor. Removing this would save £52,000.

Reduction to Corporate Advertising

Reduce corporate advertising to save £23,000.



Implement charging for community alarms

Inverclyde is currently the only council in Scotland which doesn't charge for community alarms. A new weekly charge of £2.35 for community alarms would save £203,000.

School transport

Reduction in school transport. Four options to be consulted on Saving £280,000.



You can have your say, help set the Council's budget savings and show how you would meet the budget gap for 2017/18.

With the online budget simulator, you can decide on what should be saved and which of the proposals should be protected.

The online budget simulator is at: https://Inverclyde.budgetsimulator.com or you can access it from the council website alongside all budget documents at www.inverclyde.gov.uk/yoursay

You can also e-mail your comments direct to: yoursay@inverclyde.gov.uk



Visit www.inverclyde.gov.uk/yoursay for all budget information and documents and links to the budget simulator.

Sport Pitch Waivers (team sports)

Two options to be consulted on: 1) Reduce budget by £50,000 to £161,000 2) As option 1 except reduce budget by £111,000 to £100,000.

Kirn Drive

A service reduction at Kirn Drive. Two options to be consulted on: 1) Close depot and Civic Amenity

- site 2) Close the depot and refurbish
- Close the depot and refurbish the Civic Amenity site.
 Saving £140,000.

Council tax

Residents will also be asked, as part of the budget consultation, for their views on an increase to the council tax charge for 2017/18 which would increase income by £750,000.

Dare to do the CLIC Sergent Boxing Day Dip? Call 01292 692113 for more info

Inverciyde opens its hearts to families

The first of up to 10 families fleeing the conflict in Syria have been welcomed in Inverclyde after the Council unanimously agreed to take part in the UK relocation scheme.

Provost Robert Moran said: "Over recent months we have watched as millions of desperate, destitute families have left their lives behind to seek sanctuary in Europe. The scale of misery is unprecedented – certainly since the Second World War – and I am pleased that Inverclyde is able to play a part in offering a place of sanctuary and safety."

Inverclyde has already been a successful part of the Afghan Resettlement Scheme offering asylum to people who have worked with the British Army in Afghanistan.

Mohammed Dawari, his wife and two young daughters were among the first to arrive in Inverclyde from Helmand Province - where he worked as an interpreter on patrol with British troops leaving his parents and seven brothers and sisters behind. They are expecting a baby boy in February 2016.

"It was a difficult decision to make. I miss my parents and my family. My oldest girl asks to go and see her grandparents. I have to say we will hopefully go and see them sometime."

"When I was told I was going to Port Glasgow I just heard the word 'Glasgow'. When we arrived at the airport we were exhausted because of the 24 hour journey."

"It is a small area but people are good and friendly and ask us about how we got here. Inverclyde Council have done a lot for us. When I have called for help it has been there. It has been difficult to engage but some people did approach us asking us to explain how we came here. The community has been good."

"It is tough to meet new people because you don't know the culture. I worked for 8 years as an interpreter mostly with the British so I learned something. Language is a big barrier – even for someone like me. I am hoping to go to college to learn more English. As for the future I would like to work in healthcare – I had first aid training in Helmand helping battle casualties – but it takes time."



Syrian refugees are being brought to the UK from camps in the Middle East as part of a commitment to grant immigration status to 20,000 people over the next five years. The Scottish Government has confirmed 2,000 of them will be welcomed in Scotland.

"It was a difficult decision to make." I miss my parents and my family"

Inverclyde Council job vacancies can be found at www.myjobscotland.gov.uk/inverclyde

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Welfare Benefits information

Claimant Commitment

The Claimant Commitment is an important part of claiming welfare benefit.

It sets out what work search activity you agree to do in return for getting Jobseekers Allowance or Universal Credit. If you refuse to accept a Claimant Commitment your Jobseekers Allowance or Universal Credit will stop. If you fail to carry out your work search activity detailed in your Claimant Commitment you can be sanctioned (lose benefit).

By getting the Claimant Commitment right you can avoid sanctions. If already sanctioned, the sanction can be challenged.

Seek Advice

HSCP Advice Services offers money, debt, benefit advice and tribunal representation to the people of Inverclyde.

We provide assistance with benefit form completion including: Personal Independence Payments, Employment Support Allowance, Housing and Council Tax Reduction.

- Assist with Mandatory Reconsiderations
- Offer advice and support to appeal against a DWP decision.

Our money and debt advisors provide help and advice including:

- Consumer Debts
- Budgeting
- Debt Relief Options (including The Debt Arrangement Scheme).

The Macmillan Benefits Service offers a free service for people and their families living with or affected by cancer.





Inverclyde Advice First provides money, debt and benefit advice for the people of Inverclyde

For free, confidential, impartial and expert advice Phone: 01475 715299

NHS		Lines are open Monday to Thursday from 9am to 4pm (Friday 3pm) with an out-of-hours answering service
		email: triage.advice@inverclyde.gov.uk



Power of Attorney – Why it matters for you

Every year thousands of people in Scotland lose capacity to make decisions for themselves - this may be through an accident, head injury, stroke or as a result of an ongoing progressive illness.

Without making an arrangement for a Power of Attorney no one can act on your behalf if this situation arises. This can leave you and your family, or the people looking after you if you lose your capacity to make your own decisions in very difficult positions and unable to act on your behalf.

You can think and act now – if ill health or an accident means you can no longer make your own decisions, who do you want to do that for you?

The national Power of Attorney, Start the Conversation, campaign will launch its second phase in December 2015 with a series of TV adverts highlighting the importance of planning for the future through undertaking Power of Attorney.

The campaign is about raising awareness about what Power of

Attorney is, and how you can make decisions in advance that will protect you, your family and those you care about, should you ever lose the capacity to make decisions for yourself. It will inform and encourage individuals to act now and plan ahead and think about who you would like to make decisions on your behalf. The information will include what is involved in making a Power of Attorney, how much it will cost, and will highlight the difference that this can make for you and your family if the need arises.

Inverclyde Health and Social Care Partnership will be joining in with the campaign this year, together with Inverclyde Council and other local partners.

Look out for the television adverts, as well as local information.

For more information visit

www.inverclyde.gov.uk/poa www.mypowerofattorney.org.uk

Providing a firm base

The transition from service to civilian life can be challenging for those who have served and their families.

Firmbase is a joint initiative from Renfrewshire, East Renfrewshire and Inverclyde councils. It aims to make sure veterans and their families get the help they need, whenever they ask.

Staff from all three councils have been trained to understand the needs of veterans and signpost them to the specialist help and support available, from council services or other agencies.

Veterans Support Advisor Jane Duncan is determined to make sure "those who served are not disadvantaged."

Jane, who served 22 years with the Army's Royal Signal Corps, is employed by the three Firmbase councils to support local veterans.

Jane's service included tours in Kosovo, Bosnia and Northern Ireland, and her first-hand experience helping serving personnel with welfare issues motivated her to do something similar upon completing her time in the Forces Jane said: "When we use the word 'veteran', there's a common assumption we're talking about an elderly generation who served in earlier conflicts. But 'veteran' describes anyone leaving the Services and, in the majority of cases, we're talking about young men in their late 20s or early 30s who have served for four to six years. We're also reaching out to reservists because there's also a common misconception that they don't need or deserve the same support.

"Often, these young men miss out on the support networks so many others have benefitted from before them. They are proud of how they can look after themselves, and reluctant to be seen as asking for a hand-out. But this is help and support they are entitled to, same as anyone else. It's not about seeking an advantage for those who have served, but making sure that they aren't disadvantaged."

For more information and helpful links visit: www.inverclyde.gov. uk/veterans or www.renfrewshire. gov.uk/firmbase or call the Scottish Welfare Veterans Service on 0141 224 2709

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Your Councillors

Ward 1, Inverclyde East	Ward 2, Inverclyde East Central	Ward 3, Inverclyde North
Jim MacLeod	Jim Grieve	Martin Brennan
Stephen McCabe	Michael McCormick	Math Campbell-Sturgess
James McColgan	Robert Moran	Jim Clocherty
David Wilson	Colour codes to political parties Conservative Independent Labour Liberal Democrat SNP	Kenny Shepherd
Ward 4, Inverclyde South	Ward 5, Inverclyde West	Ward 6, Inverclyde South West
Keith Brooks	Ronnie Ahlfeld	Gerry Dorrian
Vaughan Jones	Terry Loughran	Innes Nelson
Joseph McIlwee	Chris McEleny	Ciano Rebecchi
Gourock Ward 3 Inverclyde West Ward 4 Inverclyde South Inverclyde South Ward 6 Inverclyde South West Inverkip Wemyss Bay	<text><text><text><text><text></text></text></text></text></text>	

New Online Petitions available, visit www.inverclyde.gov.uk/petitions









Pertemps Network

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