
Report To:	Education & Communities Committee	Date:	5 September 2023
Report By:	Ruth Binks, Director of Education, Communities and Organisational Development	Report No:	EDUCOM/41/23/TM
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Subject:	Communities Update Report – Overview of Local and National Initiatives		

1.0 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

1.1 For Decision For Information/Noting

1.2 The purpose of this report is to update the Education and Communities Committee with developments in relation to the Communities part of the Committee.

Updates have been provided on the following areas:

- Substance Use Officers;
- Food growing strategy/Invergrow Project;
- Multiply Project;
- LBGTQ+ Peer Support Group;
- Early Adopter Community;
- Emergency Power Report- Summer Activity Funding;
- Inspiring School Age Childcare – space – capital award;
- Inverkip Primary School- School Crossing Patroller review;
- I Am Me Scotland Platform;
- Community Safety Strategy and Violence Against Women & Girls Strategy 23-26;
- Battery Park Lighting Project; and
- Mentor in Violence Prevention

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that the Education and Communities Committee notes the updates provided in this report.

Ruth Binks
Corporate Director, Education, Communities and Organisational Development

3.0 Updates

3.1 Substance Use Officers

Inverclyde Council received an allocation of funding to recruit 4 full time substance user officers for a twelve-month period. The role of the workers is to develop a local evidence-based prevention programme on substance use and risky behaviour to be delivered to young people in schools and communities, to parents and the wider community and to teaching staff and the wider school partnership. The team will be required to establish a prevention framework to underpin the core work they will be delivering, gather data and evidence of impact to provide consistency and sustain capability after the 12-month period. Four candidates have been recruited and scheduled to start in post in mid-August 2023. A period of training, induction learning and time to research and develop the programme has been allocated, the team are expected to deliver in the schools from early October 2023.

3.2 Food Growing Strategy/Invergrow Project

The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act (2015) requires each local authority to prepare a food growing strategy for its area, to identify land that may be used as allotment sites, identify other areas of land that could be used for community growing, and describe how the authority intends to increase provision for community growing, in particular in areas with experience socio-economic disadvantage. A fully developed Community Food Growing Strategy was approved by the Alliance Board in 2023, and a local Food Growing Strategic Group has been established to provide governance and accountability in the implementation of the strategy. Inverclyde Council has also received an allocation of UK Shared Prosperity Funding to implement the Invergrow Project which will include the recruitment of a dedicated member of staff to support the development of an Inverclyde wide community gardening and food growing in public spaces, to impact on climate change and help alleviate food insecurity and food waste while improving mental wellbeing. which will enhance and support the work of the Community Food Growing Strategy. This was advertised in July 2023.

3.3 Multiply Project

As part of the UK Government's shared prosperity initiative, Inverclyde Council received funding for a 'Multiply' project which seeks transform the lives of adults by improving their functional numeracy skills through the delivery of bespoke adult numeracy programmes. The programme runs until March 2025 and targets adults 19+ who have not previously attained a Level 2/SCQF Level 5 or higher maths qualification.

Three members of staff have been recruited and their role will be to develop, deliver and encourage meaningful participation in a range of community-based learning programmes that boost people's ability to use maths in their daily life, at home and work. As well as this they will enable adults to achieve formal qualifications that can open doors for them (such as career progression or progression to further study). The main objectives of the programme are that it should contribute to:

- more adults achieving maths qualifications / participating in numeracy courses (up to and including Level 2/ SCQF Level 5); and
- increased adult numeracy across the population.

The overall impact, which goes beyond achieving certificates or qualifications, will track both the perceived and actual difference taking part in the programme makes in supporting learners to improve their understanding and use of maths in their daily lives, at home and at work and to feel more confident when doing so.

The team is currently undergoing induction and training as well as the initial development of engagement strategies, needs analysis and delivery models and materials. Delivery of learning programmes will begin in September 2023.

3.4 LBGTQ+ Peer Support Group

According to recent NHS research LGBTQ+ people in Scotland are continuing to face health inequalities across every measure of wellbeing, with significant numbers experiencing loneliness and isolation. The research states that almost a half of LGBTQ+ people in the survey said they had experienced discrimination in the previous year – with trans and non-binary communities experiencing higher levels of abuse.

Inverclyde Council received a request by a member of the local LGBTQ+ community for support to establish a local adult peer support group. Working in partnership with the LGBTQ+ Community an online consultation was launched to establish a network and to identify new individuals who would be interested in becoming involved. The result of the on-line consultation is that 22 LGBTQ+ community members are interested in becoming involved in establishing a local peer support group and to form a constituted network. Inverclyde Council will continue to support this group until it feels it has the relevant skills and knowledge to operate by itself.

3.5 Early Adopter Community – Affordable Out of School Childcare

Inverclyde Council is an Early Adopter Community for out of school affordable childcare, piloting and testing a range of local services and support for children and families living on a low income or living in poverty. This pilot service has been offering after school care from Newark Primary School since January 2023, supporting 22 families and 28 children. The families who access the service are also involved in the codesign of the pilot to ensure that the service meet their needs. The parents have therefore stated that holiday childcare and breakfast childcare is vital to support working parents or to encourage parents to engage in learning or training opportunities. A holiday childcare service started on 11 July until 4 August, which was visited by Natalie Don, Communities Minister in July 2023 and a full evaluation of the Summer Clubs will be provided at the next Committee meeting.

3.6 Emergency Powers Report on the use of Summer Activity Funding

An emergency powers report was agreed 30th June 2023 detailing the use of funding from the Scottish Government in relation to funding towards summer activities. The report requested emergency powers to approve the allocation of spend for summer activities. The reason for emergency powers was that the indicative funding was announced extremely late, giving a week's notice for planning. The funding for Inverclyde was £58,000 and the funding was allocated as follows:

- £28,000 be allocated to the anti-poverty fund to allow this fund to undertake other projects. This would simply replace the money already invested from the anti-poverty fund in the summer programme;
- £6,000 be allocated to the Community fund because this fund was used to provide additionality to the playscheme proposals and can now be best used elsewhere;
- £5,000 to the Beacon Arts Centre to provide a summer programme of cultural events and entertainment as part of the MELIORA festival;
- £5,000 to libraries to increase their summer programme; and
- £14,000 to expand specific events such as pictures in park

The paper was signed by Councillors Clocherty, McGuire and Law.

3.7 Inspiring School Age Childcare Spaces – Capital Fund

The Inspiring school age childcare spaces – Capital Fund is a £4.5m capital programme, which is managed by Scottish Futures Trust, which was open to all Local Authorities, to bid into. This fund is designed to deliver low cost, high impact improvements to the learning estate to support the provision of School Age Childcare. This can be targeted to both indoor and outdoor spaces. Applications were required to demonstrate how they have worked in partnership with school age childcare and activities providers, to be ambitious in their ideas, and to define projects which will deliver benefit for children and families.

Inverclyde submitted 5 bids, of which 4 were successful. The 5th bid, for adapted bikes for Play4All did not meet the required selection criteria.

The successful bids were:

- Play 4 All - Craigmarnock School - Sensory Room - £30,000
- Play 4 All - Craigmarnock School - Sensory Room - £50,000
- Play 4 All - Craigmarnock School – Soft Play Room -£40,000
- Binnie Street Out of School Care - £25,000

The timescale for the projects to be delivered is by 31 March 2024. Officers will now work with other services to support the deliver of these projects and will report back to the Scottish Futures Trust (SFT) who are managing the Inspiring School Age Childcare Spaces Programme on behalf of the Scottish Government.

3.8 Inverkip Primary School Crossing Patrol (SXP)

During the last academic session Inverkip Primary School community raised concerns around the safety of children exiting the school from the south gate of the school. After a multi-agency review, limited options were available to make this a safer exit point. It is therefore proposed that during the 2023-24 academic year the north gate will be used as a single entry/exit point for children and the current school crossing patrol site will move location from Station Road/Main Street, approximately 30 metres, to Station Road/School Access Road. The patroller will still cover their primary crossing carriageway on Station Road, and it is anticipated they will serve a much higher proportion of the school population as a significant percentage reside in the Hill Farm area to the south of the school. The existing SXP point on Main Street will still have a zebra crossing in place for pupils crossing at Main Street. This proposal has been developed in consultation with the school senior management team, the parent council, Inverclyde Council Public Protection, Inverclyde Council Roads, Inverclyde Council Health & Safety, and Inverclyde Council Property Services.

3.9 I Am Me Scotland Platform – Antisocial Behaviour Module

Inverclyde Council's Community Safety & Resilience team were part of a cross-authority steering group who assisted Renfrewshire-based charity 'I Am Me Scotland' with the development of an antisocial behaviour (ASB) awareness lesson that will be available on their learning platform, which is free to use for teachers, police officers, and health & social care professionals. The lesson targets prevention of ASB with young people in the P6 to P7 age group by increasing their awareness of what ASB is, the impact on communities, and how to positively respond. The content for the lesson plan was co-designed with young people and a short animation which forms part of the resource can be viewed here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o8F3iZQ4SKU>.

There is further joint working planned with I Am Me for their platform around the issue of county lines criminal exploitation.

3.10 **Community Safety Strategy 23-26 and Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy 23-26**

The Community Safety Strategy 2023-26 and the Violence Against Women & Girls Strategy 2023-26 were both approved at the meeting of the Inverclyde Alliance Board on the 19 June 2023. Both strategies have been remitted to their respective community planning partnership groups to produce annual delivery action plans which will outline partnership activities that contribute to achieving the strategic priorities. The strategy documents are currently being developed by corporate communications to ensure they are presented in a consistent and coordinated way for the public. When complete they will be available at <https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/community-safety-partnership> and <https://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/vawg-partnership>

3.11 **Battery Park Lighting**

Following issues raised within our recent 'Public space, activity and women's safety survey' a successful bid was made to the UK Government Shared Prosperity Fund to install energy-efficient lighting within the Battery Park, with the intention of improving the safety perception of using the park in the darker evenings and mornings. Community consultation on the timings of the lighting ran throughout June and July with the following headline results:

- 662 responses
- 90% felt the additional lighting would encourage them to use the park more during dark evenings and mornings.
- 93% felt the additional lighting would make them feel safer when using the park during dark evenings and mornings.
- The most popular choice for lighting timing was dusk (sunset) to 10pm; 5:30am to Dawn (sunrise) at 43%. Dusk (sunset) to 12am (midnight); 5:30am to Dawn (sunrise) was 30%, and Dusk (sunset) to Dawn (sunrise) was 27%.

A tender has now been issued for the provision of the lighting and once installed, further piloting of the lighting timings will be undertaken.

3.12 **Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP)**

The Mentors in Violence Prevention Programme utilises a creative bystander approach to prevent all forms of bullying and gender-based violence. Males and females are not looked at as victims or perpetrators but as empowered bystanders with the ability to support and challenge peers. Within the MVP Programme a bystander is defined as a friend, classmate, team-mate, colleague or relative. Bystander Approach frames men's abuse of women as a societal problem rooted in the institutional structures and cultural practices of a male-dominated society, emphasising changing social norms as the key to prevention.

All secondary schools are engaged in delivery of MVP in 2023-2024. MVP training was delivered by the Violence Against Women Coordinator and a Senior CLD Worker to 12 teaching staff on Wednesday and Thursday 24th and 25th of May 2023. This allows staff in schools to train MVP mentors from 5th and 6th year to equip them to deliver the programme to younger pupils in their schools.

MVP is delivered as part of the Scottish Government's Equally Safe strategy and supports early prevention of gender-based violence. The annual report 2022-23 provides overview all projects across Scotland.

[MVP-Annual-Report-2022-23.pdf \(glowscotland.org.uk\)](#)

4.0 IMPLICATIONS

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

SUBJECT	YES	NO
Financial		X
Legal/Risk		X
Human Resources		X
Strategic (Partnership Plan/Council Plan)		X
Equalities, Fairer Scotland Duty & Children/Young People's Rights & Wellbeing		X
Environmental & Sustainability		X
Data Protection		X

4.2 Finance

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					

4.3 Legal/Risk

No

4.4 Human Resources

No

4.5 Strategic

No

4.6 Equalities, Fairer Scotland Duty & Children/Young People

(a) Equalities

This report has been considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) process with the following outcome:

	YES – Assessed as relevant and an EqIA is required.
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x	NO – This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a substantive change to an existing policy, function, or strategy. Therefore, assessed as not relevant and no EqlA is required. Provide any other relevant reasons why an EqlA is not necessary/screening statement.
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(b) Fairer Scotland Duty

If this report affects or proposes any major strategic decision:-

Has there been active consideration of how this report’s recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome?

	YES – A written statement showing how this report’s recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage has been completed.
x	NO – Assessed as not relevant under the Fairer Scotland Duty for the following reasons: Provide reasons why the report has been assessed as not relevant.

(c) Children and Young People

Has a Children’s Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment been carried out?

	YES – Assessed as relevant and a CRWIA is required.
x	NO – Assessed as not relevant as this report does not involve a new policy, function or strategy or recommends a substantive change to an existing policy, function or strategy which will have an impact on children’s rights.

4.7 Environmental/Sustainability

Summarise any environmental / climate change impacts which relate to this report.

Has a Strategic Environmental Assessment been carried out?

	YES – assessed as relevant and a Strategic Environmental Assessment is required.
x	NO – This report does not propose or seek approval for a plan, policy, programme, strategy, or document which is like to have significant environmental effects, if implemented.

4.8 Data Protection

Has a Data Protection Impact Assessment been carried out?

	YES – This report involves data processing which may result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals.
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x	NO – Assessed as not relevant as this report does not involve data processing which may result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals.
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5.0 CONSULTATION

5.1 N/A

6.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

6.1 N/A