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<b>Report To:</b>	<b>Policy &amp; Resources Committee</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>21 March 2023</b>
<b>Report By:</b>	<b>Corporate Director, Education, Communities and Organisational Development</b>	<b>Report No:</b>	<b>PR/07/23/MR</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Morna Rae</b>	<b>Contact No:</b>	<b>01475 712042</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Corporate Policy Update</b>		

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## **1.0 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY**

1.1  For Decision  For Information/Noting

1.2 This report provides the Committee with an update on several performance and policy matters relating to:

- Equalities;
- A new approach to Best Value auditing;
- The Corporate Services' Corporate Directorate Improvement Plan Progress Report;
- The Programme for Government; and
- Use of emergency powers to approve funding for an External Review of the Human Resources & Organisational Development Team.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 It is recommended that the Committee:

- Note the latest updates in relation to Corporate Policy and Performance.

**Ruth Binks**  
**Corporate Director, Education, Communities and**  
**Organisational Development**

### 3.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

- 3.1 A Corporate Policy and Performance update report is considered at every meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee.

#### EQUALITIES

- 3.2 As Members will be aware, a number of budget saving proposals were considered at the meeting of Inverclyde Council on 2 March 2023, 15 of which have related Equality Impact Assessments. All these documents, together with a Fairer Scotland Duty Statement on the Council's Revenue Budget 2023/25, are available to view on the Council's website 'Equality Impact Assessments - Inverclyde Council Budget 2023/25': <https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/council-and-government/equality-impact-assessments/equality-impact-assessments-budget-2023-25>
- 3.3 Equality Mainstreaming Report 2023, Progress on Equality Outcomes 2021/25 and the Equal Pay Statement 2023

The Equality Act 2010 requires the Council, as a public body, to publish Equality Outcomes every four years and report on their progress via a Mainstreaming Report every two years. Reports should be published by 30 April in the relevant year.

A report has been devised which provides information on the Protected Characteristics of the Council's employees, Pay Gap 2020/21 and 2021/22 details relating to Disability, Ethnicity and Gender, together with the Council's Equal Pay Statement 2023. An update is also included regarding the delivery of the Corporate Equality Outcomes 2021/25. This report can be viewed on the Council's website: <https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/council-and-government/equality-and-diversity>. Areas of note in relation to the Employee Profile include:

- During the last two reporting years, the male/female split of Inverclyde Council's employees was broadly similar: our workforce comprised just under a quarter male employees, with females making up a little over three quarters of our staff,
- Between 2020/21 and 2021/22, we saw an increase in staff aged 29 and under, the majority of the Council's employees are aged 50-59 years,
- 3.47% of employees state they are disabled,
- In terms of ethnicity Scottish people comprised the majority of staff, with a slight fall in the number of employees who chose to provide no information at all,
- Between 2020/21 and 2021/22, there was a decrease in the number of Council employees who chose to provide no information at all when asked about their Sexual Orientation, and
- When staff were asked about their Religion or Belief, the most common responses were Church of Scotland and Roman Catholic which, collectively, comprised 46.39% and 47.53% of answers to this question in 2020/21 and 2021/22 respectively.

Similar analysis in relation to recruitment, leavers, disciplinary action, grievances, flexible working requests and training is detailed in the report.

- 3.4 An Elected Members' Briefing on the Council's Mainstreaming Reports 2023 is scheduled for 21 March 2023.
- 3.5 Equally Safe at Work (ESAW)

An Elected Members' Briefing on the Council's involvement with the ESAW initiative took place on 2 February 2023. Members heard that ESAW is a world-leading employer accreditation

programme that supports local authorities to develop gender-sensitive employment practice. The initiative aims to address women's inequality at work and prevent violence against women in the workplace and in wider society. Starting in September 2022, and over the next 18 months, the Council will take part in a range of activities and develop policies and practices with the aim of becoming an ESAW-accredited employer. The Briefing was well attended by Elected Members. Future updates on the implementation of ESAW will be brought to this Committee.

### **NEW APPROACH TO THE AUDITING OF BEST VALUE**

- 3.6 Best Value is concerned with ensuring good governance; the effective management of resources; focusing on improvement and delivering the best possible outcomes for local people.
- 3.7 The Audit Scotland six-year programme of Best Value Assurance Reports (BVAR) has now concluded and a new approach to the auditing of Best Value in Scottish Councils is being implemented. The key points relating to the new approach are:
- Best Value Audit work will be fully integrated into the wider scope of annual audit work and reported via the Annual Audit Report. This builds on the approach used in the development of Best Value Assurance Reports.
  - For the first time, auditors will adopt a thematic approach to audit work in Councils. The first theme to be audited in 2022/23 will be "Leadership of the development of new local strategic priorities", recognising that Councils may have refreshed or changed their local priorities since the local government elections. A Management Report on the thematic audit will be published for each Council, with a summary of the findings included in the Annual Audit Report 2022/23.
  - As part of the Accounts Commission's developing programme of work on climate change, the Annual Audit Report will also include information on a Council's approach to tackling climate change. The Commission's intention is to integrate climate change considerations into all aspects of audit work going forward.
  - Whilst there will no longer be BVARs, the Commission will receive a Controller of Audit report focusing on eight Councils per year, beginning in October 2023. All 32 Councils will be the subject of a Controller of Audit report between 2023 and 2027. The Councils selected for year one are: Falkirk, Moray, Clackmannanshire, Orkney Islands, South Ayrshire, Dumfries and Galloway, West Dunbartonshire and City of Dundee.
  - Due to the plans for the National Care Service, the Commission has decided not to proceed with the planned programme of Controller of Audit reports on individual IJBs. Thematic BV audit work will also not apply to IJBs. Instead, the BV focus will be on national reporting and using individual IJBs as case studies where appropriate.
- 3.8 The new approach represents a significant shift in practice and introduces a number of new elements to the Best Value audit. To ensure that Inverclyde Council is in a strong position to respond to this, actions are being developed to address perceived areas for development or improvement in relation to Best Value audit. Details of this will be brought to a future meeting of this Committee.

### **CORPORATE SERVICES CORPORATE DIRECTORATE IMPROVEMENT PLAN PROGRESS REPORT**

- 3.9 The CDIPs are in their fourth and final year and refreshed improvement plans for 2022/23 were approved by this Committee on 21 June 2022.

- 3.10 This report focuses on the Corporate Services improvement actions that are being delivered by Finance and Corporate Governance and Organisational Development, Policy and Communications. It aims to provide the Committee with the opportunity to make an appropriate judgement on the progress being made and includes the most recent KPI performance data. The Environment and Regeneration Committee and the Education and Communities Committee have received separate CDIP progress reports focusing on the actions that fall within their remit.
- 3.11 The progress report has been generated directly from the Council's performance management system, Pentana Risk, which records completion due dates for all actions and milestones, then tracks progress using a traffic-light system against these deadlines.
- 3.12 Good progress continues to be made in the delivery of the majority of actions. Since the last progress report the following actions (including all sub-actions) are now fully complete:
- The review of the leisure estate and self-managed hubs is complete.
  - A policy for Non-Domestic Premises has been developed and approved.
  - A Communication and Engagement Strategy has been developed and approved.

The following sub-actions have an overdue status, meaning that the original timescale for delivery has passed:

- Improvement planning self-evaluation framework: The development of a three-year self-evaluation framework will now be taken forward as part of the wider Council wide activity on self-evaluation that planned to ensure a joined-up approach.
- Strategic Planning and Performance Management Framework (SPPMF): The development of a revised service planning template will be finalised once the review of the SPPMF is complete. This work is almost at an end and the new Performance Management Strategy is included elsewhere on the agenda for this Committee meeting.
- The roll out of MS Office 365 is continuing to progress with HSCP deployment required in order to complete the project. This work is scheduled for week beginning 6 March 2023.

## **PROGRAMME FOR GOVERNMENT**

- 3.13 *A Stronger and More Resilient Scotland* sets out the Scottish Government's plans for 2022-23, within the wider framework of the Programme for Government, issued in September 2021. The full document is available on the Scottish Government website <https://www.gov.scot/publications/stronger-more-resilient-scotland-programme-government-2022-23/>. It contains a large number of ambitions in relation to policy and statutory developments.
- 3.14 In order that the impacts on and opportunities for Inverclyde can be understood the Corporate Management Team (CMT) have periodically considered the progress of implementation of the Programme for Government proposals. A weekly policy update is also compiled and circulated amongst Council officers to highlight national publications and developments. Examples of opportunities implemented locally include the recruitment of additional teachers, being an 'early adopter' in the design and development of community-based childcare for school-age children, securing funding for re-wilding and biodiversity projects through the Nature Restoration Fund, and implementation of trauma-informed approaches.

## **USE OF EMERGENCY POWERS TO APPROVE FUNDING FOR AN EXTERNAL REVIEW OF THE HUMAN RESOURCES & ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT TEAM**

- 3.15 On 21 February 2022 the Chief Executive used their powers under the Scheme of Delegation (Officers) to approve funding up to £20k being allocated from the Council's Capacity Earmarked

Reserve to fund an External Review of the Human Resource and Organisational Development Team. This was approved by Cllrs McCabe, McCluskey and Robertson.

- 3.16 An External Review is proposed, rather than an internal one, in order to secure an independent external perspective on the current arrangements, and from someone who will be able to bring knowledge of how other similar organisations operate. In addition, limited staff resources would be a barrier to having such a review conducted internally, especially for it to be concluded swiftly and before the current Head of Organisational Development, Policy and Communications retires.

#### 4.0 PROPOSALS

- 4.1 It is proposed that the Committee note the latest updates relating to the area of corporate policy and performance.

#### 5.0 IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendation(s) is(are) agreed:

SUBJECT	YES	NO	N/A
Financial			X
Legal/Risk			X
Human Resources			X
Strategic (LOIP/Corporate Plan)	X		
Equalities and Fairer Scotland Duty			X
Children and Young People's Rights & Wellbeing			X
Environmental & Sustainability			X
Data Protection			X

#### 5.2 Finance

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

One off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Years	Proposed Spend this Report	Virement From	Other Comments
N/A					

Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact	Virement From (If Applicable)	Other Comments
N/A					

### **5.3 Legal/Risk**

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

### **5.4 Human Resources**

There are no human resources implications arising from this report.

### **5.5 Strategic**

The matters referred to within this report are of relevance to the following Corporate Plan priorities:

Organisational Priority 1: To promote Inverclyde to both residents and visitors alike, as a great place to live, work, study and visit.

Organisational Priority 2: To work collaboratively to enable strong, connected and empowered communities, particularly in areas of deprivation, so that residents have influence and control over the things that matter to them.

Organisational Priority 9: To deliver services that are responsive to community needs and underpinned by a culture of innovation, continuous improvement and effective management of resources.

## **6.0 CONSULTATION**







6.1 None.

## **7.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

7.1 None.










## APPENDIX 1: Corporate Services CDIP Progress Report 2022/23







### Corporate Improvement Actions

Action	Description	Status	Due Date	Update
<b>ECOD/CDIP020 People and OD Strategy</b>	A detailed report, including an update and action plan on the themes and initiatives for the year ahead to be presented CMT in summer 2022.		30-Sep-2022	A report has been presented to both CMT and the Policy and Resources Committee.
<b>ECOD/CDIP021 Workforce Planning / refresh</b>	Services require to review and update their Service Workforce Plans for 2022/23 by end April 2022. Make appropriate progress in the delivery of the Service Workforce Plans. Review end September 2022		31-Mar-2023	Workforce Service plans were compiled by Services early in 2022 and were reviewed in the Autumn with some additional actions being incorporated following the Council s Annual Audit report. A meeting of the Corporate Workforce Development Group is scheduled on 23 <sup>rd</sup> March 2023 to review the completion of the 2022/23 Service Workforce Plans. The recent Employee Survey results and a self-evaluation workshop on the theme of workforce held with Senior Managers on 16th February will feed into Service Workforce Plans going forward.
<b>ECOD/CDIP022 Corporate Equalities Outcomes Improvement Plan 2021/25</b>	Deliver the improvement actions which underpin each of the Equality Outcomes 2021/21.		31-Mar-2023	Good progress has been made with the delivery of the Corporate Equalities Improvement Plan 2021/25, detailed information on which is included in the report entitled Equality Mainstreaming Report 2023, Equality Outcomes 2021/25 and the Equal Pay Statement 2023 which is included on the agenda for the meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee on 21 March 2023.
<b>ECOD/CDIP023 New Ways of Working Project</b>	Implement the Council's Hybrid Working Strategy.		31-Mar-2023	This action is in progress. Further details are provided below.
<b>Sub-action 023.1 Implementation of Hybrid Working Strategy</b>	Carry out a review at key stages of the 12 month pilot period (3 month and 6 month review) by May 2023.		31-Mar-2023	A review of the hybrid working strategy is now complete and is currently being fed back to the extended corporate management team. It is intended that an update will be presented to elected members as part of a wider report being submitted for May P&R Committee.
<b>Sub-action 023.3 Campus Estate</b>	Review of the Greenock Campus, identifying and having agreed, potential office space efficiencies by July 2022		31-Mar-2023	The Policy and Resources Committee received an update in November 2022 and approved the mothballing of James Watt building. Current occupants are being relocated and we are on

Action	Description	Status	Due Date	Update
				target for mothballing James Watt building early financial year 23/24. The implications of the successful Levelling Up Fund bid on future available office space are also being taken into account.
<b>ECOD/CDIP024 Improvement Planning</b>	Strengthen performance management and develop a Directorate wide overview of planned self-evaluation and improvement activity.		31-Aug-2022	This majority of the work associated with this action is complete and the remaining sub-action almost complete. Further details are provided below.
<b>Sub-action 024.1 Implementation of Pentana</b>	Implementation of new performance management system.		31-May-2022	Pentana went 'live' on 1 <sup>st</sup> June 2022.
<b>Sub-action 024.2 Upload new plans and KPIs</b>	Upload of initial plans and key performance data.		30-Jun-2022	CDIP improvement plans and corporate KPIs are on Pentana and updated by officers. Services have identified a range of other plans and strategies and this work is ongoing.
<b>Sub-action 024.3 Training (phase 1)</b>	First phase of system training for relevant members of staff delivered.		31-Aug-2022	The first phase of training completed end September with training / demos offered to all staff at team leader level and above and officers with responsibility for updating PIs and Actions.
<b>Sub-action 024.4 Self-evaluation framework</b>	Establish a three-year self-evaluation framework for the Directorate		31-Aug-2022	Self-evaluation activity continues across the Council. A workshop focusing on the theme of Workforce took place on 16th February 2023, attended by Service Managers, Heads of Service and the CMT. The CMT has approved the development of a Self-Evaluation Plan for the Council to ensure consistency in approach. Work on this is underway.
<b>ECOD/CDIP025 Strategic Planning and Performance Management Framework</b>	Streamline the SPPMF with LOIP and Council plan in place for April 2023.		31-Oct-2022	This action is in progress and nearing completion. Further details are provided below.
<b>Sub-action 025.1 Service Planning template</b>	Template for service planning developed and approved.		30-Sep-2022	This workstream has been incorporated into the wider review of the SPPMF which at the time of writing, is being finalised. New templates will be developed at all levels of the strategic planning framework.



Action	Description	Status	Due Date	Update
<b>Sub-action 025.2 LOIP Development</b>	With the Alliance Board, agree timeframes and strategic priorities for the next LOIP, including undertaking community engagement.		31-Oct-2022	Community engagement exercise has been finalised and feedback analysed. The new LOIP is being finalised and will be considered by the Alliance Board at its meeting in March 2023.
<b>ECOD/CDIP026 Health and Safety</b>	Develop a new Health and Safety Strategy and Plan which identifies areas of priority focus across the Council.		31-Mar-2023	The delivery date for the sub-actions have been re-prioritised to 31st March 2023. Further details are provided below.
<b>Sub-action 026.1 Scoping exercise</b>	Scoping exercise with services to determine service priorities and risk areas in relation to health and safety April / May 2022.		31-Mar-2023	Risk profiles have been completed for high risk service areas, i.e. Education HSCO RESS.
<b>Sub-action 026.2 Health and Safety Plan</b>	Develop a three-year Health and Safety Plan to be agreed by CMT July 2022.		31-Mar-2023	Draft plan has been submitted to the Corporate Health and Safety Committee. Awaiting feedback which will be collated.
<b>ECOD/CDIP029 Gaelic Language Plan 2022/27</b>	Implementation of the High Level and Corporate Services Aims in the Council's new Gaelic Language Plan 2022/27.		31-Mar-2023	Following approval at the P&R meeting of 15 <sup>th</sup> November, the revised GLP was submitted to Bòrd na Gàidhlig, in accordance with the statutory timescale. The Plan was submitted for Ministerial approval by the Board on 8 <sup>th</sup> February and the Council is currently awaiting a further update. The GLP will not become 'live' until it has received Ministerial approval, nonetheless some actions within the Plan are now being taken forward as a matter of good practice.
<b>ERR/CDIP001 Budget 2023/26</b>	Develop an approved 2023/26 Budget, balanced for at least 2023/25 Revenue Budget and a 2023/26 Capital Programme which is within funding parameters		31-Mar-2023	One element of this action is ongoing whilst the other two are now complete. Further details are provided below.
<b>Sub-action 001.1 Funding gap</b>	Calculate funding gap by December 2022.		31-Dec-2022	The Council is expected to approve a balanced 2023/24 Revenue Budget on 2 <sup>nd</sup> March 2023.
<b>Sub-action 001.2 Capital Programme 2023/26</b>	Identify sustainable funding for the 2023/26 Capital Programme.		31-Mar-2023	Programme within approved parameters to be agreed by the Council on 2 <sup>nd</sup> March 2023.
<b>Sub-action 001.3 Revenue Budget 2023/25</b>	Revenue budget 2023/25 developed by March 2023.		31-Mar-2023	The Council is expected to approve a balanced 2023/24 Revenue Budget on 2 March 2023. Work is to commence on the 2024/25 Revenue Budget in summer 2023.




Action	Description	Status	Due Date	Update
<b>ERR/CDIP002 Channel Shift</b>	Move customers away from traditional channels of communications to digital channels by increasing the number of channels and transactions dealt with via digital routes.		31-Mar-2023	Microsoft 365 deployment nearing completion, planning in progress for next phases to maximise use of available services. Telephony Options Appraisal is being developed with report scheduled to be considered by CMT by end of February 2023. Proposals to support New Ways of Working and increase on-line service delivery will be put to Members as part of the part of the consideration of the 2023/25 Budget.
<b>ERR/CDIP003 Information Governance</b>	Further develop the Council's processes in relation to information governance		31-Mar-2023	This action is in progress with 2 sub-actions now complete. Further details are provided below.
<b>Sub-action 003.1 Information Governance Steering Group</b>	Refresh the Information Governance Steering Group including refreshed Terms of Reference and membership by August 2022.		31-Aug-2022	A Terms of Reference has been agreed and a refreshed group established.
<b>Sub-action 003.2 Records Management Plan</b>	Revised Records Management Plan for Inverclyde Council and Inverclyde Licensing Board submitted to the Keeper of the Records of Scotland by August 2022.		31-Aug-2022	The Records Management Plan was submitted to the Keeper of the Records of Scotland in August 2022.
<b>Sub-action 003.3 Website Accessibility</b>	Accessibility guidance issued to staff and associated action plan implemented.		31-Mar-2023	Website Accessibility training was held in January 2023, delivered by external trainer for approximately 70 staff (website creators/publishers) from a range of services. Presentation and recording of training shared with IGSG and Extended CMT for cascading. With service areas to take this forward, and review their areas of the website and Icon, to ensure accessibility. Updates will be provided at IGSG from service area representatives and progress monitored, with updates to CMT.
<b>Sub-action 003.4 Archives Store at Watt Institution</b>	Create a further archives store to house sensitive records on the ground floor of the Watt Institution.		31-Mar-2023	The procurement exercise relating to shelving is complete with installation due approx. 21 <sup>st</sup> March 2023.






## Cross Directorate Improvement Actions

Action	Description	Status	Due Date	Update
<b>ECOD/CDIP027 Tourism and Events</b>	Raise the profile of tourism development in the area with Inverclyde place marketing co-ordinated around 'discover Inverclyde'.	✔	31-Mar-2023	This action is now complete. One sub-action has been cancelled
<b>Sub-action 027.1 Marketing Campaign</b>	Delivery of a city region or local campaign during 2022/23.	-	31-Mar-2023	The Council has taken the decision not to progress this following agreement that funding would form a budget saving.
<b>Sub-action 027.2 Meliora</b>	Meliora events delivered during May / June 2022.	✔	30-Jun-2022	Meliora events delivered as scheduled and a report on the activities was considered by the Policy and Resources Committee on 20 September 2022.
<b>ECOD/CDIP028 Communications Strategy</b>	Develop a refreshed Communications Strategy.	✔	31-Mar-2023	This action is now complete.
<b>Sub-action 028.1 Scoping exercise</b>	Scoping exercise and engagement with services.	✔	31 Oct-2022	New Communications and Engagement Strategy developed taking into account scoping exercise.
<b>Sub-action 028.2 Draft Communications Strategy</b>	Draft Communications Strategy to CMT in November 2022 and subject to agreement P&R thereafter.	✔	30-Nov-2022	The Communications and Engagement Strategy for Inverclyde Council was approved by the Policy and Resources Committee on 31st January 2023.




## Finance and Corporate Governance




Action	Description	Status	Due Date	Update
<b>ERR/CDIP004 Non-domestic rates policy, Unoccupied Premises</b>	A policy for Non-domestic rates - Unoccupied premises to be developed following delegation of responsibility to Councils.	✔	31-Mar-2023	This action is complete. Further details are provided below.
<b>Sub-action 004.1 NDR Policy Approval</b>	Policy approved by Council by November 2022.	✔	30-Nov-2022	The Non-Domestic Rates Empty Property Relief Policy was approved by P&R on 31 January 2023
<b>Sub-action 004.2 Communication</b>	Communication of Policy with rate payers from January 2023.	-	31-Mar-2023	Following Committee agreement to replicate NDR legislation, which resulted in no change in practice, the requirement to communicate with rate payers is no longer required.

Action	Description	Status	Due Date	Update
<b>ERR/CDIP005 Cloud Migration Strategy</b>	Implementation of Office 365.		31-Mar-2023	This action is in progress with one sub-action showing an overdue status. Further details are provided below.
<b>Sub-action 005.1 MS Team</b>	Roll out of MS Team		30-Sep-2022	HSCP deployment is required for project completion, this is scheduled for week beginning 6 <sup>th</sup> March 2023.
<b>Sub-action 005.2 Telephony</b>	Telephony decision to be taken in early 2023.		31-Mar-2023	Market test is complete. Report due to be considered by CMT by end February 2023.

Action Status	
 Overdue; original target deadline has passed	 In progress, on track
 One or more sub-action has a red status	 Complete
 Check progress	

## KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 2022/23

Performance Indicator	Q4 2021/22	Q1 2022/23	Q2 2022/23	Q3 2022/23	Target	Status
	Value	Value	Value	Value		
Speed of processing changes in circumstances to Housing Benefit (days)	1.74 days	4.08 days	4.5 days	3.48 days	3 days	
Council tax in year collection level	95.5%	35.2%	58.8%	83.3%	Year-end target 95%	-
Invoices paid within 30 days (%)	95.53%	97.11%	95.89%	95.88%	95.5%	
Speed of processing new claims for Council Tax Reduction (days)	26.47 days	24.6 days	24.66 days	18.86 days	25 days	

PI Status	
	Alert
	Warning
	OK