

Minute

Policy and Resources Committee

Tuesday, 19 September 2023, 09:30.

Council Chamber, Council Offices, School Place, Kirkwall.



Present

Councillors James W Stockan, Heather N Woodbridge, Graham A Bevan, Stephen G Clackson, Alexander G Cowie, David Dawson, P Lindsay Hall, Steven B Heddle, Rachael A King, Kristopher D Leask, W Leslie Manson, James R Moar, Raymond S Peace, John A R Scott, Gwenda M Shearer, Gillian Skuse, Jean E Stevenson, Ivan A Taylor, Mellissa-Louise Thomson, Owen Tierney and Duncan A Tullock.

Clerk

- Hazel Flett, Service Manager (Governance).

In Attendance

- Oliver D Reid, Chief Executive.
- Stephen Brown, Chief Officer, Orkney Health and Social Care Partnership.
- Karen Greaves, Corporate Director for Strategy, Performance and Business Solutions.
- Hayley Green, Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.
- Gareth Waterson, Corporate Director for Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration.
- Gavin Mitchell, Head of Legal and Governance.
- Andrew Groundwater, Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development.
- Lynda Bradford, Head of Health and Community Care (for Items 8 to 10).
- Sweyn Johnston, Head of Enterprise and Economic Growth (for Items 15 to 19 and 22 to 29).
- Erik Knight, Head of Finance.
- Roddy Mackay, Head of Planning and Community Protection (for Items 19 to 22).
- Sharon-Ann Paget, Interim Chief Social Work Officer (for Items 1 to 14).
- Lorna Richardson, Head of Neighbourhood Services (for Items 1 to 7).
- Alex Rodwell, Head of Improvement and Performance.
- Frances Troup, Head of Community Learning, Leisure and Housing.
- Stuart Allison, Service Manager (Enterprise) (for Items 22 to 29).
- Garry Burton, Service Manager (Leisure and Culture) (for Items 19 to 29).
- Shonagh Merriman, Service Manager (Corporate Finance) (for Items 1 to 7).
- William Moore, Service Manager (Improvement and Performance) (for Items 1 to 13 and 15 to 29).
- Kerry Spence, Service Manager (Community Learning, Development and Employability) (for Items 1 to 13).

- Lindsey Johnson, Community Learning and Development Team Leader (Employability) (for Items 1 to 13).
- Glen Thomson, Team Manager (Projects) (for Items 1 to 6).
- George Vickers, Community Planning Business Manager (for Items 1 to 19).
- Emma Chattington, Interim Senior Organisational Development Adviser (for Items 15 to 19).
- Nick Blyth, Climate Change Strategy Officer (for Items 19 to 22).

In Attendance via Remote Link (Microsoft Teams)

- Anna Whelan, Service Manager (Strategy and Partnership) (for Items 13 to 17).

Observing

- Kenny MacPherson, Head of Property, Asset Management and Facilities (for Items 1 to 6 and 21 to 26).
- Ross Cunningham, Service Manager (Democratic Services and Communications) (for Items 1 to 19).
- Nick Hewitt, Team Manager (Culture) (for Items 19 to 29).
- Kirsty Groundwater, Communications Team Leader (for Items 7 to 29).

Declarations of Interest

- Councillor Stephen G Clackson – Item 27.
- Councillor Gillian Skuse – Items 10 and 16.
- Councillor Mellissa-Louise Thomson – Items 16 and 27.

Chair

- Councillor James W Stockan.

1. Disclosure of Exempt Information

The Committee noted the proposal that the public be excluded from the meeting for consideration of Items 27 and 28, as the business to be discussed involved the potential disclosure of exempt information of the classes described in the relevant paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 as amended.

2. Revenue Expenditure Outturn

2.1. Policy and Resources

After consideration of a report by the Head of Finance, copies of which had been circulated, the Committee:

Noted:

2.1.1. The revenue expenditure outturn statement in respect of service areas for which the Policy and Resources Committee was responsible, for financial year 2022/23, attached as Annex 1 to the report by the Head of Finance, indicating an underspend position of £7,407,300.

2.1.2. The revenue financial detail by service area statement, in respect of service areas for which the Policy and Resources Committee was responsible, for financial year 2022/23, attached as Annex 2 to the report by the Head of Finance.

The Committee scrutinised:

2.1.3. The explanations given, and actions proposed in respect of significant budget variances, as outlined in the Budget Action Plan, attached as Annex 3 to the report by the Head of Finance, and obtained assurance that appropriate action was taken with regard to significant budget variances.

2.2. Orkney Health and Care

After consideration of a report by the Head of Finance, copies of which had been circulated, the Committee:

Noted:

2.2.1. The revenue expenditure outturn statement in respect of service areas within the Orkney Health and Social Care Partnership, for which the Council was responsible, for financial year 2022/23, attached as Annex 1 to the report by the Head of Finance, indicating a deficit of £1,841,700.

2.2.2. The revenue financial detail by service area statement, in respect of service areas within the Orkney Health and Social Care Partnership for which the Council was responsible, for financial year 2022/23, attached as Annex 2 to the report by the Head of Finance.

The Committee scrutinised:

2.2.3. The explanations given, and actions proposed in respect of significant budget variances, as outlined in the Budget Action Plan, attached as Annex 3 to the report by the Head of Finance, and obtained assurance that appropriate action was taken with regard to significant budget variances.

2.3. Summary

After consideration of a report by the Head of Finance, copies of which had been circulated, the Committee:

Noted the revenue expenditure outturn statement for financial year 2022/23, attached as Annex 1 to the report by the Head of Finance, indicating the following:

- A total General Fund surplus of £3,238,100.
- A deficit in Sources of Funding for General Fund Services of £555,600.
- A net Non-General Fund deficit of £4,256,900.

3. Revenue Expenditure Monitoring

3.1. Policy and Resources

After consideration of a report by the Head of Finance, copies of which had been circulated, the Committee:

Noted:

3.1.1. The revenue financial summary statement, in respect of service areas for which the Policy and Resources Committee was responsible, for the period 1 April to 30 June 2023, attached as Annex 1 to the report by the Head of Finance, indicating a budget underspend position of £399,000.

3.1.2. The revenue financial detail by service area statement, in respect of service areas for which the Policy and Resources Committee was responsible, for the period 1 April to 30 June 2023, attached as Annex 2 to the report by the Head of Finance.

The Committee scrutinised:

3.1.3. The explanations given and actions proposed in respect of significant budget variances, as outlined in the Budget Action Plan, attached as Annex 3 to the report by the Head of Finance, and obtained assurance that action was being taken with regard to significant budget variances.

3.2. Orkney Health and Care

After consideration of a report by the Head of Finance, copies of which had been circulated, the Committee:

Noted:

3.2.1. The revenue financial summary statement in respect of service areas within the Orkney Health and Social Care Partnership, for which the Council was responsible, for the period 1 April to 30 June 2023, attached as Annex 1 to the report by the Head of Finance, indicating a budget overspend position of £2,811,700.

3.2.2. The revenue financial detail by service area statement in respect of service areas within the Orkney Health and Social Care Partnership, for which the Council was responsible, for the period 1 April to 30 June 2023, attached as Annex 2 to the report by the Head of Finance.

The Committee scrutinised:

3.2.3. The explanations given and actions proposed in respect of significant budget variances, as outlined in the Budget Action Plan, attached as Annex 3 to the report by the Head of Finance, and obtained assurance that action was being taken with regard to significant budget variances.

3.3. Summary

After consideration of a report by the Head of Finance, copies of which had been circulated, the Committee:

Noted:

3.3.1. The summary revenue expenditure statement for the period 1 April to 30 June 2023, attached as Annex 1 to the report by the Head of Finance, indicating the following:

- A total General Fund overspend of £3,053,000.
- A surplus in Sources of Funding of £5,012,700.
- A net Non-General Fund deficit of £7,484,300.

3.3.2. The financial detail across individual Sources of Funding for the period 1 April to 30 June 2023, including significant variances identified as Priority Actions, attached as Annex 2 to the report by the Head of Finance.

The Committee scrutinised:

3.3.3. The explanations given and actions proposed in respect of significant budget variances, as outlined in the Budget Action Plan, attached as Annex 3 to the report by the Head of Finance, and obtained assurance that action was being taken with regard to significant budget variances.

4. Capital Expenditure Outturn

After consideration of a report by the Head of Finance, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Service Manager (Corporate Finance), the Committee:

Noted:

4.1. The summary outturn position of capital expenditure incurred for financial year 2022/23 in respect of the approved General Fund and Non-General Fund capital programmes, as detailed in section 3.1 of the report by the Head of Finance, indicating a total underspend of £6,015,000 as at 31 March 2023, against revised budgets totalling £30,216,000.

The Committee scrutinised:

4.2. The detailed analysis of capital expenditure, together with project updates in respect of the General Fund and the Non-General Fund capital programmes, attached as Appendix 1 to the report by the Head of Finance, and obtained assurance with regard to significant budget variances and on progress made with delivery of the approved capital programmes for 2022/23.

5. Capital Slippage and Acceleration

After consideration of a report by the Head of Finance, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Service Manager (Corporate Finance), the Committee:

Noted:

5.1. Net slippage amounting to £6,304,000 in relation to the approved General Fund and Non-General Fund capital programmes as at 31 March 2023.

5.2. That the Head of Finance had re-profiled the five-year General Fund and the Non-General Fund capital programmes, in order to reflect the net slippage and current timescales for completion of individual capital projects, with the revised programmes attached as Appendix 2 to the report by the Head of Finance.

The Committee resolved to **recommend to the Council:**

5.3. That the sum of £4,916,000 be carried forward from financial year 2022/23 to financial years 2023/24 and onwards in respect of net slippage on projects contained within the General Fund capital programme.

5.4. That the sum of £1,388,000 be carried forward from financial year 2022/23 to financial years 2023/24 and onwards in respect of slippage on projects contained within the Non-General Fund capital programme.

5.5. That the revised five-year General Fund and Non-General Fund capital programmes, attached as Appendix 1 to this Minute, be approved.

6. Treasury Management – Annual Report

After consideration of a report by the Head of Finance, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Service Manager (Corporate Finance), the Committee:

Noted:

6.1. That stubborn inflationary pressures, the easing of COVID-19 restrictions and the Russian invasion of Ukraine had resulted in volatile interest rates during 2022/23, with the Bank of England raising the Base Rate from 0.75% to 4.25% incrementally throughout the year.

6.2. That the increase in the Bank of England Base Rate led to the Public Works Loans Board borrowing rates increasing correspondingly.

6.3. That Bank of England Base Rate increases would impact on future borrowing requirements, although the Council was well placed to benefit from savings on its existing loans, with an average interest rate of 3.03%.

The Committee scrutinised:

6.4. The Annual Treasury Management Review for financial year 2022/23, attached as Appendix 1 to the report by the Head of Finance, and obtained assurance that the Treasury Management Practices operated effectively.

Councillor John A R Scott left the meeting during discussion of this item and rejoined the meeting at this point. Councillor Stephen G Clackson left the meeting at this point.

7. Following the Public Pound

After consideration of a report by the Head of Finance, together with an Equality Impact Assessment, copies of which had been circulated, the Committee:

Noted:

7.1. That Internal Audit undertook an audit which reviewed the Council's Following the Public Pound policy and procedures.

7.2. That recommendations arising from the internal audit, referred to above, had been incorporated within the updated policy on Following the Public Pound, attached as Appendix 1 to the report by the Head of Finance.

The Committee resolved to **recommend to the Council:**

7.3. That the updated policy in respect of Funding External Bodies and Following the Public Pound, attached as Appendix 2 to this Minute, be approved.

7.4. That Corporate Directors be reminded of the policy implementation, in particular the requirement to carry out an options appraisal before funding was awarded, and that Service Level Agreements were required to be in place and current for all payments above £10,000.

8. Alternative Models of Governance

After consideration of a joint report by the Chief Executive and the Corporate Director for Strategy, Performance and Business Solutions, copies of which had been circulated, the Committee:

Noted:

8.1. That, on 4 July 2023, when considering a Notice of Motion on alternative governance arrangements, the Council resolved to support the Notice of Motion and that the Chief Executive should submit a report, to the Policy and Resources Committee, detailing the scope of work, together with the resources required, to address the matters raised in the Notice of Motion.

8.2. That a staged approach to the scope of works, to address the matters raised in the Notice of Motion, would be taken, with the first stage focused on assessment of viable options and production of an options appraisal of available alternative governance arrangements.

8.3. That the Constitutional Reform Consultative Group, supported by regular members' seminars, would be convened to provide strategic oversight to the project.

8.4. That the combined resources required for the first discovery stage was estimated at one full time equivalent post which would be met within existing resources.

The Committee resolved to **recommend to the Council:**

8.5. That progression to the first stage, namely agreeing the scope of work for the Constitutional Reform Consultative Group, as set out below, be approved:

- Providing full briefings to elected members on the previous work undertaken on alternative models of governance.

- Reviewing the implementation of the Islands (Scotland) Act 2018 to ensure that all powers and duties contained within it are being utilised to maximum benefit to address island issues. For example: development and content of National Islands Plan, scheme for requests for devolution of functions, preparation of island communities impact assessments, ability to request retrospective island communities impact assessments and ability for local authorities to request additional powers.
- Identifying and exploring opportunities using these existing mechanisms to address inequalities experienced by Orkney's communities such as the Council's funding settlement, roll out of Road Equivalent Tariff, and a ferry replacement programme.
- Engaging with the Scottish Government in their project to explore opportunities under a Single Island Authority model alongside the proposals for the National Care Service to provide the best health and care services for our Communities.
- Analysis and articulation of the benefits and contribution made by Orkney as a community to Scotland, UK and globally.
- Identifying and exploring opportunities with Scottish and UK Governments around obtaining flexibility in policies and regulations to benefit Orkney.
- Working jointly with other Islands Authorities to maximise the benefit to island communities and to feed into the Scottish and UK Governments and Nordic connections through participation in the Islands Strategic Group, Islands Forum and Nordic / Arctic events.
- Researching and learning from Alternative Models of Governance options, such as British Crown Dependencies, Overseas Territories and Nordic connections for consideration by Elected Members.
- Developing an evaluation framework for options at stage 2 to ensure the potential desired outcomes for Orkney under each model can be assessed.
- During this first stage, Elected Members will consider the relevance, political and financial impact and opportunities presented by possible constitutional reform and select an option or options for progression to the next stage.

8.6. That the Chief Executive should submit a report, to the Policy and Resources Committee in early 2024, considering an options appraisal of available alternative governance arrangements.

9. Regulation of Investigatory Powers and Covert Surveillance

After consideration of a joint report by the Chief Executive and the Corporate Director for Strategy, Performance and Business Solutions, together with an Equality Impact Assessment, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Head of Legal and Governance, the Committee:

Noted:

9.1. That the Investigatory Powers Commissioner's Office (IPCO) was a non-departmental public body established to oversee the authorisation and use of covert surveillance by statutorily empowered public authorities.

9.2. That, following a review of how the IPCO conducted its oversight of local authorities, it no longer routinely undertook an inspection as had previously been the case.

9.3. That each local authority was required to provide a written update, in the first instance, on its compliance with the legislation.

9.4. That, in June 2023, the Council submitted a comprehensive response setting out its compliance with the statutory provisions which governed the use of covert surveillance.

9.5. That, on 28 June 2023, the Investigatory Powers Commissioner wrote to the Chief Executive advising that he was satisfied that the Council's response, referred to at paragraph 9.4 above, provided assurance that ongoing compliance with RIPSA and the Investigatory Powers Act 2016 would be maintained, and that no further inspection would be required until 2026.

9.6. That, in accordance with the Covert Surveillance and Property Interference Code of Practice and the Use of Covert Human Intelligence Sources Code of Practice, both issued by the Scottish Government, the policies and procedures of a local authority relating to its use of covert surveillance, including directed surveillance, and the use of covert human intelligence sources, required to be reviewed annually.

9.7. That, on 1 March 2022, the Council reviewed its policies and procedures in connection with the exercise of its statutory powers to conduct covert surveillance.

9.8. That, since 1 March 2022, there had been no changes in the law or to relevant guidance in connection with the Council's statutory powers to conduct covert surveillance.

9.9. That, since 1 March 2022, there had been no cause by the Council to exercise its statutory powers to conduct covert surveillance.

9.10. That, in order to further enhance the safeguards outlined in the relevant Codes of Practice in relation to the retention, review and destruction of material obtained through the use of covert powers, a proposed new protocol attached as Appendix 1 to the joint report by the Chief Executive and the Corporate Director for Strategy, Performance and Business Solutions, had been developed.

9.11. That the following policies and procedures had been amended to incorporate the proposed protocol regarding data handling and safeguarding:

- Policy on Covert Surveillance.
- Procedure for Authorisation of Covert Surveillance.
- Policy on Use of Covert Human Intelligence Sources.
- Procedure for Authorisation of the Use of Covert Human Intelligence Sources.
- Surveillance through Social Media Policy.

The Committee resolved to **recommend to the Council:**

9.12. That the new and updated policies and procedures, in connection with the Council's arrangements for covert surveillance, attached as Appendices 3 to 8 of this Minute, be approved.

10. Joint Inspection of Adult Support and Protection

Improvement Plan

Councillor Gillian Skuse declared an interest in this item, her connection being that she was a member of the Adult Support and Protection Quality Assurance Sub-Group, which was responsible for one of the actions contained in the Improvement Plan, but concluded that, as the purpose of the report was only to note the progress of the actions, her interest did not preclude her involvement in the discussion.

After consideration of a report by the Chief Officer, Orkney Health and Social Care Partnership, copies of which had been circulated, the Committee:

Noted:

10.1. That, on 20 June 2023, the Policy and Resources Committee noted:

- The key findings arising from the report, published by the Care Inspectorate on 11 April 2023, of the Joint Inspection of Adult Support and Protection.
- That work was progressing to develop the improvement action plan which would be presented to the next meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee, together with a progress update.

10.2. That an Improvement Plan, attached as Appendix 1 to the report by the Chief Officer, Orkney Health and Social Care Partnership, was developed to address the five areas identified to support the improvement of Adult Support and Protection, and submitted to the Care Inspectorate.

10.3. That progress made with the actions contained in the Improvement Plan would be reported to the Adult Support and Protection Quality Assurance Sub-Group, with the final report to be completed and reported to the Orkney Public Protection Committee and Chief Officers Group.

11. Integration Joint Board – Annual Performance Report

After consideration of a report by the Chief Officer, Orkney Health and Social Care Partnership, copies of which had been circulated, the Committee:

Noted:

11.1. That, in terms of section 42 of the Public Bodies (Joint Working) (Scotland) Act 2014, integration authorities must prepare a report detailing performance relating to the planning and carrying out of the integration functions, for the area of the local authority.

11.2. That the performance report must be published and a copy provided to each constituent authority, in this case NHS Orkney and Orkney Islands Council.

11.3. That the performance report, attached as Appendix 1 to the report by the Chief Officer, Orkney Health and Social Care Partnership, was based on information supplied by the Public Health Scotland Local Intelligence Support Team, to report performance against the Core Suite of National Performance Indicators for 2021/22, as well as performance against the Ministerial Strategic Group performance indicators.

11.4. That the draft Annual Performance Report was approved by the Integration Joint Board on 28 June 2023 and subsequently submitted to the Scottish Government on 29 June 2023.

12. Chief Social Work Officer's Annual Report

After consideration of a report by the Chief Social Work Officer, copies of which had been circulated, the Committee:

Scrutinised the Chief Social Work Officer's Annual Report for 2022/23, attached as Appendix 1 to the report by the Chief Social Work Officer, and obtained assurance that social work and social care services were being delivered to an acceptable standard locally.

Councillor Duncan A Tullock left the meeting during discussion of this item and rejoined the meeting at this point.

13. Local Employability Partnership Annual Report

After consideration of a report by the Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Community Learning and Development Team Leader (Employability), the Committee:

Noted:

13.1. That, in 2020, Community Learning and Development and Employability took responsibility for delivering employability services under No One Left Behind, which saw the amalgamation of various strategic groups and creation of the Local Employability Partnership.

13.2. That, in March 2022, the Local Employability Partnership published the No One Left Behind 3 Year Operational Plan, outlining its collective efforts to deliver on the national policy context and provide employability services that met local community and economic needs.

13.3. That membership of the Orkney Local Employability Partnership was large and included a variety of public and third sector services that all contributed not only to employability directly but also indirectly including housing, community justice and health services.

13.4. The Local Employability Partnership Annual Report 2022-2023, attached as Appendix 1 to the report by the Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing, which detailed progress made across the partnership to work towards and meet the collective vision and outcomes set out in the No One Left Behind 3 Year Operational Plan.

13.5. That the Council, as the Lead Accountable Body, was allocated employability funding from Scottish Government to administer, as decided by the Local Employability Partnership, to meet local priorities and agreed outcomes.

13.6. That, despite the requirement for a 3 Year Operational Plan, funding was currently allocated on a yearly basis, which brought challenges as highlighted in the Annual Report 2022-23.

The Committee scrutinised:

13.7. The Local Employability Partnership Annual Report for 2022-23, attached as Appendix 1 to the report by the Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing, and obtained assurance that the aims and priorities detailed in the Orkney No One Left Behind 3 Year Operational Plan were being met, in as far as they related to the Council.

14. The Orkney Partnership – Update and Annual Report

After consideration of a report by the Corporate Director for Strategy, Performance and Business Solutions, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Community Planning Business Manager, the Committee:

Noted:

14.1. The recent activity of The Orkney Partnership, as described in section 4 of the report by the Corporate Director for Strategy, Performance and Business Solutions.

The Committee resolved to **recommend to the Council:**

14.2. That The Orkney Partnership's draft Annual Report 2022/23, attached as Appendix 9 to this Minute, be approved insofar as it applied to the Council.

Councillor Stephen G Clackson rejoined the meeting at this point.

15. Local Child Poverty Action Report

After consideration of a joint report by the Chief Officer, Orkney Health and Social Care Partnership, the Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing and the Corporate Director for Strategy, Performance and Business Solutions, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Head of Improvement and Performance, the Committee:

Noted:

15.1. That the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017 placed a duty on local authorities and health boards in Scotland to report annually on activity they were taking, and would take, to reduce child poverty.

15.2. That Local Child Poverty Action Reports must be submitted to the Scottish Government as soon as practicable following the end of the reporting year.

15.3. That the Child Poverty Task Force had published four Local Child Poverty Action Reports for Orkney, with the fifth, for 2022-23, attached in draft at Appendix 1 to the joint report by the Chief Officer, Orkney Health and Social Care Partnership, the Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing and the Corporate Director for Strategy, Performance and Business Solutions.

15.4. That the Orkney Child Poverty Strategy 2022-26 took effect from April 2022 and provided a coherent framework for the planning, implementation, monitoring and reporting of co-ordinated action to address child poverty in Orkney.

15.5. That the monitoring and reporting of co-ordinated action to address child poverty in Orkney, including compilation of the Local Child Poverty Action Report 2022-23, was currently undertaken by the Orkney Partnership's Cost of Living Task Force.

15.6. That the draft Local Child Poverty Action Report 2022-23 was currently in circulation for consideration by partner agencies and would be submitted for final approval to the Orkney Partnership Board prior to submission to the Scottish Government.

The Committee resolved to **recommend to the Council:**

15.7. That the Local Child Poverty Action Report 2022-23, attached as Appendix 10 to this Minute, be approved for submission to the Scottish Government, in so far as it related to the remit of the Council.

16. Islands Cost Crisis Emergency Fund

Councillor Gillian Skuse declared an interest in this item, her connection being that she was a member of the Cost of Living Task Force, and was not present during discussion thereof.

Councillor Mellissa-Louise Thomson declared an interest in this item, her connection being that she was a member of various groups who had previously benefitted from the Islands Cost Crisis Emergency Fund and might be eligible for future funding, and was not present during discussion thereof.

After consideration of a joint report by the Chief Officer, Orkney Health and Social Care Partnership, the Corporate Director for Strategy, Performance and Business Solutions and the Corporate Director for Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Head of Improvement and Performance, the Committee:

Noted:

16.1. That, in December 2022, the Scottish Government established an Islands Cost Crisis Emergency Fund, in recognition of the higher costs of living experienced by residents of Scotland's islands, to be distributed by local authorities "based on their local knowledge and understanding of the impacts of the cost crisis on their islands".

16.2. That Orkney's share of the Islands Cost Crisis Emergency Fund for 2022/23, amounting to £305,000, was allocated by the Council to the Third Sector Cost of Living Crisis Fund, administered by Voluntary Action Orkney.

16.3. That a second tranche of the Islands Cost Crisis Emergency Fund had been announced for 2023/24, with Orkney's allocation being £218,000, to be used "by providing immediate help to people, communities and businesses who are struggling most, either through existing schemes and/or other new support where need is greatest".

16.4. That the Orkney Partnership had established a multi-agency Delivery Group, the Cost of Living Task Force, with a brief to co-ordinate an agile response to the cost of living crisis, supporting both immediate need and longer-term prevention of poverty and disadvantage, which included the co-ordination of partnership action plans relating to child poverty, food dignity and fuel poverty.

16.5. That many of the projects and services delivered by members of the Cost of Living Task Force directly supported the immediate need of the people and communities targeted by the Islands Cost Crisis Emergency Fund and, with additional resources, could be rolled out to support many more.

16.6. That, collectively, members of the Cost of Living Task Force could offer unparalleled expertise, capacity and local knowledge, as well as direct access to the people and communities who were struggling most as a consequence of the cost of living crisis.

16.7. That the Cost of Living Task Force was currently chaired by the Chief Officer of the Orkney Health and Social Care Partnership.

The Committee resolved to **recommend to the Council:**

16.8. That the Cost of Living Task Force be invited to recommend how best the Islands Cost Crisis Emergency Fund 2023/24 should be spent and to action their recommendations.

16.9. That all recommendations made by the Cost of Living Task Force regarding expenditure of the Islands Cost Crisis Emergency Fund 2023/24 should be scrutinised and approved by the Corporate Director for Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration prior to implementation.

16.10. That the Islands Cost Crisis Emergency Fund should be administered by the Community Planning Business Manager.

17. National Islands Plan – Consultation

After consideration of a report by the Corporate Director for Strategy, Performance and Business Solutions, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Head of Improvement and Performance, the Committee:

Noted:

17.1. That the National Islands Plan was published by Scottish Ministers in 2019 as a requirement of the Islands (Scotland) Act 2018.

17.2. That Scottish Ministers were required to review the National Islands Plan five years after publication.

17.3. That Scottish Government was holding a public consultation to inform the review of the National Islands Plan, for which responses were required by 9 October 2023.

17.4. The Council's draft response to the Scottish Government's consultation on the review of the National Islands Plan, attached as Appendix 1 to the report by the Corporate Director for Strategy, Performance and Business Solutions.

The Committee resolved to **recommend to the Council:**

17.5. That consideration of the Council's draft response to the Scottish Government's consultation on the review of the National Islands Plan, be deferred, to the General Meeting of the Council to be held on 3 October 2023, to enable elected members to provide feedback on the proposed response, referred to at paragraph 17.4 above.

18. Place Based Investment Programme

After consideration of a report by the Corporate Director for Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Head of Enterprise and Economic Growth, the Committee:

Noted:

18.1. That the 2020 Programme for Government committed to establishing a Place Based Investment Programme, with Scottish Government and Council Leaders agreeing that Local Government would receive a share of the funding over five years to support and advance place based investment.

18.2. That the Council received an allocation of £106,000 in 2022/23 from the Place Based Investment Programme, with an indication that £74,000 would be received in 2023/24 and the following two financial years.

18.3. That the requirement to enter contracts for any work before the end of the financial year, as well as the inability to use the funds for any project already on the Council's capital programme, significantly limited options for how the Place Based Investment Programme funding could be used.

18.4. That the aims of the Place Based Investment Programme were particularly well aligned to the Council's draft Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Plan, where a place based approach was being taken and funding could form part of match funding for bids to other external funding sources such as VisitScotland's Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund.

The Committee resolved to **recommend to the Council:**

18.5. That powers be delegated to the Corporate Director for Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration, in consultation with the Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure, to determine use of the Council's Place Based Investment Programme awards for 2023/24 to 2025/26, to fund 'place based' projects, with a preference towards tourism infrastructure projects identified and developed through the Strategic Tourism Infrastructure Development Plan, where match funding could also be identified from the Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund and/or other external funding sources.

19. Equalities Mainstreaming and Outcomes

After consideration of a report by the Corporate Director for Strategy, Performance and Business Solutions, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Interim Senior Organisational Development Adviser, the Committee:

Noted:

19.1. That, in 2018, the Council published its Equality Outcomes and related action plan for the period 2018 to 2022.

19.2. The proposed Equality Outcomes for the period 2023 to 2027, as set out on page 12 of the Equalities Mainstreaming and Outcomes Report attached as Annex 1 to the report by the Corporate Director for Strategy, Performance and Business Solutions.

The Committee scrutinised:

19.3. The final progress report in respect of the Equalities Mainstreaming and Equality Outcomes 2018-2022, as detailed in Appendix 1 of Annex 1 to the report by the Corporate Director for Strategy, Performance and Business Solutions, and obtained assurance that the Council made progress against the Equality Outcomes.

The Committee resolved to **recommend to the Council:**

19.4. That the Equalities Mainstreaming and Outcomes Report, incorporating revised Equality Outcomes for the period 2023 to 2027, attached as Appendix 11 to this Minute, be approved in so far as it related to the remit of the Council.

20. Local Government in Scotland: Overview 2023

After consideration of a report by the Corporate Director for Strategy, Performance and Business Solutions, copies of which had been circulated, the Committee:

Noted:

20.1. The national audit report, Local Government in Scotland: Overview 2022, published by Audit Scotland in May 2023, attached as Appendix 1 to the report by the Corporate Director for Strategy, Performance and Business Solutions, which provided a high-level, independent view of the key challenges and performance issues faced by Scottish Councils.

20.2. The key messages and recommendations contained within the national audit report, details of which were included in section 4 of the report by the Corporate Director for Strategy, Performance and Business Solutions.

The Committee scrutinised:

20.3. The local context, as set out in section 5 of the report by the Corporate Director for Strategy, Performance and Business Solutions, and obtained assurance that the Council was addressing the key messages and recommendations arising from the national audit report, where required and as appropriate.

Councillor Stephen G Clackson left the meeting during discussion of this item and rejoined the meeting at this point.

21. Digital Strategy Delivery Plan

After consideration of a report by the Corporate Director for Strategy, Performance and Business Solutions, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Service Manager (Improvement and Performance), the Committee:

Noted:

21.1. That, on 22 February 2022, the Policy and Resources Committee recommended that the updated Digital Strategy 2022 to 2026 be approved.

21.2. That a delivery plan, which detailed actions to deliver on the aims and outcomes of the Digital Strategy 2022 – 2026, and those of the Council Plan 2023 – 2028, had been developed.

The Committee resolved to **recommend to the Council:**

21.3. That the Digital Strategy Delivery Plan 2023 – 2026, attached as Appendix 12 to this Minute, be approved.

22. Climate Change Strategy

After consideration of a report by the Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Head of Planning and Community Protection, the Committee:

Noted:

22.1. That the Council declared a Climate Emergency in 2019 and, through the adopted Council Plan 2023-28, confirmed a high ambition for action on climate change and net zero, reflecting climate leadership and support for local economic growth and transition.

22.2. That relevant guidance and standards concerning net zero as a climate target had matured in the last two years, and now reflected a consensus approach to use of the term in setting clear targets for climate action.

22.3. That achieving net zero was a clear aim for the Council and the scale of the task required independent information to support future decision making and funding decisions.

22.4. That clarity was required in communicating the Council's net zero commitments and strategy development.

22.5. That the Extended Corporate Leadership Team had agreed the establishment of a cross service Climate Change Team, with officer representation across all service areas.

22.6. The draft timeline for progressing the Council's Climate Change Strategy, as detailed in section 7.6 of the report by the Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.

Councillor James W Stockan, seconded by Councillor Kristopher D Leask, moved that:

- The Council acknowledge the scale of the challenge of transitioning the Council and services to net zero, confirm its commitment to urgent action, and endorse the developing strategic approach, including initial principles and timeline.
- The Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure should commission an independent study to identify indicative Council transition pathways towards net zero, at an estimated cost of £80,000, to be funded from the Council's Crown Estate Fund.
- The Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure should submit, to the Policy and Resources Committee no later than March 2024, an interim vision paper on net zero, explaining the Council's ambition, transparently communicating the approach to drive short term action and delivering a route map to achieve net zero.

- The Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure should submit a report, to the Policy and Resources Committee no later than March 2025, on the outcomes of the independent study commissioned to identify indicative Council transition pathways towards net zero.

Councillor Duncan A Tullock, seconded by Councillor Owen Tierney, moved an amendment that the undernoted recommendations, as proposed by officers, be deleted:

- The Council acknowledge the scale of the challenge of transitioning the Council and services to net zero, confirm its commitment to urgent action, and endorse the developing strategic approach, including initial principles and timeline.
- The Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure should commission an independent study to identify indicative Council transition pathways towards net zero, at an estimated cost of £80,000, to be funded from the Council's Crown Estate Fund.
- The Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure should submit, to the Policy and Resources Committee no later than March 2024, an interim vision paper on net zero, explaining the Council's ambition, transparently communicating the approach to drive short term action and delivering a route map to achieve net zero.
- The Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure should submit a report, to the Policy and Resources Committee no later than March 2025, on the outcomes of the independent study commissioned to identify indicative Council transition pathways towards net zero.

The result of a recorded vote was as follows:

For the Amendment:

Councillors Stephen G Clackson, David Dawson, Owen Tierney and Duncan A Tullock (4).

For the Motion:

Councillors Graham A Bevan, Alexander G Cowie, Steven B Heddle, Rachael A King, Kristopher D Leask, W Leslie Manson, James R Moar, Raymond S Peace, John A R Scott, Gwenda M Shearer, Gillian Skuse, Jean E Stevenson, James W Stockan, Ivan A Taylor and Heather N Woodbridge (15).

The Motion was therefore carried and the Committee thereafter resolved to **recommend to the Council:**

22.7. That the Council acknowledge the scale of the challenge of transitioning the Council and services to net zero, confirm its commitment to urgent action and endorse the developing strategic approach, including initial principles and timeline.

22.8. That the Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure should commission an independent study to identify indicative Council transition pathways towards net zero, at an estimated cost of £80,000, to be funded from the Council's Crown Estate Fund.

22.9. That the Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure should submit, to the Policy and Resources Committee no later than March 2024, an interim vision paper on net zero, explaining the Council's ambition, transparently communicating the approach to drive short term action and delivering a route map to achieve net zero.

22.10. That the Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure should submit a report, to the Policy and Resources Committee no later than March 2025, on the outcomes of the independent study commissioned to identify indicative Council transition pathways towards net zero.

Councillors P Lindsay Hall and Mellissa-Louise Thomson left the meeting during discussion of this item.

23. Pension Fund Sub-committee, together with Pension Board

After consideration of the draft Minute of the Meeting of the Pension Fund Sub-committee, together with the Pension Board, held on 31 August 2023, copies of which had been circulated, the Committee:

Resolved, on the motion of Councillor Rachael A King, seconded by Councillor Kristopher D Leask, to approve the Minute of the Meeting of the Pension Fund Sub-committee, together with the Pension Board, held on 31 August 2023, attached as Appendix 13 to this Minute, as a true record.

24. Asset Management Sub-committee

After consideration of the draft Minute of the Meeting of the Asset Management Sub-committee held on 29 August 2023, copies of which had been circulated, the Committee:

Resolved, on the motion of Councillor Ivan A Taylor, seconded by Councillor Steven B Heddle, to approve the Minute of the Meeting of the Asset Management Sub-committee held on 29 August 2023, attached as Appendix 14 to this Minute, as a true record.

25. Zero-Emission Vessel and Infrastructure Fund

The Committee noted that this item had been withdrawn.

26. Exclusion of Public

On the motion of Councillor James W Stockan, seconded by Councillor Heather N Woodbridge the Committee resolved that the public be excluded for the remainder of the meeting, as the business to be considered involved the disclosure of exempt information of the classes described in the relevant paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 as amended.

27. North Isles Landscape Partnership Scheme

Councillor Stephen G Clackson declared an interest in this item, his connection being that a close family member was a recipient of assistance from the North Isles Landscape Partnership Scheme, and was not present during discussion thereof.

Under section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, the public had been excluded from the meeting for this item on the grounds that it involved the disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1, 4 and 6 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

After consideration of a report by the Corporate Director for Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Service Manager (Enterprise), the Committee:

Noted:

27.1. That, in 2015, the North Isles Landscape Partnership was established and comprised the Council, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and Scottish Natural Heritage (now known as NatureScot).

27.2. That, in November 2015, the Heritage Lottery Fund (now known as the National Lottery Heritage Fund), and the scheme's main funder, awarded a first-round pass to the North Isles Landscape Partnership Scheme to work up a second-round submission.

27.3. That the North Isles Landscape Partnership Scheme's Landscape Conservation Action Plan was subsequently developed, and a second-round application made to the National Lottery Heritage Fund in 2017, with a total projected budget of up to £4,524,212, subject to a full funding package being secured.

27.4. That the North Isles Landscape Partnership Scheme consisted of a range of projects under four themes, with a list of projects attached as Appendix 1 to the report by the Corporate Director for Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration.

27.5. That, in September 2017, the Policy and Resources Committee recommended that funding, of up to £282,260, be allocated from the Strategic Reserve Fund towards the delivery phase of the North Isles Landscape Partnership Scheme.

27.6. That, in March 2018, the Heritage Lottery Fund awarded a grant of up to £2,829,200 towards eligible project costs of £4,524,212.

27.7. That, to date, funding up to a total of £4,239,211 had been confirmed in respect of the overall budget for the North Isles Landscape Partnership Scheme, with a balance of approximately £285,000 yet to be secured.

27.8. That a programme extension had been agreed by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, as the main funder, to 31 December 2024 and project managers and community groups were still seeking sources of external match funding in the time remaining.

The Committee resolved to **recommend to the Council:**

27.9. That, subject to confirmation of the subsidy control position to the satisfaction of the Corporate Director for Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration, a provision of up to £285,000 be made from the Council's Crown Estate Fund as a financial guarantee for the remaining projects to ensure delivery of the North Isles Landscape Partnership Scheme.

The above constitutes the summary of the Minute in terms of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 section 50C(2) as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985.

Councillor David Dawson left the meeting during discussion of this item and rejoined the meeting at this point.

28. Potential Acquisition of Property

Under section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, the public had been excluded from the meeting for this item on the grounds that it involved the disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 6, 8 and 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

After consideration of a report by the Corporate Director for Education, Leisure and Housing, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Service Manager (Leisure and Culture), the Committee:

Resolved to **recommend to the Council** what action should be taken with regard to the potential acquisition of property.

The above constitutes the summary of the Minute in terms of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 section 50C(2) as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985.

29. Conclusion of Meeting

At 17:00 the Chair declared the meeting concluded.

Signed: (Leader's signature).

		Total Budget £000	2022/23 £000	2023/24 £000	2024/25 £000	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000
General Fund Summary							
A	Other Housing	5,181	614	2,586	811	585	585
B	Community Social Services	13,367	2,958	8,784	1,625	0	0
C	Education	5,633	1,835	3,538	260	0	0
D	Cultural and Recreational Services	2,673	2,041	427	77	128	0
E	Roads	8,658	3,012	2,776	970	950	950
F	Transportation Services	948	33	915	0	0	0
G	Environmental services	17,583	175	4,988	9,585	2,835	0
H	Planning & Protective Services	0	0	0	0	0	0
J	Administration Services	16,739	4,507	3,584	2,706	2,971	2,971
Expenditure Total		70,782	15,175	27,598	16,034	7,469	4,506
Other Housing							
OH1	Housing Loans	2,925	585	585	585	585	585
OH7	Soulisquoy OH infrastructure	2,256	29	2,001	226	0	0
A		5,181	614	2,586	811	585	585
Social Care							
SC10	New Care Facility, Kirkwall	13,367	2,958	8,784	1,625	0	0
B		13,367	2,958	8,784	1,625	0	0
Education							
ED12	Extension to St Andrew's School	2,238	1,767	471	0	0	0
ED13	New Kirkwall Nursery	3,150	62	2,828	260	0	0
ED14	School Kitchen Improvements	245	6	239	0	0	0
C		5,633	1,835	3,538	260	0	0
Leisure and Cultural							
LC9	Refurb. improve Scapa Flow Visitor Centre and Museum	1,311	1,102	209	0	0	0
LC11	Leisure Properties General	331	331	0	0	0	0
LC12	St Magnus Cathedral Doors	22	10	12	0	0	0
LC13	Papdale East Play Park	426	352	74	0	0	0
LC14	Ness Campsite	301	220	81	0	0	0
LC15	Playpark Renewals	282	26	51	77	128	0
D		2,673	2,041	427	77	128	0
Roads							
RD5	Cycling, Walking & Safer Routes / 20 mph scheme	290	205	85	0	0	0
RD6	Roads Asset Replacement Programme	5,350	1,550	950	950	950	950
RD25	Cursiter Quarry Expansion	2,182	1,257	925	0	0	0
RD26	Coastal Change Adaptation	160	0	160	0	0	0
RD27	Salt Storage Facility (Cursiter Quarry)	676	0	656	20	0	0
E		8,658	3,012	2,776	970	950	950
Transportation							
TR8	Electric vehicle charging infrastructure	33	33	0	0	0	0
TR17	Airfield buildings - Papay and Stronsay	915	0	915	0	0	0
F		948	33	915	0	0	0
Central Administration and Asset Replacement							
CA1	General Capital Grant	0	0	0	0	0	0
CA2	IT replacement programme	3,448	1,768	420	420	420	420
CA4	Plant & Vehicle Replacement	6,534	1,377	1,557	1,200	1,200	1,200
CA12	Alterations to Garden House, Kirkwall	534	13	521	0	0	0
CA13	Disaster recovery and business continuity suite	3	3	0	0	0	0
CA17	Replacement telephone system	10	10	0	0	0	0
CA20	SRF contribution to General Fund Capital Programme	0	0	0	0	0	0
J		10,529	3,171	2,498	1,620	1,620	1,620
Corporate Property							
J	Corporate Improvement Programme	6,210	1,336	1,086	1,086	1,351	1,351
J		6,210	1,336	1,086	1,086	1,351	1,351

		Total Budget £000	2022/23 £000	2023/24 £000	2024/25 £000	2025/26 £000	2026/27 £000
Planning							
H		0	0	0	0	0	0
Operational Environmental Services							
OES2	Burial Grounds - Mainland Extensions	164	164	0	0	0	0
OES3	Burial Grounds - Mainland Major Improvements	55	1	54	0	0	0
OES4	Burial Grounds - Island Extensions	73	0	73	0	0	0
OES5	Burial Grounds - Island Major Improvements	85	10	75	0	0	0
OES7	Integrated Waste Facility	17,206	0	4,786	9,585	2,835	0
G		17,583	175	4,988	9,585	2,835	0
Non General Fund Summary							
K	Housing Revenue Account	8,755	772	6,637	1,346	0	0
L	Orkney College	17	17	0	0	0	0
M	Scapa Flow Oil Port	8,670	7,234	986	150	150	150
N	Miscellaneous Piers and Harbours	10,996	914	8,496	986	300	300
O	Strategic Reserve Fund	633	157	119	119	119	119
	Expenditure Total	29,071	9,094	16,238	2,601	569	569
Housing Revenue Account							
HRA18	Moar Drive	751	37	714	0	0	0
HRA19	Repeater Road	52	52	0	0	0	0
HRA20	McDonald Park	84	84	0	0	0	0
HRA21	Garson	80	80	0	0	0	0
HRA22	Design and Build	3,395	6	2,244	1,145	0	0
HRA24	Carness Phase 2	2,322	493	1,829	0	0	0
HRA25	Soulisquoy HRA infrastructure	2,071	20	1,850	201	0	0
K		8,755	772	6,637	1,346	0	0
OC1	L Plant & Vehicles	17	17	0	0	0	0
		17	17	0	0	0	0
Scapa Flow Oil Port							
SF7	Minor Improvements	1,110	380	280	150	150	150
SF8	Replacement Tug No 3	7,560	6,854	706	0	0	0
M		8,670	7,234	986	150	150	150
Miscellaneous Piers							
MP1	Minor Improvements	2,623	732	991	300	300	300
MP14	Hatston Pier Road Reconstruction	295	0	295	0	0	0
MP15	Hatston Terminal Passenger Walkway	42	42	0	0	0	0
MP16	Stromness Terminal Passenger Walkway	44	44	0	0	0	0
MP17	Kirkwall Pier Water Break Tank System	200	5	195	0	0	0
MP18	Reclamation at Hatston Pier - Ph 1	7,792	91	7,015	686	0	0
N		10,996	914	8,496	986	300	300
Strategic Reserve Fund							
SRF1	SRF Property Maintenance	633	157	119	119	119	119
SRF3	Investment Properties buy /sell	0	0	0	0	0	0
O		633	157	119	119	119	119



Funding External Bodies and Following the Public Pound

September 2023

Version Control

Document Reference.	Rev.	Issue date.	Reason for issue.	Reviewer.
	Approved.	June 2009.	Rev2.	Head of Finance.
		Sept 2023.	Rev3.	Head of Finance.

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This document can be made available on request in a range of formats and languages.

1. Scope

The scope of these detailed requirements is limited to payments made to external bodies, which are not already covered by straightforward contractual relationships. Services are required to carry out an options appraisal of the alternative methods of service delivery available **before** committing to funding an Arms Length External Organisation (ALEO). This options appraisal should be revisited with each renewal period.

Corporate Directors are responsible for authorising staff members to process, certify and record grant payments under schemes operating under their Service umbrella. This includes ensuring comprehensive procedures are laid out, including options appraisals and checklists to track the progress of all applications. The Corporate Director is also responsible for ensuring that the list of authorised schemes (**annex 1**) is kept up to date and that scheme expenditure is in accordance with the Council's strategic policies or objectives - subject to compliance with the Financial Regulations and the approved Scheme of Delegation to Officers.

2. Code of Guidance on Funding External Bodies and Following the Public Pound

The *Code of Guidance on Funding External Bodies and Following the Public Pound* (**annex 2**) is a national guideline and the Council is obliged to fulfil its requirements, including:

- consistency with Council objectives and principles of Best Value;
- minimum standard of management arrangements in place;
- monitoring arrangements clearly stipulated.

The Following the Public Pound Risk Assessment Model (**Annex 3**) should be used to carry out formal risk assessments on all services considering funding arrangements where payments are made in advance to ALEOs. Where payments of grants are made in arrears on the evidence of expenditure the risk process does not require completion. Completing the risk assessment will assist the Council in demonstrating it has assessed the ALEOs in terms of meeting the objectives of the Council and minimise the financial risk.

The Following the Public Pound Risk Assessment Model is a guide. Each ALEO funding arrangement should be scored against the model, ALEOs with a risk score of **over 44** is unacceptable and steps should be taken to lower the risk prior to funding being granted. A risk score of between **33 and 44** demonstrates that the ALEO has a significant risk to the Council, and although funding can be awarded steps should be taken to reduce risks in key categories. Officers will have to use their judgement, in light of the actions taken to reduce the risks, as to whether the funding should be provided / continued. Risk scores **under 33** are acceptable – notwithstanding the overall responsibility to reduce the level of risk under each category and in total. The Risk Assessment Model is attached at **Annex 3** to this document.

Payment to external bodies not only includes grants or subsidies, but also low-cost or free use of Council property, equipment or staff time. Where it is proposed to provide the use of Council property at either a reduced rent or free of charge, this should be approved through the Committee process. Where it is agreed that a lesser rent is to be charged, dispensation should be sought under Section 74 (2) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, by applying to Scottish Ministers. Each Corporate Director should ensure that their staff are aware of the information required to support an application to the Scottish Ministers and be prepared to collate the information, notify the Estates section of the Property Division and forward the relevant information to Legal Services for the appropriate application to be made.

Awarding non-cash subsidies represents a cost which needs to be recognised, valued, and recorded. It is **important** to evaluate the cost of all non-cash subsidies to ensure full disclosure in the Following the Public Pound Register. Non-cash payments should also be included in any agreements between the Council and the ALEO.

The assessment of non-cash rewards should be evaluated in one of two ways:

1. Market Cost, officers should obtain market equivalents for the services provided to ALEOs i.e. the cost for rent on a similar property; or the cost of vehicle / equipment hire over a similar period; or the cost of consultancy services.
2. Actual cost, officers should look to calculate the unit cost for the service provision, i.e. property costs incurred – including repairs; staff costs – employee and employers costs – including apportionment for IT and accommodation; vehicle / equipment maintenance costs – including depreciation.

In general – what would the ALEO have paid had the Council not provided the low-cost or free use of Council property, equipment or staff time.

3. Payments Over £10,000

For payments of £10,000 or more, a written Service Level Agreement (SLA) is required to be in place between the Council and the external body, covering the requirements stated in the Code, **prior** to the commencement of the provision of services by the external body.

KEY PRINCIPLES

- **Purpose** – is the council clear about its reasons for transferring funds to the ALEO;
- **Financial regime** – is there a clear and robust financial management regime in place;
- **Monitoring** – are there robust arrangements for monitoring its relationship with an ALEO;
- **Representation** – is the council clear about the purpose of any officer or member representation on ALEOs, and do representatives discharge their responsibilities with due regard to the objectives of the council;

- **Limitations** – if entering into a substantial funding commitment with an ALEO, has a timetable for the achievement of council objectives been laid down;
- **Accountability** – are there arrangements for suitable access by internal and external audit.

In all cases, the Corporate Director shall nominate an officer who is responsible for monitoring the relationship between the Council and the external body. The nominated officer should ensure, in conjunction with Legal Services, that an SLA is in place which clearly states the obligations placed on both parties. Reporting mechanisms should be included in the SLA with the nature and frequency of these reports being stated at the outset based on the value and risk associated with the payment. Before certifying a claim for payment, the certifying officer should have satisfied themselves that all conditions of the funding have been met and verified in line with the Financial Regulations. Where payments are made in advance, adequate controls should exist to ensure that the individual financial and monitoring requirements are followed.

Reports from the ALEOs should contain financial, qualitative and performance monitoring information including (but not limited to):

- evidence of receipt of funding, e.g. bank statements, etc.;
- evidence of payments made, e.g. accounts, receipts, payslips etc.;
- aims and objectives of the organisation and how they have been met;
- whether the standards and objectives set by Council have been met; and
- the proposed targets and future plans.

As a guide, reporting from the ALEO should be received on the following frequency:

Less than £10,000	Annual reporting
£10,000<grant<£25,000	6 monthly
£25,000 and above	Quarterly

In terms of payment, the Council recommend the first payment in April, with the second following receipt of signed agreement. The principal reason for the paying of money up front is to demonstrate goodwill to the voluntary sector. There is a risk attached to paying these amounts in advance, however, quarterly monitoring will be in place for higher grant payments.

Corporate Directors should ensure that procedures are in place to ensure that ALEOs are complying with the monitoring conditions included within their SLAs. Where performance measures are included in the monitoring arrangements, these should be assessed against the set targets. Non-compliance with the monitoring requirements contained in the SLA should trigger a review of the funding relationship, and Corporate Directors should ensure that this is standard practice.

On the evidence of the monitoring reports, the Corporate Director should be able to demonstrate that the ALEO is assisting the Council in the achievement of its objectives

in the most effective, efficient and economic manner. The “mini” registers submitted by services includes a column confirming the ALEO funding aids the achievement of the Council objectives.

4. Payments Under £10,000

The following rules apply key principles of the Code to funding arrangements of less than £10,000:

1. Applications should be received from external bodies prior to consideration and approval by relevant Officers;
2. All applications have to fall under established grants per the “Orkney Islands Council Grants” list (**annex 1**). Grant schemes included in this list have to achieve objectives identified in the Council’s Strategic Plan;
3. An officer group will approve or decline the application and inform the external organisation of the decision;
4. Where payments are made in advance controls included under the rules of the individual scheme are followed and an initial payment is made;
5. External organisation incurs costs in line with application submitted;
6. On conclusion of the event a claim form together with receipts (and/or any other information requirements specified under the individual scheme) should be submitted by the external organisation; and
7. On vouching of these receipts and approving the claim, payment vouchers can be certified. Before certifying a claim for payment, the certifying officer shall have satisfied himself that:
 - (a) The work, goods or services to which the claim relates have been received, carried out, examined and approved;
 - (b) The prices, extensions, calculations, trade discounts, other allowances, credits and tax are correct;
 - (c) The expenditure has been properly incurred in line with details on the application and is within the approved provision and the relevant budget constraints;
 - (d) Appropriate entries have been made in the scheme records as required (records should be maintained for at least 3 years – including any monitoring information received);
 - (e) The payment voucher has not been previously passed for payment and is a proper liability of the Council;
 - (f) The appropriate ledger code has been entered on the payment voucher;

- (g) Expenditure agreed outwith a budget head by a Committee has the appropriate Committee reference attached to the payment request.

5. Method of Payment

Grant and other payments will be requested through submission of a self-generated indent form / special payment form. The normal methods of payment to the ALEO of money due shall be by direct credit.

6. Processing of Payment Vouchers

Duly certified payment vouchers shall be passed without delay to the Payments Section who shall examine them to the extent that they consider necessary, for which purpose they shall be entitled to make such enquiries and to receive such information and explanations as they may require.

7. Following the Public Pound Register

A comprehensive register of funding of external bodies is maintained by Finance, which will include the key information on all significant payments made. The individual Corporate Directors are responsible for ensuring their annual Service's "mini" registers are completed swiftly and to timescales given by the Head of Finance.

The completed Register should be included in an annual report to the Policy and Resources Committee during the September cycle of meetings.

8. Conflicts of Interest Register

In addition to the Following the Public Pound Register, the Council also maintains a Conflicts of Interest Register. This register is required to be updated annually whereby all elected members and senior officers (on G12 and above) have to disclose their membership on any boards or committees. Conflicts of Interest can arise between ALEOs and the Council, therefore, the Council must be clear about the purpose of any officer or member representation on ALEOs, and representatives discharge their responsibilities with due regard to Council objectives.

The Employee Code of Conduct (page 4) and the Financial Regulations (para. 5.2) also contain sections covering members and officers duties to declare interests.

Orkney Islands Council Grants

DEPARTMENT	TYPE	RATE	CRITERIA	CONDITIONS
Education, Leisure & Housing	Talented Young Persons Fund Grant	75% up to a maximum of £110 per trip with a maximum of 3 eligible trips in any one-year.	<p>The application must be in respect of courses, events, or selected squad training of a Scottish, national or international standing in recognised arts and sports.</p> <p>Participation must have been gained on the individual's level of performance resulting in selection or specific invitation to participate, evidence of which will be required with the application.</p> <p>Recipient must be 18 years or under. The eligible costs should all be travelling costs, accommodation costs and course or coaching fees.</p> <p>The applicant should travel by the most economical means but if necessary this can be by air.</p> <p>Applications from sports teams or arts groups are not eligible for assistance under the Talented Young Persons Fund.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applications must be made before the trip is scheduled to take place. Assistance cannot be given retrospectively. • Need to attach invitation from organising body to prove representation at a national/international level • Education Admin gets the application authorised by the appropriate person. • Letter or award sent to claimant confirming allocated grant. • Individual/group attends training/competition/event • Must use the claim form supplied, with copies of all relevant receipts attached. Payment is made accordingly
	Talented Performers Fund Grant	75% up to a maximum of £110 per trip with a maximum of 3 eligible trips in any one-year.	<p>The application must be in respect of courses, events, or selected squad training of a Scottish, national or international standing in recognised arts and sports.</p> <p>Participation must have been gained on the individual's level of performance resulting in selection or specific invitation to participate, evidence of which will be required with the application.</p> <p>Recipient must be 19 years or over. The eligible costs should all be travelling costs, accommodation costs and course or coaching fees.</p> <p>The applicant should travel by the most economical means but if necessary this can be by air.</p> <p>Applications from sports teams or arts groups are not</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applications must be made before the trip is scheduled to take place. Assistance cannot be given retrospectively. • Need to attach invitation from organising body to prove representation at a national/international level • Education Admin gets the application authorised by the appropriate person. • Letter or award sent to claimant confirming allocated grant. • Individual/group attends training/competition/event • Must use the claim form

DEPARTMENT	TYPE	RATE	CRITERIA	CONDITIONS
			eligible for assistance under the Talented Performers Fund.	supplied, with copies of all relevant receipts attached. Payment is made accordingly
	Education Maintenance Allowance	Means tested according to the Scottish Government's regulations which are reviewed annually. Awards are £30 per week.	Allowances paid under the national scheme to encourage pupils to continue education after the statutory leaving age.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils must be aged 16-18 and attending a full time course at school or college in Orkney. • Pupils must sign a Learning Agreement and adhere to this • Learning Centres can hold payments if attendance, behaviour or attainment do not meet the learning agreement's criteria.
	FE Bursaries	Means tested according to regulations based on the National Policy for FE Bursaries issued by the Scottish FE Funding Council.	Grant assistance available towards course fees, maintenance, materials & travel.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approved courses with a max. level of National Certificate. • Part-time, courses up to HNC level may be considered for fees only applications
	Interview Expenses for Students	Up to £50 for interviews in Scotland, up to £75 for interviews outside Scotland.	16-18 year olds attending secondary school, Orkney College or NEET can claim for expenses for attending College or University Interviews outside Orkney.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applications in the first instance to be made to head teacher of the pupils' school.
	School Clothing Grants	Maximum annual grant is £150 for secondary £120 for primary	Grants are available to help purchase essential school clothing and footwear.	Applicants must be in receipt of one of the benefits in the criteria set by the Scottish Government
	Kirkwood Bequest	Awards are £1000 per year.	Fund used to promote agricultural and veterinary study for pupils attending Stromness Academy.	Application must be submitted while applicant is still a pupil at Stromness Academy. Application forms should be endorsed by the Head Teacher of Stromness Academy by the 5th March.
	Parental Involvement	Budget £8,900	All Parent Councils in Orkney are awarded a grant of £325 annually for their administration and clerical costs.	The grant must be paid into the Parent Council's own separate bank account and must not be mixed with OIC

DEPARTMENT	TYPE	RATE	CRITERIA	CONDITIONS
				funds. Parent Councils should have a constitution.
	Orkney Educational Trust	The amount of grant is generally between £0 - £200.	Applications to promote general educational projects and support students through bursaries and educational travel.	The OIC General Charitable Trust considers applications that are within the criteria, with a focus on applications that promote the common good of the people of Orkney.
	The Culture Fund	Budget £176,600 (2023/24)	<p>Grants to key cultural organisations – grants are provided to 5 organisations which are agreed by the Council and which are reviewed every 3 years. The current beneficiaries are:</p> <p>St Magnus International Festival</p> <p>Pier Arts Centre</p> <p>Orkney Folk Festival</p> <p>Stromness Museum</p> <p>Birsay Heritage Trust (for running Barony Mills)</p> <p>The second is the Open pot of £23,000 which is available through an open annual application from organisations who wish to deliver cultural activities. Culture in this circumstance is defined as Arts, Heritage or Language (e.g. Orcadian dialect)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding as a key cultural organisation must sign grant funding conditions if their grant is over £10,000, or general terms and conditions of grant if under £10,000. • Applications to the Open Pot must be from organisations deemed eligible in the guidance for applicants and must fulfil the criteria of the fund, also explained in detail in the guidance for applicants. These can be provided on request. • An assessment panel for the Open Fund includes OIC Cllrs, and Officers as well as external representatives of Creative Scotland, galleries museums Scotland and Voluntary Action Orkney makes recommendations for awards and the Executive Director of Education, Leisure and Housing has delegated authority to approve awards. • The full grant is awarded up front.

DEPARTMENT	TYPE	RATE	CRITERIA	CONDITIONS
	Visual Artist and Craft Maker Awards	Total budget of £8,000 Bursary levels of £750 for experienced artists, £500 for new and emerging artists.	The devolved Visual Artist and Craft Maker Awards scheme has operated since 2014. The fund is a national one, run by Creative Scotland, and managed on a local basis by the Council's Arts Development Service. The Scheme is funded by Creative Scotland (£5,000), Highlands and Islands Enterprise (£1,500) and Orkney Islands Council £1500.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awards are allocated competitively via application with a deadline in February. • An assessment panel including local art and craft, Creative Scotland, HIE and OIC representatives determine the award. • The full grant is awarded up front.
	Decoration Grant for New and Transfer Tenants	Each application will be considered on an individual basis.	<p>Tenants may be able to get a decoration grant, on the recommendation of the Building Inspector, if they are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a new tenant or • a transfer tenant from either our secure stock or emergency stock. <p>Grant is dependent on the condition of the property you are leaving and the one you are going on to and is only available to tenants with a clear rent account. Please contact the Housing Management Section for more information.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Council Tenants and Transfer Tenants Only. • The property will be assessed by the building inspectors on the condition of its décor. • On their recommendation, tenants are provided with an order to the recommended value. • The Council will be invoiced directly by the supplier and invoices checked against orders. • Any additional amounts must be funded by the Tenant.
	Decoration Grants following Planned Maintenance Works, e.g. Kitchen Upgrade	£60.00	<p>Tenants may be able to get a decoration grant, on the recommendation of the Building Inspector, if their kitchen has recently been upgraded.</p> <p>In some instances, tenants can choose to have their kitchen painted in White or Magnolia, at no expense to them;</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Tenants can provide their own paint or wallpaper, for the contractor to apply. The tenant pays for the materials only.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council Tenants with a Clear Rent Account Only

DEPARTMENT	TYPE	RATE	CRITERIA	CONDITIONS
	Removal Grant	Up to a maximum of £1310 (sum is determined by reduction in no of bedrooms within properties ie maximum sum would require downsizing from a 4 bedroom to a one bedroom property)	<p>Available to Council tenants where their home is bigger than they now need, i.e. where children have grown up and left the family home, we may offer some financial assistance to help you to move to a smaller property when one becomes available.</p> <p>Removal costs covers: Removal company costs; carpets, curtains, re-connecting telephone.</p> <p>In some cases this service may be available to tenants with rent arrears but any costs incurred during the removal may be set against the rent account.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transfer Council Tenants /OHAL • Usually only Council Tenants with a Clear Rent Account Only • Payment made on submission of receipts.
	Start-up grants for Residents' and Tenant Associations	Each application will be assessed individually, up to the maximum of £515	Newly constituted Resident/Tenant Associations. Financial assistance will be considered towards start-up costs for setting up a group, i.e. training, surveys.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All applications must be accompanied by a proper constitution. • Detailed account of expenditure must be provided.
	Annual Grant for Tenants' and Residents' Associations	£23.24 per Council dwelling per annum, for the first 100 properties and, thereafter, £11.62 per annum for each additional Council dwelling.	Constituted Residents'/Tenants' Associations	<p>Groups must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have a proper Constitution. • Hold a public AGM to which all residents living in the area are invited, as well as a Council official from the Housing Division. • Have an adequate representation of tenants of Orkney Islands Council as members of the association and its governing committee. • Follow the principles of the Code of Practice for Tenant Participation. • Have an annual audit of accounts, proper accounting procedures and regular, written financial reports.

DEPARTMENT	TYPE	RATE	CRITERIA	CONDITIONS
	One-off grants for Tenant/Residents' Associations	Each application will be considered on an individual basis.	Constituted Resident/Tenant Associations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is a top-up grant in to addition to the Tenants/Residents' Associations' Annual Grant. Grants are awarded in respect of carrying out research, surveys, questionnaires or training. The applicant must be attending training relevant to Tenant Participation. Detailed account of expenditure must be provided. Reimbursement for training and travel expenses, expenditure receipts must be provided.
	Small Repairs Grant	Maximum award of £1,000, or £2,000 if disabled	<p>Financial Criteria:</p> <p>The applicant/household should be in receipt of any of the following benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Employment Support Allowance - Income Support - Universal Credit - Job Seeker's Allowance - Pension Credit - Attendance Allowance - Disability Living Allowance - Personal Independence Payment. <p>The applicant/household should have less than £16,000 in savings.</p> <p>The applicant/household should have monthly take home pay not exceeding £435 or £935 if they are responsible for at least one child.</p> <p>Non-dependents within the household are to be disregarded for the purposes of the calculation.</p>	<p>The applicant/household's principal or sole residence should be in Orkney.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Written approval of grant is required prior to commencement of works No grant applications for retrospective works One grant application per household per two years Payment on submission of invoices for works
Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration	Economic Development Grant	30% grant up to a maximum of £55,000, based on project costs	The Council's Economic Development Grant Scheme is targeted towards supporting:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applications outwith policy may be considered by the D&I Committee

DEPARTMENT	TYPE	RATE	CRITERIA	CONDITIONS
		between minimum of £5,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects which encourage economic diversification. • Activities which raise the average wage rate. • Efforts to overcome barriers to export. • Projects which demonstrate additional benefits to the Orkney economy. • The Council's Economic Development Grant Scheme is targeted towards the following key industry sectors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food and drink production, where the products are primarily intended for export outwith Orkney. • Creative industries and manufacturing, where the outputs are primarily intended for export outwith Orkney. • High-end niche products which are only available in Orkney. • Knowledge and technology, where projects can demonstrate a benefit to the Orkney economy. • Renewable energy (but not energy production) and its supply chain • Service sector where the service is not currently provided in Orkney and a viable demand for that service can be demonstrated (provided it is not just a marginal modification of an existing service already available locally). <p>Service sector where a viable external demand can be demonstrated.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applications must be made before work on the project has commenced. Assistance cannot be given retrospectively. • If offered assistance, a legal agreement specifying the form of assistance and the conditions which apply to it. • Payment will only be made when evidence of expenditure is submitted. • The project must commence within one year of the offer letter being received • All claims must be submitted within one year of the project commencing. Interim payments are allowed
	Graduate Placement Scheme	Grants of up to 25% towards the salary of graduate recruitment for one year.	The graduate should be involved in a development role within the business; the business should be form existing eligible sectors of the economy. Maximum eligible salary is £20,000.	The graduate should be qualified to HND level or above. The placement should commence within two years of graduation and the job should be the first at graduate level for the prospective employee.
	New Business Start Up Grant	Up to 100% up to £1,500	Eligible if business is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - located in Orkney - a new start up business that has been trading for less than 6 months - operated by the business owner 	Equipment purchased and awarded grant funding may not be sold or disposed of within 12 months of receiving the grant, unless a replacement

DEPARTMENT	TYPE	RATE	CRITERIA	CONDITIONS
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - employing less than 50 people - not part of a management buy-in or buy-out - not the recipient of a previous start up grant Franchise businesses are also eligible to apply for the start-up grant. They must be ethical franchises accredited by the British Franchise Association (BFA).	item or upgrade is being purchased. Written dispensation should be requested in advance
	Small Business Training Grant	Up to 90% up to £1,000	To upgrade skills within the business and develop the workforce towards training they have identified that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helps the owner, manager or employees gain skills that directly result in benefit for the business, for example it will improve products, processes or services in the business. • Does not attract financial support from any other source 	All applicants (but not all trainees) must be 18 years of age or over. The business must remain based in the Orkney Islands Council area for at least twelve months
	Flexible Business Development Grant	Up to 50% up to £5,000	Applications from SMEs in the following sectors are strongly encouraged, Tourism, Food and drink, Low carbon and renewable energy technology. Manufacturing, Creative industries, Community based social enterprise companies.	Equipment purchased with grant support may not be sold or disposed of within two years of receipt of grant, unless a replacement item is being purchased. In any event the Council's written permission should be sought in advance
	Tourism Grant Scheme	Upgrading of accommodation up to 30% of eligible costs up to £55,000. New facilities at Existing Accommodation Up to 30% up to £20,000.	Projects which will improve existing accommodation to achieve a VisitScotland 3 star grading or above: for example this could be from ungraded to 3 star, or from 3 star to 4 or 5 star. Projects which will provide new facilities (but not bars) at existing accommodation, which is already part of the VisitScotland QA system, but which will not in itself result in an increased VisitScotland QA grading.	A requirement to maintain the target VisitScotland QA grading for the duration of the grant obligation period; to become and remain a member of Orkney Tourism Group; to commit to a programme of staff development; to demonstrate a commitment to responding to customer feedback; and to participate in industry-wide initiatives such as levels of occupancy surveys A requirement to maintain at least the current VisitScotland QA grading for the duration of the grant obligation period; to become and remain a member of Orkney Tourism Group; to commit to a programme of staff development; to

DEPARTMENT	TYPE	RATE	CRITERIA	CONDITIONS
		Provision of new or upgraded Visitor Attractions/Facilities Up to 30% up to £55,000.	Projects developing new or upgraded attractions or other facilities	demonstrate a commitment to responding to customer feedback; and to participate in industry-wide initiatives such as occupancy surveys. The Council's policy is that assistance cannot be given retrospectively.
	Island Hauliers Replacement Scheme	50% grant on expenditure up to £5,000 per vehicle, and £10,000 per haulier over the 4 year and 2 month cycle of the scheme.	Island hauliers who operate a regular (2 days per week) year round island-mainland service may be eligible for grant assistance. The vehicle must be available at all times to operate an island mainland service and must earn at least 75% of its revenue from island-mainland traffic.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applications will be considered under delegated authority. • Applications must be made before purchase of a replacement vehicle. Assistance cannot be given retrospectively. • If offered assistance, a legal agreement specifying the form of assistance and the conditions which apply to it. • Payment will only be made when evidence of expenditure is submitted.
	Rural Shop Improvement Scheme	Island Shops were that shop provides the only such service on the island: a 75% grant to up to 75% of eligible costs up to a maximum of £10,000 ceiling over the duration of the scheme Other island shops and mainland shops outwith Kirkwall, Stromness, St Margaret's Hope and Finstown: a 50% grant up to the ceiling of £10,000	Grants are available towards a range of improvements in island and rural shops outwith the main population centres of Kirkwall, Stromness, Finstown, St Margaret's Hope and Dounby. Replacement of existing petrol pumps at island shops is eligible under this scheme.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applications will be considered under delegated authority Applications must be made before work on the project has commenced. Assistance cannot be given retrospectively. • If offered assistance, a legal agreement specifying the form of assistance and the conditions which apply to it. • Payment will only be made when evidence of

DEPARTMENT	TYPE	RATE	CRITERIA	CONDITIONS
		Shops located in St Margaret's Hope, Finstown and Stromness which qualified at 1 st April 2005 for mandatory and/or discretionary rates relief (under the Small Business Rate Relief Scheme)		expenditure is submitted. Interim payments are allowed.
	Archaeology Fund Grant	Total budget available is £40,000 in any one year.	Assistance is available towards the cost of archaeological excavation and post-excavation projects within Orkney. Council policy states that half of the fund annually should be allocated to work in the Outer Isles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application deadline of end of November for next financial year. Applications will be considered by the D&I Committee prior to Council ratification. • Must use the claim form supplied, with copies of all relevant receipts attached. • Important that the money is spent on the items identified in your original application. • The Council grant has to be acknowledged in all literature, displays and press releases pertaining to your project. • Projects should commence within one year of the award.
Orkney Health and Care	Grants to Voluntary Organisations	Each application will be considered on an individual basis.	<p>Financial assistance will be considered towards start up costs, ongoing running costs or in relation to specific items of equipment.</p> <p>Priority is given to organisations working in support of Social Work services where the local community can be seen to substantially benefit from the work of the organisation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All applications forms must be accompanied by an up to date copy of the organisation's constitution and the most recent audited accounts/financial statement. • If awards above £5,000 are made, organisations are expected to enter into a formal Service Level Agreement.

DEPARTMENT	TYPE	RATE	CRITERIA	CONDITIONS
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Political organisations are not eligible.
	Local Action Fund	Each application will be considered on an individual basis.	<p>Local Action Fund objectives targeted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing the number of services and facilities available which provide constructive and relevant activities for young people. An increase in the number of young people accessing these facilities. Young people to have sustained interest and involvement in the activities provided. A reduction in youth related calls to the police in areas where new facilities are located. A reduction in community perceptions/concerns about youth crime. 	Funding made in arrears on receipt of monitoring which details how the funding award has been spent, and how the project is achieving its objectives.
	Supporting People	The programme assists people to live more independently. Variable grants are payable to range of service providers.	<p>The supporting people grant can be used across all tenures to provide various types of care. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> General counselling; and Advising and assisting services users on issues such as maintenance, security, finances, etc. 	The Scottish Executive requires all services providers to enter into a formal SLA. The format is prescribed by the Executive.
	Childcare Partnership	<p>Financial assistance will be considered towards start up costs, ongoing running costs or in relation to specific items of equipment.</p> <p>Each application will be considered on an individual basis</p>	<p>Applications must be in accordance with the purpose of the Partnership and meet the Partnership objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To develop and support flexible childcare facilities, which meet the needs of working parents. To promote developments to meet the needs of parents in employment, education or training. To address issues of equality in all aspects of the work of the Partnership. To develop the functioning of the Partnership to maximise participation and consultation with relevant service providers and users. To provide advise, guidance and support to parents seeking to enter the job market. 	<p>Applications are assessed against the aims, objectives and priorities of the Partnership.</p> <p>All organisations receiving funding will be expected to acknowledge receipt of the grant ant to complete a monitoring form after 6 months which details how the funding has been spent, and how the project is achieving its objectives.</p> <p>An SLA is required for payments above £5,000.</p>

Code of guidance on funding external bodies and following the public pound

The Code was published jointly by the Accounts Commission and the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities, in 1996.

Objective of the Code

It is important to ensure clear public accountability for public funds at the same time as supporting initiatives for securing quality local authority services in the most effective, efficient and economic manner.

The principles of openness, integrity and accountability apply to councils in their decisions on spending public money which are subject to public record and external audit. These principles should also apply to funds or other resources which are transferred by councils to arms-length bodies such as companies, trusts and voluntary bodies.

This guidance is intended to ensure proper accountability for such funds and that the principles of regularity and probity are not circumvented. It has the support of the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities.

Scope

The guidance which follows sets out a framework for councils' relationships with bodies through which they seek to carry out some of their functions other than on a straightforward contractual basis.

The principles of the guidance apply to companies and other bodies such as trusts or grant-aided voluntary organisations, both where such bodies are subject to local authority control or influence and where they operate at arm's length.

Councils will wish to have their own rules setting out procedures appropriate to their local circumstances and internal processes, and those rules should be based on this guidance.

The guidance should apply to any new substantial funding relationships entered into by councils and to existing substantial funding relationships at the earliest possible review date.

What is 'substantial' will vary according to circumstances. When interpreting 'substantial' councils should have regard to the significance of the funding in relation to their own budgets and its significance in relation to the budget of the external body. We do not, for example, intend this guidance to apply to the many small revenue grants which councils make to community groups annually. 'Funding' is intended to include all resources which councils may transfer.

Purposes

When agreeing to transfer funds to an external body a council must be clear about its reasons for doing so. Proper considerations should always apply and the prime purpose of involvement with external bodies should be the achievement of the council's objectives in the most effective, efficient and economic manner and not the avoidance of controls or legal restrictions which are designed to secure probity and regularity in the use of public funds. The reasons should be related to a strategy or policy of the council and that link should be demonstrable. An overall statement of purpose should be contained in any council decision

to establish the funding relationship and should be expressed in any establishing documents or written agreements or understandings between the council and the body.

The council should set out its expectation of the use of the funding. This should contain a broad and general statement of aims or goals and should also contain clear targets with timescales and methods of measurement whenever possible, as well as any conditions and reporting requirements.

Financial regime

The council should spell out clearly the extent of its financial commitment to the external body and the nature of the financial relationship eg, shareholding, grant, loan, contractual payments.

Criteria for making and receiving payments should be specified. The transfer of any assets should be clearly regulated in a written agreement and the end destination of any such assets should be specified.

The council's entitlements to any financial return should be stipulated and commitments to financial contributions by councils should not be open-ended in duration or amount.

The written agreement should refer to the minimum standard of management arrangements which need to be in place and any specific or additional responsibility and accountability which is being vested in a board or management committee. The minimum accounting and audit requirements should also be included.

Monitoring arrangements

The council should make clear any requirements which it has of external bodies to operate in a particular way. This might include proper employment practices, recruitment and selection processes, equal opportunities requirements, wages and conditions of service of employees and purchasing policies.

The council should also stipulate how it intends to monitor the relationship between itself and the external body. For example, the council may wish to stipulate that it will have appropriate access to records held by the body. The council may require the body to take appropriate advice on its actions and to make frequent monitoring reports to the council on such matters as:

- income, expenditure, profitability, liquidity and other financial matters
- achievement of targets
- future plans.

Regardless of representation on committees or boards, the council should insist on regular monitoring and reporting back by such bodies. Where the council designates a member of staff in a supervisory officer or equivalent capacity it should ensure that such officers are clearly aware of their responsibilities and of the relevant monitoring procedure.

It is not the intention of this guidance to try to put the external auditors of the council in the place of the auditors of external bodies. However, the council must ensure that its external auditors are given a right

of access to such records, and, if appropriate, accounts and financial arrangements of the external body so that they may follow the trail of public money from the council through the body. They should be able to seek, through the council, any explanations which they consider necessary from representatives of the body. The external auditors of the council should also have access, through the council, to the external auditors of the body.

Representation

The council should consider very carefully the question of representation on the boards of companies which are subject to its control and, to an even greater extent, on bodies which are not subject to its control. For example, members or officers who become directors will assume personal responsibilities under the Companies Act.

It is possible that conflicts of interest can arise for such members and officers as between the company and the council. The council must ensure that members and officers are properly advised of their responsibilities to the council and to the company. This should include questions of declarations of interest.

Limitations

In entering into a substantial funding commitment with an external body the council should lay down a timetable for the achievement of the objectives. If the purpose is a continuing one, then provision should be made for regular review of achievements and of the relationship between the body and the council.

Arrangements should include regular reporting to an appropriate council committee, if necessary in private if issues of commercial confidentiality arise. Clear limits should be set on the extent to which the council will become involved financially with the body and its affairs.

Clear rules should be laid down at the outset for terminating the funding agreement and separation of the council's interest from that of the body. Councils should consider whether particular events should trigger a review eg, a change of leading personnel in the external body.

Accountability

The external auditors appointed by the Accounts Commission will be required to review as part of the annual audit the arrangements which councils have made for such substantial funding agreements and will measure councils' compliance with this guidance. In cases where they have concerns over issues of probity and regularity they will make these known to the council and the Controller of Audit.

Following the Public Pound - Risk Assessment Criteria						
		1	2	3	4	5
Risk		Insignificant	Minor	Significant	Major	Catastrophic
1	Service Infrastructure	Local service provider, well established and known to the Council	National organisation with experience in the field	Local service provider, not well established or not well known to the Council	National organisation with no experience in the field	Service not established and known to be a cause for concern to other authorities
2	Service Provider Management and Staffing	Competent management and well trained staff	Competent management but largely untrained staff	Weaknesses in local management or staffing identified	Resolved complaints about management and staffing	Unresolved complaints about management and staffing
3	Service Provider Financial Assessment	Operates within the financial framework set by Council.	Difficulty in achieving the conditions of the financial framework set by the Council	Repeated difficulties in operating within the financial framework set by the Council	Cash flow is uneven causing cyclical difficulties for the organisation	Financial Integrity and viability of the organisation exist
4	Contract Value	<£5k	£5k to £50k	£50k to £300k	£300k to £1m	>£1m
5	Service Level Agreement	SLA in place which outlines service requirements and obligations of provider to review, self-evaluate and report	SLA in place but specification requires updating	No SLA in place, but positive service history evident	No SLA in place and no substantial service history evident	No SLA in place and negative service history evident
6	Quality Monitoring	Monitoring reports received on time in accordance with the quality framework set by the Council	Monitoring reports received on time with evidence that issues within the quality framework are being resolved	Formal monitoring arrangements still to be established, but positive service history evident	Monitoring reports not received on time or in accordance to the quality framework set by the Council	Formal monitoring arrangements still to be established and negative service history evident
7	Service User Risk	Service offers support and advice only	Low levels of personal care and/or clients able to self-advocate	High levels of personal care provided in group living setting and/or clients have difficulty self-advocating	High levels of personal care provided in the client's home and/or clients are not able to self-advocate	High levels of personal care provided in the client's home and client in a vulnerable client group
8	Strategic Fit	Service clearly fits with Council strategies	Service fits with Council strategies and service in process of modernising	Service fit satisfactory, but service type is outdated	Service type outdated and provider is reluctant to change or modernise	Service no longer fits with Council's aims or strategies
9	Embarrassment	Contained within Service unit	Contained within Department	Local public or press interest	National public or press interest	Officer and/or members forced to resign
10	Damage to Council Property	Negligible damage to property or equipment	Minor damage to one property or equipment damage <£50k	Significant damage to property or equipment £50k to £250k	major damage property or equipment £250k to £1m	Total loss property or equipment or cost >£1m
11	Removing funding causes the Council to fail to provide a Statutory Service and/or a breach of Legal requirements	Litigation claim or fine <£2k	Litigation claim or fine £2k to £50k	Litigation claim or fine £50k to £250k	Litigation claim or fine £250k to £1m or custodial sentence imposed	Multiple civil or criminal actions; litigation, claim or fine >£1m



RIPSA Data Safeguards Compliance Process

All our written information can be made available, on request, in a range of different formats and languages. If you would like this document in any other language or format, please contact Strategy, Performance and Business Solutions on 01856873535 or email spbs@orkney.gov.uk

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1. Introduction

1.1.

This document sets out Orkney Islands Council's process to safeguard data security regarding information gathered which falls within the framework of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Act 2000 [RIPSA] and the Investigatory Powers Act 2016 ('the Acts').

1.2.

Reference is made to Orkney Islands Council's policies and procedures in respect of covert surveillance and use of covert human intelligence sources (hereinafter collectively referred to as 'the Council's RIPSA policies and procedures'), to which this process is subsidiary.

1.3.

This Data Protection Compliance Process is supplemental to the safeguards contained in Chapter 8 of the Covert Surveillance and Property Interference: Code of Practice and in Chapter 8 of the Covert Human Intelligence Sources: Code of Practice issued by the Scottish Government on 20 December 2017 and, in the case of any conflict, these Codes would prevail.

2. Objective

2.1.

The objective of this Process is to ensure that all data obtained through processes subject to the Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Act 2000 is maintained in a safe, secure, and effective way.

2.2.

The procedure will set out a retention, review and destruction process to ensure that information obtained is not kept for any longer than is required.

3. Data Safeguards

3.1.

Any information obtained through surveillance should be handled in accordance with the safeguards that the Council has put in place to support data protection, as set out in the Council's Data Protection Policy and Procedure for Staff, which can be found [here](#).

3.2.

The following should be undertaken to ensure the integrity of data:

- Ensure that the information you hold is relevant and that data is accurate and up to date.

- Any data collected or transported off site should be kept secure, and that authorisation has been obtained to do so.
- Ensure that any paper-based files are stored securely, such as in access controlled areas / locked filing cabinets etc. to minimise risk of theft or loss.
- Ensure that information you are working with cannot be accidentally overseen by anyone else, follow a clean desk policy.
- Ensure any breaches are reported to the Information Governance Officer as soon as you are aware of them.
- If a member of the public makes a request for their data ensure this is forwarded to foi@orkney.gov.uk.

4. Records Management

4.1.

The Council must keep a detailed record of all authorisations, renewals, cancellations and rejections within Services and a Central Register of all Authorisation Forms will be maintained and monitored by Legal and Governance.

4.2.

Each authorisation will be allocated a unique reference number which will be linked to information obtained through the use of the regulated powers.

4.3.

Any material obtained using powers under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Act 2000 should form part of an investigation file and a retention period set (see section 5 below) to record how material will be handled. Legal and Governance will oversee this process for files and dispose of them appropriately.

4.4.

Information that should be retained within the records should be:

- A copy of the Forms together with any supplementary documentation and notification of the approval given by the Authorising Officer.
- A record of the period over which the surveillance has taken place.
- The frequency of reviews prescribed by the Authorising Officer.
- A record of the result of each review of the authorisation.
- A copy of any renewal of an authorisation, together with the supporting documentation submitted when the renewal was requested.
- The date and time when any instruction was given by the Authorising Officer.
- The Unique Reference Number for the authorisation (URN).

4.5.

Information obtained through surveillance should be held separately so that it is easily identifiable and scheduled for deletion or destruction in line with the Council's Retention Policy.

4.6.

This record must be regularly updated whenever an authorisation is granted, renewed or cancelled. This will be achieved by the Authorising Officer forwarding a copy of the approved application, renewal or cancellation to the Head of Legal and Governance for the centrally retrievable record.

4.7.

An access controlled Microsoft Teams site with a closed group should be set up in order to manage access to an electronic information file relating to a RIPSAs application, and limit dissemination, copying and retention of material to the minimum necessary for the authorised purposes.

5. Retention**5.1.**

Orkney Islands Council holds a formal retention schedule. For both covert surveillance and covert human intelligence sources, data should only be retained for a maximum of three years.

5.2.

Once the retention period is reached the file should be scheduled for deletion or secure destruction in line with the Council's Retention Policy.

5.3.

For electronically held records (Microsoft Teams or Electronic Document and Records Management System) automated retention labelling and automatic disposal rules can be set to ensure that information is not retained longer than necessary.

5.4.

Periodic reviews should be undertaken to ascertain whether data obtained under previous authorisations is being retained for longer than is necessary and, if appropriate, retained data should be duly disposed of.

Document Control Sheet

Review/Approval History

Date	Name	Position	Version Approved

Change Record Table

Date	Author	Version	Status	Reason



Policy on Covert Surveillance

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1. Introduction

1.1.

In some circumstances, it may be necessary for council employees where evidence cannot be obtained in any other way, in the course of their duties, to make observations of a person or persons in a covert manner, i.e. without that person's knowledge. By their nature, actions of this sort are potentially intrusive (in the ordinary sense of the word) and may give rise to legal challenge as a potential breach of Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights and the Human Rights Act 1998 ("the right to respect for private and family life").

1.2.

The Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (2000) [RIPA], the Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Act (2000) [RIP(S)A] and the Investigatory Powers Act 2016 ("the Acts") together provide a legal framework for covert surveillance by public authorities and an independent inspection regime to monitor these activities.

1.3.

The Investigatory Powers Act 2016 establishes an Investigatory Powers Commission whose remit includes providing comprehensive oversight of the use of powers to which this Policy applies.

1.4.

The Investigatory Powers Tribunal, established in terms of RIPA, has jurisdiction to investigate and determine complaints against public authority use of investigatory powers.

1.5.

The Chief Executive is the RIPSAs Senior Responsible Officer, who has oversight and scrutiny in relation to the RIPSAs function and ensures the integrity of the processes in place and acts as the main point of contact with the Investigatory Powers Commission. In the Chief Executive's absence, the Corporate Director for Strategy, Performance and Business Solutions will deputise.

1.6.

A detailed procedure has been developed for Covert Surveillance ("the Procedure").

2. Objective

The objective of this policy is to ensure that all covert surveillance by council employees is carried out effectively, while remaining in accordance with the law. It should be read in conjunction with the Scottish Government's Code of Practice on Covert Surveillance and Property Interference ("the Code of Practice").

3. Scope of the Policy

This Policy applies in all cases where “directed surveillance” is being planned or carried out. Directed surveillance is defined in section 1(2) of the RIP(S) Act as surveillance, which is covert but not intrusive, and undertaken:

3.1.

For the purposes of a specific investigation or specific operation.

3.2.

In such a manner as is likely to result in the obtaining of private information about a person (whether or not one specifically identified for the purposes of the investigation or operation).

3.3.

Otherwise than by way of an immediate response to events or circumstances the nature of which is such that it would not be reasonably practicable for an authorisation under the RIP(S) Act to be sought for the carrying out of the surveillance. In cases of doubt, the authorisation procedures described below should however be followed.

4. Principles of Surveillance

4.1.

In planning and carrying out covert surveillance, council employees shall comply with the following principles.

4.1.1.

Lawful purposes – covert surveillance shall only be carried out where necessary to achieve one or more of the permitted purposes (as defined in the Acts); i.e. it must be:

- For the purpose of preventing or detecting crime or the prevention of disorder.
- In the interest of public safety.
- For the purpose of protecting public health.

Employees carrying out surveillance shall not cause damage to any property or harass any person.

4.1.2.

Necessity – covert surveillance shall only be undertaken where there is no reasonable and effective alternative way of achieving the desired objective(s).

4.1.3.

Effectiveness – planned covert surveillance shall be undertaken only by suitably trained or experienced employees, or under their direct supervision.

4.1.4.

Proportionality – the use and extent of covert surveillance shall be as defined in section 6(2) of the RIP(S) Act – that the authorised surveillance is proportionate to what is sought to be achieved by carrying it out.

4.2.

Obtaining an authorisation under the RIP(S) Act and the 1997 Act will only ensure that there is a justifiable interference with an individual's Article 8 rights if it is necessary and proportionate for these activities to take place. The RIP(S)A first requires that the person granting an authorisation is satisfied that the authorisation is necessary in the circumstances of the particular case for one or more of the statutory grounds in section 6(3) of the RIP(S) Act for directed surveillance and in section 10(2)(a) of the RIP(S) Act for intrusive surveillance.

4.3.

Then, if the activities are necessary, the person granting the authorisation must be satisfied that they are proportionate to what is sought to be achieved by carrying them out. This involves balancing the intrusiveness of the activity on the target and others who might be affected by it against the need for the activity in operational terms. The activity will not be proportionate if it is excessive in the circumstances of the case or if the information which is sought could reasonably be obtained by other less intrusive means. All such activity should be carefully managed to meet the objective in question and must not be arbitrary or unfair.

4.4.

Intrusive surveillance – no activity shall be undertaken that comes within the definition of "Intrusive Surveillance", as defined in section 1(3) of the RIP(S) Act as covert surveillance that:

4.4.1.

Is carried out in relation to anything taking place on any residential premises or in any private vehicle.

4.4.2.

Involves the presence of an individual on the premises or in the vehicle or is carried out by means of a surveillance device.

4.5.

Collateral intrusion – reasonable steps shall be taken to minimise the acquisition of information that is not directly necessary for the purposes of the investigation or operation being carried out.

4.6.

Before authorising surveillance, the authorising officer should also take into account the risk of intrusion into the privacy of persons other than those who are directly the subjects of the investigation or operation (collateral intrusion). Measures should be

taken, wherever practicable, to avoid or minimise unnecessary intrusion into the lives of those not directly connected with the investigation or operation.

4.7.

Authorisation – all directed surveillance shall be authorised in accordance with the Procedure.

5. The Authorisation Process

5.1.

The statutory purposes for which covert surveillance authorisations may be issued must reflect the functions of the Council.

5.2.

Applications for directed surveillance where knowledge of confidential information is likely to be acquired shall be authorised by a Corporate Director (other than the Corporate Director for Strategy, Performance and Business Solutions who has a role of deputising for the Senior Responsible Officer) and in their absence the Head of Legal and Governance.

5.3.

A Corporate Director (or in their absence) the Head of Legal and Governance should be designated officers to give the necessary written authorisation for the use or conduct of covert surveillance. In urgent or exceptional circumstances written or oral authorisation might be given by an officer of Chief Officer grade.

5.4.

In terms of the Scottish Government's Code of Practice a written authorisation granted by an authorising officer will cease to have effect (unless renewed) at the end of a period of three months beginning with the day on which it took effect. Urgent oral authorisations granted by a person who is entitled to act only in urgent cases will unless renewed, cease to have effect after seventy-two hours, beginning with the time when the authorisation was granted or renewed. Further details are contained in the Procedure and Chapter 5 of the Code of Practice.

6. Documents

6.1.

The Procedure in implementation of this policy uses the following documents:

6.1.1. Covert Surveillance – Written Authorisation

This should be completed by the applicant in all cases not covered by oral authorisation (below). It is effective from the time that approval is given.

6.1.2. Covert Surveillance – Oral Authorisation

This is a record of an oral authorisation, which should be completed by the applicant. It should be used only in cases where the urgency of the situation makes the

submission of a written application impractical. The authorising officer should write out a separate authorisation as soon as practical.

6.1.3. Covert Surveillance – Renewal of Authorisation

This should be completed by the applicant in all cases where surveillance is required beyond the previously authorised period (including previous renewals) and thereafter signed by the authorising officer.

6.1.4. Covert Surveillance – Cancellation

This should be completed by both the applicant and the authorising officer when the authorisation ceases to be either necessary or appropriate.

7. Security and Retention of Documents

7.1.

Documents created under this procedure are highly confidential and shall be treated as such. Services must ensure that arrangements are in place for the handling, storage and destruction of material obtained through the use of covert surveillance. Authorising officers must ensure compliance with the requirements of data protection legislation, the Procedure for Authorisation of Covert Surveillance and Chapter 8 of the Scottish Government's Code of Practice on Covert Surveillance and Property Interference and the Council's RIPSAs Data Safeguards Compliance Process .

7.2.

The Head of Legal and Governance shall maintain a register of current and past authorisations. Applicant officers shall ensure that sufficient information is provided to keep this up to date.

8. Central Record of all Authorisations

8.1.

A centrally retrievable record of all authorisations should be held by the Head of Legal and Governance and be regularly updated whenever an authorisation is granted, renewed or cancelled. The record should be made available to the relevant Inspector from the Investigatory Powers Commission, upon request. These records should be retained for a period of five years from the ending of the authorisation and should contain the following information:

- The type of authorisation.
- The date the authorisation was given.
- Name and rank/grade of the authorising officer.
- The unique reference number (URN) of the investigation or operation.
- The title of the investigation or operation, including a brief description and names of subjects, if known.
- Whether the urgency provisions were used, and if so why.
- If the authorisation is renewed, when it was renewed and who authorised the renewal, including the name and rank/grade of the authorising officer.

- Whether the investigation or operations is likely to result in obtaining confidential information as defined in this code of practice.
- The date the authorisation was cancelled.

8.2.

In all cases, Services should maintain for a period of three years the following documentation which need not form part of the centrally retrievable record:

- A copy of the application and a copy of the authorisation together with any supplementary documentation and notification of the approval given by the authorising officer.
- A record of the period over which the surveillance has taken place.
- A record of the result of each review of the authorisation.
- A copy of any renewal of an authorisation, together with the supporting documentation submitted when the renewal was requested.
- The date and time when any instruction was given by the authorising officer.

Document control Sheet

Review / Approval History

Date	Name	Position	Version Approved
1 May 2018	Gavin Mitchell	Head of Legal Services	V1.2– approved at General Meeting of the Council
11 May 2020	Gavin Mitchell	Head of Legal Services	V1.3
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11 May 2020	Gavin Mitchell	V1.3	Final	Reflect observations contained in IPC Inspection Report



Procedure for Authorisation of Covert Surveillance

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1. Foreword

1.1.

The use of surveillance to provide information is a valuable resource for the protection of the public and the maintenance of law and order. In order that local authorities and law enforcement agencies are able to discharge their responsibilities, use is made of unaided surveillance and surveillance devices. Where this surveillance is covert i.e. the subject of the surveillance is unaware that it is taking place, then it must be authorised to ensure that it is lawful. CCTV systems in the main will not be subject to this procedure as they are 'overt' forms of surveillance. However where CCTV is used as part of a pre-planned operation of surveillance then authorisation should be obtained. This includes circumstances where such use is sought by the Council or by a third party such as the Police. For the use of CCTV for covert surveillance, officers should refer to paragraph 10 of the Council's CCTV Code of Practice.

1.2.

A legal framework ensures that the use of surveillance is subject to an authorisation, review and cancellation procedure.

2. Implications of this Procedure

2.1.

In some circumstances, it may be necessary for Orkney Islands Council employees, in the course of their duties, to make observations of a person or person(s) in a covert manner, i.e. without that person's knowledge. By their nature, actions of this sort may constitute an interference with that person's right to privacy and may give rise to legal challenge as a potential breach of Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights and the Human Rights Act 1998 ('the right to respect for private and family life').

2.2.

The Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (2000) [RIPA], the Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Act (2000) [RIP(S) A] and the Investigatory Powers Act 2016 ('the Acts') together provide a legal framework for covert surveillance activities by public authorities (including local authorities) and an independent inspection regime to monitor these activities.

2.3.

Whilst the Acts do not impose a requirement for local authorities to seek or obtain an authorisation, where one is available, Orkney Islands Council employees will adhere to the authorisation procedure before conducting any covert surveillance.

2.4.

Employees of Orkney Islands Council will not carry out intrusive surveillance within the meaning of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Act 2000. This is surveillance of anything taking place on residential premises or in a private vehicle

that involves the presence of an individual on the premises or in the vehicle or is carried out by means of a surveillance device capable of providing information of the same quality and detail as might be expected to be obtained from a device actually present on the premises or in the house or vehicle.

2.5.

A number of practical examples of the use of directed surveillance are contained in sections 3 and 4 of the Scottish Government's [Code of Practice on Covert Surveillance and Property Interference](#).

3. Objective

3.1.

The objective of this procedure is to ensure that all work involving directed surveillance by Orkney Islands Council employees is carried out effectively, while remaining in accordance with the law. It should be read in conjunction with the Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Act 2000 and the Scottish Government's Code of Practice on Covert Surveillance and Property Interference ("the Code of Practice").

3.2.

Definitions:

3.2.1.

Covert surveillance means surveillance that is carried out in a manner calculated to ensure that the persons subject to the surveillance are unaware that it is taking place.

3.2.2.

Authorising officer is the person who is entitled to give an authorisation for directed surveillance in accordance with section 6 of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Act 2000.

3.2.3.

Private Information includes information about a person relating to his private or family life.

3.2.4.

Residential premises means any premises occupied or used, however temporarily, for residential purposes or otherwise as living accommodation.

3.2.5.

Private vehicle means any vehicle that is used primarily for the private purpose of the person who owns it or of a person otherwise having the right to use it. This does not include a person whose right to use the vehicle derives only from his having paid, or undertaken to pay, for the use of the vehicle and its driver for a particular journey. A vehicle includes any vessel, aircraft or hovercraft.

4. Scope of the Procedure

4.1.

This procedure applies in all cases where 'direct surveillance' is being planned or carried out. Direct surveillance is defined in the Code of Practice as surveillance undertaken "for the purposes of a specific investigation or operation" and "in such a manner as is likely to result in the obtaining of private information about a person."

4.2.

The procedure does not apply to:

- Ad-hoc covert observations that do not involve the systematic surveillance of specific person(s).
- Observations that are not carried out covertly.
- Unplanned observations made as an immediate response to events.

Particular attention should be made to Social Media Networking Sites. A separate policy is in place in connection with surveillance through social media and should be consulted as necessary.

4.3.

In cases of doubt, the authorisation procedures described below should be followed.

5. Principles of Surveillance

In planning and carrying out covert surveillance, Orkney Islands Council employees shall comply with the following principles.

5.1. Lawful purposes

Directed surveillance shall only be carried out where necessary to achieve one or more of the permitted purposes (as defined in the Acts) namely:

- For the purpose of preventing or detecting crime or the prevention of disorder.
- In the interests of public safety.
- For the purpose of protecting public health.

Employees carrying out surveillance shall not interfere with any property or harass any person.

5.2. Confidential material

5.2.1.

Particular care should be taken with applications where a significant risk of acquiring confidential material has been identified.

5.2.2.

Confidential material consists of:

- Matters subject to legal privilege for example between professional legal advisor and client), in terms of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Modification of the Authorisation Provisions: Legal Consultations) (Scotland) Order 2015 directed surveillance carried out on premises in respect of matters subject to legal privilege is to be treated as intrusive surveillance and can only be carried out by the police.
- Confidential personal information (for example relating to a person's physical or mental health).
- Confidential journalistic material.

6. The Authorisation Process

6.1.

Applications for directed surveillance will be authorised by a Corporate Director (other than the Corporate Director for Strategy, Performance and Business Solutions who has a role of deputising for the Senior Responsible Officer) or in their absence the Head of Legal and Governance. In urgent or exceptional circumstances written or oral authorisation might be given by an officer of Chief Officer grade who has not been designated which should as soon as practicable be followed up by a written authorisation from the relevant official.

6.2.

Authorising officers within the meaning of this procedure should avoid authorising their own activities wherever possible and only do so in exceptional circumstances.

6.3.

All applications for directed surveillance authorisations will be made on form OIC/auth/ds. The applicant in all cases should complete this. In urgent cases the authorising officer may give an oral authorisation. A statement that the authorising officer has expressly granted the authorisation should be recorded on the form or, if that is not possible, in the applicant's notebook or diary. This should be done by the person to whom the authorising officer spoke (normally the applicant) but should later be endorsed by the authorising officer. The authorising officer should write out a separate authorisation as soon as practical.

6.4.

All applications for directed surveillance renewals will be made on form OIC/ren/ds. The applicant in all cases should complete this where the surveillance requires to continue beyond the previously authorised period (including previous renewals). The renewal of the authorisation should be considered and signed by the authorising officer.

6.5.

Where authorisation ceases to be either necessary or appropriate the authorising officer will cancel an authorisation using form OIC/can.ds submitted by the applicant.

6.6.

Forms, codes or practice and supplementary material will be available from the Council Intranet.

6.7.

Any person giving an authorisation for the use of directed surveillance must be satisfied that:

- Account has been taken of the likely degree of intrusion into the privacy of persons other than those directly implicated in the operation or investigation ('collateral intrusion'). Measures must be taken, wherever practicable, to avoid unnecessary intrusion into the lives of those affected by collateral intrusion.
- The authorisation is necessary (see below).
- The authorised surveillance is proportionate (see below).
- In particular when Environmental Health Investigators deploy DAT noise level monitors to assist in any enforcement action in relation to noisy neighbour complaints. These cases should be reviewed on a case by case basis and if necessary the appropriate authorisation sought.
- In relation to aerial surveillance, using, for example, drones, the same considerations should be made to determine whether a directed surveillance authorisation is appropriate. In considering whether the surveillance should be regarded as covert, account should be taken of the reduced visibility of a craft or device at altitude.

6.8. Necessity

Surveillance operations shall only be undertaken where an authorisation is necessary on grounds falling within S.6(3) of RIP(S)A if it is necessary- (a) for the purpose of preventing or detecting crime or of preventing disorder; (b) in the interests of public safety; or (c) for the purpose of protecting public health.

6.9. Effectiveness

Surveillance operations shall be undertaken only by suitably trained or experienced employees, or under their direct supervision.

6.10. Proportionality

The use of surveillance shall be proportionate in terms of S6(2)(b) of RIP(S)A to what is sought to be achieved by carrying it out. Further there must be no other reasonable and effective way of achieving the desired objective(s).

A potential model answer would make clear that the following elements of proportionality had been fully considered:

- balancing the size and scope of the operation against the gravity and extent of the perceived mischief.
- explaining how and why the methods to be adopted will cause the least possible intrusion on the target and others.
- that the activity is an appropriate use of the legislation and the only reasonable way, having considered all others, of obtaining the necessary result.

- providing evidence of other methods considered and why they were not implemented.

6.11 Authorisation

6.11.1.

All directed surveillance shall be authorised in accordance with this procedure.

The authorising officer must take into account the following issues when considering an application:

- who is to conduct the operation.
- what is being proposed.
- where and when the proposed operation will take place.
- whether it is necessary and proportionate.

6.11.2.

Underlying all of these considerations is the requirement for the authorising officer to be satisfied that the terms of the legislation and relevant guidance are met.

6.11.3.

The case for the authorisation should be presented in the application in a fair and balanced way. In particular, all reasonable efforts should be made to take account of information which supports or weakens the case for the authorisation.

6.11.4.

The authorising officer should clearly complete the “Authorising Officer’s Statement” on the application form, preferably in their own hand, and articulate in their own words what activity they are authorising.

The Authorising Officer must state explicitly what is being authorised.

6.11.5.

The Authorising Officer must describe and specify what they are granting. This may or may not be the same as requested by the applicant. For the benefit of those operating under the terms of an authorisation, or any person who may subsequently review or inspect an authorisation, it is essential to produce, with clarity, a description of that which is being authorised (i.e. who, what, where, when and how). The Authorising Officer should as a matter of routine state explicitly and in their own words what is being authorised, and against which subjects, property or location.

6.11.6.

Mere reference to the terms of the application is inadequate. The Authorising Officer should specify the details of how and why they consider the application to be both necessary and proportionate.

Authorisation different from application.

6.11.7.

If an application fails to include an element in the proposed activity which in the opinion of the Authorising Officer should have been included (for example, the return of something to the place from which it is to be taken for some specified activity), or which is subsequently requested orally by the applicant, it may be included in the authorisation; if so, a note should be added explaining why. Conversely, if an Authorising Officer does not authorise all that was requested, a note should be added explaining why. This requirement applies equally to intrusive surveillance, property interference, directed surveillance and CHIS authorisations.

The Senior Responsible Officer should avoid granting authorisations.

6.11.8.

The role of the Senior Responsible Officer is to oversee the competence of Authorising Officers and the processes in use in their public authority. Whilst legislation does not preclude their use as an Authorising Officer, it is unlikely that they would be regarded as objective if they oversee their own authorisations.

6.11.9.

Applications for covert surveillance that may result in the acquisition of knowledge of matters subject to legal privilege within the meaning given in paragraph 1.1 of the Code of Practice should state whether the covert surveillance is likely or intending to obtain knowledge of matters subject to legal privilege. Where covert surveillance is likely or intended to result in the acquisition of knowledge of matters subject to legal privilege, an authorisation shall only be granted or approved if the authorising officer is satisfied that there are exceptional and compelling circumstances that make the authorisation necessary.

6.11.10.

Where the surveillance is not intended to result in the acquisition of knowledge of matters subject to legal privilege, such exceptional and compelling circumstances may arise in the interests of preventing or detecting serious crime.

6.11.11.

Where the surveillance is intended to result in the acquisition of knowledge of matters subject to legal privilege, such circumstances will arise only in a very restricted range of cases, such as where there is a threat to life or limb and the surveillance is reasonably regarded as likely to yield intelligence necessary to counter the threat.

7. Time Periods – Authorisations

7.1.

Urgent oral authorisations granted by a person who is entitled to act only in urgent cases unless renewed, cease to have effect after seventy-two hours, beginning with the time when the authorisation was granted or renewed.

7.2.

In terms of the Scottish Government's Code of Practice a written authorisation granted by an authorising officer will cease to have effect (unless renewed) at the end of a period of three months beginning with the day on which it took effect.

8. Time Periods – Renewals

8.1.

If at any time before an authorisation would cease to have effect, the authorising officer considers it necessary and proportionate for the authorisation to continue for the purpose for which it was given, the authorisation may be renewed in writing for a further period of three months. Renewals may also be granted orally in urgent cases and last for a period of seventy-two hours. Applications should only be made shortly before the authorisation is due to expire.

8.2.

Any person entitled to authorise may renew authorisations. They may be renewed more than once, provided they continue to meet the criteria for authorisation.

9. Review

9.1.

The Authorising Officer shall keep all authorisations under constant review and an authorisation will be cancelled immediately the requirement for surveillance ceases. The Authorising Officer should set review dates and ensure that all reviews are carried out with the review period tailored to meet the particular requirements of the investigation. Details of the review and the decision reached shall be noted on the Review Form.

9.2.

During a review, the authorising officer who granted or last renewed the authorisation may amend specific aspects of the authorisation, for example, to cease directed surveillance against one of a number of named subjects or to discontinue the use of a particular tactic.

9.3.

Particular attention should be given to the need to review authorisations frequently where they involve a high level of intrusion into private life or significant collateral intrusion, or particularly sensitive information is likely to be obtained. At the point when the Council is considering applying for an authorisation, it must have regard to whether the level of protection to be applied in relation to information obtained under the warrant or authorisation is higher because of the particular sensitivity of that information.

9.4.

In each case, unless specified by the Investigatory Powers Commission, the frequency of reviews should be determined by the Council. This should be as frequently as is considered necessary and proportionate.

9.5.

In the event that there are any significant and substantive changes to the nature of the operation during the currency of the authorisation, the Council should consider whether it is necessary to apply for a new authorisation.

10. Cancellation**10.1.**

Those acting under an authorisation must keep their authorisations under review and notify the authorising officer if they consider that the authorisation is no longer necessary or proportionate, and so should therefore be cancelled.

10.2.

The authorising officer and the applicant must cancel an authorisation if he/she is satisfied that the directed surveillance no longer satisfies the criteria for authorisation.

11. Record Keeping

Each Service or discrete location within Services must maintain a record of all applications for authorisation (including refusals), renewals, reviews and cancellations. A centrally retrievable record of all authorisations will be held by Legal and Governance and be regularly updated whenever an authorisation is granted, renewed or cancelled. An application for authorisation cannot proceed until a unique reference number (URN) has been issued by Legal and Governance and Legal and Governance must have sight of each and every application. The central register should be kept up-to-date at all times. The record should be made available to the relevant Inspector from the Investigatory Powers Commission, upon request. These records should be retained for a period of at least five years. Orkney Islands Council Policy for Authorisation of Covert Surveillance contains further details at Paragraph 8 thereof.

12. Security and Retention of Documents**12.1.**

Documents created under this procedure are highly confidential and shall be treated as such. Services shall make proper arrangements for their retention, security and destruction, in accordance with the requirements of data protection legislation and Chapter 8 of the Scottish Government's Code of Practice on Covert Surveillance and Property Interference and the Council's RIPSAs Data Safeguards Compliance Process.

12.2.

Dissemination or copying of material must be limited to the minimum necessary for authorised purposes. The purposes are authorised if the material:

12.2.1.

Is, or is likely to become, necessary for any of the statutory purposes set out in RIPSA in relation to covert surveillance or property interference;

12.2.2.

Is necessary for facilitating the carrying out of the functions of public authorities under RIPSA;

12.2.3.

Is necessary for facilitating the carrying out of any functions of the Investigatory Powers Commission or the Investigatory Powers Tribunal;

12.2.4.

Is necessary for the purposes of legal proceedings; or

12.2.5.

Is necessary for the performance of the functions of any person by or under any enactment.

12.3.

Legal and Governance will maintain the Central Register of Authorisations. Authorising officers shall notify Legal and Governance of the grant, renewal or cancellation of any authorisations and the name of the Applicant Officer within 1 working day to ensure the accuracy of the Central Register.

12.4.

The Authorising Officer shall retain the original Authorisation and Renewal Forms until cancelled. On cancellation, the original Application, Renewal and Cancellation forms shall be forwarded to Legal and Governance with the Authorising Officer retaining a copy.

12.5.

The Authorising Officer shall retain the copy forms for a period of three years after cancellation. Legal and Governance will retain the original forms for a period of five years after cancellation. In both cases these will not be destroyed without the authority of the authorising officer if practicable.

13. Oversight

The Investigatory Powers Act 2016 establishes an Investigatory Powers Commission to provide comprehensive oversight of the use of the powers to which this Procedure applies. This oversight includes inspection visits by Inspectors appointed by the Investigatory Powers Commission.

14. Complaints

The Investigatory Powers Tribunal has jurisdiction to investigate and determine complaints against public authority use of investigatory powers. Any complaints in respect of the use by the Council of its powers described in this Procedure should be directed to the Investigatory Powers Tribunal. Full details of how to present a complaint are available on the Tribunal's website – www.ipt-uk.com.

Document control Sheet

Review / Approval History

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Policy on Use of Covert Human Intelligence Sources

All our written information can be made available, on request, in a range of different formats and languages. If you would like this document in any other language or format, please contact Strategy, Performance and Business Solutions on 01856873535 or email spbs@orkney.gov.uk .

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1. Introduction

1.1.

In some circumstances, it may be necessary for Orkney Islands Council employees where evidence cannot be obtained in any other way, in the course of their duties, to make use of informants and to conduct 'undercover' operations in a covert manner, i.e. without a person's knowledge. By their nature, actions of this sort may constitute an interference with that person's right to privacy and may give rise to legal challenge as a potential breach of Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights and the Human Rights Act 1998 ("the right to respect for private and family life").

1.2.

The Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (2000) [RIPA], the Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Act (2000) [RIP(S)A] and the Investigatory Powers Act 2016 ("the Acts") together provide a legal framework for use of Covert Human Intelligence Sources by public authorities and an independent inspection regime to monitor these activities.

1.3.

The Investigatory Powers Act 2016 establishes an Investigatory Powers Commission whose remit includes providing comprehensive oversight of the use of powers to which this Policy applies.

1.4.

The Investigatory Powers Tribunal, established in terms of RIPA, has jurisdiction to investigate and determine complaints against public authority use of investigatory powers.

1.5.

The Chief Executive is the RIPSAs Senior Responsible Officer, who has oversight and scrutiny in relation to the RIPSAs function and ensures the integrity of the processes in place and acts as the main point of contact with the Investigatory Powers Commission. In the Chief Executive's absence, the Corporate Director for Strategy, Performance and Business Solutions will deputise.

1.6.

A detailed procedure has been developed for Covert Human Intelligence Sources ("the Procedure").

2. Objective

The objective of this Policy is to ensure that all use or conduct of a source by council employees is carried out effectively, while remaining in accordance with the law. It should be read in conjunction with the Scottish Government's Code of Practice on Use of Covert Human Intelligence Sources ("the Code of Practice").

3. Scope of the Policy

3.1.

This Policy applies in all cases where the use of an undercover officer or source is being planned or carried out. All Officers involved should be suitably trained and experienced.

3.2.

This Policy does not apply to covert test purchase transactions under existing statutory powers where the officers involved do not establish a personal or other relationship for the purposes stated. As an example the purchase of music CD for subsequent expert examination would not require authorisation but where the intention is to ascertain from the seller where he/she buys suspected fakes, when he/she takes delivery etc. then authorisation should be sought beforehand; or tasks given to persons (whether that person is an employee of the Council or not) to ascertain purely factual information (for example the location of cigarette vending machines in licensed premises).

3.3.

In terms of Section 1(7) of RIP(S) Act a person is a covert human intelligence source if the person:

1. Establishes or maintains a personal or other relationship with another person for the covert purpose of facilitating the doing of anything falling within paragraph 2 or 3 below.
2. Covertly uses such a relationship to obtain information or to provide access to any information to another person.
3. Covertly discloses information obtained by the use of such a relationship or as a consequence of the existence of such a relationship.

4. Principles of the Use and Conduct of a Source

4.1.

In planning and carrying out the use of a covert human intelligence sources, council employees shall comply with the following principles.

4.1.1.

Lawful purposes – the use and conduct of a source shall only be carried out where necessary to achieve one or more of the permitted purposes (as defined in the Acts); i.e. it must be:

1. For the purpose of preventing or detecting crime or the prevention of disorder.
2. In the interest of public safety.
3. For the purpose of protecting public health.

Employees carrying out source work or using sources must be aware that a source has no licence to commit crime.

4.1.2.

Necessity – An authorisation for the use of a Covert Human Intelligence source is necessary on grounds falling within section 7 (3) of RIP(S)A if it is necessary-(a) for the purpose of preventing or detecting crime or of preventing disorder; (b) in the interests of public safety; or (c) for the purpose of protecting public health.

4.1.3.

Effectiveness – planned undercover operations shall be undertaken only by suitably trained or experienced employees, or under their direct supervision.

4.1.4.

Proportionality – the use and extent of a source shall be as defined in section 6(2) of the RIP(S) Act – that the authorised use and conduct of a source is proportionate to what is sought to be achieved by carrying it out.

4.2.

Obtaining an authorisation under the RIP(S) Act will only ensure that the authorised use or conduct of a source is a justifiable interference with an individual's Article 8 rights if it is necessary and proportionate for the source to be used. The RIP(S) Act first requires that the person granting an authorisation is satisfied that the authorisation is necessary in the circumstances of the particular case for one or more of the statutory grounds in section 7(3) of the RIP(S) Act.

4.3.

If the use of the source is necessary, the person granting the authorisation must be satisfied that the use of a source is proportionate to what is sought to be achieved by the conduct and use of that source. This involves balancing the intrusiveness of the use of the source on the target and others who might be affected by it against the need for the source to be used in operational terms. The use of a source will not be proportionate if it is excessive in the circumstances of the case or if the information which is sought could reasonably be obtained by other less intrusive means. The use of a source should be carefully managed to meet the objective in question and sources must not be used in an arbitrary or unfair way.

4.4.

Collateral intrusion – reasonable steps shall be taken to minimise the acquisition of information that is not directly necessary for the purposes of the investigation or operation being carried out.

4.5.

Before authorising the use or conduct of a source, the authorising officer should take into account the risk of intrusion into the privacy of persons other than those who are directly the subjects of the operation or investigation (collateral intrusion). Measures

should be taken, wherever practicable, to avoid unnecessary intrusion into the lives of those not directly connected with the operation or investigation.

4.6.

Authorisation – all use and conduct of covert human intelligence sources shall be authorised in accordance with the Procedure. Additionally, the authorising officer must make an assessment of any risk to a source in carrying out the conduct in the proposed authorisation and satisfactory arrangements exist for the management of the source.

5. The Authorisation Process

5.1.

Applications for use of a Covert Human Intelligence Source will be authorised by a Corporate Director (other than the Corporate Director for Strategy, Performance and Business Solutions who has a role of deputising for the Senior Responsible Officer) or in their absence the Head of Legal and Governance.

5.2.

A Corporate Director should be a designated officer to give the necessary written authorisation for the use or conduct of a Covert Human Intelligence Source or in their absence the Head of Legal and Governance. In urgent or exceptional circumstances written or oral authorisation might be given by an officer of Chief Officer grade which should as soon as practicable be followed up by a written authorisation from the relevant official.

5.3.

In terms of the Scottish Government's Code of Practice a written authorisation granted by an authorising officer will cease to have effect (unless renewed) at the end of a period of twelve months beginning with the day on which it took effect. Urgent oral authorisations granted by a person who is entitled to act only in urgent cases will unless renewed, cease to have effect after seventy two hours, beginning with the time when the authorisation was granted or renewed. Further details are contained in the Procedure. Particular special rules apply to the use of vulnerable individuals or juvenile sources. Additional guidance is contained in Chapter 5 of the Code of Practice.

6. Documents

6.1.

The Procedure in implementation of this Policy uses the following documents:

1. Use or conduct of a covert human intelligence source – Written Authorisation

This should be completed by the applicant in all cases not covered by oral authorisation (below). It is effective from the time that approval is given.

2. Use or conduct of a covert human intelligence source – Oral Authorisation

This is a record of an oral authorisation, which should be completed by the applicant. It should be used only in cases where the urgency of the situation makes the submission of a written application impractical. The authorising officer should write out a separate authorisation as soon as practical.

3. Use or conduct of a covert human intelligence source – Renewal of Authorisation

This should be completed by the applicant in all cases where surveillance is required beyond the previously authorised period (including previous renewals) and thereafter signed by the authorising officer.

4. Use or conduct of a covert human intelligence source – Cancellation

This should be completed by both the applicant and the authorising officer when the authorisation ceases to be either necessary or appropriate.

7. Security and Retention of Documents

7.1.

Documents created under this procedure are highly confidential and shall be treated as such. Services must ensure that arrangements are in place for the handling, storage and destruction of material obtained through the use of a covert human intelligence source. Authorising officers must ensure compliance with the requirements of data protection legislation, the Procedure for Authorisation of the use of Covert Human Intelligence Sources and Chapter 8 of the Scottish Government's Code of Practice on Covert Human Intelligence Sources and the Council's RIPSAs Data Safeguards Compliance Process.

7.2.

The Head of Legal and Governance shall maintain a register of current and past authorisations. Applicant officers shall ensure that sufficient information is provided to keep this up to date.

8. Central Record of all Authorisations

8.1.

A centrally retrievable record of all authorisations should be held by the Head of Legal and Governance and be regularly updated whenever an authorisation is granted, renewed or cancelled. The record should be made available to the relevant Inspector from the Investigatory Powers Commission, upon request. These records should be retained for a period of five years from the ending of the authorisation and should contain the following information:

- The type of authorisation.
- The date the authorisation was given.
- Name and rank/grade of the authorising officer.
- The unique reference number (URN) of the investigation or operation.
- The title of the investigation or operation, including a brief description and names of subjects, if known.

- Whether the urgency provisions were used, and if so why.
- If the authorisation is renewed, when it was renewed and who authorised the renewal, including the name and rank/grade of the authorising officer.
- Whether the investigation or operations is likely to result in obtaining confidential information as defined in this code of practice.
- The date the authorisation was cancelled.

8.2.

In all cases, Services should maintain for a period of three years the following documentation which need not form part of the centrally retrievable record:

- A copy of the application and a copy of the authorisation together with any supplementary documentation and notification of the approval given by the authorising officer.
- A record of the period over which the activities of the source has taken place.
- A record of the result of each review of the authorisation; the results of which should be recorded in the central record.
- A copy of any renewal of an authorisation, together with the supporting documentation submitted when the renewal was requested.
- The date and time when any instruction was given by the authorising officer.

Document control Sheet

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Procedure for Authorisation of the use of Covert Human Intelligence Sources

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1. Foreword

1.1.

The use of human beings to provide information ('informants') is a valuable resource for the protection of the public and the maintenance of law and order. In order that local authorities and law enforcement agencies are able to discharge their responsibilities, use is made of 'undercover' officers and informants. These are referred to as 'covert human intelligence sources' or 'sources' and the area of work of undercover officers and informants to whom this procedure applies will be referred to as 'source work'.

1.2.

A legal framework ensures that the use, deployment, duration and effectiveness of sources is subject to an authorisation, review and cancellation procedure.

2. Implications of this Procedure

2.1.

In some circumstances, it may be necessary for Orkney Islands Council employees, in the course of their duties, to make use of informants and to conduct 'undercover' operations in a covert manner, i.e. without a person's knowledge. By their nature, actions of this sort may constitute an interference with that person's right to privacy and may give rise to legal challenge as a potential breach of Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights and the Human Rights Act 1998 ('the right to respect for private and family life').

2.2.

The Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (2000) [RIPA] and the Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Act (2000) [RIP(S) A] and the Investigatory Powers Act 2016 ('the Acts') together provide a legal framework for covert surveillance activities by public authorities (including local authorities) and an independent inspection regime to monitor these activities.

2.3.

Whilst the Acts do not impose a requirement for local authorities to seek or obtain an authorisation, where one is available Orkney Islands Council employees will adhere to the authorisation procedure before using a source or allowing or conducting an undercover operation.

2.4.

Employees of Orkney Islands Council will not carry out intrusive surveillance within the meaning of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Act 2000 nor will they authorise any person for any covert human intelligence source activity as an opportunity to install any surveillance equipment into residential premises or private vehicle.

2.5.

A number of practical examples of the use of covert human intelligence sources are contained in sections 2, 3 and 4 of the Scottish Government's [Code of Practice on Covert Human Intelligence Sources](#).

3. Objective

3.1.

The objective of this procedure is to ensure that all work involving the use or conduct of a source by Orkney Islands Council employees is carried out effectively, while remaining in accordance with the law. It should be read in conjunction with the Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Act 2000 and the Scottish Government's Code of Practice on the Use of Covert Human Intelligence Sources ("the Code of Practice").

3.2. Definitions

3.2.1.

Covert human intelligence source means a person who establishes or maintains a personal relationship with another person for the covert purpose of facilitating anything that:

1. Covertly uses such a relationship to obtain information or to provide information or to provide access to information to another person; or
2. Covertly discloses information obtained by the use of such a relationship or as a consequence of the existence of such a relationship.

A relationship is used covertly if, and only if, it is conducted in a manner calculated to ensure that the person is unaware of its purpose.

3.2.2.

Directed surveillance is defined in the Code of Practice as surveillance undertaken "for the purposes of a specific investigation or operation" and "in such a manner as is likely to result in the obtaining of private information about a person."

3.2.3.

Authorising officer is the person who is entitled to give an authorisation for use and conduct of a Covert Human Intelligence Source in accordance with section 7 of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Act 2000.

3.2.4.

Handler means the person referred to in section 7(6) of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Act 2000 holding an office or position within the local authority and who will have day to day responsibility for:

- Dealing with the source on behalf of the local authority.
- Directing the day to day activities of the source.

- Recording the information supplied by the source.
- Monitoring the source's security and welfare.

3.2.5.

Controller means the person/the designated managerial officer within the local authority referred to in section 7(6)(b) of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Act 2000, responsible for the general oversight of the use of the source.

3.2.6.

The conduct of a source is action of that source, falling within the terms of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers (Scotland) Act 2000, or action incidental to it.

3.2.7.

The use of a source is any action to induce, ask or assist a person to engage in the conduct of a source or to obtain information by means of an action of the source.

3.2.8.

Private information includes information about a person relating to his private or family life.

3.2.9.

Residential premises means any premises occupied or used, however temporarily for residential purposes or otherwise as living accommodation.

3.2.10.

Private vehicle means any vehicle that is used primarily for the private purpose of the person who owns it or of a person otherwise having the right to use it. This does not include a person whose right to use the vehicle derives only from his having paid, or undertaken to pay, for the use of the vehicle and its driver for a particular journey. A vehicle includes any vessel, aircraft or hovercraft.

4. Scope of the Procedure

4.1.

This procedure applies in all cases where the use of an undercover officer or source is being planned or carried out.

4.2.

The procedure does not apply to:

- Covert test purchase transactions under existing statutory powers where the officers involved do not establish a personal or other relationship for the purposes stated (see definition of a covert human intelligence source). As an example the purchase of a music CD for subsequent expert examination would not require authorisation but where the intention is to ascertain from the seller where they buy suspected fakes, when they take delivery etc. then authorisation should be sought beforehand.

- Tasks given to persons (whether that person is an employee of the Council or not) to ascertain purely factual information (for example the location of cigarette vending machines in licensed premises).
- Particular attention should be made to Social Media Networking Sites. A separate policy is in place in connection with surveillance through social media and should be consulted as necessary. In cases of doubt, the authorisation procedures described below should be followed.

5. Principles of Use or Conduct of Covert Human Intelligence Source

In planning and carrying out the source work, Orkney Islands Council employees shall comply with the following principles.

5.1. Lawful purposes

Source work shall only be carried out where necessary to achieve one or more of the permitted purposes (as defined in the Acts) namely:

5.1.1.

For the purpose of preventing or detecting crime or the prevention of disorder.

5.1.2.

In the interests of public safety.

5.1.3.

For the purpose of protecting public health.

Employees carrying out source work or using sources must be aware that a source has no licence to commit crime. Any source that acts beyond the acceptable limits of case law in regard to this principle risks prosecution.

It may be necessary to deploy directed surveillance against a potential source as part of the process of assessing their suitability for recruitment, or in planning how best to make the approach to them. An authorisation under this procedure authorising an officer to establish a covert relationship with a potential source could be combined with a directed surveillance authorisation so that both the officer and potential source could be followed.

5.2. Confidential material

5.2.1.

Particular care should be taken with applications where a significant risk of acquiring confidential material has been identified.

5.2.2.

Confidential material consists of:

- Matters subject to legal privilege (for example between professional legal advisor and client); special rules apply in relation to directed surveillance carried out on premises where legal consultations are taking place and are referred to in the Procedure for Authorisation of Covert Surveillance.
- Confidential personal information (for example relating to a person's physical or mental health).
- Confidential journalistic material.

5.3. Vulnerable individuals

5.3.1.

Vulnerable individuals, such as a person aged 16 or over whose ability to protect him/herself from violence, abuse or neglect is significantly impaired through physical or mental disability or illness, through old age or otherwise, will only be authorised to act as a source in the most exceptional circumstances.

5.3.2.

Special safeguards also apply to the use or conduct of juvenile sources, that is, those under the age of 18 years. The use or conduct of any source under 16 years of age living with their parents cannot be authorised to give information about their parents.

5.3.3.

Subject to the above, juvenile sources can give information about members of their immediate family in exceptional cases. A parent, guardian or other 'appropriate adult' should be present at meetings with the juvenile source under the age of 16 years.

5.3.4.

An authorisation for the conduct or use of a source may not be granted or renewed in any case where the source is under the age of 18 at the time of the grant or renewal, unless:

- A person holding an office, rank or position with the relevant investigating authority has made and, in the case of a renewal, updated a risk assessment sufficient to demonstrate that:
 - The nature and magnitude of any risk of physical injury to the source arising in the course of, or as a result of, carrying out the conduct described in the authorisation have been identified and evaluated.
 - The nature and magnitude of any risk of psychological distress to the source arising in the course of, carrying out the conduct described in the authorisation have been identified and evaluated.
- The person granting or renewing the authorisation has considered the risk assessment and is satisfied that any risks identified in it are justified and, if they are, that they have been properly explained to and understood by the source.

- The person granting or renewing the authorisation knows whether the relationship to which the conduct or use would relate is between the source and a relative, guardian or person who has for the time being assumed responsibility for the source's welfare, and, if it is, has given particular consideration to whether the authorisation is justified in the light of that fact.

6. The Authorisation Process

6.1.

Applications for the use or conduct of a source will be authorised by a Corporate Director (other than the Corporate Director for Strategy, Performance and Business Solutions who has a role of deputising for the Senior Responsible Officer) and in their absence the Head of Legal and Governance who will give the necessary written authorisation for the use or conduct of the Covert Human Intelligence Source. In urgent or exceptional circumstances written or oral authorisation might be given by an officer of Chief Officer grade who has not been designed which should as soon as practicable be followed up by a written authorisation from the relevant official.

6.2.

Authorising officers should ensure that arrangements are in place for the proper oversight and management of sources, including appointing individual officers as defined in section 7(6)(a) and (b) of RIP(S)A for each source as handler and controller. All Officers involved should be suitably trained and experienced.

6.3.

Authorising officers should not be responsible for authorising their own activities, for example, those in which they, themselves, are to act as the covert human intelligence source or the handler of the covert human intelligence source. Furthermore, authorising officers should, where possible, be independent of the investigation. It is recognised that this is not always possible, especially in the cases of small organisations. However, where possible, clear separation should be maintained between those responsible for the investigation and those managing the covert human intelligence source to ensure that the safety and welfare of the covert human intelligence source are always given due consideration.

6.4.

All applications for covert human intelligence source authorisations will be made on form OIC/auth/chis. The applicant in all cases should complete this. In urgent cases an oral authorisation may be given by the authorising officer. A statement that the authorising officer has expressly granted the authorisation should be recorded on the form or, if that is not possible, in the applicant's notebook or diary. This should be done by the person to whom the authorising officer spoke (normally the applicant) but should later be endorsed by the authorising officer. The authorising officer should write out a separate authorisation as soon as practical.

6.5.

The case for the authorisation should be presented in the application in a fair and balanced way. In particular, all reasonable efforts should be made to take account of information which supports or weakens the case for the authorisation.

6.6.

All applications for covert human intelligence source renewals will be made on form OIC/ren/chis. The applicant in all cases should complete this where the source work requires to continue beyond the previously authorised period (including previous renewals). The renewal of the authorisation should be signed by the authorising officer.

6.7.

Where authorisation ceases to be either necessary or appropriate the authorising officer and the applicant will cancel an authorisation using form OIC/can.chis.

6.8.

Forms, codes or practice and supplementary material will be available from the Council Intranet.

6.9.

Any person giving an authorisation for the use of a covert human intelligence source must be satisfied that:

- Account has been taken of the likely degree of intrusion into the privacy of persons other than those directly implicated in the operation or investigation ('collateral intrusion'). Measures must be taken, wherever practicable, to avoid unnecessary intrusion into the lives of those affected by collateral intrusion. Particular consideration should be given in cases where religious, medical, journalistic or legally privileged material may be involved, or where the communications of a member of a relevant legislature may be involved.
- The authorisation is necessary (see below).
- The authorised surveillance is proportionate (see below).
- Satisfactory arrangements exist for the management of the source.
- In particular when Environmental Health Investigators deploy DAT noise level monitors to assist in any enforcement action in relation to noisy neighbour complaints. These cases should be reviewed on a case by case basis and if necessary the appropriate authorisation sought.

6.10.

Authorisation for use of a Covert Human Intelligence Source can only be granted if sufficient arrangements are in place for handling the source's case. The arrangements that are considered necessary are that:

6.10.1.

There will at all times be a person holding the requisite office, rank or position with the relevant investigating authority who will have day to day responsibility for dealing with the source on behalf of that authority and for the source's security and welfare – this should be the source's line manager (the Handler).

6.10.2.

There will at all times be another person holding the requisite office, rank or position with the relevant investigating authority who will have general oversight of the use made of that source – this should be the handler's line manager (the Controller).

6.10.3.

There will at all times be a person holding the requisite office, rank or position with the relevant investigating authority who will have responsibility for maintaining a record of the use made of that source – this should be the Authorising Officer.

6.10.4.

The records relating to the use of that source are maintained by Orkney Islands Council which will always contain particulars of such matters as may be specified in regulations made by the Scottish Ministers.

6.10.5.

The records maintained by Orkney Islands Council that disclose the identity of the source will not be available to persons except to the extent that there is a need for access to them to be made available to those persons. The records kept by Orkney Islands Council should be maintained in such a way as to preserve the confidentiality of the source and the information provided by that source. There should, at all times, be a designated person within the authority who will have responsibility for maintaining a record of the use made of the source.

6.11. Necessity

An authorisation for the use of a Covert Human Intelligence source is necessary on grounds falling within section 7 (3) of RIP(S)A if it is necessary - (a) for the purpose of preventing or detecting crime or of preventing disorder; (b) in the interests of public safety; or (c) for the purpose of protecting public health.

6.12. Effectiveness

Planned undercover operations shall be undertaken only by suitably trained or experienced employees, or under their direct supervision.

6.13. Proportionality

The use of covert human intelligence sources must be proportionate or in terms of RIP(S)A section 7(b) that the authorised conduct or use is proportionate to what is sought to be achieved by that conduct or use.

A potential model answer would make clear that the following elements of proportionality had been fully considered:

- Balancing the size and scope of the operation against the gravity and extent of the perceived mischief.
- Explaining how and why the methods to be adopted will cause the least possible intrusion on the target and others.
- Whether there are any implications of the authorised conduct for the privacy of others, and an explanation of why (if relevant) it is nevertheless proportionate to proceed with the operation.
- That the activity is an appropriate use of the legislation and the only reasonable way, having considered all others, of obtaining the necessary result.
- Providing evidence of other methods considered and why they were not implemented.

The degree of intrusiveness of an authorisation of a covert human intelligence source will vary from case to case, and therefore proportionality must be assessed on an individual basis.

6.14. Authorisation

All use and conduct of covert human intelligence sources shall be authorised in accordance with this procedure.

The authorising officer must take into account the following issues when considering an application:

- Who is to be deployed as the source.
- What is being proposed.
- Where and when the proposed deployment will take place.
- Whether it is necessary and proportionate.

6.14.1.

However, the tasking of a person should not be used as the sole benchmark in seeking an authorisation. It is the activity of the covert human intelligence source in exploiting a relationship for a covert purpose which is ultimately authorised by RIP(S)A, whether or not that source is asked to do so by the Council. It is possible therefore that a person will become engaged in the conduct of a covert human intelligence source without the Council inducing, asking or assisting the person to engage in that conduct. An authorisation should be considered, for example, where the Council is aware that a third party is independently maintaining a relationship (i.e. self-tasking) in order to obtain evidence of criminal activity, and the Council intends to make use of that material for its own investigative purposes.

6.14.2.

Underlying all of these considerations is the requirement for the authorising officer to be satisfied that the terms of the legislation and relevant guidance are met.

6.14.3.

The authorising officer should clearly complete the “Authorising Officer’s Statement” on the application form, preferably in their own hand, and articulate in their own words what activity they are authorising.

The Authorising Officer must state explicitly what is being authorised.**6.14.4.**

The Authorising Officer must describe and specify what they are granting. This may or may not be the same as requested by the applicant. For the benefit of those operating under the terms of an authorisation, or any person who may subsequently review or inspect an authorisation, it is essential to produce, with clarity, a description of that which is being authorised (i.e. who, what, where, when and how). The Authorising Officer should as a matter of routine state explicitly and in his own words what is being authorised, and against which subjects, property or location. Mere reference to the terms of the application is inadequate. The Authorising Officer should specify the details of how and why they consider the application to be both necessary and proportionate.

Authorisation different from application.**6.14.5.**

If an application fails to include an element in the proposed activity which in the opinion of the Authorising Officer should have been included (for example, the return of something to the place from which it is to be taken for some specified activity), or which is subsequently requested orally by the applicant, it may be included in the authorisation; if so, a note should be added explaining why. Conversely, if an Authorising Officer does not authorise all that was requested, a note should be added explaining why. This requirement applies equally to intrusive surveillance, property interference, directed surveillance and CHIS authorisations.

6.14.6.

It is important to note that the reactive nature of the work of a covert human intelligence source, and the need for him/her to maintain cover, may make it necessary for the source to engage in conduct which was not envisaged at the time the authorisation was granted, but which is incidental to that conduct. Such incidental conduct is regarded as properly authorised by virtue of sections 1(6)(a), 5 and 7(5) of RIP(S)A, even though it was not specified in the initial authorisation.

The Senior Responsible Officer should avoid granting authorisations.**6.14.7.**

The role of the Senior Responsible Officer is to oversee the competence of Authorising Officers and the processes in use in their public authority. Whilst legislation does not preclude their use as an Authorising Officer, it is unlikely that they would be regarded as objective if they oversee their own authorisations.

6.14.8.

Additionally, the authorising officer must assess risks to a source in carrying out the conduct in the proposed authorisation. The risk assessment must be made by the applicant and presented to the authorising officer for consideration. A risk assessment is carried out to determine the risk to the source of any tasking and the likely consequences should the role of the source become known. The ongoing security and welfare of the source, after the cancellation of the authorisation, will also be considered from the outset.

Use of a covert human intelligence source with technical equipment.**6.14.9.**

A covert human intelligence source wearing or carrying a surveillance device and invited into residential premises or a private vehicle does not require special authorisation to record activity taking place inside the premises or vehicle. Authorisation for the use of that covert human intelligence source may be obtained in the usual way.

6.14.10.

Applicants should apply within their own line management structure unless other arrangements have been agreed or it is unreasonable or impractical in the circumstances.

7. Security and Welfare

The Council, when deploying a covert human intelligence source, should take into account the safety and welfare of that source when carrying out actions in relation to an authorisation or tasking, and the foreseeable consequences to others of that tasking. Before authorising the use or conduct of a covert human intelligence source, the authorising officer should ensure that a risk assessment is carried out to determine the risk to the source of any tasking and the likely consequences should the role of the source become known. This should consider the risks relating to the specific tasking and circumstances of each authorisation separately and should be updated to reflect developments during the course of the deployment, as well as after the deployment if contact is maintained.

8. Time Periods – Authorisations**8.1.**

Urgent oral authorisations granted by a person who is entitled to act only in urgent cases will unless renewed, cease to have effect after seventy-two hours, beginning with the time when the authorisation was granted or renewed.

8.2.

In terms of the Scottish Government's Code of Practice a written authorisation granted by an authorising officer will cease to have effect (unless renewed) at the end of a period of twelve months beginning with the day on which it took effect. Authorisations for the deployment of a juvenile source are for one month.

9. Time Periods – Renewals

9.1.

Before an authorising officer renews an authorisation, they must be satisfied that a review has been carried out of the use of a source as outlined in paragraph 10.1.

9.2.

If at any time before an authorisation would cease to have effect, the authorising officer considers it necessary for the authorisation to continue for the purpose for which it was given, they may renew it in writing for a further period of twelve months. Renewals may also be granted orally in urgent cases and last for a period of seventy-two hours.

9.3.

A renewal takes effect at the time at which, or day on which the authorisation would have ceased to have effect but for the renewal. An application for renewal should not be made until shortly before the authorisation period is drawing to an end. Any person who would be entitled to grant a new authorisation can renew an authorisation. Authorisations may be renewed more than once, in necessary, provided they continue to meet the criteria for authorisation. The renewal should be kept/recorded as part of the authorisation record.

9.4.

Authorisations for the deployment of a juvenile source are renewable for a further period or further periods of one month each.

10. Review

10.1.

The Authorising Officer shall keep all authorisations under constant review and an authorisation will be cancelled immediately the requirement for surveillance ceases. The Authorising Officer should set review dates and ensure that all reviews are carried out immediately after the source has been deployed with the review period tailored to meet the particular requirements of the investigation. Details of the review and the decision reached shall be noted on the Review Form.

10.2.

Particular attention should be given to the need to review authorisations frequently where they involve a high level of intrusion into private life or significant collateral intrusion, or particularly sensitive information is likely to be obtained. At the point when the Council is considering applying for an authorisation, it must have regard to whether the level of protection to be applied in relation to information obtained under the warrant or authorisation is higher because of the particular sensitivity of that information.

10.3.

In each case, unless specified by the Investigatory Powers Commission, the frequency of reviews should be determined by the Council. This should be as frequently as is considered necessary and proportionate.

10.4.

In the event that there are any significant and substantive changes to the nature of the operation during the currency of the authorisation, the Council should consider whether it is necessary to apply for a new authorisation.

11. Cancellation

11.1.

The authorising officer and the applicant must keep each authorisation under review. The applicant must notify the authorising officer if they consider that the authorisation is no longer necessary or proportionate. The authorising officer must cancel an authorisation if they are satisfied that the use or conduct of the source no longer satisfies the criteria for authorisation or that procedures for the management of the source are no longer in place. Where possible, the source must be informed that the authorisation has been cancelled.

11.2.

Where necessary and practicable, the safety and welfare of the covert human intelligence source should continue to be taken into account after the authorisation has been cancelled and risk assessments maintained. The authorising officer will wish to satisfy himself/herself that all welfare matters are addressed and should make appropriate comment in their written commentary.

12. Record Keeping

12.1.

Each Service or discrete location within Services must maintain a record of all applications for authorisation (including refusals), renewals, reviews and cancellations. A centrally retrievable record of all authorisations will be held by Legal and Governance and be regularly updated whenever an authorisation is granted, renewed or cancelled. An application for authorisation cannot proceed until a unique reference number (URN) has been issued by Legal and Governance and Legal and Governance must have sight of each and every application. The central register shall be kept up-to-date all times. The record should be made available to the relevant Inspector from the Investigatory Powers Commission, upon request. These records should be retained for a period of at least five years. The Council's Policy for Authorisation on use of Covert Human Intelligence Sources contains further details at Paragraph 8 thereof.

12.2.

In addition, consideration should be given to maintaining auditable records for individuals providing intelligence who do not meet the definition of a covert human intelligence source. This will assist the Council to monitor the status of an individual and identify whether that person should be duly authorised as a covert human intelligence source. This should be updated regularly to explain why authorisation is not considered necessary.

13. Security and Retention of Documents**13.1.**

Documents created under this procedure are highly confidential and shall be treated as such. Services shall make proper arrangements for their retention, security and destruction, in accordance with the requirements of data protection legislation and Chapter 8 of the Scottish Government's Code of Practice on Covert Human Intelligence Sources and the Council's RIPSAs Data Safeguards Compliance Process.

13.2.

Dissemination or copying of material must be limited to the minimum necessary for authorised purposes. The purposes are authorised if the material:

13.2.1.

Is, or is likely to become, necessary for any of the statutory purposes set out in RIPSAs in relation to covert surveillance or property interference;

13.2.2.

Is necessary for facilitating the carrying out of the functions of public authorities under RIPSAs;

13.2.3.

Is necessary for facilitating the carrying out of any functions of the Investigatory Powers Commission or the Investigatory Powers Tribunal;

13.2.4.

Is necessary for the purposes of legal proceedings; or

13.2.5.

Is necessary for the performance of the functions of any person by or under any enactment.

13.3.

Legal and Governance will maintain the Central Register of Authorisations. Authorising officers shall notify Legal and Governance of the grant, renewal or cancellation of any authorisations and the name of the Applicant Officer within 1 working day to ensure the accuracy of the Central Register.

13.4.

The Authorising Officer shall retain the original Authorisation and Renewal Forms until cancelled. On cancellation, the original Application, Renewal and Cancellation forms shall be forwarded to Legal and Governance with the Authorising Officer retaining a copy.

13.5.

The Authorising Officer shall retain the copy forms for a period of three years after cancellation. Legal and Governance will retain the original forms for at least five years after cancellation. In both cases these will not be destroyed without the authority of the authorising officer if practicable.

13.6.

All information recovered through the use of a source which is relevant to the investigation shall be retained for a period of five years after the cancellation of the authorisation or the completion of any Court proceedings in which said information was used or referred to. All other information shall be destroyed as soon as the operation is cancelled.

14. Particulars to be Contained in Records

1. The identity of the source.
2. The identity, where known, used by the source.
3. Any relevant investigating authority other than the authority maintaining the records.
4. The means by which the source is referred to within each relevant investigating authority.
5. Any other significant information connected with the security and welfare of the source.
6. Any confirmation made by a person granting or renewing an authorisation for the conduct or use of a source that the information in paragraph (5) has been considered and that any identified risks to the security and welfare of the source have where appropriate been properly explained to and understood by the source.
7. The date when, and the circumstances in which, the source was recruited.
8. The identities of the persons who, in relation to the source, are discharging or have discharged the functions.
9. The periods during which those persons have discharged those responsibilities.
10. The tasks given to the source and the demands made of him or her in relation to their activities as a source.

11. All contacts or communications between the source and a person acting on behalf of any relevant investigating authority.
12. The information obtained by each relevant investigating authority by the conduct or use of the source.
13. Any dissemination by that authority of information obtained in that way.
14. In the case of a source who is not an undercover operative, every payment, benefit or reward and every offer of a payment, benefit or reward that is made or provided by or on behalf of any relevant investigating authority in respect of the source's activities for the benefit of that or any other relevant investigating authority.

15. Oversight

The Investigatory Powers Act 2016 establishes an Investigatory Powers Commission to provide comprehensive oversight of the use of the powers to which this Procedure applies. This oversight includes inspection visits by Inspectors appointed by the Investigatory Powers Commission.

16. Complaints

The Investigatory Powers Tribunal has jurisdiction to investigate and determine complaints against public authority use of investigatory powers. Any complaints in respect of the use by the Council of its powers described in this Procedure should be directed to the Investigatory Powers Tribunal. Full details of how to present a complaint are available on the Tribunal's website – www.ipt-uk.com.

Document control Sheet

Review / Approval History

Date	Name	Position	Version Approved
1 May 2018	Gavin Mitchell	Head of Legal Services	V1.2– approved at General Meeting of the Council
1 May 2019	Gavin Mitchell	Head of Legal Services	V1.3
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1 May 2019	Gavin Mitchell	1.3.	Final	Amendment of Paragraph 5.3.1.
11 May 2020	Gavin Mitchell	1.4	Final	Reflect observations contained in IPC Inspection Report



Surveillance through Social Media Policy

All our written information can be made available, on request, in a range of different formats and languages. If you would like this document in any other language or format, please contact Strategy, Performance and Business Solutions on 01856873535 or email spbs@orkney.gov.uk.

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1. Introduction

1.1.

This document sets out Orkney Islands Council's policy regarding internet surveillance using Social Media.

1.2.

Reference is made to Orkney Islands Council's policies and procedures in respect of covert surveillance and use of covert human intelligence sources (hereinafter collectively referred to as 'the Council's RIPSAs policies and procedures'), to which this policy is subsidiary.

1.3.

In some circumstances, it may be necessary for Orkney Islands Council employees, in the course of their duties, to access social media websites either by creating covert identities or through the officer's Service identity.

1.4.

Directed online surveillance using an officer's private social media account should not be undertaken in any circumstances given the personal and operational security risks which such use would be liable to present.

1.5.

Officers are referred to paragraphs 3.11 to 3.16 of the Scottish Government's [Code of Practice on Covert Surveillance and Property Interference](#) (December 2017) and paragraphs 4.7 to 4.14 of the Scottish Government's [Code of Practice on Covert Human Intelligence Sources](#) (December 2017) which provide operational examples that would assist staff in recognising situations where RIPSAs are potentially engaged in their investigations.

1.6.

Whilst much of the work undertaken by social workers is not in pursuance of the prevention or detection of crime, and is not within the purview of RIPSAs, research conducted online in the interests of a child may still engage an individual's rights under Article 8 of the European Convention of Human Rights (right to respect for one's private and family life). This should be considered by staff prior to conducting any research online, being aware of their obligations in ensuring such Article 8 rights are not infringed by any online research conducted in child protection cases. Therefore, a protocol containing an auditable process has been developed for circumstances where online research is considered necessary in the interests of child protection. The process is similar to the procedure for seeking a RIPSAs authorisation as commended by the Investigatory Powers Tribunal. Orkney Health and Care shall be responsible for ensuring that this process is observed and responsible for adherence to the Safeguards in relation to retention, review and destruction of material obtained in accordance with the Council's RIPSAs Data Safeguards Compliance Process.

2. Statement of Intent

The aim of this policy is to provide the framework outlining the Council's process for authorising and managing internet surveillance operations using social media, and to set the parameters for expected good practice.

3. Objective

The objective of this policy is to ensure that all surveillance through social media conducted by Orkney Islands Council employees is carried out effectively, while remaining in accordance with the law. It should be read in conjunction with the Council's RIPSAs policies and procedures, the relevant legislation, the Scottish Government's Codes of Practice on Covert Surveillance and Property Interference and on Covert Human Intelligence Sources ('the Codes of Practice') and any guidance which the Investigatory Powers Commission may issue from time to time.

4. Orkney Islands Council's Social Media Presence

The Council has four main social media accounts. The OIC Updates Facebook page and Orkney Council Twitter feed are managed by the communications team and provide information about a range of Council activities. The OIC School Transport Facebook page is managed by the Education Service. The OIC Roads Twitter Feed is managed by the Council's roads team and provides updates about road conditions on the Churchill Barriers during adverse weather.

In addition, a number of services manage Facebook and Twitter accounts including primary and secondary schools, the museum service, the library and St Magnus Cathedral.

5. Types of Investigators' Accounts

There are two different ways in which social media websites may be accessed by council officers to carry out investigations:

- Through an identity created specifically as the service's representative.
- Through a covert identity using a false name.

6. Types of Surveillance

Investigators utilise social media in two different ways:

- By simply visiting / viewing third party accounts or groups.
- By entering into a personal relationship with the third party/group member.

7. Privacy Settings of Account under Investigation

7.1.

Most social media websites will have a variety of privacy settings that users can apply to protect their accounts from others accessing the information contained therein. Facebook would be the social media website that would be most commonly used by Orkney Islands Council Officers to investigate service users or potential

service users and it has several different privacy settings. Therefore, Facebook will be used as an example in this policy. Depending on what privacy setting a user chooses, different people can access the account and see all or some of its contents.

7.1.1. 'Public'

All Facebook users can see the account and all of its content, including the user's "friends", their timeline and photographs. Non-Facebook users can see photographs and posts published on the account, but not who has 'liked' a post or the marital status or geographic location of the user.

7.1.2. 'Friends'

Only those whom the user has accepted as Facebook 'friends' are able to see the entire content of the user's page.

7.1.3. 'Custom'

The user can create lists of specific contacts and Facebook users and designate them as the audience for – or block them from view of – any posts.

Of these three options, the relevant options for investigating officers are 'public' and 'friends', as option 3 is a sub-category of 'friends'.

8. Utilisation of Social Media

8.1. Surveillance using identity as department's representative or departmental account

'Public' privacy setting

8.1.1.

If an investigating officer views a service user's Facebook profile, with whom they are not 'Friends' via a normal route, and where the content is not protected by any privacy settings, then information on this profile can be treated as being in the public domain. Any viewing / visiting of this profile will be overt and no authorisation under RIPSAs will be required.

8.1.2.

If the officer frequently or regularly views/visits the same individual's profile this must be considered as targeted. However if the service user posts publicly, they can have no expectation of privacy and will give everybody the right to view their posts at any time and as many times as that person wishes to. Therefore, strictly speaking, no authorisation under RIPSAs for directed surveillance is required. However, as a matter of best practice, an appropriate RIPSAs authorisation should be sought.

8.1.3.

If an investigating officer enters into a 'conversation' with the service user, and if the officer informs them that they are contacting them in their role as an employee of Orkney Islands Council, then this contact will be overt and no authorisation under RIPSAs will be required.

'Friends' privacy setting

8.1.4.

To investigate a service user whose Facebook account is protected by privacy settings, the investigating officer will have to send the service user a 'friend request'. As it is obvious from the department name that the person behind it is an Orkney Islands Council employee, then the action could not be classified as covert. No RIPSAs authorisation would be needed.

8.1.5.

In either of the above privacy settings, although the officer has been given access to the account with the consent of the owner, the officer will still need to consider whether the account may contain information about others who have not given their consent. If there is a likelihood of obtaining private information about others, the need for a directed surveillance authorisation should be considered, particularly where it is intended to monitor the account going forward.

8.2. Surveillance using covert identity

8.2.1.

If an investigating officer establishes a relationship with a service user under a covert identity in order to obtain, provide access to, or disclose information, then a covert human intelligence source ('CHIS') authorisation will always need to be in place before that is done.

8.2.2.

However if a covert identity is presented but no steps are taken to form a relationship with the subject, a CHIS authorisation may not be required. For example, where a website or social media account requires a minimum level of interaction (such as sending or receiving a friend request before access is permitted) this may not in itself amount to establishing a relationship. Equally, the use of electronic gestures such as "like" or "follow" in order to react to information posted by others online would not in itself constitute forming a relationship. Nonetheless, it should be borne in mind that entering a website or responding to such gestures may lead to further interaction with that user or other users. A CHIS authorisation should be obtained if it is intended to engage in such interaction to obtain, provide access to, or disclose information.

9. Best practice for the use of social media in investigations

As a matter of best practice, whenever a Council officer intends to investigate a particular service user through social media, rather than conducting a general sweep of social media sites, an appropriate RIPSAs authorisation should be completed.

10. Authorisation for all types of surveillance

Please refer to Orkney Islands Council's Policies and Procedures on Covert Surveillance and Use of Covert Human Intelligence Sources.

11. Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed every year from the date of approval.

Document control Sheet

Review / Approval History

Date	Name	Position	Version Approved
1 May 2018	Gavin Mitchell	Head of Legal Services	V1.2– approved at General Meeting of the Council
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Change Record Table

Date	Author	Version	Status	Reason
11 May 2020	Gavin Mitchell	V1.3	Final	Reflect observations contained in IPC Inspection Report



The Orkney Partnership

Working together for a better Orkney

Draft at 1 September 2023

Annual Report 2022 to 2023

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Appendix 9

Incorporating a progress report on
Orkney's Local Outcomes Improvement Plan 2021 to 2023

Welcome to the Orkney Partnership's Annual Report 2022-23

This Annual Report covers the second year of our two year Community Plan 2021-23, which we developed to support Orkney to recover from the Covid-19 pandemic.

The priorities for this recovery plan were:

Connectivity – addressing both digital connectivity and transport.

Community Wellbeing – focusing on both individual and community wellbeing and the need to help people retake control of their lives.

Sustainable Recovery - which exploited the synergy between Orkney's economic recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic and doing our part to combat the climate emergency.

The year saw massive fuel price rises and the cost of living crisis affect an ever-increasing number of households in Orkney. As well as pursuing the priorities set out in the 2021-23 plan, the Partnership established a Cost of Living Task Force, and agencies across Orkney got together with a sense of urgency to map out what they could do to support those most in need.

The Task Force took as their starting point the actions identified in the Orkney Child Poverty Strategy 2022-26 and the Food Dignity

Report, and continues to look at other ways they can support families and individuals. In the new Orkney Community Plan 2023-30, which took effect from April 2023, the Cost of Living has become one of the Partnership's strategic priorities. Our other priorities are Local Equality, which will focus on Orkney's most disadvantaged communities, and Sustainable Development, which expands on the work begun under the theme of Sustainable Recovery.

Orkney is a community which has challenges, and it is also a community that pulls together to support each other. We want to express our thanks for all the hard work done across Orkney to support people through the pandemic and the initial recovery period. Through its new Community Plan, the Partnership will continue its work to make Orkney an even better place to live.

After several years as Chair and Vice-Chair, we stood down in June 2023 and the Orkney Partnership Board appointed Councillor Heather Woodbridge as its new Chair and Morven Brooks of Voluntary Action Orkney as its new Vice Chair, to take forward the new plan. We wish them both every success in their new roles.

Councillor James Stockan
Chair
Orkney Partnership Board



Meghan McEwen
Vice Chair
Orkney Partnership Board

Our structure during 2022-23



The Orkney Partnership Board is at the centre of our structure. During 2022-23, the Board was chaired by Councillor James Stockan, Council Leader, and the Vice Chair was Meghan McEwen, Chair of the Board of NHS Orkney. Membership is made up of all of the statutory partner organisations named in the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, plus locally co-opted partners.

Each of the Board’s strategic priorities is assigned to a Delivery Group, whose chairs sit on the Board. Delivery Groups include representatives of any organisation or group that can actively help to deliver the priority assigned to their group.

The Orkney Partnership Board is supported by an Executive Group comprising senior officers of the five partners with a duty to facilitate community planning, plus Voluntary Action Orkney and the Delivery Group chairs.

The Board or Delivery Groups may create short life working groups to address specific issues. During 2022-23, the Partnership had two short life working groups, the Cost of Living Task Force and the First Responders (Isles) Group, focusing on the provision of emergency first responders on the ferry linked isles. Meanwhile, the Council together with Highlands and Islands Enterprise invited private sector businesses to join a new Business Forum, to advise the Partnership on business matters.

The Board regularly reviews and sometimes changes the Partnership’s strategic priorities, to make sure they are still right for Orkney and to address any new challenges we need to tackle.

Membership of Orkney Partnership Board during 2022-23

Five partners have a collective duty to **facilitate** community planning



Other partners have a duty to **participate** in community planning



The Board includes these local and co-opted partners



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Orkney Community Plan 2021-23

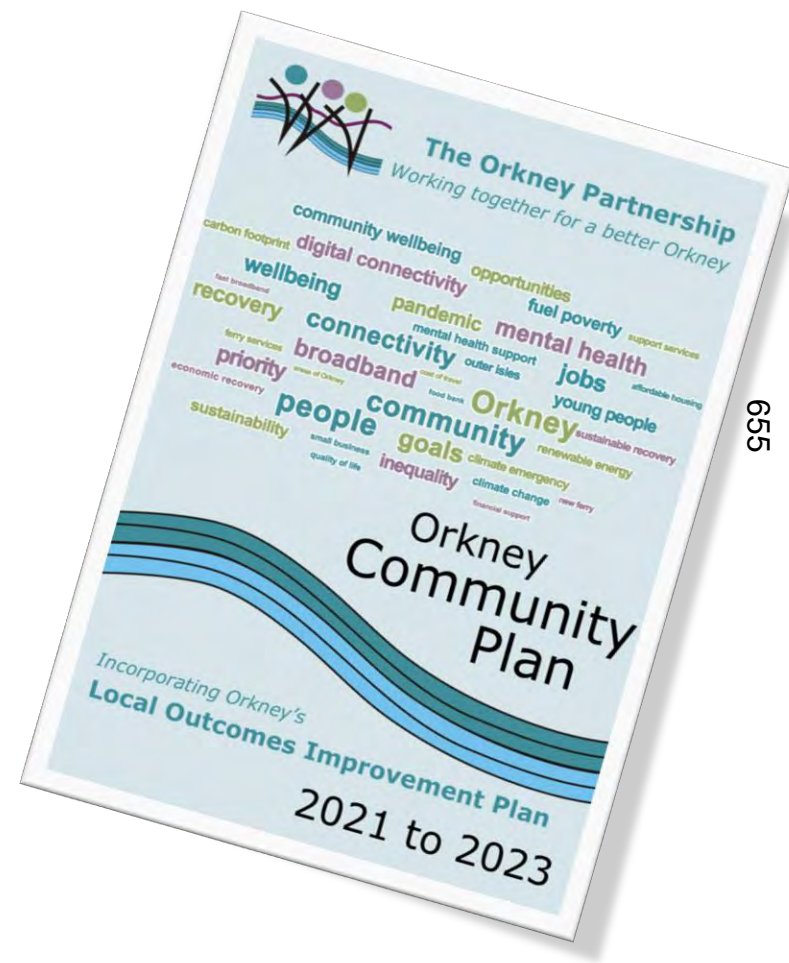
The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 places a duty on community planning partnerships to prepare and publish a Local Outcomes Improvement Plan (often called the LOIP). The LOIP sets out the local outcomes that a partnership has prioritised for improvement. The Orkney Partnership chooses to publish a Community Plan, incorporating our LOIP.

Our LOIP had previously been a three-year rolling plan which was refreshed, updated and reissued every year. However, in 2020, The Orkney Partnership Board decided to develop a shorter term recovery plan to cover the two years 2021-23. Public consultation took place early in 2021 and the new community plan was adopted in June 2021. It can be found on the Partnership's website at www.orkneycommunities.co.uk/CommunityPlanning.

The following pages describe the progress made by our delivery groups against their target outcomes, during the second year of the plan. The performance measures reported by each group are not necessarily measures we can control, but are indicators of how well Orkney is doing. For example, the roll out of digital connectivity (The R100 Programme) is the responsibility of the UK and Scottish Governments.

To measure progress against particular outcomes, we rely on various national surveys and data. The Partnership usually uses for information that is collated nationally, to avoid disproportionate effort being put into researching data instead of implementing the plan. The data available nationally is generally reliable, although data collection during Covid-related lockdowns has not been straightforward.

Some of the data we use is not collected annually, e.g. the Scottish Government's survey for the National Islands Plan, but is published regularly enough for our longer term outcomes which require long term strategies. Where possible, the same indicators are used over time making it possible to track progress over time. This report covers the second year of the 2021-23 plan.



Community Wellbeing

	What we aim to achieve	
	Our aim is to support Orkney's individuals and communities to withstand and recover from the Covid-19 pandemic and its socio-economic impacts.	
	Target outcomes	Progress during 2022-23
A.	Consolidate and develop effective partnerships and collaborative work to support individuals and communities through recovery.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Group drafted a Poverty Pledge that was adopted by the Partnership: <i>"We believe that it is not acceptable that people in our community live in poverty. Over the coming years, we will commit our time, energy, and resources to do all we can, in partnership, to work towards the elimination of poverty throughout Orkney."</i> This Pledge guided the work of the Partnership through the year up to the present. The partnership published the Orkney Child Poverty Strategy 2022-2026 and the VAO published the Food Dignity Report on behalf of the partnership and these documents, along with the Fuel Poverty Strategy currently being drafted, set out how poverty will be tackled in Orkney, including by the Partnership. The cost of living crisis became more urgent during the year, as fuel prices rose, the price of everyday household goods increased and incomes failed to match the higher prices we all had to pay. A dedicated Cost of Living Task Force was established by the Partnership that drew up ambitious plans to challenge poverty, incorporating the actions identified in the Child Poverty Strategy and Food Report, including an advice/cash first approach to help those in need. Funding from the council was provided for a partnership project led by VAO called Orkney Money Matters. This will create new advice posts and deliver a far more co-ordinated approach to ensure those in need are identified and given all the help they need. The project was set up in the first quarter of 2023 2023, with most of the posts recruited to and became live shortly after.
B.	Improve the resilience and sustainability of Orkney's fragile communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A report on streamlining Multi-agency Groups was produced by the partnership and a central register of all the groups created which sets out the purpose of the group and the contact details. This is revised periodically and circulated to partners.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Delivery Group held an online conference 12 May 2022 allowing community organisations across Orkney to share the lessons they learnt from how they had to adapt to the challenges of the Pandemic. • The Delivery Group secured a further £74,000 for a Mental Health Wellbeing Fund which it allocated to agencies providing support to people. • A further £305,000 challenge fund was provided by the Council and distributed by Voluntary Action Orkney to Third Sector agencies to support people through the recovery period.
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Measuring progress in Community Wellbeing

How households are managing financially in Orkney (Source: Scottish Household Survey 2019 and Data Explorer)					
	2020-21 Baseline	2021-22 Milestone	2022-23 Target	2022-23 Outcome	Progress in 2022-23
Managing very well or quite well	66%	66%	66%	n/a	National figures have not been updated since 2021.
Get by all right	31%	32%	34%	n/a	
Don't manage very well and have some financial difficulties	3%	2%	0%	n/a	
<p>In this period, it is likely that the position of households in Orkney has deteriorated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rising fuel prices when households in Orkney already pay a significantly higher than average proportion of their income on fuel. • Cost of living, especially food, has gone up and average wages in Orkney are less than the average for Scotland. <p>Consequently, it is likely that the number of people who are managing very well or well has decreased. NB This measure is included in the 2023-30 LOIP so it will be possible to measure over time how well people are managing.</p>					
Percentage of dwellings in Orkney in Fuel Poverty (Source: Scottish House Condition Survey Local Authority Analysis 2019)					
2020-21 Baseline	2021-22 Milestone	2022-23 Target	Progress in 2021-22	Progress in 2022-23	
30.5% (Scottish average 24.4%)	Reduce	Same as Scottish average	National figures have not been updated.	National figures have not been updated.	
<p>Updated figures have not yet been published but it is inevitable that fuel poverty will have been exacerbated by recent high price rises. NB This measure is included in the 2023-30 LOIP so it will be possible to measure over time how well people are managing.</p>					

Percentage of dwellings in Orkney in Extreme Fuel Poverty 2017-19 (Source: [Scottish House Condition Survey Local Authority Analysis 2019](#))

2020-21 Baseline	2021-22 Milestone	2022-23 Target	Progress in 2021-22	Progress in 2022-23
21.8% (Scottish average 11.9%)	Reduce	Same as Scottish average	National figures have not been updated.	National figures have not been updated.

Updated figures have not yet been published but it is inevitable that extreme fuel poverty will have been exacerbated by recent high price rises. NB This measure is included in the 2023-30 LOIP so it will be possible to measure over time how well people are managing.

Population of the ferry-linked isles (Source: [Scotland's Census](#))

2020-21 Baseline	2022-23 Target	Progress in 2021-22	Progress in 2022-23
2,862 (Census 2011)	Maintain or increase (Census 2022)	The 2022 census has not yet been published.	The 2022 census has not yet been published.

National Records of Scotland will begin to release the local results of the 2022 census in 2023. A local estimate as of January 2021 put the population at 2,743 ([2021-23 LOIP](#)). The estimated figure indicates a small (4%) drop in the population since 2011, which is in line with long term trends.

Percentage of adult residents (18-75) planning to stay on the island for the next 5 years (Source: [National Islands Plan Survey Report 2020](#) and [online results explorer tool](#))

		2020-21 Baseline	2022-23 Target	Progress in 2021-22	Progress in 2022-23
Orkney Mainland	Yes	87.2	Increase	Not applicable, survey only every two years.	This survey was originally planned to be repeated every two years but the 2022 survey has been put back to 2023.
	No	4.4	Decrease		
	Don't know	8.4	Decrease		
Orkney Outer Isles	Yes	79.0	Increase		
	No	8.7	Decrease		
	Don't know	12.3	Decrease		

Net migration to Orkney has been positive for the last few decades i.e. the number moving to Orkney is greater than those leaving. National Records of Scotland estimates for 2019-20 indicate that net migration was 170 which is typical of previous years. NB This measure is included in the 2023-30 LOIP so it will be possible to track population levels over time.

Percentage of adults participating in some form of sport or exercise, including walking, in previous 4 weeks (Source: Scottish Household Survey 2019 and Data Explorer)				
2020-21 Baseline	2021-22 Milestone	2022-23 Target	Progress in 2021-22	Progress in 2022-23
86%	87%	88%	National figures have not been updated.	National figures have not been updated.
<p>Scottish Household Survey figures for 2020 and 2021 have not yet been published. Anecdotal evidence would indicate that during lockdown, exercise increased as many people took daily walks.</p> <p>The National Islands Plan Survey found that 83.5% of people agreed that "...there are places I could go to take part in sports and physical exercise."</p>				
Access to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services - waiting period of 18 weeks or less from referral to treatment (source: Orkney Health and Care Strategic Commissioning Implementation Plan 2021-22)				
2020-21 Baseline	2021-22 Milestone	2022-23 Target	Progress in 2021-22	Progress in 2022-23
90% (NHS Delivery Standard)	90%	90%	Pending	Pending
Outcome data for 2021-22 and 2022-23 is expected shortly and will be added prior to publication.				

Sustainable Recovery

	What we aim to achieve	
	Our aim is to exploit the synergy between two linked priorities: Orkney’s economic recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic and combatting the climate emergency.	
	Target outcomes	Progress during 2022-23
	A demonstrable upturn in Orkney’s economy, supported through co-ordination and implementation of the ASPIRE Orkney action plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Partnership adopted Community Wealth Building as the approach to develop Orkney’s economy, moving towards Net Zero and a Wellbeing Economy. Community Wealth Building will ensure that more of the wealth generated in Orkney remains in the county and is shared across the community but also that economic activity is sustainable, i.e., Doughnut Economics. • In February 2023, the Partnership organised a workshop with partners, councillors and the Scottish Government to explore what Community Wealth Building could look like in Orkney and how best to take it forward locally. • The Partnership published the report from the Economic Recovery Steering Group: Housing in an Economic Context: A Review of The Last 20 Years of Population Growth in Orkney and The Effects This Has Had on Housing Provision and Availability.
	A “Just Transition” towards a well-being economy with a focus on climate change, fair work, and diversity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Just transition will be central to Orkney’s vision for Community Wealth Building. • It was agreed to set up a Skills Working Group, led by Skills Development Scotland and working closely with the Local Employability Partnership, to ensure that local people develop the skills necessary to grow Orkney’s wellbeing economy. This will support the Skills Charter. • Core to Just Transition is energy jobs, and a conference was convened by Orkney Renewable Energy Forum (OREF) 26 March 2023 to develop an Action Plan to deliver the Orkney Strategy Energy Strategy.
	Measurable progress towards Scotland’s target of net zero emissions by 2045.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scotland has a target of Net Zero by 2045, halving emissions by 2030. The Partnership has taken the view that Orkney should be more ambitious with a NetZero target for 2030. This would contribute to reducing the damage caused by climate change and allow Orkney to take advantage of funding opportunities and economic development by being early adopters.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hoy was selected by the Scottish Government to be one of its six pilot Carbon Neutral Islands, benefiting from government support to become carbon neutral by 2040. Community Energy Scotland is coordinating the three implementation phases – carbon audits, community climate change action plans and investment strategies. The Partnership have led initial discussion between NatureScot, HIE and the Council to develop a project to restore Orkney’s peat lands in a carbon off-setting project with local businesses.
An adaptation strategy to protect our citizens, businesses, habitats and wildlife from the effects of climate change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Orkney Flood Risk Management Plan 2022-2028, developed the Council and Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA), was finalised in 2022. During 2022-23, the Council recruited a permanent Climate Change Officer, who will work with partners to take forward an adaptation strategy for Orkney.

Measuring progress in Sustainable Recovery

Employment rate (16-64 years) (source: NOMIS Official labour market statistics)					
2018-19 Baseline	2019-20 target	2020-21 target	2021-22 target	Actual 2021-22 figure	Actual 2022-23 figure (Jan to Dec 2022)
88.7%	>85%	>85%	>85%	78.5%	87.5%
There was an initial significant drop in the employment rate because of lowered economic activity in Orkney, especially in the tourist sector, as a result of the impact of Covid-19, and we may also be seeing the impact of some people deciding to retire early. There has been an almost complete recovery of employment levels during 2022.					
% of 16-19 year olds participating in education, employment and other training and development activities (source: Skills Development Scotland, Annual Participation Measure)					
2018-19 Baseline	2019-20 target	2020-21 target	2021-22 target	Actual 2021 figure	Actual 2022 figure
95.4%	Maintain	Maintain	Maintain	93.4%	93.9%
Orkney’s participation rate dropped 2% in 2021 but partially recovered in 2022, giving a net 1.5% decline over the two years. National participation rates have increased by 0.8% over the same period but at 92.4% remain marginally lower than Orkney.					

Businesses in the Highlands and Islands that are optimistic over their future prospects in the next 12 months (Source: [HIE Business Panel June 2021 report](#) and [HIE Business Panel Report, February/March 2022](#) report).

2020-21 Baseline	2021-22 Milestone	2022-23 Target	Five-year target 2026-27	Feb/March 2022	April 2023 (% optimistic over future prospects for the next 6 months)
75% Jan/Feb 2020	80% June 2021	Maintain or improve	>80%	77%	85%

HIE changed this indicator in 2023 from a 12 month optimism forecast to a 6 month optimism forecast. It is likely that, had the original indicator remained unchanged, our original target for 2022-23 would still have been met.

House build completions in Orkney, all sectors (source: OIC Building Standards)

2020-21 Baseline	2021-22 Milestone	2022-23 Target	Five-year target 2026-27	2021-22 Outcome	2022-23 Outcome
92	144	130	225	119	93

% Orkney pupils' journeys to school by walking/cycling/scooter/skate (all schools excluding nursery) (Source: [Sustrans Hands Up Scotland Survey 2020 and 2021, and 2022](#)).

2020-21 Baseline	2021-22 Milestone	2022-23 Target	Five-year target 2026-27	2021	2022
33.7%	Improve	Improve	>40%	36.7%	33.7%

Over the period of this plan, we have not seen any overall improvement to this indicator.

% Walking journeys to work as a proportion of all journeys in Orkney (Source: Scottish Government [2019 and 2021 Transport – Travel to Work and Other Purposes](#))

Baseline (2019)	2021-22 Milestone	2022-23 Target	Five-year target 2026-27	2021	2022
27%	Improve	Improve	>35%	14%	n/a

The statistics indicate a considerable drop in the number of people walking to work. This may partially be related to changes in work patterns during and since the pandemic. Figures for 2022 have not yet been updated by Scottish Government.

Local Authority territorial area - CO2 emissions estimates 2019 and 2020 (kilotonnes CO2) (Sources – [UK Government local authority and regional carbon dioxide emissions national statistics 2005-2019](#) and [2005-2020](#))

	Original 2019 Baseline*	Revised 2019 Baseline*	2021-22 Milestone	2022-23 Target	Five-year target 2026-27	2020 (latest figures)
Commercial	8.9 kt	5.6 kt	Reduction commensurate with achieving NetZero by 2045	Reduction commensurate with achieving NetZero by 2045	Reduction commensurate with achieving NetZero by 2045	3.8 kt
Public Sector	2.6 kt	2.4 kt				2.5 kt
Domestic	42.0 kt	36.4 kt				36.4 kt
Transport	31.1 kt	32.4 kt				26.7 kt
LULUCF**	135.6 kt	124.1 kt				123.9 kt
Total for Orkney	277.2 kt	251.6 kt				240.3 kt

*Since the publication of the LOIP 2023-30, the 2019 baseline estimates have been recalculated and the new figure is set out in brackets.

**Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry

Figures are for the whole of a local authority's territorial area, not the local authority itself.

No updates have been available since 2020 but, up to then, some progress has been made towards meeting the target.

NB These are long term targets and this measure has therefore been included in the 2023-30 LOIP.

Connectivity

What we aim to achieve	
Our aim is to improve Orkney's connectivity by resolving the issues holding up the delivery of 21st century mobile, broadband and transport networks to all of Orkney's communities.	
Target outcomes	Progress during 2022-23
Equal standards of digital connectivity to elsewhere in the UK, with mobile and broadband services available and affordable to all in Orkney.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Government's R100 programme has continued to roll out providing more homes with better connectivity, but progress by BT OpenReach has been significantly slower than planned. Additional funding has been acquired which means that around 1,000 additional households, mainly on the ferry linked isles, will be connected by the end of the programme in 2028.
Integrated, sustainable and affordable transport services which meet the needs of Orkney's residents, businesses and visitors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Following pressure from the Council and community planning partners, the Scottish Government agreed to convene a Taskforce to work with the Council and other partners to address the funding needed to replace the inter-isles ferry fleet. The Taskforce met once in February 2023 but was subsequently suspended due to the SNP leadership campaign. The Partnership made a submission to the Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR2) consultation arguing that Orkney's internal ferry service should be included as a life-line service and continues to challenge the decision made to sift out council-funded services. The Scottish Government, following lobbying by the Council and community planning partners, continued to provide the additional revenue funding required to run the inter-island ferry service. The junior rate for ferry fares has been extended to all those aged up to 22, paid for by the Council. The Partnership continued to lobby Scottish Ministers about the case for Road Equivalent Tariff (RET) to be rolled out to Orkney.

Measuring progress in Connectivity

% Orkney premises unable to access 10Mbps/s Broadband (Sources: Ofcom Connected Nations 2020 , Ofcom Connected Nations 2022 , and Ofcom Connected Nations 2023)					
2020-21 Baseline	2021-22 Milestone	2022-23 Target	2022 Outcome	2023 Outcome	
20.7%	10%	0%	19.7%	17.2%	
% Orkney premises unable to access 30Mbps/s Broadband (Sources: Ofcom Connected Nations 2020 , Ofcom Connected Nations 2022 , and Ofcom Connected Nations 2023)					
2020-21 Baseline	2021-22 Milestone	2022-23 Target	Five-year target 2026-27	2022 Outcome	2023 Outcome
31.5%	20%	10%	0%	32.9%	31%
% Orkney residents whose internet connection at home is fast enough to do what they want online (Source: National Islands Plan Survey Report 2020 and online results explorer tool)					
	2020-21 Baseline	2022-23 Target	Five-year target 2026-27	2022 Outcome	2023 Outcome
Orkney Mainland	70%	Increase	100%	Not applicable, survey only every two years.	The survey scheduled for 2022 was postponed to 2023. Updated results will not be available until 2024.
Ferry-linked isles	45%	Increase	100%		
<p>Commentary on broadband speed indicators:</p> <p>The Scottish Government launched the Reaching 100% programme (R100) in 2017 with the aim of having full coverage in Scotland for all premises with a minimum speed for 30 Mb by 2021. There were significant delays during the tendering progress and consequently these targets have not been met.</p> <p>In summer 2022, further investment was announced that will extend R100 to an additional 1,000 properties in Orkney and the Council is working with the Scottish Government to improve on that.</p>					

% Orkney residents who have a good mobile phone signal at home (Source: National Islands Plan Survey Report 2020 and online results explorer tool)					
	2020-21 Baseline	2022-23 Target	Five-year target 2026-27	2022 Outcome	2023 Outcome
Orkney Mainland	78%	Increase	100%	Not applicable, survey only every two years.	The survey scheduled for 2022 was postponed to 2023. Updated results will not be available until 2024.
Ferry-linked isles	27%	Increase	100%		
<p>The Scottish Government is leading on this, and the Shared Rural Network (SRN) is an agreement involving the four largest mobile network operators: EE, O2, Three and Vodafone. Government has provided subsidies to build masts but even with these subsidies, the companies consider there is little commercial case for many developments. Four EE sites have been built which include two (September 2022) waiting to go live.</p>					
% of people in Orkney very or fairly satisfied with the quality of public transport (Source: Scottish Household Survey 2019 and Data Explorer)					
2020-21 Baseline	2021-22 Milestone	2022-23 Target	2022 Outcome	2023 Outcome	
61%	70%	80%	National figures have not yet been updated.	National figures have not yet been updated.	
<p>This indicator is taken from the Scottish Household Survey, which publishes much of its data as three-year rolling averages. This is more robust for small populations and smooths out anomalous years. Due to inconsistencies in data collection during the pandemic, the SHS has not been updated since 2019 data was published, and we have been unable to measure progress in a quantitative way.</p>					
% of Orkney residents who agree “When I make journeys to or from my home, it is easy connecting between different forms of transport” (Source: National Islands Plan Survey Report 2020 and online results explorer tool)					
	2020-21 Baseline	2022-23 Target	2022 Figure	2023 Figure	
Orkney Mainland	46%	60%	Not applicable, survey only every two years.	The survey scheduled for 2022 was postponed to 2023. Updated results will not be available until 2024.	
Ferry-linked isles	29%	50%			

Activity of Short Life Working Groups in 2022-23

Cost of Living Task Force

The Cost of Living Task Force was set up as a short life working group in June 2022 and, from 1 April 2023, is a full Delivery Group. The group addresses the immediate cost of living crisis and the underlying causes of poverty in Orkney.

The Task Force has drawn together the actions from Orkney's Child Poverty Strategy, and the Orkney Food Dignity Report into a single action plan. When the Orkney Fuel Poverty Strategy is finalised, any additional actions will be incorporated into this plan.

The Orkney Partnership produced the Orkney Child Poverty Strategy 2022-26 and has published several statutory Local Child Poverty Action Reports, the most recent of which is linked below.

- [Orkney Child Poverty Strategy 2022-2026](#)
- [Orkney Local Child Poverty Action Report 2021-22](#)
- [Food Dignity Recommendations Report](#)

Orkney Money Matters is, to date, the most important initiative of the Task Force. It is a new partnership project between Voluntary Action Orkney, Orkney Citizens Advice Bureau, Orkney Blide Trust, Orkney Islands Council, Orkney Housing Association, NHS Orkney, the Foodbank and the Trussell Trust. It has initially been funded by Orkney Islands Council. It will reduce the levels of financial insecurity in Orkney by increasing access to advice, and cash-based support, through the creation of a 'advice-and-cash-first' referral pathway. The project will develop frameworks and resources to support closer working between organisation, as well as developing a centralised promotion campaign to raise awareness of available support.

First Responders (Isles) Group

This group was set up because of a shortage of emergency first responders on some of the ferry linked isles. When someone gets into trouble, it can be some time before the ambulance and trained medics can reach people, so the Scottish Ambulance Service relies on islanders to come forward as First Responders. Unfortunately, too few volunteers were prepared to come forward. The view of some is that the problem is exacerbated because, on some islands First Responders are paid, while on others they are not. The group came together to explore options to resolve the problem, including lobbying the Scottish Government for the resources needed for an equitable service. The group is still working to resolve this challenge.

Review of The Orkney Partnership

Early in 2022, the Orkney Partnership Board invited the Improvement Service to conduct a review of the Partnership's operation and effectiveness, with a focus on the Executive Group and the Board itself. The review was carried out during summer 2022 using a methodology based on the Public Sector Improvement Framework. This comprised two main stages: a survey questionnaire which was completed by members of each group and submitted to the Improvement Service for analysis, and a workshop for each group exploring the findings from their survey and developing potential improvement actions.

The Partnership agreed on a range of issues on which to focus improvement work, including performance reporting, resourcing the delivery groups, greater contribution and challenge from all partners, shared leadership, clearer lines of accountability, more effective early intervention and prevention, and better co-ordinated community engagement. An improvement plan was agreed by the Board in December 2022 and many of these workstreams were under way by the end of 2022-23.



The Orkney Partnership

Our shared mission is: *Working together for a better Orkney*

Our shared values are:

Resilience
Enterprise
Equality
Fairness
Innovation
Leadership
Sustainability

All the information in this report, and much more, can be found at:
www.orkneycommunities.co.uk/CommunityPlanning

If you would like this report in a different language or format, or just
require more information, please contact us at:

community.planning@orkney.gov.uk

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The Orkney Partnership

Draft at 1 September 2023

Orkney Local Child Poverty Action Report 2022-23

Working together for a better Orkney

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Introduction

Local authorities and health boards in Scotland must report every year on the actions they are taking to combat child poverty. In Orkney, this work is supported by The Orkney Partnership, which brings together the many partner agencies which play a part in our children's lives and wellbeing. The Cost of Living Task Force took the lead on child poverty work during 2022-23.

The last few years have been difficult for everybody, and especially so for families on low incomes. In 2020-21 many households were affected financially by the pandemic, successive lockdowns and job losses, but the mitigating actions taken by local and national governments helped to offset these losses. The Scottish Child Payment began to take effect and data for 2020-21 subsequently showed that child poverty actually fell for the first time in several years. In 2021-22, we started to see economic recovery but rising energy prices reversed those temporary gains.

National figures included in this report show that Orkney had an estimated 567 children living in relative poverty in 2021-22, and the percentage of Orkney's children living in poverty increased to 16%. In 2022-23, the cost of living crisis piled on the pressure and increasing numbers of families found themselves in financial hardship, many of these for the first time. There is no sign of things improving any time soon. If we are to prevent hardship blighting our children's lives and future prospects, we must take urgent action.

Last year, The Orkney Partnership published Orkney's first Child Poverty Strategy, setting out our plans for 2022-26 to combat child poverty. In this report, we track the progress we have made in implementing our strategy. A highlight of our first year was the development of Orkney Money Matters, an integrated referral pathway for anyone in need of urgent cash or money advice. Led by Orkney's voluntary sector, Orkney Money Matters will help us channel immediate support to children, families, young people and anyone else in Orkney who is struggling to make ends meet.

Thank you for your interest in our report.

Craig Spence
Chair, 2022-23
Cost of Living Task Force



Reporting on child poverty in Orkney

Meaningful statistics for local child poverty are not easy to obtain. Published data may be years old and the small numbers in island communities mean that data may be misleading or not released at all due to the risk of identifying individuals. Many data sets have been unreliable, inconsistent or unavailable since the pandemic, because new survey methods had to be adopted and this can change the results.

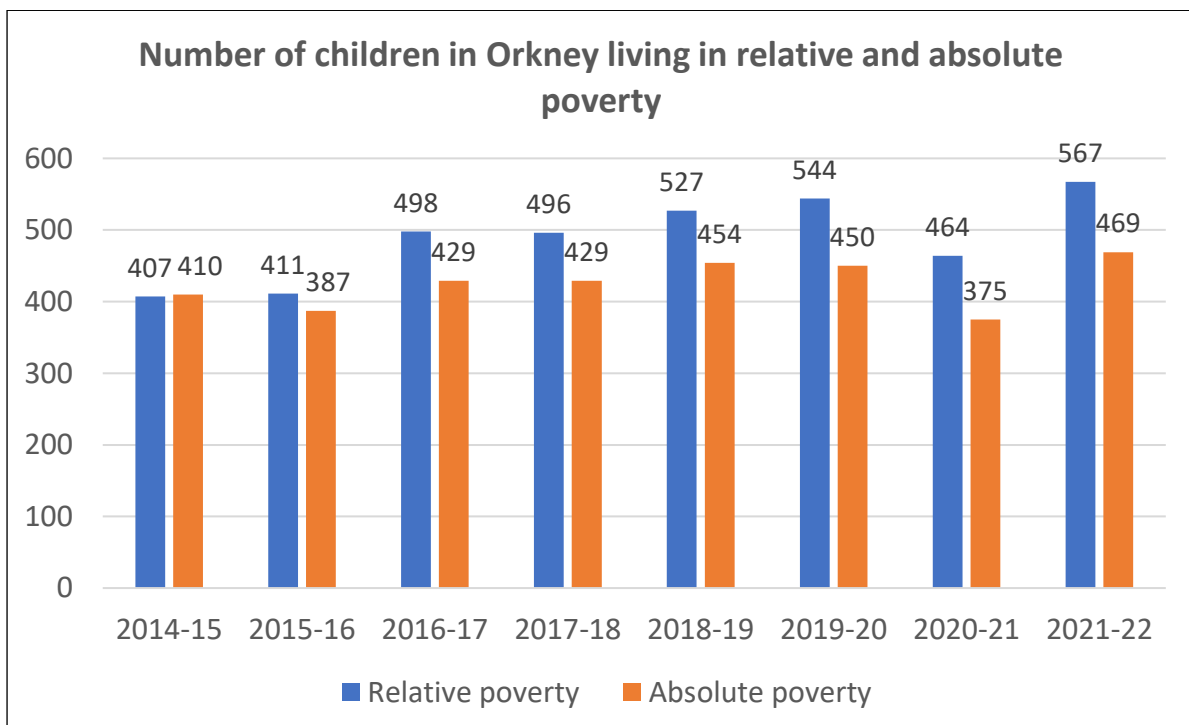
Children living in relative and absolute poverty

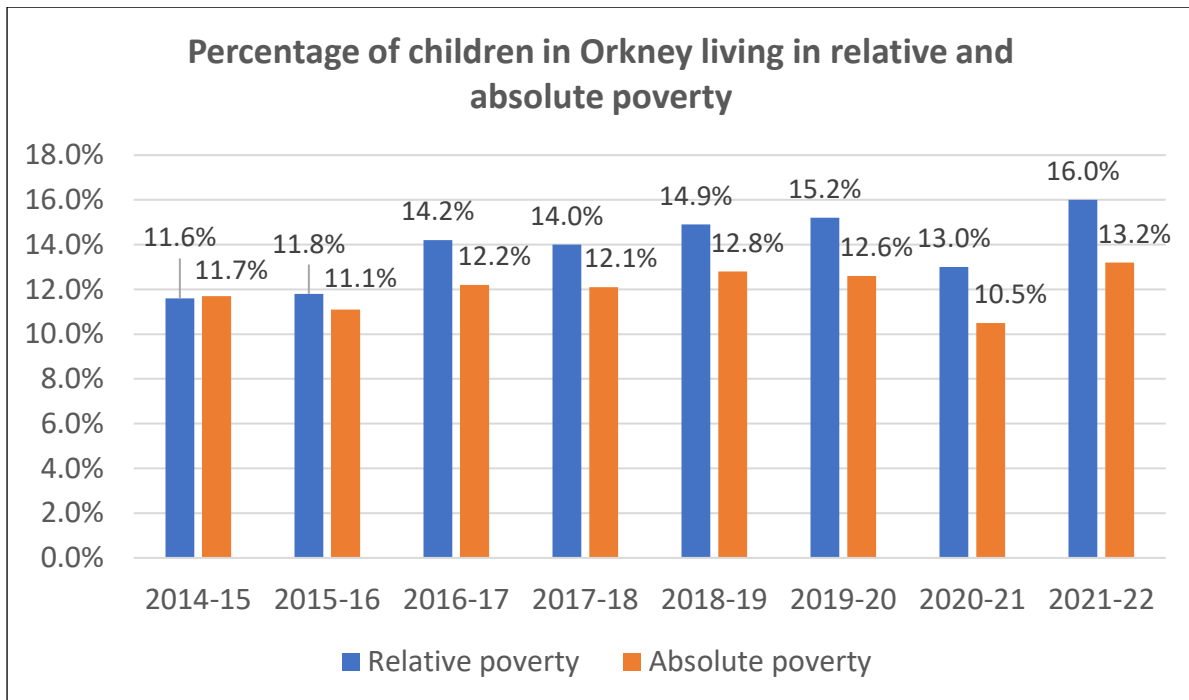
The UK Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) publishes [figures](#) every year for the numbers and percentages of children living in absolute and relative poverty for every local authority in the UK. Absolute poverty is a measure of whether those in the lowest income households are seeing their incomes rise in real terms. Relative poverty is a measure of whether those in the lowest income households are keeping pace with the growth of incomes in the economy as a whole.

Relative poverty	Children in families with incomes less than 60% of the contemporary UK median income
Absolute poverty	Children in families with incomes less than 60% of inflation adjusted 2010-11 median income

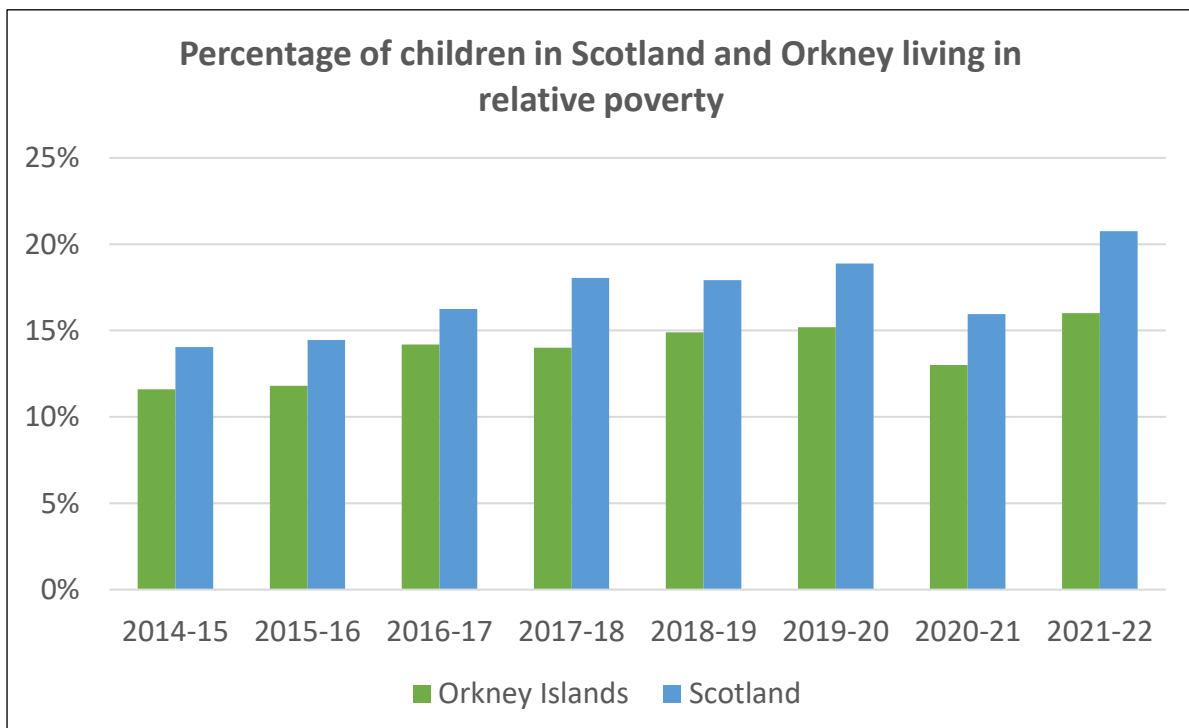
The DWP statistics include only children aged 0-15, due to difficulty in establishing whether 16 and 17 year olds are dependents or not. Incomes are adjusted in the calculation to reflect family size because a larger family requires a higher income to achieve the same standard of living as a smaller family.

The most recent figures available are 2021-22, and we can see at once the impact of the rise in fuel prices during this year on families in Orkney. This offset any improvement in household income due to the introduction of the Scottish Child Payment, and reversed the fall in child poverty we saw in 2020-21.





We can calculate the incidence of poverty in Scotland from the DWP figures, to compare with Orkney, although they do not publish a Scottish average so this should be considered a local estimate only.



Fuel poverty

It might appear that families in Orkney are relatively better off than those in Scotland as a whole. However, the DWP calculation does not take into account the higher cost of living in rural, remote and island areas, or the impact on fuel costs of living in a cold, windy region.

Minimum income standard (MIS) is defined as the income required by a particular type of household for an acceptable standard of living. The Scottish Government has commissioned research from the University of Loughborough to calculate a MIS for Scottish islands, taking into account the higher cost of travel, freight, fuel etc. Scottish Government is exploring the idea of a minimum income guarantee (MIG) in Scotland, and we are interested in the potential for piloting MIG in Orkney as part of our long term strategy to prevent families falling into poverty.

Fuel poverty is a significant cause of hardship in Orkney. A household is defined as being in 'fuel poverty' if total fuel costs necessary to maintain a satisfactory heating regime are more than 10% of the household's net income (after housing costs) and their remaining income is insufficient to maintain an acceptable standard of living. 'Extreme fuel poverty' follows the same definition except that a household would have to spend more than 20% of its net income.

The last available figures for Orkney, from the [Scottish House Condition Survey 2019](#), show that 30.5% of Orkney households were in fuel poverty during 2017-19, compared with a Scottish average of 24.4%. 21.8% of Orkney households were in extreme fuel poverty over the same period, compared with a Scottish average of 11.9%.

The results of the 2021 survey have not yet been published but our partner report from THAW Orkney (on page 38 of this report) includes data on the fuel poverty rates being experienced by their client base in 2022. This shows that of the households seeking help from THAW, couples had an average fuel poverty level of 60% and single parent families had an average of over 100%. Greater than 100% means that a family would need to spend more than they have coming in (after housing costs) to adequately heat their home.

We included a range of other indicators in our Child Poverty Strategy but most have not been updated nationally since its publication. We will report further on these when updated data is available.

Child health indicators

Poverty impacts on children's health, and problems can persist for a lifetime. We monitor a selection of the child health indicators published by [Public Health Scotland](#) to see how the health of Orkney's children compares with the Scottish average. This helps us to assess how effectively our services are working.

The figures in the table below mostly include 2020 and subsequent years, when children's lives and education were disrupted by the pandemic and successive lockdowns. Reduced family income, reduced activity levels and in many cases poorer diet impacted negatively on children's health and the effect of this can be seen in data across the UK, including Scotland and Orkney.

Where our performance has got worse (↓ or ↑), or our children are doing worse than Scotland overall, this can be a warning sign that something is not right and needs more resources devoted to it, or perhaps a change in policy.

ScotPHO Health indicator	Reporting period	Orkney	How did we do?	Scotland	How did we compare to Scotland?
Healthy birth weight 3 year rolling average percentage	2018-21	74.5	Baseline	84.2	Worse
	2019-22	73.3	↓	84.1	Worse
Child healthy weight in Primary 1 Percentage whose BMI is within the healthy reference range for their age and sex	2019-20	77.2	Baseline	76.2	Same
	2020-21	73.7	↓	69.8	Better
Drug-related hospital admissions, age 11-25 3 year rolling average age/sex standardised rate per 100,000	2018-20	120.6	Baseline	162.2	Better
	2019-22	182.6	↑	167.7	Same
Alcohol-related hospital admissions, age 11-25 3 year rolling average age/sex standardised rate per 100,000	2018-21	477.8	Baseline	270.0	Worse
	2019-22	503.4	↑	255.2	Worse
Scottish Housing Quality Standard Households with children in homes that fail the SHQS, 3 year rolling average %	2015-17	35.0	Baseline <i>no new data available</i>	38.0	Same
Teenage pregnancies 3 year rolling average per 1000 females age 15-19	2017-19	12.3	Baseline	29.2	Better
	2018-20	12.8	↑	27.1	Better
Child dental health in Primary 1 Percentage of P1 children showing no obvious signs of tooth decay	2019-20	85.0	Baseline	72.4	Better
	2021-22	86.2	↑	73.1	Better

The comparison colour codes are those used by Public Health Scotland:



Orkney doing better than Scotland



No statistically significant difference to Scotland



Orkney doing worse than Scotland

What we do in Orkney to combat child poverty

All support agencies in Orkney refer families to partner agencies where they might be able to provide additional services, resources or assistance to the family. This might be a matter of simply providing information or, if more support is needed, perhaps making an appointment for the family and following it up. A helpsheet listing sources of support with contact details was included with the survey forms issued for the Making Ends Meet survey.¹

The summary table below lists the actions which partner agencies routinely carry out to combat child poverty and mitigate against its effects. Most of these actions are continued from year to year. Further information on many of these actions can be found in the reports from partner agencies on the projects and services they deliver, contained in the next section of this report.

All of the actions in this list address one or more of the key poverty drivers:-

- Income from employment
- Income from social security entitlements and benefits
- The cost of living

What we did in 2022-23 to combat child poverty		Lead agencies
1	Advocacy services commissioned by NHS Orkney and Orkney Islands Council.	CAB Orkney
2	Maximise income by assisting clients to identify and claim their full financial entitlements.	CAB Orkney
3	Parent Employability Support for individuals and families to access information, support, welfare, training and employment.	OIC (Community Learning, Development and Employability)
4	Providing and encouraging take-up of free school meals and associated clothing allowances and support grants.	OIC (Schools Catering), OHAC
5	Regular discussions with families about finances, debt, benefits etc. Financial support provided and referrals made to CAB for benefit checks/money advice for those in financial difficulties.	OHAC (Social Work); OIC (Housing); OIC (Community Learning, Development and Employability); OIC (Revenues and Benefits)

¹ <http://www.orkneycommunities.co.uk/communityplanning/documents/makingendsmeetsupport-sources-02-08-21.pdf>

What we did in 2022-23 to combat child poverty		Lead agencies
6	Support with Scottish Welfare Fund Community Care Grant applications, and administering the funds.	OIC (Revenues and Benefits); OIC (Housing and Homelessness Services, Halls of Residence, and appointed agents)
7	Support for individuals and families to manage relationships, improve mental health and reduce substance use plus onward referrals to other services e.g. CAB, Women's Aid.	Relationships Scotland - Orkney
8	Support for women and children affected by domestic abuse.	Women's Aid Orkney
9	Sourcing funding (local and national) to assist families to purchase items, e.g. bicycles.	OHAC (Occupational therapists, Health Visitors)
10	Assisting families to apply for Best Start grants.	Social Security Scotland, OHAC (Social Work)
11	Financial support for local children in need, including the following grant schemes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orkney Fund • Bairns Need Nappies • Help from Home • Every Child Should Be Warm In Bed • Every Child Deserves A Christmas • Winter Coat Fund 	Orkney Charitable Trust
12	Provision of emergency food to families referred by partner agencies.	Orkney Foodbank
13	Community Fridges established in Kirkwall and Stromness to share surplus food donated by retailers and reduce food waste.	Greener Orkney
14	Addressing poor quality housing and fuel poverty through the Home Energy Efficiency Programme for Scotland (HEES ABS) and Landlord Registration.	OIC (Housing and Homelessness Services and appointed agents)
15	Providing information and advice on energy efficiency, tariff switching support, assistance with accessing grant funding, advocacy, income maximisation and budgeting support.	THAW Orkney

What we did in 2022-23 to combat child poverty		Lead agencies
16	Providing direct support to householders in fuel poverty by means of electricity vouchers (including those fulfilled by the Foodbank), Cosy Home Packs and small grants.	THAW Orkney
17	Electricity top-ups so those in receipt of food parcels can heat/cook their food.	Orkney Foodbank THAW Orkney
18	Support for families on low incomes and/or those going through tough times.	Homestart Orkney
19	Community larder boxes, pop-up charity shops, fuel voucher schemes etc. Acting as a link between the community and services, including referrals to the Foodbank from the isles.	Island Wellbeing Project
20	Enabling digital connectivity and access to mifi, laptops and other devices for digitally excluded children and families.	OIC (Community Learning, Development and Employability); OHAC (Health Visitors, School Health, Paediatric therapists)
21	Provision and promotion of free period products available locally.	OIC (Building Cleaning); OHAC (Health Visitors, School Health)
22	Supported employment and skills development for adults and young people with a barrier to maintaining employment. Restart Orkney recycles, restores and sells secondhand furniture and household items and supports new tenants to furnish their property.	Employability Orkney with funding and support from OIC (Housing and Homelessness Services, and appointed agents)
23	Funding for starter-packs of essential household items.	OIC (Housing and Homelessness Services, and appointed agents)
24	Housing support for vulnerable families.	OIC (Housing and Homelessness Services, Halls of Residence, and appointed agents)
25	Ad hoc essential clothing items for Papdale Halls of Residence pupils.	Papdale Hall of Residence staff

What we did in 2022-23 to combat child poverty		Lead agencies
26	Distribution of Scottish Government baby boxes to all families with new babies, containing items needed in the first six months.	OHAC (Maternity unit)
27	Support for pregnant women and families with babies and young children.	OHAC (Maternity Services and Health Visitors)
28	Hungry Baby service - baby milk, baby food, nappies etc (referred to Health Visitors where child/children under 2 years).	Orkney Foodbank
29	Childsmile - improving children's oral health.	OHAC (Dental & Oral Health)
30	Provision of an informal learning programme for young people transitioning out of school.	Voluntary Action Orkney (The Connect Project)
31	Supporting the Active Schools Network to increase the number of opportunities for all children to get engaged in sport.	OIC & SportScotland
32	ActiveLife Budget Membership scheme offering unlimited access to The Pickaquoy Centre and 11 Council-owned health and fitness facilities across the islands.	OIC & The Pickaquoy Centre
33	Supported Accommodation for homeless young people is provided by the Council in Kirkwall and Stromness. Residents are supported Y People to learn independent living skills, enabling them to sustain a tenancy in the future.	Y People; OIC (Housing and Homelessness Services, Halls of Residence, and appointed agents)
34	Provision of school uniform, toiletries and laundry items.	OIC (Housing and Homelessness Services, Halls of Residence, and appointed agents)
35	Facilitation of Young Scot cards, Youth Achievement Groups and the Orkney Youth Forum.	OIC (Community Learning, Development and Employability)
36	Supporting vulnerable young adults to build confidence and positive relationships while focusing on life and employability skills.	Voluntary Action Orkney (The Connect Project)

What we did in 2022-23 to combat child poverty		Lead agencies
37	Developing new ways of working (via telephone and online) to engage with service users and deliver services safely.	OHAC & OIC (Housing Service)
38	Moratorium on increase of rents within emergency housing.	OHAC & OIC (Housing and Homelessness Services)
39	Explore options to ensure dental and wider health services are accessible without barriers of finance.	Orkney Partnership Board
40	Money Counts – publication of “Worrying about Money?” leaflet and training for support agencies.	NHS Orkney (Public Health), Orkney CAB, Social Security Scotland
41	Young People’s Befriending Project – supporting children and young people from the ages of 8-18 through the provision of a trained Befriender.	Voluntary Action Orkney
42	In School Counselling service available for all children and young people aged ten and over, both face to face and online.	OIC (Schools)
43	Breakfast clubs for children who would otherwise go without.	Orkney Charitable Trust, Kirkwall Grammar School, Papdale Primary School.
44	“A Helping Hand” webpage bringing together sources of help and support for those affected by the cost of living crisis.	Orkney Islands Council

Orkney Child Poverty Strategy 2022-26: Progress report

In this section we report on how we are doing in progressing the actions we planned to undertake in our Child Poverty Strategy for 2022-26.

Our target outcomes	Short term actions 2022-23	Medium 2022-25	Long term 2022-26
Pockets Every family can make ends meet	Raise awareness of entitlements and maximise family incomes		
	Adopt a 'one stop shop' approach to streamline access to services and new ways to engage		
	Explore with Scottish Government the scope for piloting Minimum Income Guarantee in Orkney		
Prospects Every child has a good start in life	Remove barriers to participation in school trips and experiences		
	Improve take-up of free school meals and associated benefits		
	Remove barriers to participation in family leisure/holiday activities		
Places Every family has a sustainable home	Improve the energy efficiency of new/existing housing in the private and social rented sectors		
	Extend more employment opportunities to the isles		
	Explore options to apply the benefits from wind power developments to reduce home energy costs		
Prevention Future generations can escape from poverty	Promote good employment practice, flexibility and fair pay, and their benefits to employers		
	Increase the capacity of Orkney's advisory agencies		
	Explore people-centred strategies for local development such as Community Wealth Building		
Priorities No child is left behind	Make inter-island ferry travel affordable to children and families on the ferry-linked isles		
	Improve the availability and affordability of wraparound childcare/after-school provision		
	Prioritise early financial support for families at risk, to avert crisis and family breakdown		

Pockets

Every family can make ends meet.

“Pockets” is about ensuring people get the benefits they need and are entitled to, supporting people to take up work and working with employers to boost productivity and pay. Longer term, we are interested in exploring social reforms such as Minimum Income Guarantee which could potentially eliminate child poverty for good.

Raise awareness of entitlements and maximise family income

Who’s doing it?	Voluntary Action Orkney and Community Consulting are leading this action on behalf of Orkney Money Matters and NHS Public Health. CAB Orkney is the designated entry point in the Orkney Money Matters referral pathway for families needing financial assistance.
How is it being resourced?	The extra staff capacity needed within partner agencies for Orkney Money Matters is being financed through an initial grant of £350,000 in LACER funding provided by Orkney Islands Council. CAB has been commissioned through the Local Employability Partnership to provide income maximisation, welfare and debt support to individuals identified under 'No One Left Behind' (including the Parental Employability Support Fund).
Timescale	Short term, 2022-23
How did we do?	<p>Coverage was secured on Radio Orkney during early January 2023 with Thaw, CAB and others, together with a phone-in event. Messages were drawn together on different websites including the new A Helping Hand page on the Council website.</p> <p>In 2022-23, 52 households were assisted resulting in a total client financial gain of £54,591. We aim to increase this gain in future years. As at 18 August 2023, A Helping Hand has received 2718 views by 2208 people.</p>

Adopt a ‘one stop shop’ approach to streamline access to services and new ways to engage

Who’s doing it?	Voluntary Action Orkney and Community Consulting are leading this action on behalf of Orkney Money Matters and NHS Public Health. Key third Sector partners include CAB Orkney, Blide Trust and THAW Orkney.
How is it being resourced?	The extra staff capacity needed within partner agencies for Orkney Money Matters is being financed through an initial grant of £350,000 in LACER funding provided by Orkney

	Islands Council. The project will run a pilot to March 2024 and additional staff have been recruited to Third Sector partners.
Timescale	Medium term, 2022-25
How are we doing?	The Orkney Money Matters project is creating a referral pathway for individuals experiencing financial insecurity or destitution, bringing together all relevant services and support. This is supported by shared communications, including a leaflet and website.

Explore with Scottish Government the scope for piloting Minimum Income Guarantee in Orkney

Who's doing it?	Scottish Government has established a Minimum Income Guarantee (MIG) Expert Group to explore options for Scotland. Orkney Islands Council's Strategy and Partnership team are liaising with the MIG Expert Group to advise on island issues.
How is it being resourced?	Officer time is being resourced from existing budgets.
Timescale	Long term, 2022-26
How are we doing?	The MIG Expert Group published an interim report in March 2023. This set out the principles that a MIG should follow and the initial actions needed to prepare the ground. A MIG brings the income of every household up to a pre-defined standard and is made up of a number of complementary parts, from solutions that reduce costs for households to cash and practical support. In year 2, the MIG Expert Group will continue to refine and focus what form a Minimum Income Guarantee might take in Scotland.

Prospects

Every child has a good start in life.

"Prospects" aims to improve the life chances of children, enabling them to escape poverty in a sustainable way. This includes supporting child development and educational achievement, supporting families through crisis and encouraging employers to provide family-friendly jobs and opportunities to progress.

Remove barriers to participation in school trips and experiences

Who's doing it?	The Council's Education service, Parent Councils, Island Development Trusts and Orkney Charitable Trust.
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How is it being resourced? Various local initiatives have been supported by Island Development Trusts, Parent Councils et al. Orkney Charitable Trust and a donation provided the initial funds to set up the Papdale School Participation Fund, which is now being managed and topped up by the Parent Council.

Timescale Short term, 2022-23

How did we do? School/establishment managers were asked to review the impact of the 'cost of the school day' as part of a briefing in December 2022. There has been a specific focus on using local facilities for outdoor education programmes during 2022-23, in recognition that these can remove barriers to participation, including making the experience more affordable. Where approval has been given for other trips, establishment managers are asked to ensure, through positive engagement with the wider community, that cost is not a barrier.

Orkney Charitable Trust partnered with Papdale Parent Council to set up a fund to enable children to participate in activities at Papdale School which their families would otherwise be unable to afford. Since the fund was set up, it has provided assistance with school photographs, a verruca sock for swimming, reading overlays, ear defenders and travel to school activities. The fund is available to any child, whether or not they are registered for free school meals.

Education Scotland inspected Papdale Primary School and reported in June 2023: "The Parent Council provide a well-considered participation fund. This offers funding to ensure all children can access learning experiences and opportunities without families incurring additional financial costs."

During 2023-34 we will try to roll out the initiative to other schools in Orkney.

Improve take-up of free school meals and associated benefits

Who's doing it? The Council's Schools Catering service, together with Orkney Health and Care (OHAC).

How is it being resourced? Free school meals and clothing grants are funded by the Scottish Government. Orkney Islands Council pays additional holiday grants to qualifying families to encourage take-up.

Timescale Short term, 2022-23

How did we do? Uptake of free school meals was actively promoted in schools and the community, linking this to the payments being made for Christmas from Scottish Government and the Council. A

card system for school meals is being rolled out which will mean pupils cannot identify who is getting free school meals.

During 2022-23, 1,733 children in Orkney were eligible for free school meals, but we don't at present record how many of these were taken up. The approach to lunchtime in nursery settings has been revised to enable children to be more independent in making food choices, which encourages the uptake of free nursery meals.

Remove barriers to participation in family leisure/holiday activities

Who's doing it?	The Pickaquoy Centre and the Council offer Budget Membership to their joint ActiveLife scheme at a cost of 50p per person per activity, with no up-front subscription cost.
How is it being resourced?	The Budget Membership scheme is funded by the Pickaquoy Trust (for Pickaquoy Centre users) and the Council (for users of 11 health and fitness centres).
Timescale	Short term, 2022-23
How did we do?	In 2022-23, 608 Orkney residents took out or renewed a Budget Membership to ActiveLife. A total of 8,054 activity sessions at 50p a time were taken up at the Pickaquoy Centre through the scheme, including 592 Soft Play sessions.
	During 2022-23, the Council's Leisure team has been developing a Physical Activity and Wellbeing Strategy which is scheduled for consideration by the Council in November 2023. The strategy will address financial inclusion. We will report further on the Strategy in our 2023-24 Local Child Poverty Action Report.

Places

Every family has a sustainable home.

The places where people live shape their lives, affecting their job prospects and access to essential goods, services and housing. Policies designed to regenerate communities must address transport availability and accessibility as well as the quality and affordability of housing. We must also take into account the need for a "Just Transition" to net zero, ensuring that the impacts of climate change do not add to poverty and disadvantage in particular places.

Improve the energy efficiency of new/existing housing in the private and social rented sectors

Who's doing it?	The Council's Housing, Homelessness and Schoolcare Accommodation service, in partnership with Orkney Housing Association Ltd (OHAL).
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How is it being resourced? Energy efficiency upgrades on social rented housing are funded by the Housing Revenue Account (tenants' rents). Across Scotland, issues are being raised around the ethics of asking the poorest members of society to fund these huge costs and we hope that some Government funding may follow.

Private sector homeowners can access the Energy Efficient Scotland: Area-Based Scheme (HEES ABS), available in Orkney through [Warmworks](#), which is means tested. Warmworks will undertake an assessment of their property and give advice as to what their entitlement may be, together with any contribution needed from the householder themselves. In 2022-23, the Council received approximately £2m HEES ABS funding.

Timescale Medium term, 2022-25

How are we doing? This action is being followed through in the Council's statutory Fuel Poverty Strategy, Heat Strategy and Energy Efficiency Strategy, all of which are in development. The Council and OHAL are waiting for Scottish Government to confirm guidance on the energy efficiency standards they need to work to. For new build, that is determined by existing building standards that housebuilders are obliged to follow, and the Council and OHAL both currently work to the Silver Standard. The focus will be on existing properties, with timescales to be reviewed once the Fuel Poverty Strategy is in place. Work is going on in the background, including pilot projects and carrying out works that will be monitored. Once the plans are in place, this preliminary work will be followed up by larger programmes.

Extend more employment opportunities to the isles

Who's doing it? This action is being led by the Orkney Partnership's Local Equality Delivery Group, which includes representatives from isles development trusts, community councils, the Islands Deal, North Isles Elected Members and other key community planning partners. The Local Employability Partnership and the Strategic Community Learning Group are managed by the Council's Community Learning, Development and Employability team.

How is it being resourced? Scottish Government funds the Community Based Adult Learning grant scheme. The Orkney Partnership's facilitating partner agencies jointly source resources to support community planning initiatives.

Timescale Medium term, 2022-25

How are we doing?

The Local Employability Partnership encourages partners to provide work based learning opportunities on the isles. During 2022-23, the Strategic Community Learning Group awarded £4,000 of Community Based Adult Learning funding to Westray Learning Centre to help develop their learning/work hub. Following the launch of the Orkney Community Plan 2023-30, this action has been adopted by the Local Equality Delivery Group, which will progress it via Orkney's new Locality Plan.

Explore options to apply the benefits from wind power developments to reduce home energy costs

Who's doing it?

The Council's Enterprise and Economic Growth service.

How is it being resourced?

Development activity is being funded from the Council's Strategic Reserve Fund.

Timescale

Long term, 2022-26

How are we doing?

Orkney's Community Wind Farm Project encompasses three 28.8MW, six turbine, wind farm developments at Quanterness in St Ola, at Wee Fea in Hoy and on Faray in the North Isles. All three sites have now received planning permission. In March 2023, the UK's energy regulator, Ofgem, announced a 'minded-to' position to approve the request to install a 220MW inter-connector cable from Orkney to the Scottish mainland, which will help employment and income remain in the county.

The project is forecast to generate around £6m profit per annum, as well as £432,000 a year in community benefits which the Council has already agreed would be paid to community councils. The Council has yet to decide how the majority of the income from the scheme would be allocated, but one consideration would certainly be the mitigation of local fuel poverty. Decisions are not expected soon because the new turbines are not expected to start generating until 2027 at the earliest.

Prevention

Future generations can escape from poverty.

Almost anyone can experience poverty during their lifetime, so policies that protect against poverty are important. Unemployment, illness or relationship breakdown can strike at any time. Once in poverty, it is difficult to escape, and hardship can persist for generations.

Promote good employment practice, flexibility and fair pay, and their benefits to employers

Who's doing it?	The Council's Community Learning, Development and Employability team on behalf of Orkney's Local Employability Partnership (LEP).
How is it being resourced?	The No One Left Behind Employer Recruitment Incentive helps people of all ages with the greatest barriers to employment get jobs and stay in jobs. It is funded by the Scottish Government and administered by local authorities. In 2022-23, the LEP allocated £60,000 to provide a minimum of 10 Employer Recruitment incentives.
Timescale	Medium term, 2022-25
How are we doing?	<p>During 2022-23, a campaign was conducted to promote employment rights, fair pay and conditions, and Scottish Living Wage accreditation. The Employment Rights & Responsibilities media campaign was followed up by the creation of a Your Rights Booklet, to be distributed through the Local Employability Partnership. The booklet includes a QR code which directs people to CAB Orkney and ACAS. Posters have been produced for circulation within prominent employment premises. The LEP has developed an employers' information and resource toolkit relating to employment rights and employer responsibilities, which was launched at an employer engagement event at the new Employability Hub in March 2023.</p> <p>In 2022-23 twelve Employer Recruitment Incentives were negotiated and administered across a range of private and third sector organisations in Orkney. Six young people (aged 16–24) and six people aged 25 + were employed, of whom eleven (91%) remain in fair and sustainable work.</p>

Increase the capacity of Orkney's advisory agencies

Who's doing it?	Voluntary Action Orkney and Community Consulting are leading this action on behalf of Orkney Money Matters.
How is it being resourced?	Orkney Money Matters is being financed through an initial grant of £350,000 in LACER funding provided by Orkney Islands Council. The Trussell Trust has granted an additional £45,000 to Orkney Foodbank. CAB Orkney has funded two new posts.
Timescale	Medium term, 2022-25
How are we doing?	As part of the Orkney Money Matters advice-and-cash first pilot, significant funding has been secured for distribution to

financial inclusion advice services. The new staff include two Money Matters Links Workers within CAB and at least one Energy Advice Support Worker within THAW. In addition, CAB have funded two additional Benefit Advice Workers. All staff were recruited by end of March 2023, and training commenced in April 2023.

Explore people-centred strategies for local development such as Community Wealth Building

Who's doing it?	The Orkney Partnership's Sustainable Development Delivery Group is leading partnership work on Community Wealth Building.
How is it being resourced?	The Orkney Partnership's facilitating partner agencies jointly source resources to support community planning initiatives.
Timescale	Long term, 2022-26
How are we doing?	<p>Community wealth building (CWB) is a people-centred approach to local economic development, which seeks to direct wealth back into the local economy and places control and benefits into the hands of local people. It can be described as an approach that does not redistribute wealth but pre-distributes wealth. Integral to CWB is support for small and medium sized local businesses, including co-operatives and social enterprises, upskilling people to access new opportunities and fairer employment practices, all of which support wages and reduce poverty.</p> <p>Many agencies in Orkney already implement policies which embody CWB principles, for example the Council's Sustainable Procurement Policy which enables small local suppliers to bid for school meal contracts, the Business Improvement District in Kirkwall, and locally owned wind turbine developments. In February 2023, the Partnership held a workshop to consider the scope for CWB to add value to local development plans and initiatives. Potentially, CWB might also help to resolve such longstanding issues as market failure in the meat supply chain, residential care and nursery provision. CWB has since been adopted as a guiding principle in both the Orkney Community Plan 2023-30 and the Council Plan 2023-28.</p>

Priorities

No child is left behind.

The Scottish Government has identified six types of family which are more likely than others to experience poverty:

- Lone parent families
- Families with an adult or child with disabilities
- Families with 3 or more children
- Minority ethnic families
- Families with the youngest child aged less than 1
- Families with a mother aged under 25

Orkney's Child Poverty Strategy recognises two additional local groups at higher risk of hardship:

- Families with experience of the care system.
- Residents of the ferry-linked isles.

Make inter-island ferry travel affordable to children and families on the ferry-linked isles

Who's doing it?

Orkney Islands Council's Transport team is leading this action in partnership with Scottish Government and community planning partner agencies in the Cost of Living Task Force.

How is it being resourced?

Scottish Government provides revenue funding for Orkney's internal ferry fleet.

Timescale

Medium term, 2022-25

How are we doing?

On 31 January 2022, the Scottish Government's Young Persons' Free Bus Scheme came into effect and everyone in Scotland who is under 22 or a full time student can have their National Entitlement Card updated to permit free bus travel everywhere in Scotland. But in Orkney, our buses may actually be ferries, and the Council has been actively lobbying Scottish Government to extend the scheme to include free ferry fares.

The Community Learning, Development and Employability team are in discussion with National Youth Agency officials including Young Scot, Youth Link and the Children's Commissioner. A Member of the Scottish Youth Parliament (MSYP) for Orkney was invited to the Scottish Parliament's Net Zero Energy & Transport Committee where they raised the importance of free ferry travel on islands in line with free bus travel in rural areas.

Meanwhile, the Schools team has been actively promoting the online application process to Orkney's under 22 year olds to maximise uptake.

During 2022-23, Orkney Ferries fares were frozen at the reduced rates implemented in June 2021, when adult passenger and vehicle fares were cut by 38%. The rates were frozen again in June 2023 to last until spring 2024, in line with Orkney's external ferry services. A 25% discount applies for elderly and disabled passengers and 50% for under 22s. Children under 5 do not need a card and already travel free on buses and ferries.

The cost of travel by ferry to attend medical and dental appointments has been considered before by the Partnership, without a resolution, and will be looked at further by the Cost of Living Task Force. Increasingly, NHS advice is now available digitally via their virtual consultation system "Near Me", but for many types of care (such as dentistry) there is no alternative to a face-to-face appointment and a lengthy journey which to some is unaffordable.

Improve the availability and affordability of wraparound childcare / after-school provision

Who's doing it?

The Council's Schools team is leading on the construction of new nursery premises in Kirkwall. The Community Education, Development and Employability team led the provision of training for childminders.

How is it being resourced?

During 2022-23, the Council was awarded £1.5m from the Scottish Government's Islands Infrastructure Fund (part of the Islands Programme supporting the National Islands Plan) towards the total project cost of £2.52m for a new nursery in Kirkwall, with the remainder being funded by the Council.

Timescale

Medium term, 2022-25

How are we doing?

Orkney Islands Council is building new nursery premises to accommodate the council-run Willow Tree Nursery. Plans have been approved for a 51-place nursery to be built adjacent to Orkney College, facilitating future training and practical experience in early learning and childcare for college students. The construction contract was awarded in March 2023 to local firm Orkney Builders Ltd and the nursery is expected to be ready to open in autumn 2024.

During 2022-23, CLD Employability Services ran a Childminding qualification and training course for 10 individuals. There are now 6 additional newly qualified childminders offering childcare provision across Orkney.

Prioritise early financial support for families at risk, to avert crisis and family breakdown

Who's doing it?	Orkney Health and Care's Children and Families social work team, in partnership with the Orkney Charitable Trust and other agencies.
How is it being resourced?	Providers include Orkney Charitable Trust, the Scottish Welfare Fund and Orkney Foodbank.
Timescale	Medium term, 2022-25
How are we doing?	Financial stressors are discussed with families during the initial assessment period. The team helps to optimise the financial benefits available to families at risk, provides referrals to Orkney Foodbank and has partnered with Orkney Charitable Trust, who offer grants for household goods, white goods and financial support. Team meetings have included reflective discussions on the impact of the cost of living crisis and associated stressors for Orkney's children and families, particularly families in crisis and those going through the child protection process.

Reports from partner agencies

Orkney Islands Council: Scottish Welfare Fund

The Scottish Welfare Fund provides assistance to people who are on benefits or a low income. The Council administers the fund on behalf of the Scottish Government and provides two types of grant: Crisis Grants and Community Care Grants.

Crisis Grants provide a safety net in the event of a disaster or emergency, for example a fire or flood, facing a gap in your income because of redundancy or change in work, losing all your money, or having to visit a sick child in hospital. You may be given money or another form of support, for example, a voucher, fuel card, travel ticket or furniture.

Crisis Grants in Orkney	2021-22	2022-23
Accepted	40	72
Rejected	55	60
Total Applications	100	132
Proportion Accepted	42%	55%
Total Spend this year	£7,315	£9,193
Average award	£174	£127

Community Care Grants provide help to leave care and live on your own, or to continue living in your own home, for example if you are about to leave care, after being in hospital or in prison, or don't have the money to buy essential household items like a cooker or washing machine.

Community Care Grants in Orkney	2021-22	2022-23
Accepted	95	100
Rejected	20	47
Total Applications	115	147
Proportion Accepted	81%	68%
Total Spend this year	£77,324	£66,144
Average award	£823	£661

The acceptance rates for both types of grant are low in Orkney, and there are a number of reasons for this. Sometimes the application form has not been fully completed and when the assessors try to make contact with the applicant, there is no reply. If the form is incomplete, it is counted as a rejected application. Sometimes the problem is one of timing: for example, if someone has lost their job but still has one final wage payment due, a Crisis Grant will be turned down at that time but the applicant might well be eligible later on. The Orkney team is obliged to apply the rules as set by Scottish Government, and people are encouraged to get in touch with the SWF team for advice before applying, to optimise the acceptance rate.

During 2022-23, the team began delivering a series of training sessions to agencies offering front line advice, including Voluntary Action Orkney, THAW Orkney, Orkney Foodbank, Social Security Scotland, CAB Orkney, Blide Trust, Community Link Practitioners, Island Co-ordinators, and Wellbeing Co-ordinators. The team goes through the application form, explains the regulations by which they have to abide, and opens up the floor for a Q and A. To date the training has been very well received and the team is hoping to see this reflected in an increase in the proportion of successful applications in the coming year.

Data for Scottish Welfare Fund expenditure is published annually in July and can be found on the Scottish Government's website here:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-welfare-fund-statistics-annual-update>

Orkney Islands Council: Education

Free early learning and childcare

Introduced as part of a Scotland-wide expansion of early learning and childcare, nurseries across Orkney are now offering 1,140 hours of free provision for eligible children, to support working families. The local authority is also working with childminders, who – if in partnership with the local authority – can also offer 1,140 hours of free provision.

As well as 3 and 4-year-olds, eligibility extends to 2-year-olds of parents in receipt of a qualifying benefit. More details are available on the Council website at <https://www.orkney.gov.uk/Service-Directory/P/eligible-two-year-olds.htm>

Early Years' Service

The service's Family Team continues to offer support through individual work, group work and nurture groups, by sharing leaflets and by sign posting to services such as Warmworks, Money Matters, CAB Orkney, Orkney Foodbank and the Community Fridge. The team are also able to provide practical advice on a range of matters directly eg accessing a slow cooker, Pickaquoy membership etc. Staff from the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB Orkney) attended the service's Nurture Group to improve access for families.

The family team support families to apply for the child disability payment where needed.

Healthy snack and milk money provided by Scottish Government is used to provide a daily snack of fruit, veg and milk for under 5s in registered settings, reducing the need for parents to contribute.

Removal of charges for the core curriculum in schools

In the past, pupils within secondary schools were often asked to cover the cost of materials for practical lessons such as home economics, art and technology. As part of a Scotland wide scheme, the government has provided additional funding to schools to mitigate these costs. While there may still be a need to consider how the cost of any additional activity is covered, the basic core cost will not be something that families have to find.

Free instrumental music tuition

Orkney's Instrumental Service is not big enough to support all learners but it reaches an impressive 26% of the pupil population, one of the highest rates in Scotland. Funding from the Scottish Government continues to support the service's ability to ensure that no charges for instrumental tuition are passed on to the young musicians and their families.

The participation rate of children and young people entitled to free school meals is routinely monitored to ensure equity of access. As well as the intrinsic value of music tuition, participation plays a significant part of growing social capital, which is in itself a positive asset with respect to mitigating the impact of childhood poverty.

Narrowing the poverty related attainment gap

Refinements introduced to the way in which schools collect and analyse data (about the progress, achievement and attainment of children and young people) have helped to establish a more reliable description of the 'attainment gap' across our schools. Work to further develop, and focus, the impact of the Pupil Equity Fund to reduce this gap is underway. It is anticipated that the publication of both qualitative and quantitative outcomes over the course of the next school year should be possible.

Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA)

EMA is aimed at 16-to-19-year-olds from low-income households who are participating in non-advanced learning in school/college or at an approved learning centre. It is also available to those who are home-educated.

The aim is to increase participation and retention in post-16 education, with young people being able to choose from the same learning opportunities, regardless of background or circumstance.

EMAs are payments of £30 per week, normally paid fortnightly in arrears, dependent on attendance and conduct. Across all sectors (Secondary Schools, Orkney College, Activity Agreements and Home Education) the uptake for 2022-23 was 70 students.

Free school meals

The approach to lunchtime in nursery settings has been revised to enable children to be more independent in making food choices, which in turn encourages the uptake of free nursery meal offer.

The Scotland-wide rollout of free school meals continued with P4s becoming eligible in August 2021 and P5s in January 2022. The Council issued a reminder to parents in July 2022 to get in touch to find out whether they were eligible for free school meals and associated benefits in the form of clothing grants and cash payments for holiday food. Parents were encouraged to register, even if their children were included in the universal provision, to be sure of receiving the associated benefits.

The Council maintains records of pupils who are eligible for free school meals, but we do not record whether or not eligible pupils take up their entitlement. Nursery pupils are eligible for a free meal if they stay for a whole session (both morning and

afternoon) but not if they only attend for one of the sessions (either morning or afternoon).

All Primary 1-4 pupils were eligible for universal free meals throughout the year, and Primary 5 were eligible from January 2022. Primary 6 and above were eligible if in receipt of qualifying benefits. The numbers eligible in total during 2022-23 were:

Nursery (All pupils eligible when attending for a whole day)	488
P1 (All pupils)	202
P2 (All pupils)	197
P3 (All pupils)	220
P4 (All pupils)	214
P5 (All pupils from January 2022)	240
P6	34
P7	23
S1	34
S2	18
S3	25
S4	20
S5	17
S6	1
Total	1,733

In-School Counselling

During 2021-22, Scottish Government funding of £166,000 was allocated to Orkney schools to make counselling available for all children and young people aged ten and over. As well as the appointment of Counsellors, additional capacity to support the service has been created in the Junior High Schools, where the possibility of needing to provide aspects of the service via video-link is more likely.

The Counselling team continue to offer pupils at Kirkwall Grammar School and Stromness Academy access to In-School Counselling, both face to face and online if required. As an 'in-school' service, the team are visible, known, and accessible. The team is yet to achieve full capacity and continues to seek appropriately skilled and qualified staff to join the team.

The counselling team remains aware of the on-going cost of living challenge being faced by families. Those who were previously coping financially are not doing so now. Examples include pupils reporting poor sleep due to less food available at home. The team has also encountered examples of hidden poverty among previously better-off households, where (for example) single parents work in relatively well-paid roles.

As the service evolves and matures, how it supports and compliments other services across Orkney can be explored in more depth and detail. Our expectation is that by managing the relationships between services, for example the Schools Guidance Teams, In-school Counselling Services and Orkney's Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS), referrals, help and support can be at the earliest stage possible, in order to mitigate long term and harmful impacts.

Removing barriers to participation in school trips and experiences

All establishment managers have been asked to review the impact of the '[cost of the school day](#)' as part of a briefing in December 2022. The toolkit itself has been refreshed by the Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG) and a further reminder to establishments and teams will be issued in August 2023.

There has been a specific focus on using local facilities for outdoor education programmes during 2022-23 in recognition that these can remove a range of barriers to participation, including making the experience more affordable.

Where approval has been given for other trips, establishment managers have been asked to ensure, through positive engagement with the wider community, that cost is not a barrier.

A number of positive relationships with, for example, islands development trusts, has resulted in a range of some positive and successful outcomes for all children and young people. In some schools, Parent Councils have been instrumental in establishing and sustaining these approaches. (An example of this would be the Papdale School Participation Fund).

Orkney Islands Council: Community Learning, Development & Employability

The Council's Community Learning, Development & Employability Service provides a wide range of services which support people – both directly and via partner agencies – to improve their family's income and prospects.

Income maximization

During 2022- 23, the Local Employability Partnership, through OIC, procured income maximisation support services from CAB Orkney for individuals identified under No One Left Behind, Scottish Government's strategy for employability support. Through this route, 191 individuals were supported, resulting in client financial gain of £235,107 made up of previously unclaimed benefit entitlements.

Skills and employability support for parents

The CLD Employability team has worked during the year with 31 parents within identified groups. Each parent has been allocated a designated Employability Keyworker and supported to co-produce a bespoke Individual Development Plan, working towards identified personal goals etc. Fifteen parents have gained a recognised and accredited qualification and fifteen have moved into employment.

The CLD Employability team and Youth Services have worked in partnership with social work and health colleagues to plan, develop and deliver a 'Young Parents' group. This group meets weekly, and sessions are developed in collaboration with the families who attend. The sessions are focused on health and wellbeing together with developing confidence and skills to support future transitions. Four parents attend regularly along with their four children.

The CLD team have worked in partnership with Homestart and the CLD Youth and Family Learning officer to plan and run an eight-week 'Food with Friends' Course, focusing on healthy meal preparation, skills development and cooking on a budget. As part of this course four parents gained an accredited Food Hygiene certificate.

The CLD Employability team worked in partnership with the Yard Nursery to plan and run a free 'Funday Sunday' event. This focused on outdoor and family learning opportunities and the promotion of support/information/services available locally.

One of the biggest barriers to entering employment, identified through talking to parents and partners, was lack of affordable childcare. The CLD Employability team have worked in partnership with the Scottish Childminding Association, Business Gateway, the Care Inspectorate and local training providers to plan, coordinate and deliver a Childminding Course for local parents. Six individuals completed all aspects of the course and are now registered childminders. This program was funded through No One left Behind as agreed by the Local Employability Partnership. Going forward, CLD Employability is working with the Scottish Childminding Association, Business Gateway and other local delivery partners to promote and deliver a future course aimed at upskilling individuals and increasing local childcare provision.

Skills and employability support for young people

A Transitions Planning group has been established to ensure young people at risk of not making a positive progression from school are identified, and appropriate provision explored, at the earliest opportunity. Partners include Skills Development Scotland, CLD and Employability, Schools, Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) and Third Sector partners.

The purpose of the group is to coordinate and deliver support to meet the young people's needs and support young people to make informed decisions and positive and sustainable future transitions. The most recent participation rate figures published by Skills Development Scotland indicate that the number of young people participating in education, training or employment has increased by 2.2% compared with the same period in 2022. Orkney's participation rates are consistently among the best in Scotland.

Participation rates of 16-19 year olds in education, training or employment

	Orkney May 2022 %	Scotland May 2022 %	Orkney Dec 2022 %	Scotland Dec 2022 %	Orkney May 2023 %	Scotland May 2023 %
Participating	92.40	90.70	93.70	90.50	94.60	90.80
Not participating	3.20	4.90	3.40	4.70	2.90	5.20
Unconfirmed	4.40	4.40	2.90	4.80	2.50	3.90

The CLD Employability Support team have worked with 39 young people identified under 'No One Left Behind' as requiring support to make positive progression towards learning/training and employment. This has been through a variety of bespoke and holistic programmes and one-to-one support. Each young person has a designated Employability Keyworker and is supported to co-produce an Individual Development Plan, working towards identified personal goals and targets. Of all those involved:

- 14 young people progressed to Employment, including 2 Apprenticeship opportunities.

- 1 young people made positive progression to Further or Higher Education
- 11 young people gained a recognised qualification.
- 3 young people engaged with a work experience opportunity

Promoting good employment practice

CLDE leads the Orkney Child Poverty Strategy 2022-26 action to “Promote good employment practice, flexibility and fair pay, and their benefits to employers”.

During 2022-23, a campaign was conducted to promote employment rights, fair pay and conditions, and Scottish Living Wage accreditation. The Employment Rights & Responsibilities media campaign was followed up by the creation of a Your Rights Booklet, to be distributed through the Local Employability Partnership. The booklet includes a QR code which directs people to CAB Orkney and ACAS. Posters have been produced for circulation within prominent employment premises. The LEP is developing an employers' information and resource toolkit relating to employment rights and employer responsibilities, which was launched at an employer engagement event at the new Employability Hub in March 2023.

‘No One Left Behind’

During 2022-23, the LEP allocated £60,000 to provide a minimum of 10 Employer Recruitment incentives. The ‘No One Left Behind’ Employer Recruitment Incentive helps people of all ages with the greatest barriers to employment get jobs and stay in jobs. It is funded by the Scottish Government and administered by local authorities.

Employer Recruitment Incentives play an important role in supporting those with the greatest barriers to employment, to enable them to obtain and remain in sustainable employment. The Employer Recruitment Incentive has been developed to integrate and link fully with existing employability and skills programmes and is available to use as a contribution to the additional costs of recruiting and sustaining eligible individuals in employment.

Employers can apply for funding to help with the costs of recruiting and employing someone who fits the eligibility criteria for the fund. The scheme can provide up to £6,000 for newly created jobs or vacancies. Employers who are successful in applying to the fund receive the money direct.

In 2022-23 twelve Employer Recruitment Incentives were negotiated and administered across a range of private and third sector organisations in Orkney. Six young people (16–24-year-old) and six people over 25 + were employed. Two of the opportunities for young people were Modern Apprenticeships.

Of the 12 people who were employed through the incentive, eleven (91%) remain in fair and sustainable work.

OIC Housing: Support for tenants in social rented housing

New research from the [Scottish Housing Regulator](#) highlights the significant and worsening financial difficulties being experienced by tenants across Scotland. At the time of the survey, in the early months of 2023, a quarter of respondents said they were not managing well financially. Increased food and energy costs were the biggest contributors to financial difficulties, with nine in ten respondents citing energy costs as the main factor contributing to difficulties in heating their home. Nearly all respondents were concerned about their future financial circumstances.

OIC Housing carried out a Tenant Satisfaction Survey last year, which provided some corroborating information about the impact the pandemic has had on household finances. As yet we have no data from Orkney tenants on the cost-of-living crisis specifically, as the survey was carried out prior to the widespread impact of the crisis.

OIC Housing and OHAL organised joint Tenant Participation Pop-up Events across various locations on Orkney Mainland, and also jointly hosted a Cost-of-living event last year ([Cost-of-living crisis – support and advice offered at upcoming event in Orkney](#)). The general consensus coming back from the community is that almost everyone is struggling in some way, and most are cutting back on spending at least somewhere.

Organisations such as CAB Orkney and Social Security Scotland provide OIC Housing with updates that may be of interest to tenants, i.e. information on changes to benefits. This information is communicated to tenants via a Housing Services Newsletter, which is usually released quarterly.

An upcoming Newsletter will be focusing on energy efficiency and reducing condensation. It will also contain information signposting tenants to organisations which can assist with these matters, such as THAW.

NHS Orkney: Money Counts

'Worrying About Money?' cash first referral leaflets are co-designed as straightforward resources for people facing money worries or financial crises, and their support workers, to quickly see which local agencies are best placed to help with available cash first options. The aim of this work is to reduce the need for charitable food aid by helping people access any existing financial entitlements and advice on income maximisation as a cash first response to food insecurity. Since June 2020, the Independent Food Aid Network (IFAN) has collaborated with local stakeholders to publish leaflets covering over 70 local authorities in Scotland, England and Wales.

'Money Counts' was originally developed by the Highland Money Counts Partnership, who kindly gave permission for its adoption and adaptation for delivery in Orkney. Adoption and adaptation were completed collaboratively by Orkney Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB), Social Security Scotland, NHS Orkney Public Health and other community partners.

'Money Counts' training in Orkney commenced in February-March 2022 and helps frontline workers and volunteers to best use the leaflet to support people struggling with money worries or financial crisis. The first block of 'Money Counts' training was delivered in February and March 2022. In total there were eight training sessions delivered to 50 participants who represented a range of statutory and voluntary sector organisations in Orkney.

Due to the level of interest in this training, a second block of training sessions was delivered between May and October 2022. Eighteen sessions were delivered to 76 attendees during this block. Initial evaluation from both training blocks suggests that the training has increased the confidence of the participants in engaging in conversations about money worries, and has supported the knowledge and use of the 'Worrying About Money?' leaflet across organisations in Orkney.

Voluntary Action Orkney: Young People's Befriending Project

The Young People's Befriending Project is now in its 15th year. This year has seen us offer 1-1 Befriending support to 12 young people through the tailored support of our team of volunteer Befrienders. The young people's ages ranged from 9-16, with some matches just beginning and some young people being supported for their 4th year.



Our Befrienders have given hundreds of hours of their time to our young people, working to grow their self-esteem and confidence, increase their resilience and coping skills, build a steady and reliable friendship with them, and help them to engage in new skills and hobbies.

Our volunteer team continues to offer high quality support to the young people we care for, as evidenced by the most recent reviews conducted throughout the year which reported that:

In the most recent Project reviews, 100% of young people told us that their Befriender was 'someone they could trust' and was someone who 'made them feel important and worth listening to'. 100% of our young people also told us that their confidence had increased, and their general feelings of happiness had increased because of their befriender.

Here's what some of our young people, their parents and our volunteers had to say about what they enjoy about Befriending (all names have been changed).

It has made my life so much better because it feels like I haven't just got someone that takes me to places for fun, but it feels like I've gained a real friend. I'm very happy to have him as a friend.

Young person talking about their volunteer

Graham is a very calming influence, always smiling, very engaging and has built a very strong relationship with Ben, who always looks forward to his time with him.

A parent talking about their son's Befriender

Having a Befriender has helped me meet new people, try new things and has grown my confidence.

Young person talking about the benefits of their match

Befriending has been great – not only has it made a difference to the young person, but I also feel it has impacted my life greatly and built up my confidence.

Volunteer's experience

Case Study – Martha and Rosa

Martha and 11-year-old Rosa are a new match that started this year. Rosa has quite a complex disability so we knew that she would need a special Befriender who could support her and enable her to join in safely with activities in the community. Martha is a volunteer who has a sibling with a similar disability as Rosa so had a wealth of experience to bring to the match.

Martha and Rosa hit it off from their first meeting and have built a mutually beneficial relationship together. They take part in various activities within the community from soft play to pottery to board games and coffee dates. Martha really enjoys her time with Rosa and knows that she is making a difference to her life, and Rosa sings Martha's praises and has already reported a rise in confidence and self-esteem since her match began only a few months ago.

Voluntary Action Orkney: The Connect Project

The Connect Project is an early intervention project that offers young people aged 15-21, who face barriers to learning and engaging in the community, access to a flexible and person-centred learning/training programme, through a strength-based approach. The Connect Project works with partners in Health, Education, Social Work, Skills Development Scotland and the Voluntary Sector, prioritising wellbeing needs and life skills development.



Our referral partners:

I feel the Connect Project is a valuable and much needed resource for our islands.

Our families and carers:

Connect gave us a lifeline when there was nothing else they would engage with.

Our young people:

Connect still helped me after I left – to make sure I was ok and so I knew I could always ask them for help if I needed to.

I'd never met a person from another country (except England) before I came to Connect and now I have. I never thought I'd be ever doing that.

Sometimes it can be noisy but not bad-noisy, the fun kind when you know you'll be ok.

I was nervous about coming but when I came in it just felt right. I give Connect a thumbs up.

My memory is bad and they made photobooks for me so I could see what I had done. I liked showing that to my mum.

They tell me I'm eating too much sugar – I think they are wrong.

I would not have gone to college if Connect hadn't encouraged me – I didn't think I would manage but I have.

You knew I would be all right – how did you know that when I didn't know it?

They asked me what colour my front door was – it was unexpected – but now I know that this type of question can come up in conversations. I will be ready if it does again.

Over the past year the Connect Project team have engaged with 24 young people through a range of activities which have included regular group sessions, remote outreach, in person one-to-one sessions, and alongside community partner delivery in shared programmes. We have seen some of our young people move onto positive destinations and all have become more involved in their community.

Orkney Charitable Trust

Orkney Charitable Trust raises and distributes funds to help people under 25 who live in the Orkney Islands. OCT funds are available to young people in times of ill health, disability, hardship or disadvantage. OCT's income relies completely on grants and donations, with less than £500 spent in 2022-23 on overhead costs.



From June 2022 to June 2023, OCT granted £48,000 to Orkney families and young people, made up of:

- 'Coats for Kids' grants – supported 73 children in need of a warm coat - £2,900.
- 'Every Child Deserves a Christmas' £60 Grants supported 371 children - £22,260.
- £25 'Cosy Christmas Day Heat and Cook Grant' was given to every household that applied for our Christmas grants.
- 'Bairns Need Nappies' provided £1,900 of nappies to help parents and their peedie folk.
- 'Help from Home' supported families traveling south, for NHS appointments, £1,500.
- £50 "Get Ready for Summer" Grants – supported 107 families - £5,350.
- Provided bespoke support for bereaved families.
- Start funded a Participation Fund within Papdale School.
- Promoted activities and opportunities that might help families.
- Bought bedding, beds, mattresses, supported families in crisis, general grants.
- £18,250 of external funding brought into Orkney, including Scottish Sea Farms, CORRA Foundation and CLLD Grant.

Case study: Papdale School Participation Fund

Orkney Charitable trust was keen to support the cost of the school day, and was aware many of the families they support were within the catchment area of Papdale School. The school were very aware of the rising cost of the school day and the cost of living crisis, and knew that children sometimes were not

participating due to cost. The Parent Council was moving towards supporting families and the school with its improvement plans, around attainment and experiences, away from the traditional fundraising role.

Orkney's Child Poverty Strategy 2022-26 contains an action to "Remove barriers to participation in school trips and experiences". Orkney Charitable Trust, Papdale School and the Parent Council decided to put it into effect.

All partners came together and discussed the possibility of setting up a Papdale School Participation fund. This fund would be ring-fenced by the school, and used at the discretion of senior management to be available for any child where there might be a financial barrier. Orkney Charitable Trust would provide the initial funding and match fund a donation, the school and parent council would fundraise to ensure sustainability, and donations would also be accepted from external funders and grants. The school would report usage at each Parent Council Meeting.

An agreement was drawn up which agreed the principles of the fund to be:

- **Vision** – Every child at Papdale School will develop into confident and successful learners and will be able to participate in all activities and opportunities provided by the school.
- **Aim** – To ensure every child attending Papdale School can participate in all activities, striving to ensure that no child is excluded from these activities on financial grounds.
- **Purpose** – To ensure that money is never again a barrier to any child at Papdale being able to participate fully, be included and supported to access opportunities which help them fulfil their potential.

The fund is now available to be used for such things as P7 Buddy tops, items for out-door activities, field trips, cost of out-door activities, cost of school trips, swimming items, head lice treatment etc; as well as items which can be reused by the school such as swimming towels, rucksacks, water-proofs, pack lunch boxes etc. Since the fund was set up, it has provided assistance with school photographs, verruca socks for swimming, reading overlays, ear defenders, and travel to school activities.

Orkney Foodbank

Orkney Foodbank supports families in a variety of ways:

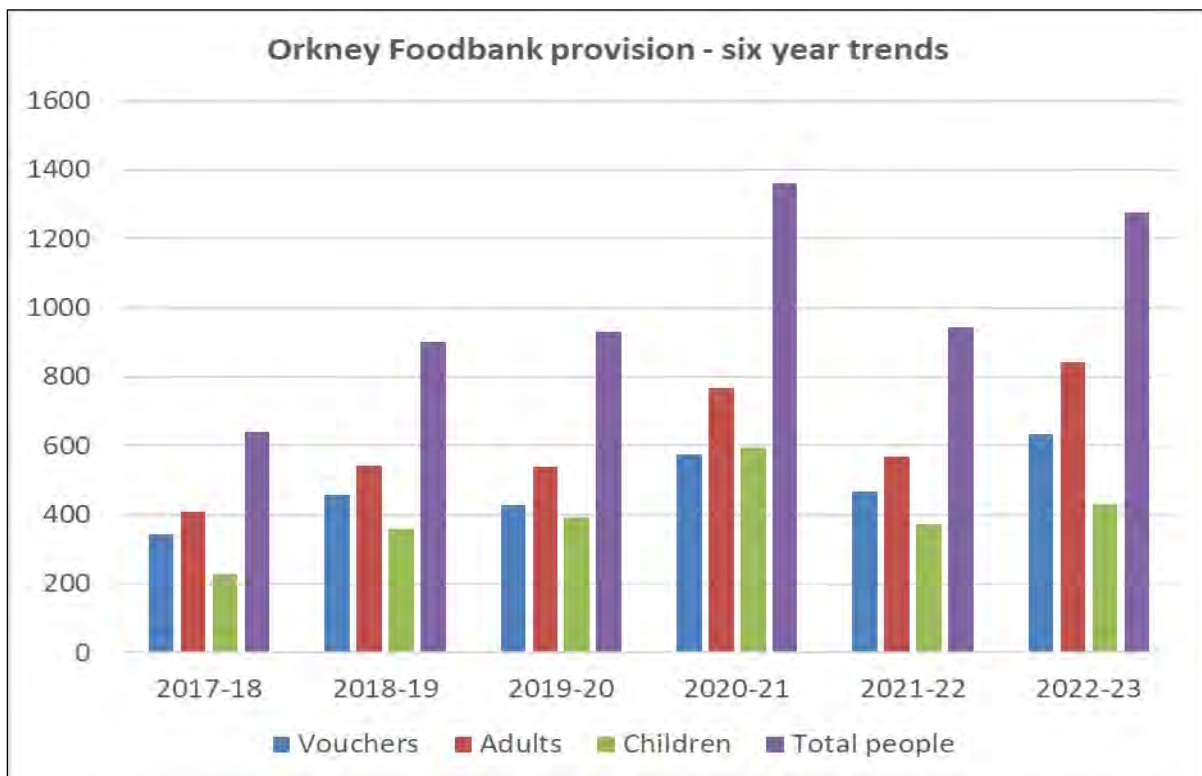
- Food parcels are issued to households with children as they are referred to us.
- We issue child holiday meals, which comprise a foodbank parcel for the total number in the household where they struggle to provide enough food during school holidays.
- We have partnered with Kirkwall Grammar School and Papdale Primary School to provide breakfast for children who would otherwise go without.
- All children under 2 are automatically referred to the health visiting team.
- If any young child is needing baby milk, nappies or baby food we contact the parent to check what is required, purchase it and add to the parcel.



- Where young children need nappies, we refer to health visitors who link with Orkney Charitable Trust to get them a month's supply.
- At Christmas we make sure all families with children are referred to Orkney Charitable Trust to benefit from the Christmas grant.

Demand increased by 35% in 2022-23, compared with 2021-22. During 2022-23 we provided food parcels to feed 1,275 people (633 vouchers) of which 432 were children. 748 were classified as having "low income" as reason for referral (345 vouchers). This compares to 2021-22 when we provided food parcels for 942 people (468 vouchers) of which 374 were children. 324 were classified as having "low income" as reason for referral (154 vouchers).

The figure below shows trends over the past six years. The peak demand in 2020-21 reflects the first year of the pandemic. A number of factors contributed to the fall in 2021-22, including economic recovery, the further rollout of free school meals and the Scottish Child Payment. In 2022-23 we see the effects of the cost of living crisis wiping out those gains and pushing many families back into food insecurity.



During winter of 2022-23 Orkney Foodbank also ran a warm home scheme and issued warm bedding, flasks, electric blankets and the like – this was hugely successful and the issue of these basic items made a significant difference to many households.

THAW Orkney

THAW's mission is:

to work for households in all Orkney communities to reduce levels of fuel poverty and achieve affordable warmth



This year THAW had a 6-month period with severely restricted funding and staffing. Even so, THAW's energy support to fuel-poor households only slightly reduced to a total of £107,745 from Apr '22 - Mar '23, as compared to £120,603 during 2021-22.

Total support for families with children was £38,499, including energy support:

• Electricity vouchers/debt support	£16,819	276 awards
• Home Heating Advice fund	£10,402	15 awards
• Fuelbank Foundation Heat Fund	£1,142	2 awards
• Warm homes discount	£450	3 awards

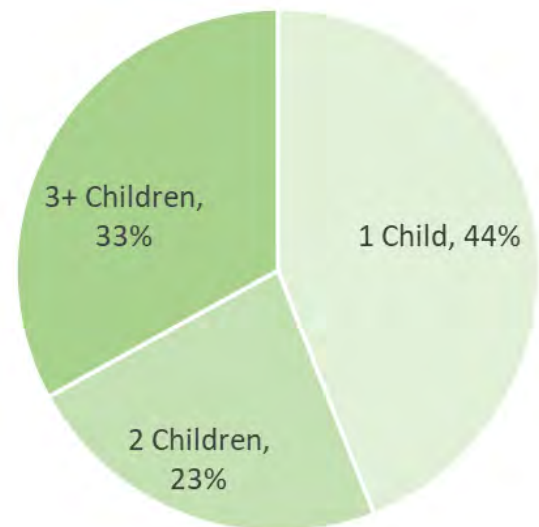
And other wider support:

• Cosy Home Packs	£5,330	53 awards
• Tesco vouchers for food/other items	£1,890	31 awards
• White goods	£1,249	4 awards
• Orkney Charitable Trust grants	£660	4 awards

Although there have been fewer awards made since last year, THAW have provided a higher amount of electricity voucher support and created funds for energy debt support through Orkney Money Matters and white goods through British Gas Energy Trust funding.

THAW simplified voucher distribution through digital tools, including trialling the use of Tesco vouchers for fresh food and other goods. Foodbank energy and fresh food vouchers were then taken in-house by Foodbank during early 2023, allowing greater focus on energy efficiency for the now fully staffed THAW team.

At least 178 children (down from 296 last year) were supported during 2022-2023, with at least a third of families supported having 3 or more children (see right).



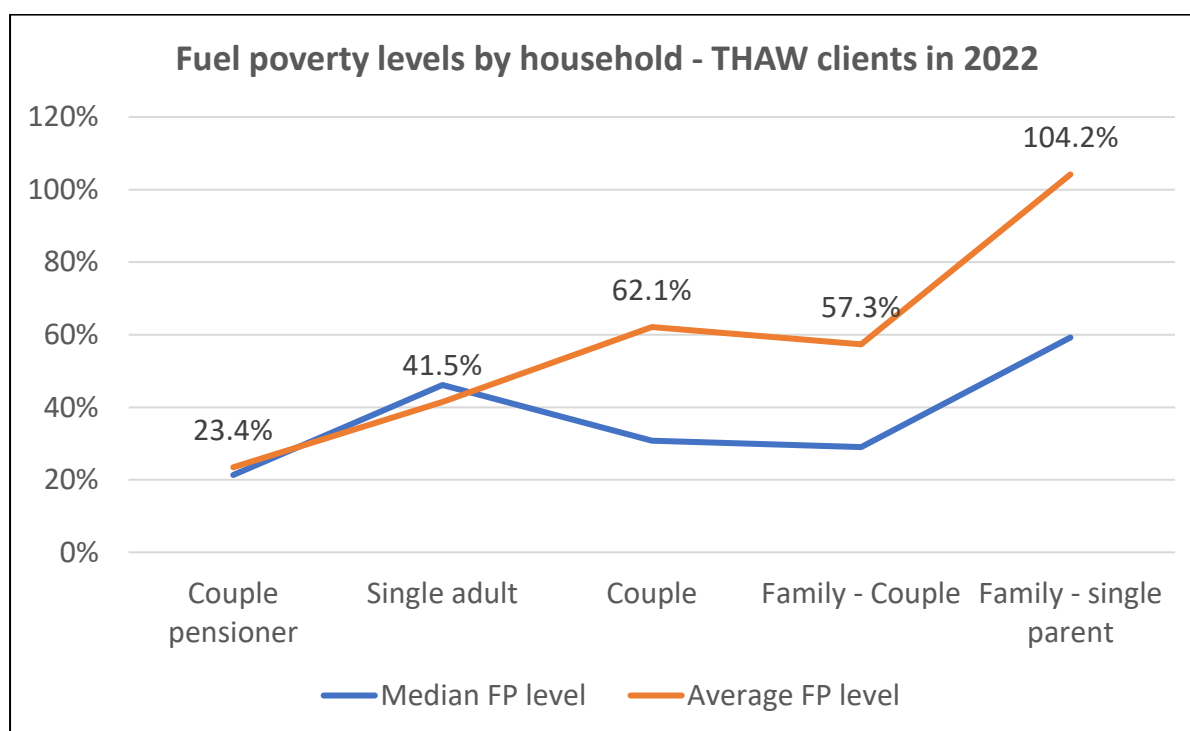
We increased provision of energy advice from 37 to 57 families as well as visited at least 12 family households to provide home energy efficiency surveys and higher levels of support.

We expect the 2023-24 report to show higher provision due to increased staff capacity as well as the greater need shown since April for energy support.

Fuel poverty levels in THAW client families in 2022

Of those clients assessed by THAW within 2022, the median fuel poverty level for a couple with at least one child is 30%, rising to 60% for single parent families.

However, there is great variance between clients, with a significant number of families at much higher levels of fuel poverty. This gives rise to an average fuel poverty level of 60% for couples and an average over 100% for single parent families. Greater than 100% means that a family would need to spend more than they earn (after housing costs) to adequately heat their home.



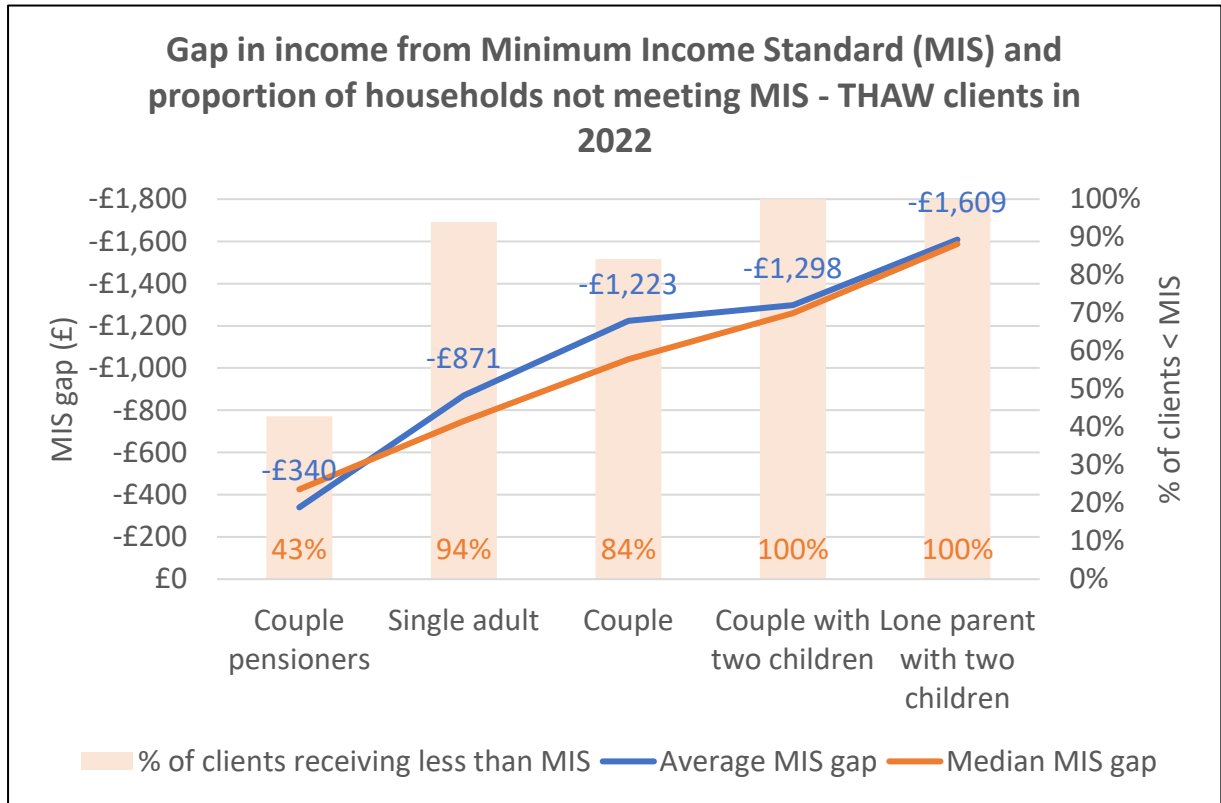
Minimum income standard of THAW client families in 2022

Minimum Income Standard (MIS) is modelled annually by Loughborough University to provide an estimated minimum spend across multiple areas (food, energy, housing etc.) to achieve an acceptable living standard. The standard is written into the Scottish definition of fuel poverty, such that household must be below MIS in order to be deemed fuel poor. However, it also provides a method to assess gaps in income required to reach an acceptable living standard.

A rural MIS has been created to consider the additional expenses required in remote rural areas; this has not been used as it has not been updated since 2016, but also because income levels are already well below the national MIS.

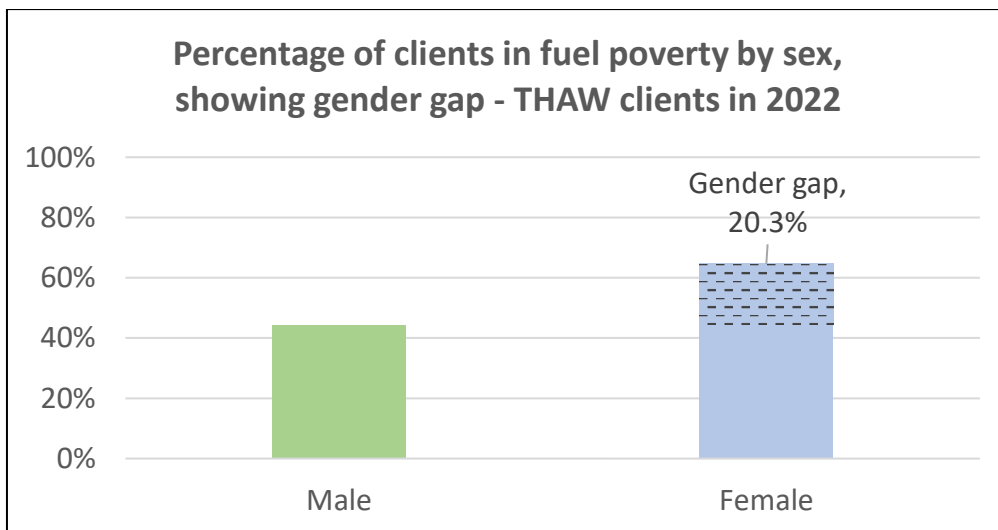
Compared to the national MIS, both on average and as a median, single parents with two children are receiving £1,600 less than the MIS and a couple with 2 children are receiving almost £1,300 less than the MIS. None of the families assessed were earning enough to meet the MIS and only pensioners had a positive median income; however all demographics may be below MIS if a rural premium was included.

The MIS considers the income required to adequately heat households, so it is likely to be high locally due to high energy costs and low energy efficiency of properties.



Gender gap for all THAW clients in 2022

The gender gap between male and female THAW clients is over 20%, meaning that female clients are on average 20% further in fuel poverty. Taken across all clients, this may also highlight interactions of gender inequalities with child poverty.



Social Security Scotland – Best Start Grants

Social Security Scotland is responsible for administering a number of benefits that have been devolved to Scotland. Currently, Social Security Scotland administers thirteen benefits, eight of which are brand new. The Scottish Government's package of five family benefits for low income families, administered by Social Security Scotland, is now worth up to a maximum of over £10,000 by the time a family's first child turns six – and £9,700 for second and subsequent children. The benefits include:

[Carer's Allowance Supplement](#) is an extra payment of £270.50 paid twice a year for people in Scotland who get Carer's Allowance on a particular date.

[Best Start Grant](#) is a package of three payments that will give extra money to families on certain benefits or tax credits during the early years of a child's life.

- [Best Start Grant – Pregnancy and Baby Payment](#) is a one-off payment of up to £707.25 from 24 weeks in pregnancy up until a baby turns six months for families who get certain benefits. This goes up to one if you've taken over looking after a child, such as if you've adopted. You get £707.25 for your first child or £353.65 for any subsequent child.
- [Best Start Grant – Early Learning Payment](#) is a one off payment of £294.70 when a child is between two and three years and six months. People can still apply if your child is not taking up a place at nursery.
- [Best Start Grant – School Age Payment](#) is a one off payment of £294.70 for eligible families around the time a child normally starts Primary 1. People can still apply if they are deferring school entry.

[Best Start Foods](#) provides a prepaid card for families to help buy food for children under three or during pregnancy. It replaced the UK Government's Healthy Start Vouchers in Scotland.

[Funeral Support Payment](#) is a payment available to people in Scotland, who are on certain benefits or tax credits, and need support to meet the costs of a funeral.

[Young Carer Grant](#) is a yearly payment of £359.65 for young carers aged 16 to 18 who live in Scotland and care for people for an average of 16 hours a week or more.

[Job Start Payment](#) is a one off payment of £294.70 for 16 to 24 year olds, or £471.50 if you are the main carer of any children, who have been out of work and on certain benefits for six months or more to help with the costs of starting a job.

[Child Winter Heating Assistance](#) is a payment of £235.70 to help disabled children and young people and their families with increased heating costs over winter.

[Scottish Child Payment](#) is a benefit unique to Scotland of £100 every four weeks to eligible families and carers to help towards the costs of looking after each child under 16. There are no limits on the number of eligible children supported by the Scottish Child Payment.

[Child Disability Payment](#) provides support for the extra costs that a disabled child might have, whether mental or physical disabilities. People can apply for Child Disability Payment for a disabled child under 16. Social Security Scotland will continue to pay Child Disability Payment until the child is 18.

[Adult Disability Payment](#) is extra money to help people who have a disability or long-term health condition that affects their everyday life.

[Winter Heating Payment](#) is a yearly payment of £55.05 to help people on low income benefits who might have extra heating needs during the winter. It replaces the Cold Weather Payment from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and has the same eligibility requirements.

Best Start grants in Orkney 2022-23	Reporting period	Number of applications	Total value of awards
Pregnancy & Baby Payment A one-off payment of £642.35 for a first child or £321.20 for a second or later child.	1 Mar 2022 to 31 Mar 2023	75	£11,851
	Total in Orkney since start date 10 Dec 2018	315	£57,796
Early Learning Payment A one-off payment of £267.65 if your child is between 2 and 3½ years old.	1 Mar 2022 to 31 Mar 2023	75	£11,130
	Total in Orkney since start date 29 April 2019	230	£48,943
School Age Payment A one-off payment of £267.65 if your child is around school starting age.	1 Mar 2022 to 31 Mar 2023	55	£10,385
	Total in Orkney since start date 1 June 2019	260	£46,218
Best Start Foods A pre-paid card to buy healthy food for anyone eligible who is pregnant or has a child under 3. Payments range from £18 - £36 every 4 weeks depending on the age of the child.	1 Mar 2022 to 31 Mar 2023	150	£17,225
	Total in Orkney since start date 14 Aug 2019	525	£53,628
Scottish Child Payment A weekly payment to eligible families for every child under 6 years of age which was increased in Nov 2022 to under 16 years of age. Up to 31 March 2022 the payment was £20, from 14 Nov 2022 it increased to £25.	1 April 2022 to 31 Mar 2023	365	£416,940
	Total in Orkney since start date Feb 2021	685	£540,200

Best Start grants in Orkney 2022-23	Reporting period	Number of applications	Total value of awards
Young Carer Grant Is a yearly payment of £359.65 for young carers in Scotland. To be able to get Young Carer Grant, you must be 16, 17 or 18 years old.	1 April 2022 to 31 Mar 2023	10	£326
	Total in Orkney since start date Oct 2020	20	£3,714
Jobstart Payment helps with the costs of starting a new job. £294.70 or £471.50 if you are the main carer of any children. You must be between 16 to 24 years old.	1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023	10	£1,185
	Total in Orkney since start date Dec 2020	55	£6,882
Funeral Support Payment helps pay for funeral costs if you live in Scotland.	1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023	10	£9,204
	Total in Orkney since start date March 2021	45	£42,191
Carers Allowance Supplement is paid two times a year to those in receipt of Carers Allowance	Total Eligible Carers in 2022/2023	April: 215	£53,000
		Oct: 205	£51,000
Adult Disability Payment is extra money to help you if you have a disability or long-term health condition that affects your everyday life.	Launched August 2022	225	£234,400
Child Disability Payment provides support for the extra costs that a disabled child might have.	Launched November 2021	90	£551,070
Child Winter Heating Payment is a payment to help disabled children and young people and their families with increased heating costs over winter.	Winter 2022/2023	60	£13,000
	Total	135	£28,000
Winter Heating Payment is to help people on low income benefits who might have extra heating needs.	Winter 2022/2023	1,075	£53,500

Social Security Scotland work in close partnership with organisations across Orkney to maximise the take-up of these benefits. Clients can book in-person meetings with our Client Support Advisers at home or in their local community, at a time and location that suits them best, face-to-face, by video call or by phone. Our Client Support Advisers have supported a number of clients at home across Orkney including in Shapinsay and Sanday.

More information is available from: [Social Security Scotland - Benefits](#) and [Social Security Scotland - Social Security Scotland statistics: publications](#)



Equalities Mainstreaming and Outcomes Report 2023 - 2027

Orkney Islands Council

Orkney Islands Council Education Authority

Orkney Islands Area Licensing Board

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Orkney Islands Council Equality Statement

We are committed to fulfilling the three key elements of the general equality duty as outlined in the Equality Act 2010:

- Eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- Advancing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. This means removing barriers, meeting different needs and encouraging participation.
- Fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not, improving integration, building understanding, and reducing bullying and harassment.

The protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010 are:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race, this includes ethnicity, colour, and national origin
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage or civil partnership

Everyone has protected characteristics, but it is the treatment individuals and groups experience, the level of autonomy they have, and the positive or negative outcome for them, that are its focus. As a Council we will seek to:

- Remove or minimise disadvantages experienced by people due to their protected characteristics.
- Meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people.
- Encourage people with protected characteristics to participate in public life or other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.
- Be transparent, accessible and accountable.

Equality Challenges in Scotland and Orkney

The total population of Orkney in 2020 was approximately 22,400, this has now increased by 0.6% to 22,540, which is higher than the national increase of 0.3%. In Orkney, life expectancy is higher than across Scotland, but the demographic profile has aged significantly in recent years, with 54% of the Orkney population over 45 years old, compared to the national figure of 47%. There is a trend of depopulation from the outer isles into the mainland of Orkney and we continue to see migration of young people away from Orkney.

The rurality of Orkney can pose many challenges for people to participate in activities or access services required, and for providers in planning and delivering services. Within the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation, 14 of Orkney's 29 data zones are among the most deprived 10% in Scotland for access to services.

Orkney does not have any data zones in the most socio-economically deprived 20% in Scotland but due to the scattered pattern of poverty in Orkney, there are individuals and families in all areas experiencing multiple deprivation. Rural and island poverty has its own set of characteristics and presents its own set of unique challenges that may not be the uniform experience of poverty across Scotland. Rural households face an increased cost of living between 10% to 30% more than children and families living in urban Scotland, and for those living on islands the premium can exceed 40%. Children in low-income families has risen to 16% in 2022, the Scottish average is 15.9%. In 2021-22, 20.1% of children in Orkney are in Child poverty.

More than 50% of households in Orkney live in fuel poverty. The number of residents stating they have access to good public transport facilities is approximately 55% compared with 91% in the rest of Scotland. Many specialist health / support services are distant from rural communities, creating social inequalities for those without private transport.

The annual participation measure (16–19-year-olds in positive destinations) increased to 93.9% in 2022.

Prior to the pandemic, Orkney had a strong economy with very high employment levels however it had a relatively low wage economy with underemployment rather than unemployment tending to be a factor. Orkney has one of the highest rates of self-employment in Scotland.

The 75-and-over age group is projected to see the largest percentage increase between 2018 and 2028 at 37%, a trend similar to other rural and island areas, and significantly higher than at the Scotland level (22%). This will have implications in the provision of housing, and all support and care services.

Poverty is the single largest determinant of health, and ill-health is an obstacle to social and economic development. Unemployment in Orkney has historically been, and remains, much lower than the Scottish and UK figure, with employment rates consistently close to 90%. However, some residents remain out of work for a variety of reasons, and there continues to be poverty-based challenges for those in low-income employment. Part-time work is much more prevalent in Orkney than it is in other parts of the country.

The public sector is a major employer in Orkney accounting for 31% of all employment – compared to a Scottish average of 26%. Much of this employment continues to be concentrated in Kirkwall, although COVID-19 has seen the establishment of working from

home practices; public sector employment, particularly in schools, is important in more rural and island communities across Orkney, although in a much lower concentration than the number of jobs based in Kirkwall.

The issues to be addressed include an ageing population, under-employment, low wages and a seasonal economy, high costs of living, fuel poverty, limited affordable housing, limited transport and digital connectivity and constrained access to essential services.

Many of these issues may be felt by some groups more than others and can require targeted measures in order to redress the inequality experienced.

It is envisaged that the 2022 Census will better show the population picture compared to these projections, although it may be some time until results from the Census are available.

Mainstreaming Equality

Mainstreaming is an approach to delivering equality within an organisation and it contributes to continuous improvement, better performance and better value. It is primarily a long-term strategy aimed at ensuring that equality principles and practices are integrated into every aspect of an organisation from the outset. The focus should not only be internal (mainstreaming equality principles into procedures and systems) but also external (mainstreaming equality principles into policies and customer service delivery). Mainstreaming provides a framework that facilitates and complements equalities legislation and other equality measures.

This simply means integrating equality into our day-to-day work. We take equality and fairness into account in the way we go about our business when acting as an employer, when planning and providing services and when making decisions.

Mainstreaming ensures that equality becomes part of our culture. This benefits both employees and service users who know that they will be treated fairly and contributes to a continuous improvement and better performance.

We are committed to promoting equality, which means recognising that everyone has different needs and taking action to ensure that we are all able to participate in society. Our aim is that Orkney is a community where we all have the opportunity to fulfil our potential.

Orkney Islands Council is the public body responsible for all local government services in Orkney. We have an impact on many aspects of everyday life and our activities touch the lives of everyone living in our island community, from schools to the care of older people. Our councillors meet regularly to make decisions about local services and about various aspects of life. These decisions are then implemented by our workforce. With equality at the heart of everything we do, we never forget that we are here to serve the public and have a big role to play in improving the quality of life enjoyed by people throughout the islands.

Leadership

Our Elected Members have responsibility for promoting equality and diversity within the Council and externally. They engage and listen to the views of our local communities through a range of methods enabling them to take a more collaborative approach to addressing inequalities within Orkney.

Policies and practices

Policies and practices internal to our organisation should not be discriminatory. Equality, diversity and inclusion issues are fully considered when developing new policies and processes and when they are reviewed periodically.

HR and Organisational Development (HR and OD) delivers a programme of workshops and training events for staff to ensure that our human resources policies and procedures are understood. This includes training on Recruitment and Selection, Grievance, Managing Sickness Absence, Dignity at Work and Learning and Development policies. Mental Health and Wellbeing remain a priority for the Council and HR and OD have launched a revised Mental Health and Wellbeing policy along with employee and manager guides, and continue to promote a variety of support services and resources that are available for employees and managers.

Assessing impact

The Council has systematic arrangements in place to ensure equalities issues are part of decision-making processes. The Equality Impact Assessment process ensures that we consider the impact that various policies, strategies, activities and approaches have on different groups, both within our organisation and for the wider public. Equality impact assessments aim to help ensure our services are fair. They provide an opportunity to stop or revise a policy or function which is potentially unfair or unlawful. They identify mitigating actions wherever possible to minimise any adverse impacts. They also identify opportunities for positive impacts such as advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations. We use internal and external data to provide evidence for the assessments and consult directly with equalities groups as required. Impact assessments are organic documents and are developed and added to as a project or plan progresses.

The impact assessment takes an integrated approach to include assessment of impact relating to socio-economic disadvantage as required by the Fairer Scotland Duty along with care experienced people. We will continue to utilise feedback and best practice when reviewing the impact assessment process and will also consider best practices approaches to incorporating Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessments.

Raising and maintaining awareness

It is important in mainstreaming equality that the Council builds and maintains awareness of our duties as an employer and service provider.

As part of induction to Orkney Islands Council, all new employees are required to complete an e-learning course which aims to raise awareness about the importance of equality and diversity. The course covers equality legislation and is designed to encourage employees to think about and challenge their own perceptions. Equality and diversity awareness is also one of the core mandatory courses and is completed periodically by all employees. Equality and diversity awareness forms part of the induction programme for Elected Members, as well as ongoing briefings relating to the general equality duty, updates on changes to equality legislation and other equality related topics.

Increasing awareness of the value of diversity can help further mainstream equality within the Council.

To raise awareness and demonstrate commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion in the community, the Council flew the Progress flag for the Pride weekend in June. The press release accompanying the flying of the flag acknowledged our LGBTQ+ communities in particular have endured prejudice and inequalities historically and unfortunately, continue to do so in some quarters. We highlighted our commitment to ensuring a compassionate approach to serving all and by flying the Progress flag, as well as spotlighting the importance of building an inclusive culture for OIC colleagues.

We are committed to creating a safe and inclusive workplace, our people policies and employee benefits are an important part of working at the Council and we want to ensure that these are inclusive to all.

Human Resources and Organisational Development



Orkney Island Council has successfully achieved level two of the Disability Confident Scheme and is a Disability Confident Employer. Under the framework we are committed to actively attracting, recruiting a retaining

disabled people by providing an inclusive recruitment process. As part of this, Orkney Islands Council guarantees disabled candidates an interview if they meet the minimum criteria. This guaranteed interview scheme is also offered to Veterans who meet the minimum criteria as part of the Armed Forces Covenant.

HR and OD are reviewing the recruitment and selection processes and policy and are considering a variety of ways to improve the experience of candidates, in particular those facing barriers to employment.



Employer
Recognition
Scheme

SILVER AWARD

In collaboration with Orkney College, a six-week taster course, Introduction to a Career in Social Care, is running aimed at people aged 16 and over who are interested in working in social care, including senior phase pupils, people who are unemployed, under threat of unemployment or considering a change in career. The part-time course is free and students work through materials at their own pace and no prior qualifications or experience are required.

Students gain an SCQF Level 5 certificate and all students who complete the course are guaranteed interviews for roles within social care. A number of students from previous cohorts have successfully secured employment with the Council and Third Sector organisations on the islands.

Housing

The Housing team hosted tenant participation pop-up events in partnership with Orkney Housing Association Ltd to promote tenant participation and engagement. The sessions were an opportunity to listen to feedback and to engage with tenants and participation events offer the benefit of increased sense of community. Tenant participation is a tenant-centred approach that includes informing, engaging and consulting with tenants. It involves the collaboration between both landlord and tenants with the aim of working together to continuously improve housing services.

Customer satisfaction is at the forefront of tenant participation and it provides tenants with a means of sharing their thoughts and opinions with their landlord. Feedback from the event is used to inform changes to the services and is given due consideration in any decision-making process.

In 2023 the Housing service launched a Domestic Abuse Policy which commits to:

- Provide a sensitive, supportive, non-judgemental and confidential service, and, by creating a safe environment victim-survivors, children and young people feel able to approach the Council and that they are listened to.
- Work in partnership with other internal and external services and agencies to best meet the needs of victim-survivors and any children and young people, and, to take steps to try and prevent future domestic abuse.
- Assist victim-survivors to access information, advice and support on the range of housing options available to enable them to make informed choices, including the possibility of sustaining their current accommodation safely and to prevent homelessness where possible.
- Continue to assess the need for, and where appropriate, develop, or support the development of, further services.
- Hold the perpetrators of domestic abuse to account.

The Housing service support the delivery of actions identified in Orkney's Violence Against Women Partnership Action Plan and will continue to participate in awareness raising activities and in challenging attitudes and behaviours in relation to domestic abuse and violence against women.

Inclusive services

The Sensory Exploration Project builds on the digital offerings already in place in the library, such as virtual reality headsets and interactive smartboards. Orkney Library and Archive have utilised the Scottish Government's Public Library Improvement Fund to purchase a mobile digital interactive floor projector. The floor projector offers over 5000 built in media assets, offering access to stimulating content that is suitable for multi-sensory exploration, play, learning, therapy and relaxation.

More than one person can use it at a time so there's an interaction and inclusivity element to the experience. The sessions can be tailored to suit those using the equipment, for example, stimulate movement, light and sound, as well as reminiscence and memory functionality for people with dementia.

The purpose is to remove barriers for those what may be vulnerable and missing out due to a range of circumstances, helping to achieve the wider Council objective of promoting and enhancing community health and wellbeing.

Transport and travel

We are committed to continue the ongoing programme to improve accessibility to all transport services, taking advantage of contract, vehicle, infrastructure and vessel replacement and renewal opportunities where possible.

In 2022 Orkney welcomed a fleet of 34 brand new fully accessible and low carbon emission buses for the public and school bus services. The new fleet feature contactless payments and live bus tracking on board public bus services that bus users can access by downloading the free Stagecoach mobile app.



Passenger figures in for January to May 2023 on public bus services subsidised by the Council were over 7% higher than pre-pandemic 2019 levels. Increased tourism, the

cost-of-living crisis, in-migration to the county and the introduction of the Scottish Government's Under 22 Free Bus Scheme have all contributed to the increased passenger numbers as well as the new, fully accessible fleet.

Earlier this year an Orkney Travel Matters survey was launched in partnership with Sustrans, a charity that aims to make walking and cycling easier for people. This survey follows up on the Orkney Matters consultations the previous year which highlighted the importance of transportation across the county and indicated that many people aspired to walk and cycle more.

The results of the Orkney Travel Matters survey helps to understand travel behaviour in more detail including how, why and where local people travel and the barriers to active travel which is using walking, wheeling and cycling to make everyday journeys. The results from the survey are being used to inform policy decisions and guide investments.

Education

The main goals of the education service centre around raising the bar and closing the gap; achieving excellence through raising attainment and ensuring ever child has the same opportunity to succeed. The refreshed local plan set out in 2022 outlines the steps to delivering three main themes of inclusion and wellbeing, learning and achievement and systems and processes.

Mainstreaming equalities is integral to the delivery of education services and are embedded through supporting strategies, plans and activities including Orkney Children's Services Plan, Good Parenting Plan, Community Learning and Development Partners Plan, Local Employability Plan and within work relating to the Scottish Attainment Challenge.

The Anti-Racism Group – under the guidance of Theo Ogbhemhe, Religious, Moral and Philosophical Studies teacher at Kirkwall Grammar School – have received funding of just over £4,000 from the Scottish Government to drive forward the anti-racism events. The students will also be fundraising for a further £2,500 to enable them to carry out all that they have planned through non-uniform days, bake sales and a raffle.

The activities include a free musical festival, a new anti-racism story book for children telling the story of Beuy the black Orkney vole, the purchase of anti-racism books for the school library and community libraries in Orkney, a talk by an anti-racism speaker and anti-racism hoodies as school uniform.

The Anti-Racism Group at KGS is made up of 25 pupils who are continuing this great work and are making arrangements for a number of important events to raise

Licensing

Although the Licensing Board has a separate legal status from Orkney Islands Council it is resourced entirely by the Council.

The close connection between the Board and the Council enables the Board to benefit directly from the Council's awareness building, training and actions relating to equality, diversity and inclusion. This means taking into account the way in which the Board achieve their day-to-day business and integrating equalities into everything they do such as regularly equality impact assessing licensing related policies.

Equality Outcomes 2023 – 2027

We are committed to pursuing objectives that make real improvements for people by reducing inequalities and increasing inclusion, whilst fostering good relations and building connections between communities.

These equality outcomes are designed to focus on the areas that we consider most important, and that we have the scope to realistically influence in the next four years as an employer, services provider, and as a partner with communities and other organisations within Orkney.

We have reviewed national evidence and local information to inform these outcomes; this has included looking at information from recent consultations that are relevant to equalities such as those for the creation of our Council Plan, and other community consultations.

We note that the following outcomes do not cover all protected groups and that is because we have assessed the most pressing inequalities in Orkney and have focused on them.

We will continue to advance the public sector equality duty, using Equality Impact Assessment to inform policy design, implementation and monitoring and through our ongoing mainstreaming activities.

Outcome	Measures
The Council will aim to attract more diverse talent by reviewing policies and practices to ensure that there are no barriers to entering and sustaining employment for under-represented groups.	<p>Aim to increase the diversity of employees throughout the organisation.</p> <p>Number of people who declare protected characteristics accessing employment, in particular disability.</p>
The Council will aim to reduce the gender pay gap.	Aim for a sustained reduction in the gap between women and men's rate of pay.
People have increased confidence and opportunities to express their views and influence decision making and service design.	Improved engagement with consultation on services across a range of community groups.
People in Orkney have improved accessibility to all transport services.	As identified in Local Transport Strategy.
Pupils have a greater sense of belonging and safety in schools.	<p>Increased awareness in schools of gender-based bullying and harassment.</p> <p>Increased awareness in schools of LGBTQ+-based bullying and harassment.</p>

Outcome	Measures
	Continued implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)
Young people facing barriers are supported and leave school with sustained positive destinations.	Percentage of pupils entering positive destinations.
People in Orkney will have improved choice and accessibility to licencing application processes.	Number of online licencing applications received via the Customer Services Platform.

Following agreement of the Equality Outcomes a detailed delivery plan will be developed containing agreed actions and measures to support these. The measures listed alongside the outcomes above are indicative.

Informing our Equality Outcomes

There have been extensive and recent consultation and engagement through a number of other plans and policies and groups, with content substantively relevant also to the development of the Equalities Outcomes for Orkney Islands Council, Education Services and Licensing Board.

Orkney Matters, an initiative set up by the LEADER Local Action Group, OIC and Voluntary Action Orkney (VAO) undertook an Orkney-wide community survey to find out what is important to the people of Orkney within their own communities – whether that be development, the countryside, play areas, sports and leisure, shops and services, activities, connectivity, etc.

An Orkney Matters survey ran from October 2021 to February 2022 – with more than 1,000 responses to the survey obtained, representing around 12% of Orkney's households. Orkney Matters recorded the views of all of Orkney's communities, including residents of the ferry-linked isles, young people, and lesser heard voices.

Some of the issues highlighted through consultation require action to be taken by agencies working together, and the Orkney Partnership have chosen them to be strategic priorities.

The partnership's plans to address these priorities are set out in the new Community Plan (also called the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan) for 2023-2030. Other issues are matters primarily for the Council to address, and these are included in our council plan.

The Council Plan pledges to maintain existing high standards of service wherever possible, improve services and outcomes for the people of Orkney where needed, and to develop and deliver projects for the benefit of our communities. This plan sets the framework for achieving a number of aims and outcomes for the next five years and are underpinned but core principles to guide future decision-making. These core principles include key equalities themes of:

- Equality, fairness and inclusion, in particular for vulnerable and remote communities like the ferry-linked isles.
- Sustainable and accessible services for all.
- Community wellbeing and mental health.

Orkney families with experience of poverty and hardship contributed a wealth of information in response to the Partnership's 'Making Ends Meet' survey, conducted in autumn 2021 to inform the Child Poverty Strategy 2022-26.

Following COVID-19, a Positive Destinations Group was established in Orkney to ensure that young people leaving school are appropriately supported into a positive postschool destination. As part of the work they were undertaking, the group developed a Youth Employment Survey to better understand how COVID-19 has impacted young people and their options regarding education, training and employment, as well as better understand young people's knowledge of the support services that currently exist in Orkney. When asked if they had any barriers to engaging with support services, 23 people (48%) indicated they did, or sometimes did. The biggest barrier was suffering from anxiety (13 people = 68%) followed by limited or no access to transport (nine people = 47%).

National consultation also played a part in the development of these outcomes. A total of 790 Orkney residents participated in the first National Islands Plan survey, conducted in

October 2020, answering questions on their experience of employment and business opportunities, transport, housing, fuel poverty, digital connectivity, health, social care, the environment, climate change, culture, and education. The survey is due to be repeated in 2023 and every two years thereafter for the lifetime of the National Islands Plan. Results are published online with responses from Orkney Mainland and Isles respondents split out, making this a useful resource for measuring future progress.

Equal Pay

Orkney Islands Council is required to publish information on the percentage difference among our employees between men's average hourly pay (excluding overtime) and our women's average hourly pay (excluding overtime). This is known as the gender pay gap.

The gender pay gap figures are calculated using the average (mean) as well as the median average which gives a greater indicator of any gender inequalities in pay.

The figures have been calculated based on permanent employee's and relief workers have not been included.

There are some service areas that are traditionally more male-dominated, such as Marine Services and Towage staff, which are not part of most councils' remit in Scotland. These services are competing for some staff with private industry in the islands such as the oil and renewable energy sectors and therefore the level of pay reflects this.

We are committed to ensuring the process to determine pay and conditions of employment for all our employees should be free from bias and should not discriminate.

Reducing pay gaps at Orkney Islands Council is a long-term goal and we acknowledge that it is affected by societal and educational factors and we employ a complex and diverse workforce across a range of services and professional areas.

The following data are the most recent snapshot figures as at 31 March 2023 relating to pay gaps. These figures are used to inform ongoing actions within the plan.

Gender Pay Gap

Category	2022/2023	2021/2022
Total number of employees in top 5% of earners	94	92
Total number of women employees in top 5%	36	28
Percentage of women employees in top 5%	38.3%	30.4%

Category	Post type	Count	Average (Mean) Hourly Rate	Median Hourly Rate
Female	All	1,791	16.24	13.13
	Full-time	592	19.16	13.13
	Part-time	1,199	14.79	13.13
Male	All	700	17.39	13.83
	Full-time	475	18.95	13.83
	Part-time	225	14.08	13.83
Gender Pay Gap %			6.62	

The Gender Pay Gap for 2021/2022 was reported at 11.6% Action was taken in 2022/23 to restructure the lower end of the pay and grading structure within the Council which has had a positive impact on pay rates and has reduced the gender pay gap.

Ethnicity Pay Gap

Our pay gap information for black and minority ethnic employee groups are based on a calculation for minority ethnic combined employees in comparison to white combined employees and does not include data for employees not stating their ethnicity.

No pay gap has been identified based on ethnicity however we acknowledge that we report low figures for ethnic diversity within our workforce. Work continues to address the gaps in employee diversity data.

Disability Pay Gap

Identified pay gaps are based on a calculation for disabled employee groups in comparison against employees with no disability. These calculations do not include the data for employees not providing information in this area.

Work continues to address the gaps in employee diversity data.

Category	Post Type	Count	Average (Mean) Hourly Rate	Median Hourly Rate
Yes Disability	All	106	16.02	12.91
	Full-time	48	18.64	16.28
	Part-time	58	13.85	12.14
No Disability	All	1,777	16.56	13.13
	Full-time	731	19.29	16.49
	Part-time	1,046	14.65	12.79
Prefer not to say	All	45	15.46	13.13
	Full-time	18	17.73	16.39
	Part-time	27	13.94	12.29
No data	All	563	16.75	13.65
	Full-time	270	18.62	16.28
	Part-time	293	15.02	12.29
Disability Pay Gap (%)			3.26	

Appendix 1 - Overview of progress

In 2018 Orkney Islands Council set out its equality outcomes to help us to deliver on our duties under equality legislation.

Significant progress has been made against these outcomes and has previously been reported in the Equality Outcome progress updates. The COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020 impacted the way in which many of our services have been delivered through the duration of this plan and large-scale changes were introduced in many areas of the organisation to meet these challenges.

Many of the outcomes and actions identified in this set of equality outcomes continue to be priorities and work has been undertaken to ensure that these are now mainstreamed into the delivery of our everyday services.

This is the final progress report of the Equality Outcomes 2022-2023.

Equality Outcomes 2022 – 2023 Final progress report

Outcome	Progress
<p>People in Orkney have the opportunity to fulfil their potential throughout life.</p>	<p>Pathways from education into positive destination and employment.</p> <p>The Local Employability Partnership (LEP) has taken a lead to develop a local data dashboard to monitor and analyse sustainable destinations for young people and this work is ongoing.</p> <p>The LEP has produced an overview guide of the employability provisions to simplify the routes into employment available for people in Orkney. This is published on the Council website and widely promoted by a range of partners.</p> <p>To view the resources, visit: https://www.orkney.gov.uk/Service-Directory/C/employability.htm</p> <p>The Pathway Planning meetings implemented in 2020/21 continue with the aim to identify those most at risk of not entering a positive destination and to ensure that they have the support to make the right decisions for themselves. In 2021/22 figures show that 96.7% of pupils have sustained a positive destination – an increase of 1.9% on the previous year, and 3.3% above the Scottish figure of 93.5%.</p> <p>A School Leavers Programme has been developed and is delivered in partnership by Developing the Young Workforce (DYW) Orkney and Skills Development Scotland (SDS). The programme is aimed at pupils who are leaving school at the end of the academic year and need support to take their next steps. Held in February each year, it is delivered as a two-day intensive programme helping young</p>

Outcome	Progress
	<p>people to plan what they want to do when they leave school and to develop the skills to write a CV, apply for a job, complete an application form, and prepare for a job or college interview.</p> <p>27 pupils attended the 2023 programme. 12 were offered employment, eight entered further education, three were offered Modern Apprenticeships, three were in education S5 and one is seeking employment.</p> <p>The Young Persons Guarantee (YPG) transition programme was identified in early 2023 and is designed to provide additional support to young people who may struggle to achieve a positive post 16 transition. The eight-week youth intervention programme is delivered in partnership between schools, SDS, DWY Orkney and the Community Learning, Development and Employability team.</p> <p>The programme includes various activities and opportunities for young people to help develop skills such as teamwork, reliability, timekeeping, effective communication, budgeting, problem solving and other transferable employability skills.</p> <p>All young people who have attended the programme have identified they have gained confidence, skills, certificates and networks that can support them in their future transitions.</p> <p>Feedback from the transition programme has identified further work to develop a Planning for the Future programme to support similar young people both in and outwith compulsory education.</p> <p>During 2021/22, eight Kickstart placements were established across a variety of teams within Orkney Islands Council. In March 2022 seven young people had been offered a six-month, 25 hours per week Kickstart placement. Of the initial seven participants, 71% completed the six months and 57% progressed into sustainable employment. In June 2022, Orkney Islands Council funded additional Kickstart placements for a broader group of candidates. Two placements have been established and will be delivered during 2023/24.</p> <p>Work has also been undertaken to establish three permanent posts within the Council and Orkney College, offered through a supported employment arrangement. These carved roles offer work opportunities to candidates identified under No One Left Behind scheme (NOLB) and are designed to meet the needs of the individual whilst also meeting service demands and requirements.</p>

Outcome	Progress																			
	<p>Modern apprenticeship scheme by gender. Figures for the 2022/2023 highlight that there were 81 Modern Apprentice (MA) starts in Orkney.</p> <p>Current data shows that there has been an overall decrease in MA starts over the past four years.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="576 479 1433 555"> <thead> <tr> <th>2019/20</th> <th>2020/21</th> <th>2021/22</th> <th>2022/23</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>142</td> <td>99</td> <td>83</td> <td>81</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Of the MA starts in 2022/23, 37% were female, an increase on the final 2021/22 figure of 30.1%.</p> <p>The age profile of MA starts shows a decline in 16-24 year olds' over the past four years:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="576 734 1433 810"> <thead> <tr> <th>2019/20</th> <th>2020/21</th> <th>2021/22</th> <th>2022/23</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>76</td> <td>56</td> <td>53</td> <td>52</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>The MA figures for 2022/23 to date show that again Orkney Islands have one of the highest achievement rates (number of certificated leavers) in comparison to other local authorities at 81%.⁹ This is the fourth consecutive year that Orkney has had one of the highest achievement rates.</p> <p>Work continues to support the collection and sharing of data relating to protected characteristics and remains a priority action in the LEP Partners Plan 2021-2024 (2023 Update).</p> <p>In its People Plan 2022-2026 the Council has committed to a programme of increased numbers of trainees and apprenticeships over the duration of the plan.</p> <p>Challenge gender stereotypes that influence education, training and career choices. Activities in this area have included the regular No Wrong Path campaign highlighting that many people don't necessarily take a straight, obvious, or traditional path into their jobs.</p> <p>Careers Week activities have increased exposure to a variety of different jobs, including many that pupils may not have initially considered. One talk was delivered by a former pupil Corrine Sinclair who works with EMEC and described her own career journey, encouraging pupils to explore all options available to them.</p> <p>The Education Support Officer for STEM and Orkney Builders worked together to deliver practical, hands-on workshops for Glaitness Primary School to bring building and engineering to life for some of the young students. They used KAPLA wooden blocks for building and MakeDo cardboard toolkits to explore through play building towers,</p>				2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	142	99	83	81	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	76	56	53	52
2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23																	
142	99	83	81																	
2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23																	
76	56	53	52																	

Outcome	Progress
	<p>copying and creating designs and undertaking other small-scale challenges.</p> <p>The promotion of cross-circular links through STEM has continued with activities such as Christmas enterprise projects and site visits with Orkney Builders. The sessions are increasing motivation and engagement in all aspects and hope to inspire an interest in industries such as construction and engineering.</p> <p>Deliver actions relating to closing the attainment gap. COVID has increased these challenges, however, there is evidence of systematic change in terms of culture with a focus on equity becoming more embedded and sustained in schools. A greater awareness and understanding of the barriers facing children and young people adversely affected by socio-economic disadvantage is apparent and interventions are being implemented to meet the needs of children and young people.</p> <p>The Orkney's Childrens Services Plan 2021-23 contained a range of performance indicators which sought to enable partner agencies to better measure the collective progress towards the eight target outcomes of Getting it Right for Every Child framework.</p> <p>In March 2021, the Good Parenting Plan 2020-2025 for the Education Service was updated and included the following outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compile an accurate and up to date list of care experienced children and young people (CECYP) • Complete a tracker for school-attending CECYP across Orkney in relation to attainment and progress. • Ensure CECYP transition into positive destinations when they leave school. <p>Significant progress has been made in relation to developing tracking and monitoring structures for the Broad General Education (BGE) for Care Experienced Young People.</p> <p>The Raising Attainment Strategy 2023-2026 sets out clear actions to continue to address the poverty related attainment gap. Planning and implementation of the use of the Pupil Equity Fund will support the six priority family characteristics as identified by the Scottish Government:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lone parent families • Minority ethnic families • Families with a disabled adult or child • Families with a young mother (under 25) • Families with a child under one

Outcome	Progress
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Larger families (3+ children) <p>There is a greater focus on the attainment of children and young people in receipt of free school meals and those who have been care experienced. Work continues in further developing the use of the BGE tracking toolkit to monitor and track attainment.</p> <p>Implementation of Anti-bullying policy for our Children and Young people.</p> <p>The Anti-Bullying Policy for our Children and Young People was launched in August 2018 and set out a strategic approach to addressing bullying and provides clear definitions and guidance for schools and settings to review or develop local anti-bullying policies to address and monitor any incidences of bullying.</p> <p>The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic added to the pressure that children and young people were already feeling in relation to mental health and wellbeing. Shared resources, expertise and plans were implemented for pupils, staff and communities during the reopening of schools.</p> <p>Particular needs have been identified around more resources for managing stress and mental health, knowing where to go for help, being able to self-refer to services or getting help to refer if preferred, and education around the LGBT+ community. The Youth Forum have also highlighted a need for better education around LGBT+ identities and issues, in order to eliminate stigma and misunderstanding of LGBT+ people in our community. It is recognised that LGBT+ young people can have a particularly difficult time in Orkney and may experience homophobic, biphobic and / or transphobic bullying, may feel excluded, disrespected and even unsafe. Specific actions to address this are outlined in the Orkney Education Services Report and include the achievement of LGBT Charter Award by Junior High and Secondary Schools.</p>
<p>Orkney Islands Council is an inclusive employer.</p>	<p>Review of flexible working plan and review of sickness-absence process to be more inclusive of age-related conditions and mental health.</p> <p>Work has been delivered to incorporate resources and services supporting mental health into the Sickness Absence Management process and training. This has included the Workplace Mental Health Support Service delivered through Maximus and Able Futures.</p>

Outcome	Progress
	<p>Policies, along with manager and employee guidance has been developed for supporting people with the menopause and with mental health and wellbeing. A review of support available to employees has been undertaken and work has been undertaken to scope the requirements for the delivery of an employee assistance programme. This will progress in 2023/24.</p> <p>HR System development has included the requirement for the reason for absence as mandatory in the reporting which is enabling greater consistency and accuracy in the statistics available. Improvements have also been made to the reporting functionality of these systems.</p> <p>The People Plan 2022-2026 strengthens emphasis on this action and sets out our positive response to the changing needs of our existing and future employees. Recognising the value of flexibility for employees across all generations the People Plan makes commitment to drive forward the work already underway to deliver flexible working opportunities that meet the needs of our employees.</p> <p>The Supporting our people through the menopause policy was launched on 8 March 2023 – International Women’s Day. The promotion communications set out that the menopause is a workplace issue and encouraged people to talk more about the menopause and perimenopause and signposted the policy and manager guide which provide tips on how to create a safe space to hold these conversations.</p> <p>Further HR system development has included the option to record specific menopause related absences to improve the data that is available regarding reason for absence for greater analysis and to identify future actions once baseline data has been captured.</p> <p>Review Employee Survey responses to develop proactive age-inclusive communications, promotion and development opportunities.</p> <p>Any highlighted differences in survey data by age and gender are being fed into the ongoing work to develop the three key thematic areas identified following initial analysis of the overall survey results.</p> <p>Age-inclusive actions have been integrated into the People Plan 2022-2026 and the Pay Gap and Occupational Segregation action plan.</p> <p>Carry out regular employee surveys.</p> <p>Increased staff engagement has been a key focus through the Our people, our Plan initiative and has included new approaches such as the creation of a Leadership Forum</p>

Outcome	Progress
	<p>and Lunch and Learn sessions which provide routes for sharing of information, and feedback on priorities.</p> <p>Actions relating to employee engagement are being delivered through the People Plan 2022-2026, which in itself involved considerable engagement across Council services to understand better the people challenges we face.</p> <p>The Investors in People survey carried out at the end of 2022 / beginning of 2023 provided feedback to develop recommendations which were used to inform an improvement plan. Orkney Islands Council were awarded the Investors in People Standard in January 2023 and regular employee surveys will provide ongoing engagement with employees to support the delivery of the improvement plan.</p> <p>Delivery of Mentally Healthy Workplace and communication plan to increase awareness relating to mental health and wellbeing.</p> <p>Work has been delivered to increase awareness of mental good health and wellbeing across the organisation on a regular basis.</p> <p>Significant work was delivered in this area throughout the pandemic. The Council website was initially identified as the best means of sharing information relating to mental health and wellbeing for all employees, specifically in relation to dealing with the associated impact of COVID-19 and the restrictions during lockdown. A section of the COVID-19 information pages was developed to provide information and signposting on a variety of themes including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resources for a mentally healthy workplace including links to iLearn courses on relaxation, dealing with stress and recognising stress. • Information and resources from the Educational Psychology team ranging from more general guidance on supporting mental health and wellbeing, to comprehensive information for staff supporting vulnerable children, those working in the Hub and for teaching staff and other professionals supporting young people with school closure and the impacts of COVID-19. • Wellbeing advice for working from home. • Coronavirus and your wellbeing advice and guidance from Mind, the mental health charity. • COVID-19 and your mental health resources produced by Caring for People, a task-force made up of public and voluntary organisations in Orkney to

Outcome	Progress
	<p>help people recover and build resilience in challenging times.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information and links to the Grampian Psychological Resilience Hub which was set up to directly respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. This is a virtual hub providing support by telephone for self-referral regarding mental health and wellbeing. <p>Health and Wellbeing training sessions have been delivered across the organisation including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scottish Mental Health First Aid. Mental Health Awareness for Managers. Coping with Change for Managers. Personal Stress Management. Introduction to Coaching. <p>Regular communications have been provided to employees to signpost to resources online and to highlight other sessions and support including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promotion of Mental Health Awareness Week 2022 and 2023 seeking to inspire action to promote the message of good mental health for everyone. Themes have included isolation and loneliness and anxiety. Awareness raising of mental health at work and the promotion of the updated Mental Health and Wellbeing policy. Targeted information and resources around specific days throughout the year including when clocks went back and in preparation for the Christmas period. Make 2023 the year you look after you campaign, promoting the Five Ways to Wellbeing, highlighting the role we all have in stopping the stigma often attached to speaking about mental health, signposting support for those with caring responsibilities as well as the menopause, mental health and wellbeing, leave of absence and flexible working policies. <p>Review of jobs appropriate to undertake remotely. During COVID-19, many office-based jobs were required to be delivered from home and the IT infrastructure, management practices and many work-related processes rapidly developed in order to accommodate this.</p> <p>The People Plan 2022-2026 commits to develop a clear integrated strategy setting out how we will exploit the full benefits of mobile and smart technology for the benefit of</p>

Outcome	Progress
	<p>our employees which will be key to the delivery of this action.</p> <p>Hybrid working guidance was issued as a pilot at the start of 2023 and set out a broad framework for services to work within. This framework is based on employees spending a minimum of 40% of their time in their place of work. The pilot was launched in March 2023 and is to be reviewed later this year.</p> <p>It is noted that the pandemic has had a profound negative impact on Scotland's wellbeing, particularly in terms of health, the economy and fair work. This has brought further impacts on already marginalised communities and in many cases exacerbating inequalities such as an increasing reliance on technology, accelerated by the pandemic, can bring new opportunities as well as risks of excluding certain groups where technology is not as accessible.</p>
<p>People in Orkney have an equal opportunity to access and shape public services.</p>	<p>Develop guidance for inclusive engagement and embed within the Council's Community Consultation and Engagement guide and in-house training.</p> <p>The Council's Community Consultation and Engagement Policy was launched in 2019, bringing a greater focus on areas such as engaging with seldom heard groups, peripherality and island-proofing and the Fairer Scotland duty to better consider the impact of socio-economic deprivation on groups.</p> <p>Training sessions have been provided by the Consultation and Engagement Officers Group with topics including consultation and engagement with young people, inclusive communications, making meetings accessible guide and mainstreaming participatory budgeting.</p> <p>Review and develop inclusive practices to support participation in the democratic process.</p> <p>A review of resources and communications was undertaken in the lead up to the local elections in May 2022. Content for the OIC website was developed to improve and increase the information available to community members including general information, news posts, videos and signposting to better inform people on what to expect, how to vote and to explain the voting system changes.</p> <p>All households were written to providing information on current registration to vote and information on postal voting and ongoing communications through a variety of channels were aimed at encouraging people to apply for postal voting if this would be the best option for them. Feedback was</p>

Outcome	Progress
	<p>sought from a number of community groups in terms of increasing the accessibility to polling stations.</p> <p>The overall turnout for the 2022 elections was 48.83%. Nationally, turnout stood at 44.8%, lower than 2017 at 46.9%.</p> <p>Work continues to review resources available nationally to improve the inclusive participation in the democratic process and feedback following the most recent election will also be used to inform any future actions as business as usual.</p> <p>Audit of existing elected office by protected characteristic and prior to an election engage with stakeholders to develop an action plan to promote inclusion.</p> <p>The Council hosted online sessions in early February 2022 aimed at encouraging more women to stand for election to the Council in May 2022. Mind the Gap: Women for Council was delivered in partnership with Elect Her, a non-partisan organisation working to motivate, support and equip women in all their diversity to stand for political office.</p> <p>These sessions, along with additional support information and signposting were promoted through a wider social media campaign aimed at encouraging greater diversity of potential candidates looking to stand for the May 2022 elections.</p> <p>International Women's Day 2022 saw a further opportunity to showcase some of the work that the Council's current Elected Members deliver on. Three of our Elected Members who are women gave their views and experiences of life in the Council Chamber, encouraging people from all walks of life to consider standing for election.</p> <p>Local elections in May 2022, saw an increase in the gender diversity of candidates standing for election in comparison to elections in May 2017, with around 13% increase in female candidates. The election results also reflected greater diversity seeing an increase of around 9.5% in the gender split of Elected Members.</p> <p>Orkney Islands Council had the highest response rate with 71.4%.</p> <p>The Local Government Candidates Survey Report published in November 2022 indicates that further consideration is being given to how the project can be built on. Working with partner organisations and stakeholder groups, next steps will be identified to improve the data</p>

Outcome	Progress
	<p>collection and the representativeness of candidates standing for election in Scotland.</p> <p>Improve accessibility of services provided online through the delivery of the Customer Services Platform and Council Website redesign.</p> <p>The Customer Services Platform (CSP) is providing more accessible information on the Council and its services with the ability to carry out transactions on a 24/7 basis. This provision runs alongside the option for non-digital alternatives to provide choice to customers and greater flexibility of accessibility.</p> <p>COVID-19 had a significant impact on the ability to deliver face-to-face services and drove local authorities to deliver services in very different ways, for most; almost entirely digitally which helped to produce further insight into continuing inequalities in this area.</p> <p>During this time, to mitigate digital exclusion, many mobile devices and digital skills support were provided to communities, however, poor connectivity and poor mobile coverage remained significant challenges for delivery of some services across Orkney.</p> <p>Organisational priorities outlined in Our People, Our Plan and new Council Plan include improvement to connectivity with an emphasis on improving life for everyone in Orkney covering both digital and transport connectivity.</p> <p>The refreshed Digital Strategy focuses on three core strategies with Digital Local Government and Services being one of them. This core area sets out clear aims to ensure that all public service are designed through the lenses of isles proofing and inclusion more broadly which is key to the continuing improvement of accessibility to online services. The Digital Strategy Delivery plan is in development and has been shaped by the commitments outlined in the Council Plan.</p> <p>Improvements have been made to the structure of the Council website following feedback and work in this area is ongoing. The Website User Guide provides information on how to get the best out of the website highlighting the Recite Me Accessibility software, how to download Adobe Acrobat Reader and how to access information in alternative formats. There is a How to use our website video which takes the user through how to navigate the website and how to make use of the accessibility features.</p>

Outcome	Progress
	<p>The Accessibility section of the Council website provides further information and signposting to services such as AbilityNet and Contact Scotland BSL.</p> <p>A Customer Services public survey was launched and service user satisfaction levels are routinely invited through the use of the Customer Services Platform. The Customer Services survey in 2022 was also used to seek feedback from customers who still come to the Council Offices rather than utilise the 24/7 MyOrkney online services. The results highlighted that an area of improvement is an easier to navigate website and work continues to take this forward.</p> <p>Weekly training sessions for the Customer Services Advisers has been introduced to increase the breadth of service knowledge and to improve the customer experience. Sessions have included team training on the Customer Services Platform – customer accounts, duplicate records, Self/MyOrkney and MyGovScot for customer access.</p> <p>Customer Services Advisers are also able to help customers set up accounts on the MyOrkney online portal and show them how to record and track requests. This support is offered either in-person or by telephone.</p> <p>Audit existing processes for recording personal information to ensure it is inclusive of gender identity requirements.</p> <p>The Council recruitment processes were reviewed following the revised Census 2021 data collection in this area and now mirrors these categories to improve recruitment reporting. This has required work to align categories through My Job Scotland as well as develop the internal systems to reflect these updated data collection categories.</p> <p>The next phase of this work is to further develop the reporting availability for diversity data and to improve the disclosure rates internally.</p> <p>There has been wide-ranging work at a national level in this area of data collection. Research on equality data collection has been published in the Understanding Equality Data Collection in the Scottish Public Sector report, commissioned by the Scottish Government. This report reviews the barriers and challenges in relation to sex and gender. There is ongoing development work through a Scottish Government Working Group looking at the way data on sex and gender is collected and published and guidance has now been published.</p> <p>A review of the collection of equalities data has begun in some areas including HR and Community, Learning,</p>

Outcome	Progress
	<p>Development and Employability. This review aims to with a model of best practice, provide robust and consistent methods of equality data collection that can be adopted across the organisation, and will enable better benchmarking.</p> <p>Implementation of British Sign Language local plan in partnership with OHAC.</p> <p>The British Sign Language (BSL) local plan was developed in partnership with OHAC and Orkney College UHI and was launched in October 2018.</p> <p>The BSL Progress group meets on a monthly basis to progress the actions within this plan. The primary focus for this group has been centered around actions relating to children and young people and education. Resources have been purchased for each of the schools and training has been delivered around BSL.</p> <p>Some of the key actions delivered include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BSL pendrive training resource provided to all schools. • BSL and hearing support resources regularly provided to Nurseries. • Delivery of short online BSL courses at Stromness Academy and Kirkwall Grammar School. • Let's Sign established as the resource to be used in Orkney Schools and resources regularly updated and shared. • Support Deaf Awareness Week to continue to raise awareness and set challenges on finger spelling. • Class signing projects with signed stories and signed songs. • S3 Wider Achievement BSL class delivered at Kirkwall Grammar School. • A group of S3 KGS students have been awarded National 3 Introduction to BSL. • Lunchtime informal group of signers meet at KGS. • 10 people undertook a six-week introductory BSL course delivered by a Deaf BSL instructor. • 6 people including one student at KGS have completed the Level One BSL course. <p>This ongoing work is creating an impact with one KGS pupil planning to study BSL as a career option. These BSL skills have also been put to the test when a group of six tourists who were all deaf visited the Italian Chapel where one of the Level One BSL course attendees was working. Having the recently acquired BSL skills meant that the group were</p>

Outcome	Progress
	<p>able to benefit from a far more inclusive experience visiting one of Orkney's iconic tourist attractions.</p> <p>The BSL Progress group will continue to engage with other areas of the organisation to offer support and guidance to support the delivery of the actions identified within the BSL Local Plan.</p> <p>Consult with taxi and private hire car operators and the public to identify any unmet need in relation to wheelchair accessible vehicles and promote a list of wheelchair accessible vehicles on the Council website. Consultation was undertaken and a list containing details of providers with wheelchair accessible vehicles is available on the Council website.</p> <p>There continue to be three providers of Private Car Hire / taxi wheelchair accessible vehicles on the list.</p>

Appendix 2 - Equalities monitoring data

Employee diversity and monitoring

Employees can update their own personal information held on the electronic HR system My View. This includes the ability to update details relating to the protected characteristics and can be updated at any time through the self-service system.

The council undertakes its equality duty to monitor and report on specific information about staff to help identify any trends and to address any identified inequalities. Whilst employees are asked to keep their diversity information up to date, the council recognises that this is voluntary and not all staff choose to disclose all information. Increasing disclosure rates on the diversity of our workforce is ongoing work.

There have been significant changes in the diversity data process over the past year with reporting categories changing to match the revisions for the Census 2022. There have also been extensive developments within the HR System My View, to enable electronic reporting of this data which has previously been a partially manual process. Information can now be recorded on caring responsibilities and additional data is collected on long term health conditions. Disclosure rates for sex are showing as low in this report as the data recording process has changed and there is a gap for many of the long-term workforce with data in this area previously recorded under gender rather than sex. Overall comparisons with previous years' reporting data are difficult due to the changes in category reporting however, these figures have been taken into account in the analysis of any trends in the key messages section of this report. Further analysis will be undertaken as disclosure rates increase with the ability to now access diversity reporting on demand.

Plans are in place to increase disclosure rates for all diversity data through regular communications, starting with key messaging during National Inclusion Week in late September of this year. The newly launched online Induction programme also highlights the requirement to complete the diversity data section on My View, along with the need to keep this up to date.

Our workforce – key messages

In the first year of reporting caring responsibilities, 19.7% of non-teaching employees and 17.1% of teaching employees have indicated yes. It is noted that disclosure rates represent slightly less than half of the workforce in this area.

Our workforce profile relating to sex shows that the largest percentage of employees at Orkney Islands Council is female, reflecting the trends within the wider public sector. We have a very small percentage (0.1%) of employees who identify as transgender although disclosure rates are low in this area.

The ethnicity breakdown of our workforce remains similar to previous years with a slight decrease in the number of non-teaching employees being White Scottish. A slightly higher proportion are from ethnic minority groups in comparison to previous years.

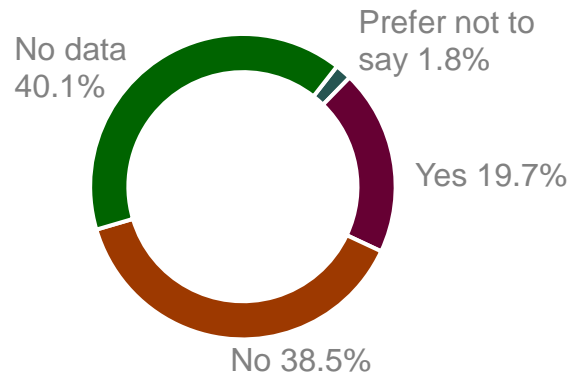
5.4% of general staff at the council have declared a disability along with 4.7% of teaching staff. This is an increase from previous years' figures. The highest figures relating to long-term health conditions are long term illness / disease / condition and mental health conditions. Data relating to new starts are similar in representation, although are slightly higher for leavers.

Among those employees who have declared their religion or belief, the majority have no religion or are Church of Scotland. Declaration rates for this area have increased by 3.4% for non-teaching employees and have remained similar for teaching employees.

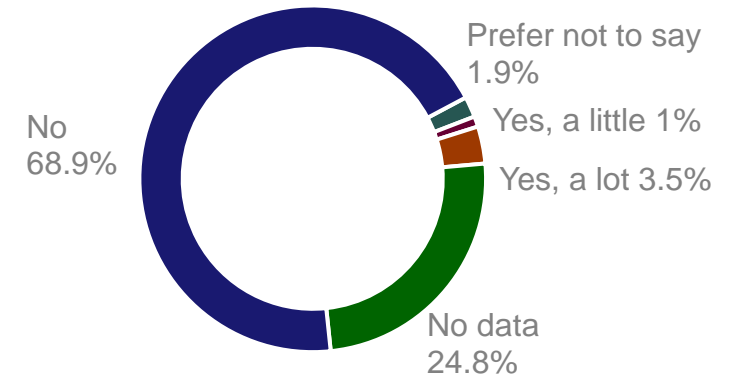
Of those who have shared information relating to their sexual orientation the majority of employees identify as heterosexual although this percentage has dropped slightly from previous years.

About our workforce

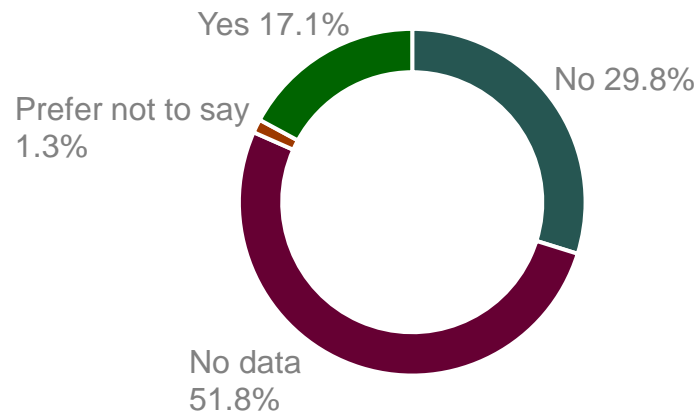
Carers - Non-Teaching all staff



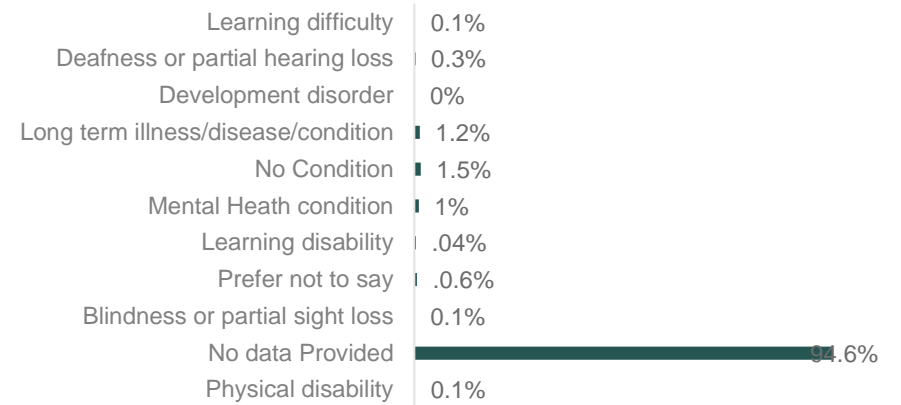
Disability - Non teaching all staff



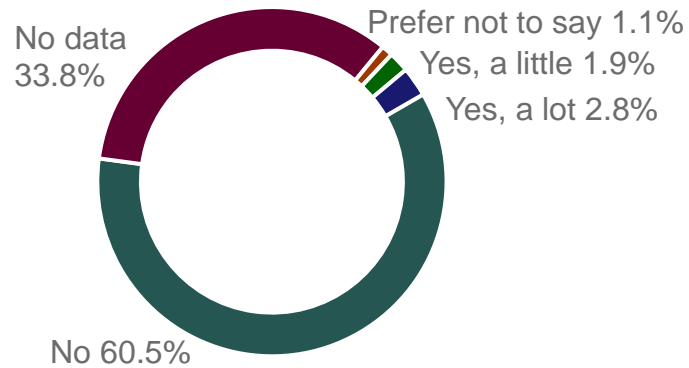
Carers - Teaching all staff



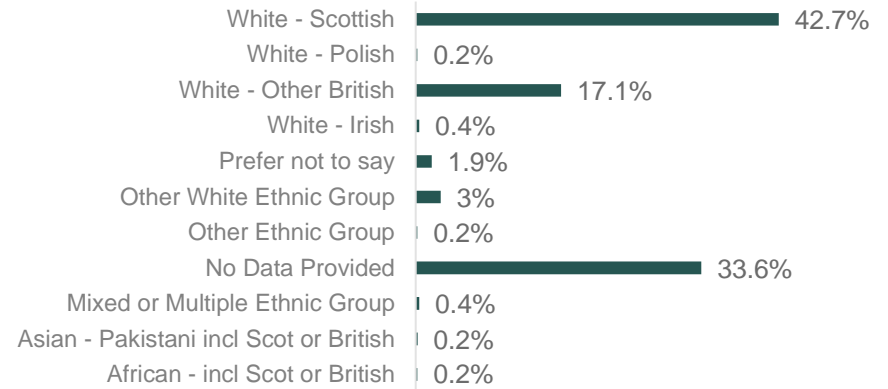
Health condition - Non-Teaching all staff



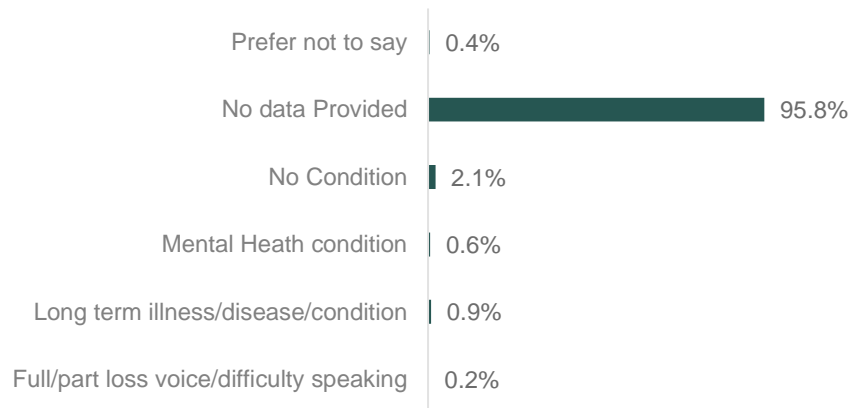
Disability - Teaching all staff



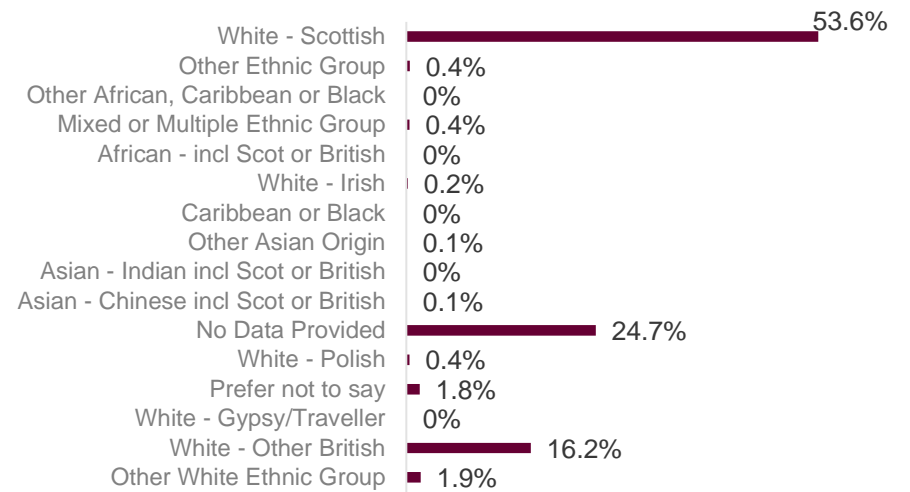
Ethnicity - Non-Teaching all staff



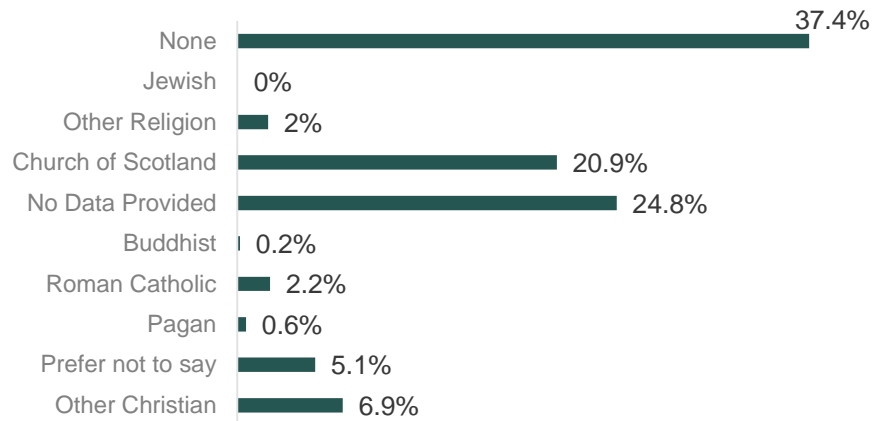
Health condition - Teaching all staff



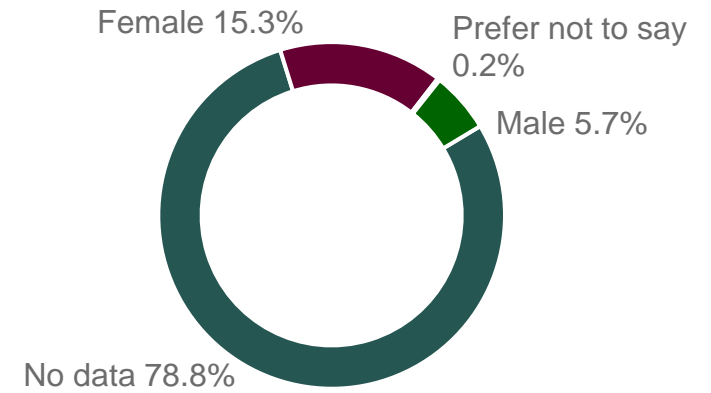
Ethnicity - Non teaching all staff



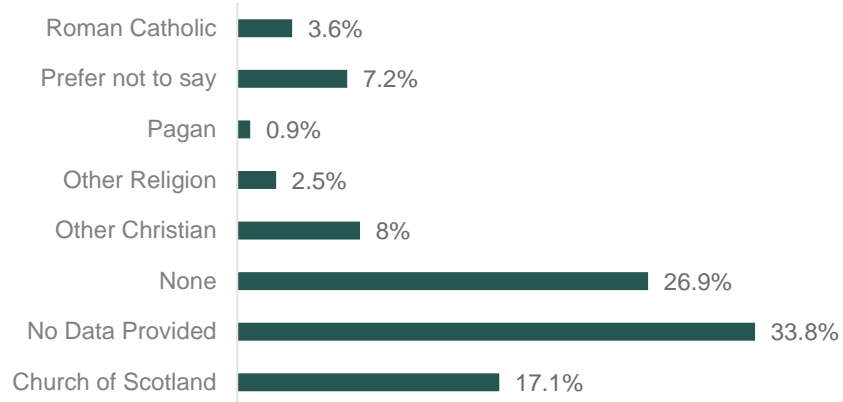
Religion - Non teaching all staff



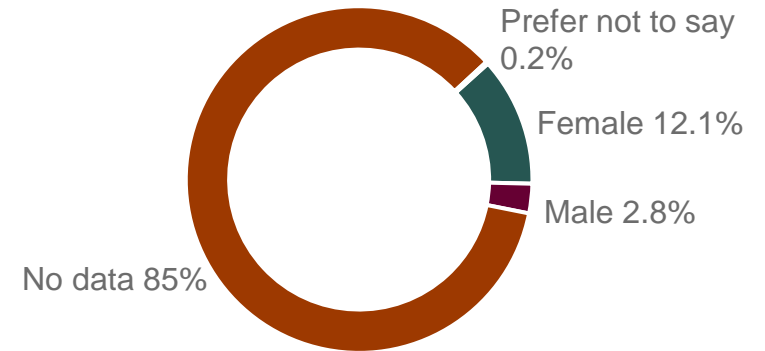
Sex - Non-Teaching all staff



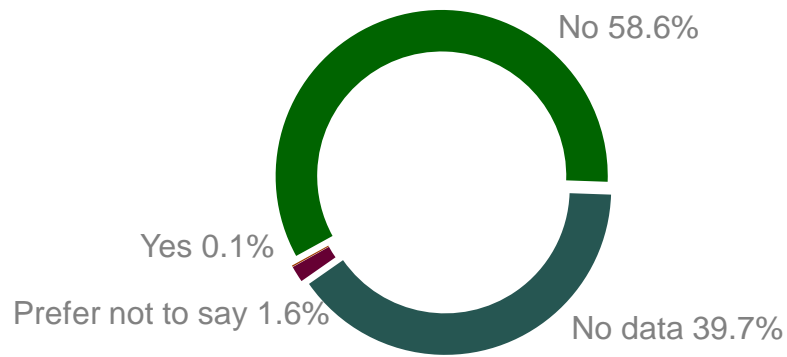
Religion -Teaching all staff



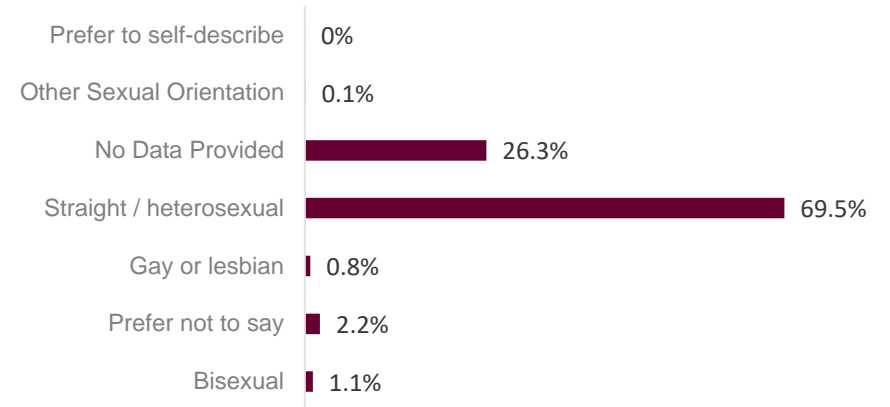
Sex - Teaching all staff



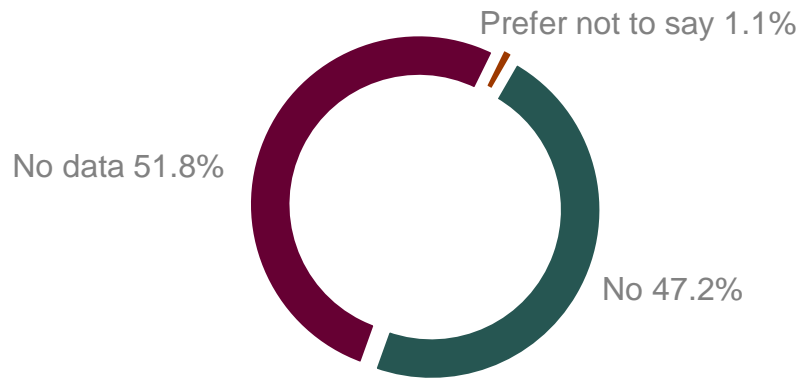
Transgender - Non teaching all staff



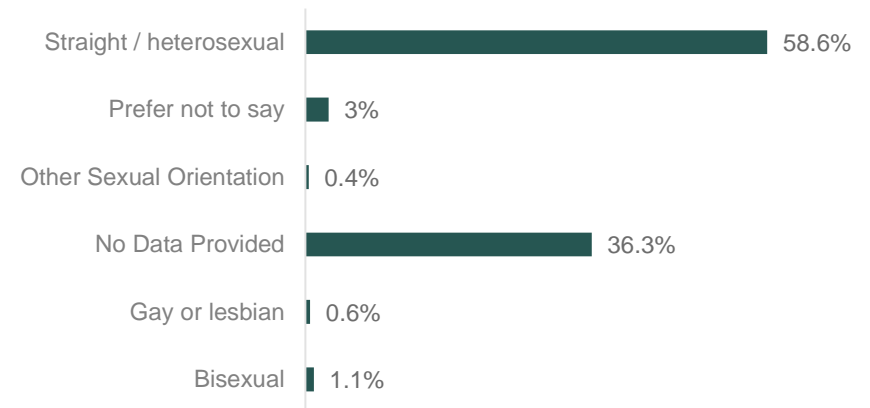
Sexual Orientation - Non teaching all staff



Transgender - Teaching all staff

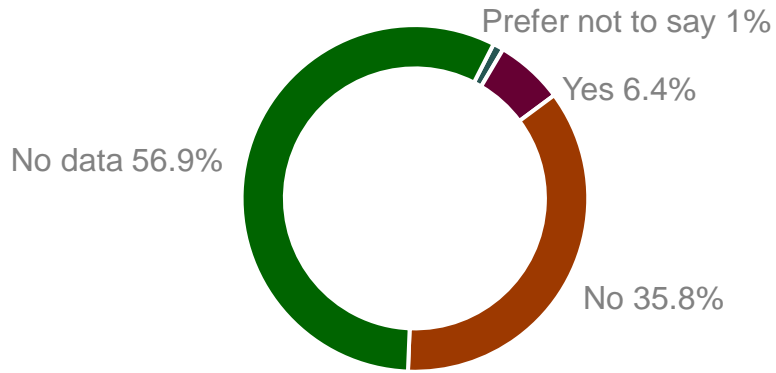


Sexual Orientation - Teaching all staff

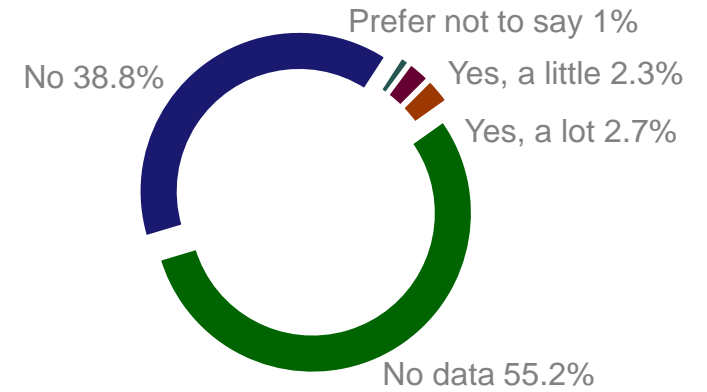


New Starts

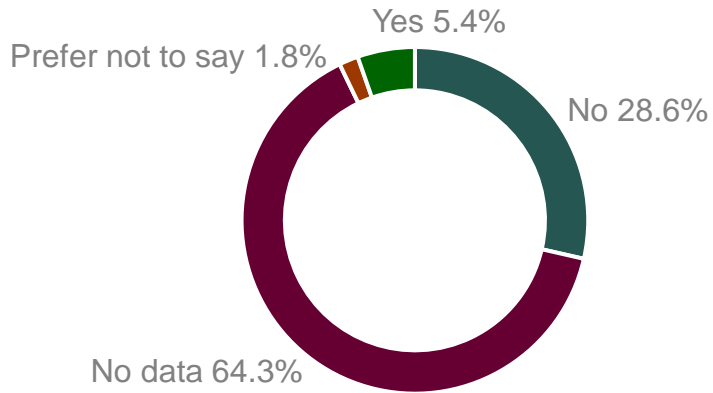
Carers - Non teaching new starts



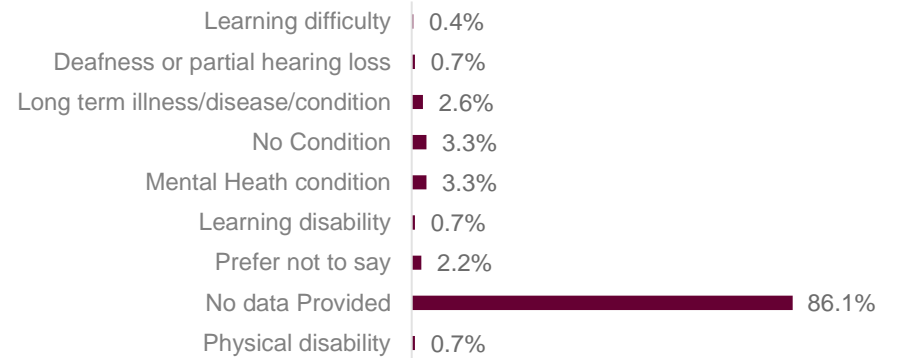
Disability - Non teaching new starts



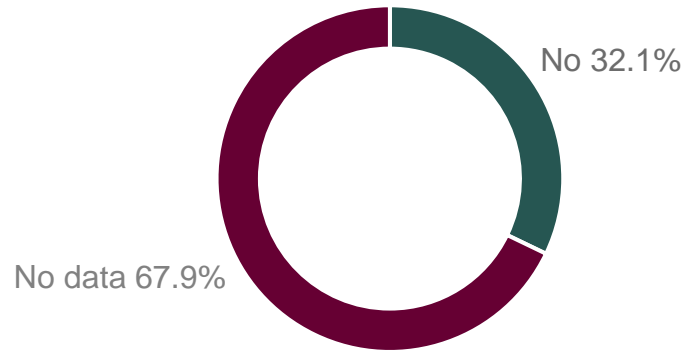
Carers - Teaching new starts



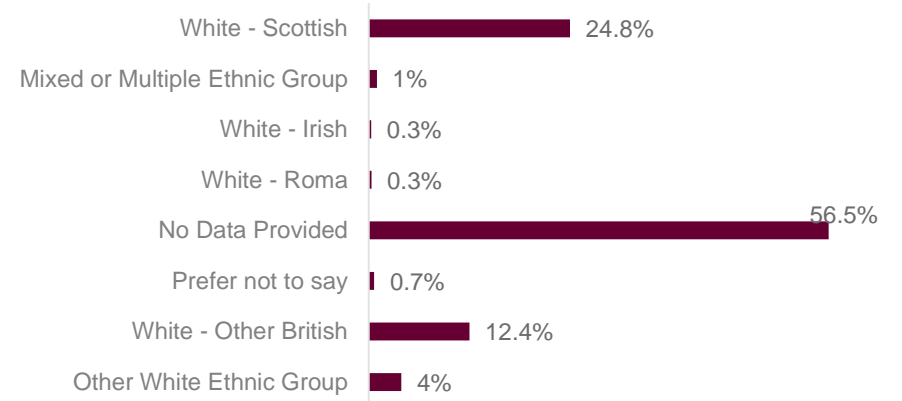
Health condition - Non-Teaching new starts



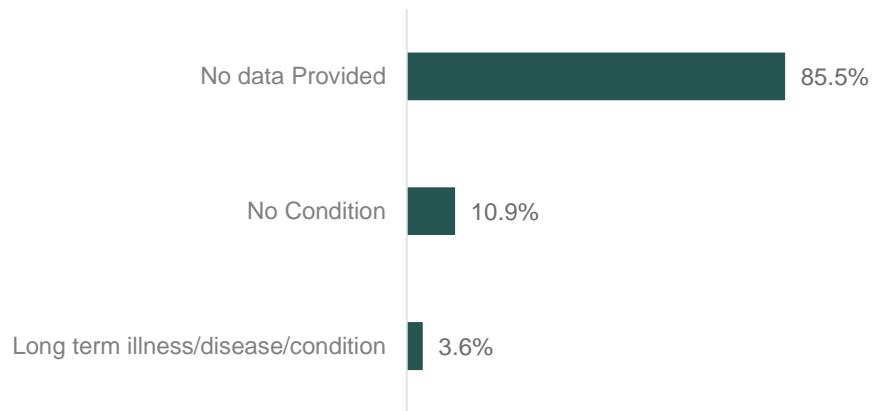
Disability - Teaching new starts



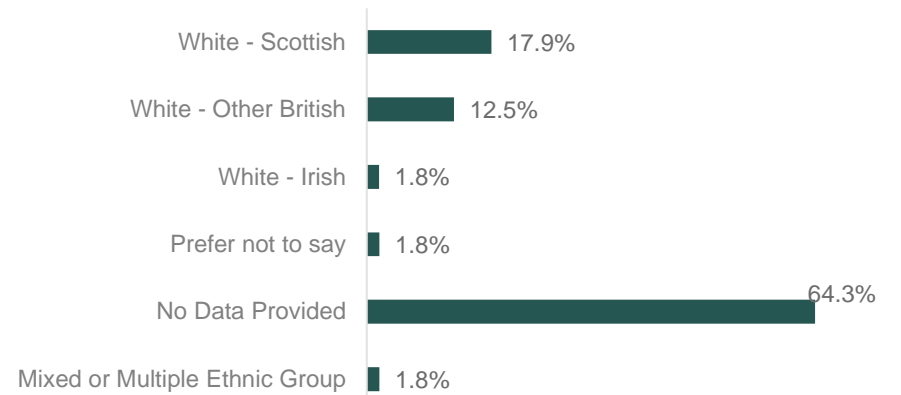
Ethnicity - Non-Teaching new starts



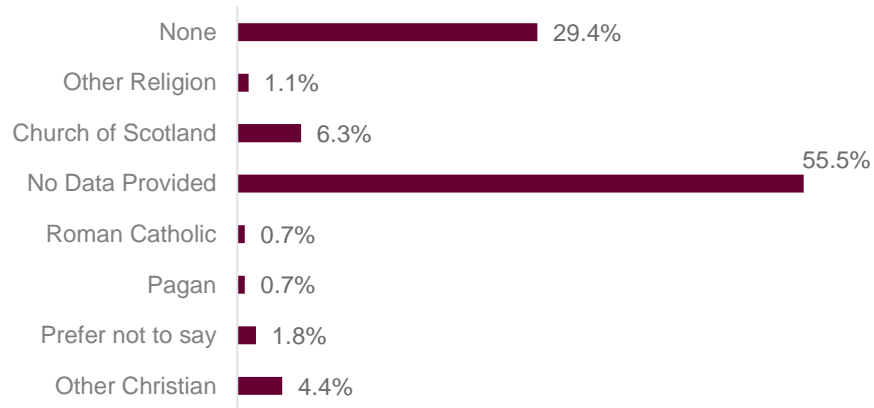
Health condition - Teaching new starts



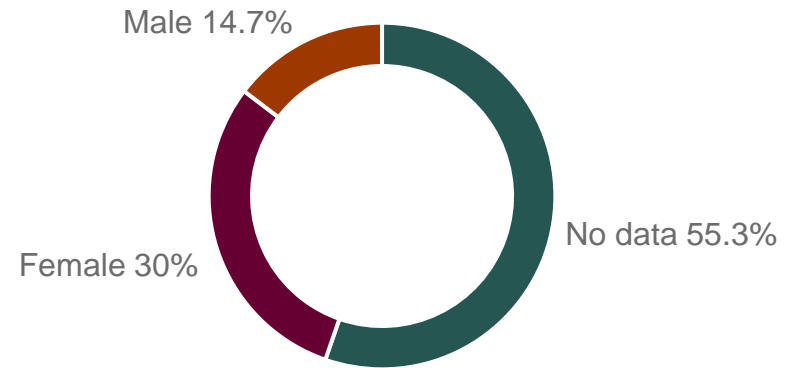
Ethnicity - Teaching new starts



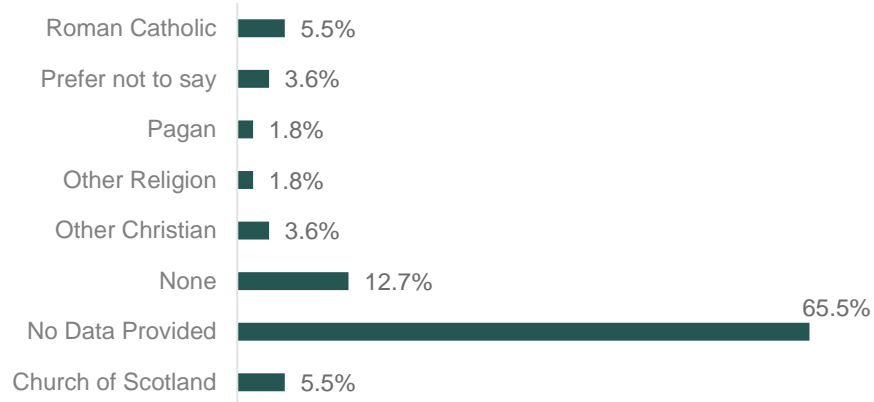
Religion - Non-Teaching new starts



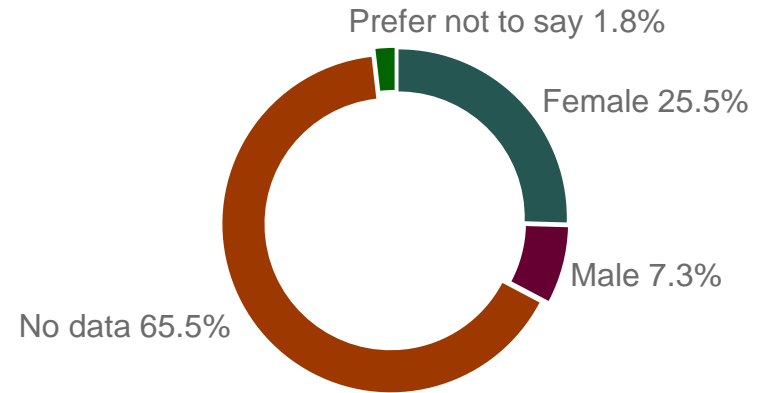
Sex - Non-Teaching new starts



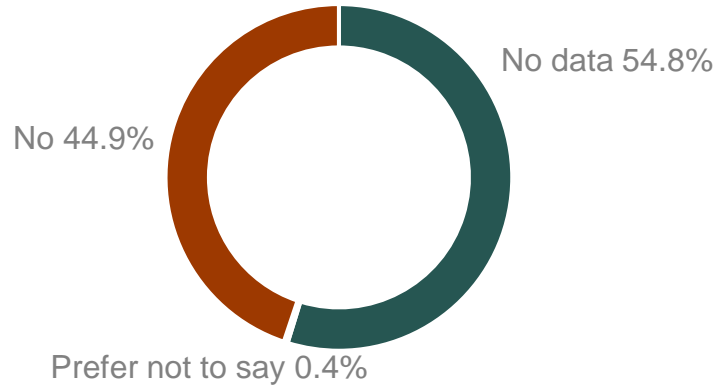
Religion - Teaching new starts



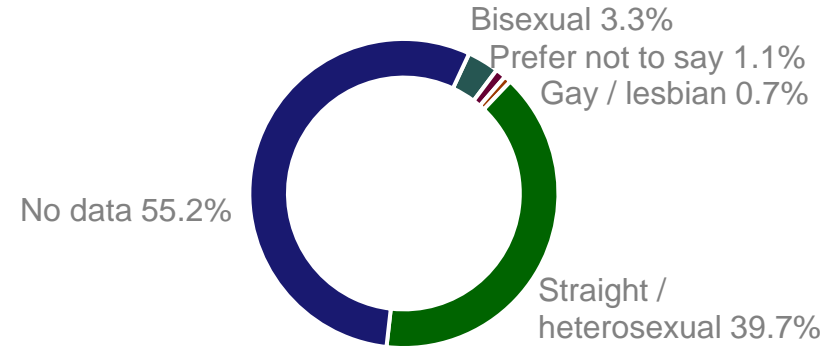
Sex - Teaching new starts



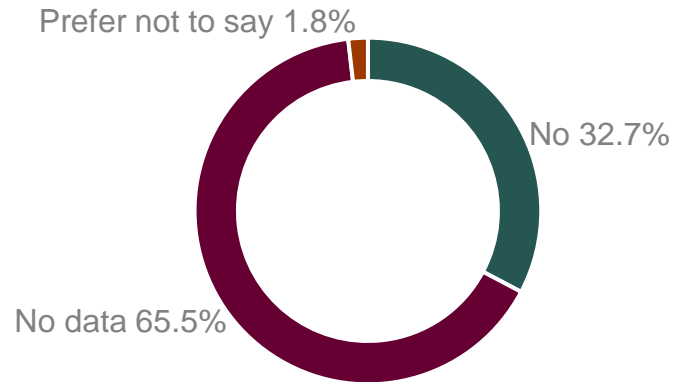
Transgender - Non teaching new starts



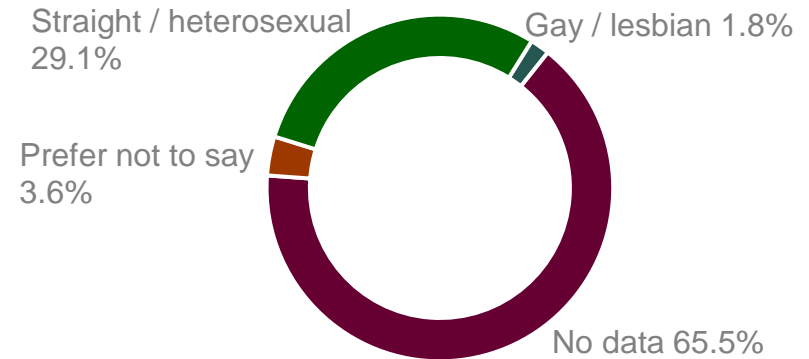
Sexual Orientation - Non teaching new starts



Transgender - Teaching new starts

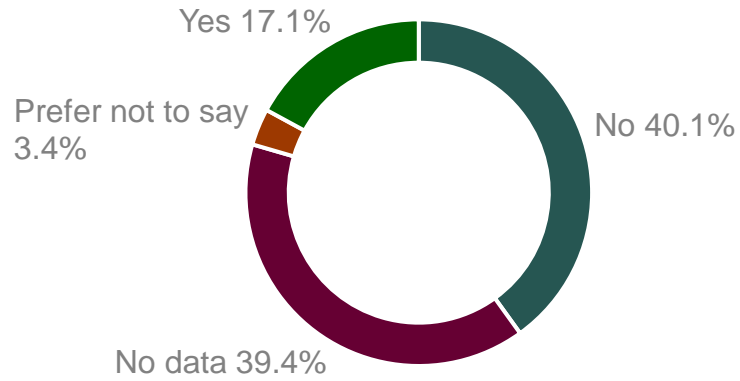


Sexual Orientation - Teaching new starts

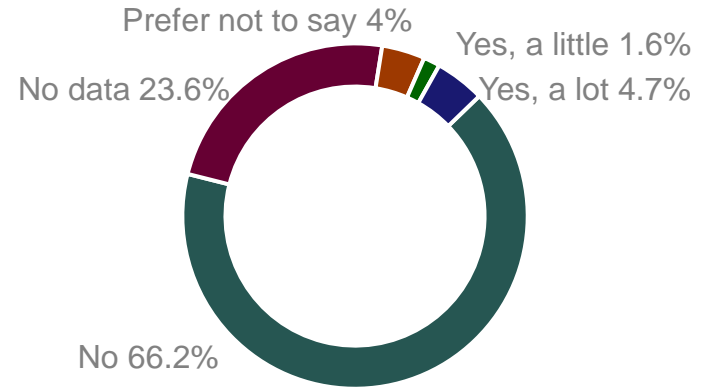


Leavers

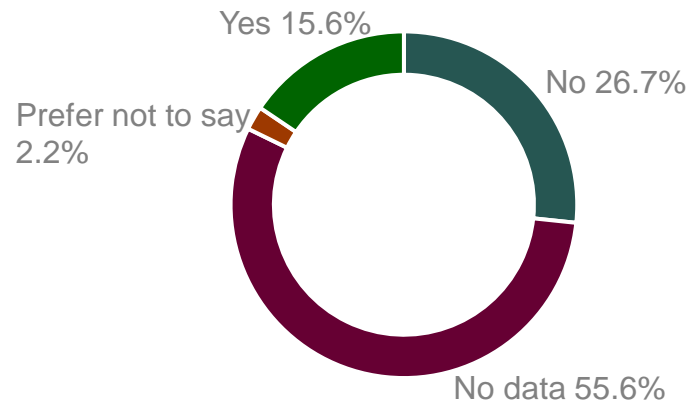
Carers - Non-Teaching leavers



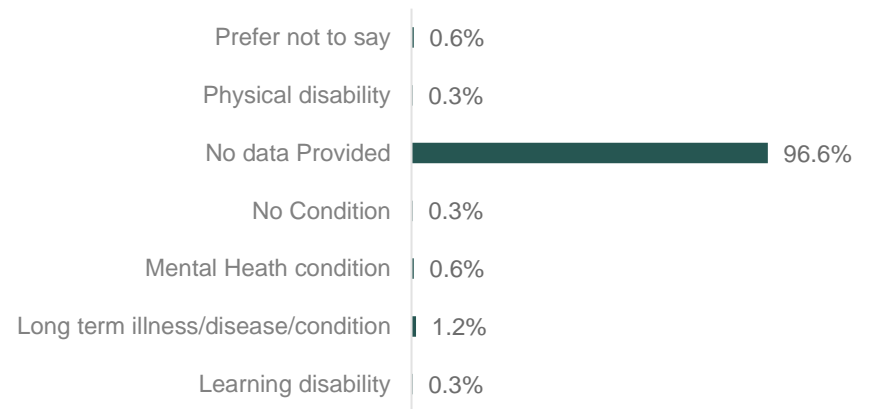
Disability - Non teaching leavers



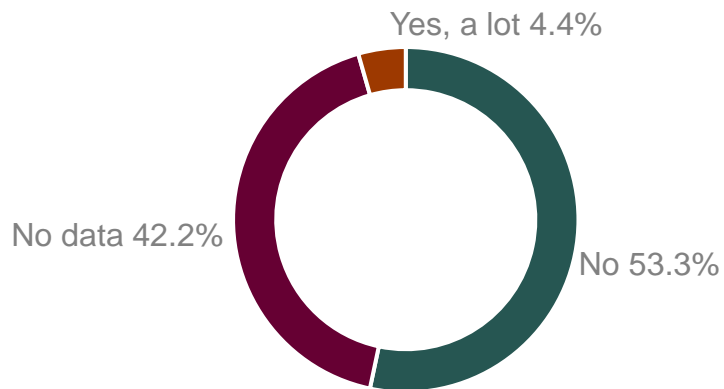
Carers - Teaching leavers



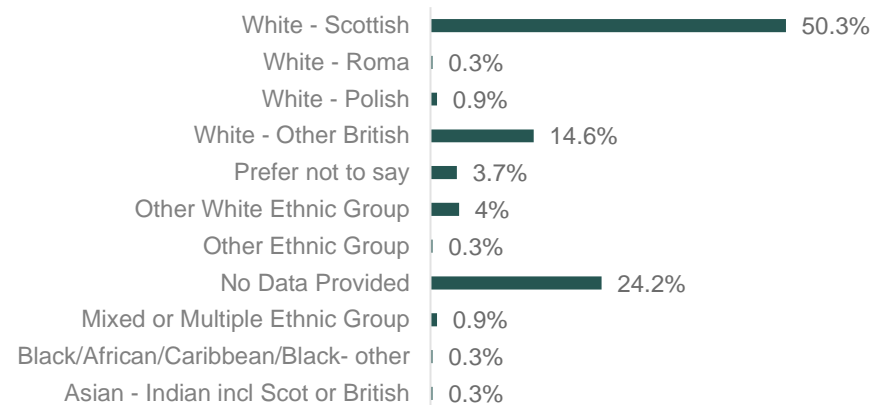
Health condition - Non-Teaching leavers



Disability - Teaching leavers



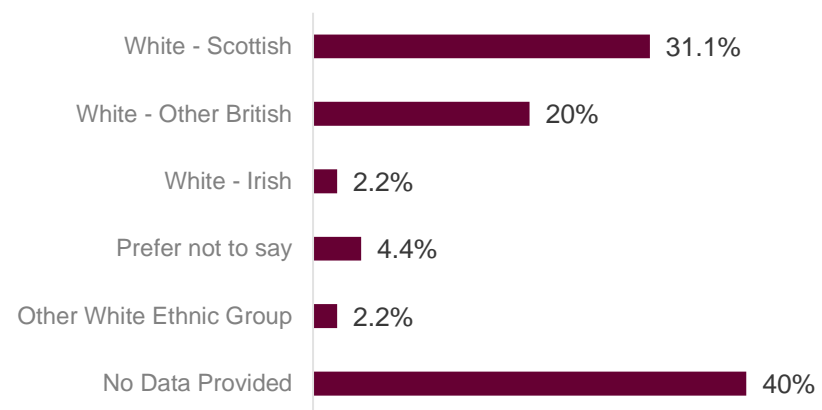
Ethnicity - Non-Teaching leavers



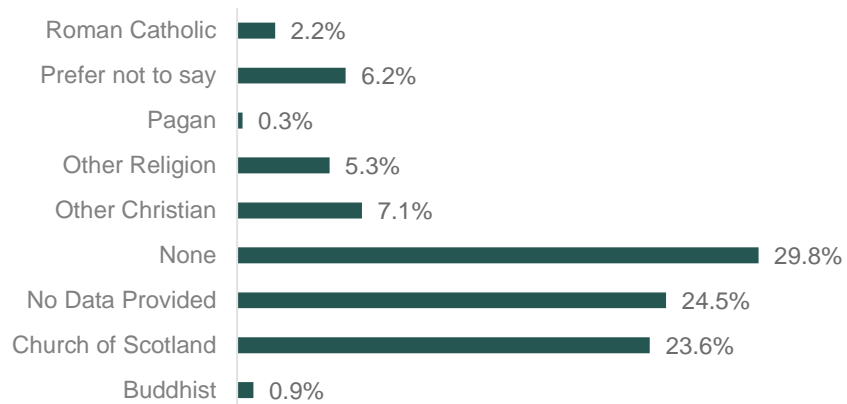
Health condition - Teaching leavers



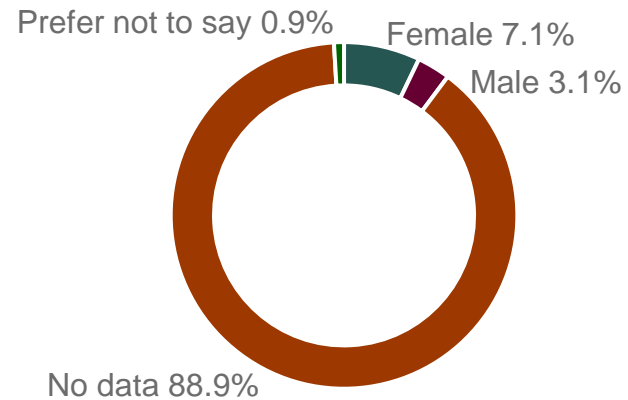
Ethnicity - Teaching leavers



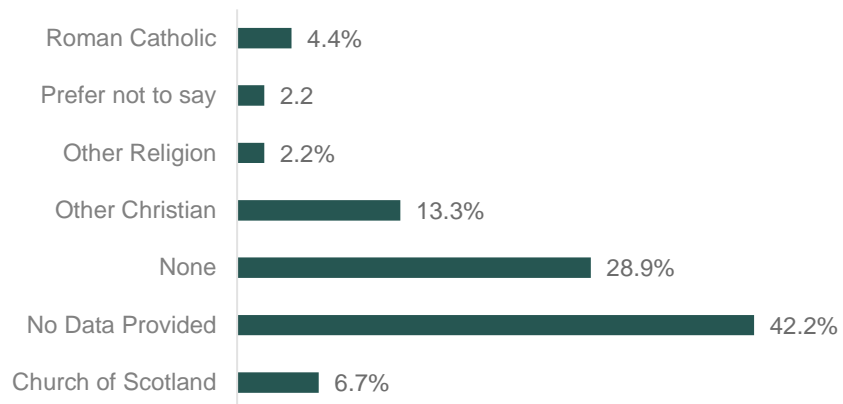
Religion -Non-Teaching leavers



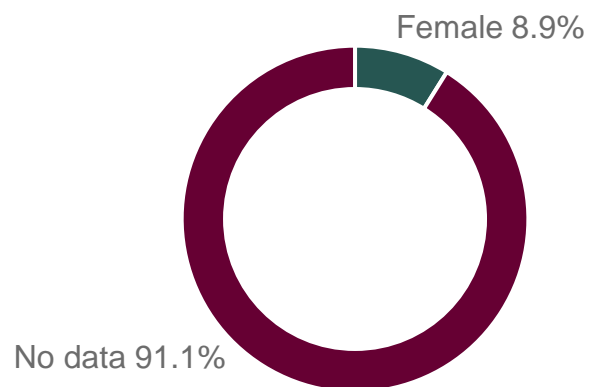
Sex - Non-Teaching leavers



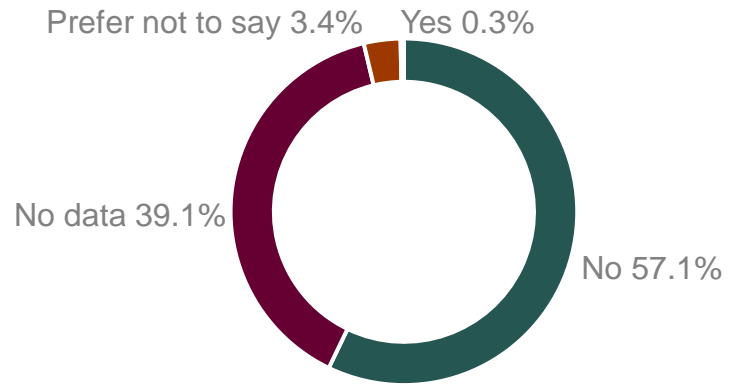
Religion -Teaching leavers



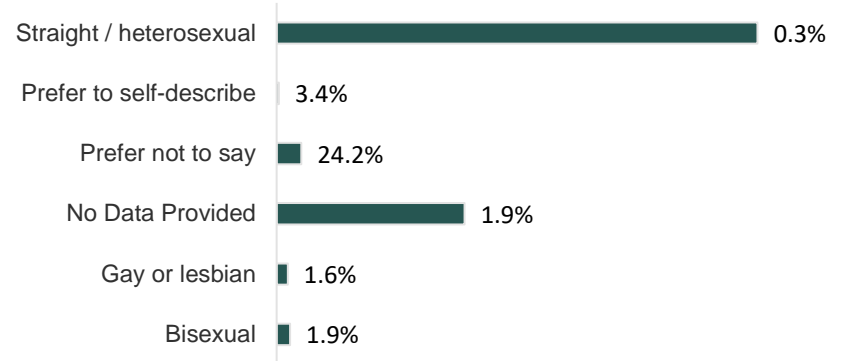
Sex - Teaching leavers



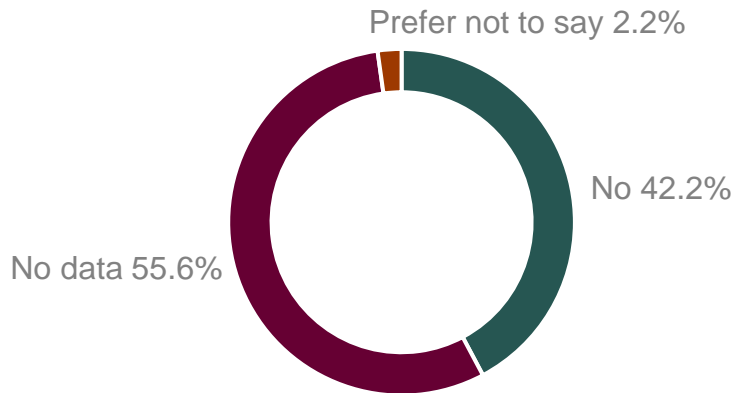
Transgender - Non Teaching leavers



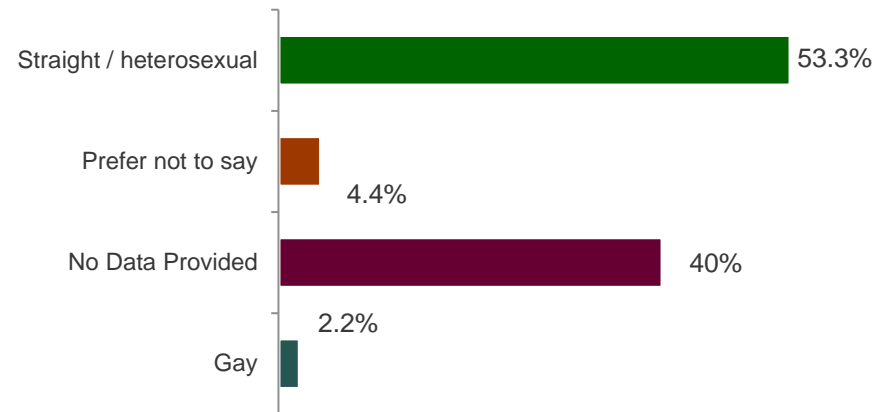
Sexual Orientation - Non Teaching leavers



Transgender - Teaching leavers



Sexual Orientation - Teaching leavers





Digital Strategy Delivery Plan

2023 – 2026

Introduction

Welcome to the Orkney Islands Council Digital Strategy Delivery Plan. This plan covers the three financial years from 2023/24 to 2025/26 and sets out actions we will take to develop our digital systems and infrastructure during that time.

The actions we set out in this plan support the aims and objectives from the Council Plan 2023 – 2028 and serve both our internal and external customers by using technology to improve our internal processes and our interactions with customers.

Link to our Other Plans

This Digital Strategy Delivery Plan follows from the Council's Digital Strategy for 2022 – 2026, approved by elected members in February 2022.

The Digital Strategy's three core strategic priorities are:

- Digital Communities and Wellbeing,
- A Digital Islands Economy, and
- Digital Local Government and Services.

The Digital Strategy has since been considered in the context of the Council Plan and Council Delivery Plan 2023 – 2028, which detail the Council's aims and outcomes for Orkney, grouped into three priority themes:

- Growing our economy,
- Strengthening our communities, and
- Developing our infrastructure.

These aims and outcomes are supported by a number of priorities under a fourth overall theme - Transforming our council – to provide the foundations for staff to deliver outstanding customer service and performance.

The actions in this Digital Strategy Delivery Plan support the priority themes from the Council Plan, and the core priorities in the Digital Strategy.

Our Digital Infrastructure and Systems

Our **digital infrastructure** includes the physical infrastructure we rely on to provide our services, such as servers and network cabling, as well as our software infrastructure such as the Microsoft Windows network and firewalls.

Plans for the ongoing maintenance and development of our digital infrastructure are set out in the ICT Strategy Delivery Plan, and the development of all of our other digital systems depend on the successful progression of that plan.

Our core **digital systems** comprise both those corporate systems used council-wide, such as our Integra Finance system, and those used by the individual council services to support specialist activities, such as the Education and Housing management systems.

One of the key outcomes of this delivery plan is to ensure that our core digital systems are updated to an appropriate version, and are kept up-to-date, ensuring the correct level functionality to meet changing business needs, in addition to ongoing support from software vendors.

Our first step in ensuring that our digital systems are kept up-to-date will be to work to identify the most crucial systems for service delivery, which we will classify as tier one systems, and those other systems important for service delivery which we will classify as tier two systems.

We will prioritise the upgrade of tier one systems in the first year of this plan to ensure that, where possible, by March 2024 all tier one systems are at the required version.

We will ensure that our digital systems remain fit for purpose by setting out a development roadmap for our each of our tier one systems which will detail how we intend to develop those systems to improve existing functionality and incorporate new functionality.

Our Business Processes

Another key outcome of this delivery plan is to modernise our core business processes, particularly some of our administrative processes, to ensure that we use available technology to automate processes and workflows where we can and make the best use of our limited resources.

In the first year of this delivery plan, we will work to identify which of our core business processes would benefit from digital improvement, and we will trial different technologies we already use to design proof-of-concept solutions for sample business processes to demonstrate the potential of these technologies and ensure we understand their use cases and limitations.

In years two and three we will design and build digital solutions for the business processes which our Corporate Leadership Team has decided we will see the most benefit from.

Other Technologies

In years two and three of this delivery plan we will undertake a review of available technologies, by looking at the market for local government technology through software vendors, and by benchmarking with other councils and external partners such as the Improvement Service.

System Development Policy

To ensure that we effectively manage our development of corporate systems and our build of solutions for digital business processes, we will design and embed a System Development Policy during year one of this delivery plan, which will include a framework for future system development work.

The framework will provide a standardised and consistent methodology for managing the system development lifecycle, including:

- setting out the business case for developments,
- building, testing and implementing developments,
- developing users' digital skills to ensure successful uptake,
- defining the roles and responsibilities of the various council services, and
- measuring the benefits delivered by developments.

The System Development Framework will be used as a tool to manage future system development projects.

Roles and Responsibilities

Information Services Programme Board

The Information Services Programme Board (ISPB) is responsible for the approval, oversight and scrutiny of the actions carried out to implement the Digital Strategy Delivery Plan and the ICT Strategy Delivery Plan.

ICT Service

The ICT service is responsible for providing the underlying technological infrastructure on which corporate and service systems operate, including physical infrastructure such as servers and base corporate software such as the Microsoft 365 suite and corporate firewalls.

The ICT service will carry out upgrades to the infrastructure underlying corporate and service systems where required to maintain ongoing functionality, or where the existing infrastructure configuration requires upgrade to mitigate a risk to security or continuing vendor support.

The ICT service has overall responsibility for data security and the Information Security Officer will provide advice and guidance with respect to security on specific development projects.

System Development Team

The council's System Development Team, which sits within the Improvement and Performance service, is responsible for engaging with council services to assess development needs and recommending development priorities to the Information Systems Programme Board.

The system development team will assist services to design solutions using existing or new technologies based on service requirements, in line with the system development framework, with a focus on outcomes and benefits.

The priorities that the System Development Team support are directed by the Information Services Programme Board.

System Development Working Group

We will create a System Development Working Group with representatives from the System Development team, from the ICT service and from various council services. The working group will look to progress the actions in this delivery plan, to align development across the council and to share best practice.

Heads of Service will be responsible for ensuring the appropriate user(s) for each of their systems engage with the working group.

Updates from future working group meetings will form the basis of reporting on the current position of digital systems development to Directorate Management Teams and to the ISPB.

Governance of Digital Systems

Overall accountability for digital systems sits with the Head of Service responsible for the main user(s) of the system, and the responsible Head of service is the owner of both the digital system and the data held within it.

For some critical corporate systems, ownership may sit with a Director/Chief Officer, or with the ISPB.

System owners are responsible for ensuring that their digital systems are kept up-to-date in line with:

- Changing customer expectations and requirements,
- Regulatory changes and best practice,
- Vendor support requirements, and
- Advice and guidance from the ICT service, in particular to address infrastructure and security issues.

The System Development Team and the ICT service will provide advice and guidance where appropriate on carrying out upgrades to digital systems.

System owners are responsible for ensuring that any contracts with software vendors comply with the council's Contract Standing Orders, and should seek appropriate advice and guidance from the Procurement service when considering procuring new software, or extending or renewing an existing contract.

Contracts with software vendors, where required, should receive sign-off by the relevant chief officer, on the advice of the Procurement service.

System owners are also responsible for ensuring that the developments to existing systems and the procurement of new systems are highlighted through the System Development Working Group to allow reporting to the ISPB on an organisational basis.

Governance of Development Projects

System development projects prioritised by the Information Services Programme Board will be project-managed by the Improvement and Performance service where applicable, and will follow a defined project structure with a Project Manager reporting to a Project Board.

A Project Board will normally comprise the system owner and other senior officers representing users of a system.

An initial project plan will set out development activities during the life of the project, with each development deliverable comprising a product within the project plan.

Project Managers will provide highlight reports to Project Boards at a frequency proportional to the project, and will provide exception reports where an exception or risk of exception with project progress occurs.

Project Boards will ensure that Project Managers have access to the board through regular board meetings and additional informal discussions at a frequency proportional to the nature of the project.

Progress Reporting

The Head of Improvement and Performance will provide a report of the progress against the actions set out in this plan to the quarterly meeting of the ISPB.

The Head of Improvement and Performance will provide an annual briefing note to elected members on progress against the actions set out in this plan, or report to the relevant committee where changes to the plan or policies are recommended

Summary of Actions

Our Intended Outcomes	Actions we will take	By when	Responsible Officer(s)
<p>Ensuring consistency in our approach to digital development and sharing of best practice</p> <p>Co-ordinating development of our core corporate systems</p>	<p>Establish System Development Working Group</p> <p>Corporate system development policy with development framework approved</p>	<p>October 2023</p> <p>March 2024</p>	<p>Service Manager (Improvement and Performance)</p> <p>Service Manager (Improvement and Performance)</p>
<p>Meeting our business needs through the development of our systems</p>	<p>Identify tier one systems</p> <p>Identify tier two systems</p> <p>Upgrade of tier one systems to required version</p>	<p>November 2023</p> <p>March 2024</p> <p>March 2024</p>	<p>Service Manager (Improvement and Performance)</p> <p>Service Manager (Improvement and Performance)</p> <p>Heads of Service, Service Managers</p>
<p>Improving our core business processes through the development of our systems</p>	<p>Identify core business processes which require system development support</p> <p>Design proof-of-concept digital solutions for sample business processes</p> <p>Present prioritised list of planned developments for core business processes to Corporate Leadership Team for approval</p>	<p>March 2024</p> <p>March 2024</p> <p>September 2024</p>	<p>Service Manager (Improvement and Performance), Service Manager (Corporate Administration and Customer Service)</p> <p>Service Manager (Improvement and Performance)</p> <p>Service Manager (Improvement and Performance), Service Manager (Corporate Administration and Customer Service)</p>

Our Intended Outcomes	Actions we will take	By when	Responsible Officer(s)
	Develop digital solutions for core business processes selected for development	March 2025	Service Manager (Improvement and Performance), Service Manager (Corporate Administration and Customer Service) Head of Improvement and Performance
Ensuring we adopt cost-effective technologies with the potential to improve our services.	Review of available technologies which can enable improved service delivery	December 2024	Service Manager (Improvement and Performance)
Ensure our digital development continues to progress beyond the life of this delivery plan	Review delivery plan outcomes Develop Digital and Data Strategy 2026/27 – 2028/29 and present to elected members for approval	March 2025	Service Manager (Improvement and Performance) Service Manager (ICT) Head of Improvement and Performance

Minute

Pension Fund Sub-committee, together with Pension Board

Thursday, 31 August 2023, 11:30.

Council Chamber, Council Offices, School Place, Kirkwall.



Present

Pension Fund Sub-committee:

Councillors P Lindsay Hall, Steven B Heddle, Kristopher D Leask and Rachael A King.

Pension Board:

Employer Representatives:

Councillors James R Moar and Owen Tierney, Orkney Islands Council.

Trade Union Representatives:

Karen Kent (Unison) and Eileen Swanney (Unison).

Present via remote link (Microsoft Teams)

Pension Fund Sub-committee:

Councillor Mellissa-Louise Thomson.

Clerk

- Sandra Craigie, Committees Officer.

In Attendance

- Gareth Waterson, Corporate Director for Enterprise and Sustainable Regeneration.
- Erik Knight, Head of Finance.
- Katie Gibson, Team Manager (Corporate Finance).
- Paul Maxton, Solicitor.
- Karen Rorie, Senior Accounting Officer (Treasury).

Apologies

Pension Fund Sub-committee:

- Councillors James Stockan and Heather N Woodbridge.

Pension Board:

Employer Representative:

- Councillor Graham A Bevan.

Trade Union Representative:

- Eoin Miller (Unite).

Not Present

Pension Board:

Trade Union Representative:

- Mark Vincent (GMB).

Declarations of Interest

- No declarations of interest were intimated.

Chair

- Sandra Craigie, Committees Officer (for Item 1).
- Councillor Rachael A King (for Items 2 and 3).

1. Appointment of Chair

As both the Leader and Depute Leader had intimated their apologies, the Clerk invited nominations for Chair for this meeting, and the Sub-committee:

Resolved that Councillor Rachael A King be appointed Chair for this meeting.

Councillor Rachael A King took the Chair for the remainder of the meeting.

2. Pension Fund – Draft Financial Statements

After consideration of a report by the Head of Finance, copies of which had been circulated, the Sub-committee:

Resolved, in terms of delegated powers:

2.1. That the draft Annual Governance Statement, comprising pages 17 to 24 of the draft Annual Report and Accounts of the Orkney Islands Council Pension Fund for financial year 2022/23, attached as Appendix 1 to the report by the Head of Finance, be approved.

2.2. That the draft Annual Report and Accounts of the Orkney Islands Council Pension Fund for financial year 2022/23, attached as Appendix 1 to the report by the Head of Finance, be approved.

Councillor Mellissa-Louise Thomson joined the meeting during discussion of this item.

3. Conclusion of Meeting

At 12:01 the Chair declared the meeting concluded.

Signed: R A King.

Minute

Asset Management Sub-committee

Tuesday, 29 August 2023, 09:30.

Council Chamber, Council Offices, School Place, Kirkwall.



Present

Councillors Lindsay P Hall, Steven B Heddle, Jean E Stevenson and Ivan A Taylor.

Clerk

- Sandra Craigie, Committees Officer.

In Attendance

- Hayley Green, Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.
- Erik Knight, Head of Finance.
- Kenny MacPherson, Head of Property, Asset Management and Facilities.
- Thomas Aldred, Service Manager (ICT).
- Graeme Christie, Service Manager (Estates).
- Michael Scott, Solicitor.
- Glen Thomson, Team Manager (Projects).
- Gwyn Evans, Strategic Projects.

Observing

- Alex Rodwell, Head of Improvement and Performance.

Apologies

- Councillors James W Stockan, Mellissa-Louise Thomson and Heather N Woodbridge.

Declarations of Interest

- No declarations of interest were intimated.

Chair

- Sandra Craigie, Committees Officer (for Item 1).
- Councillor Ivan A Taylor (for Items 2 to 10).

1. Appointment of Chair

As both the Leader and Depute Leader had intimated their apologies, the Clerk invited nominations for Chair for this meeting, and the Sub-committee:

Resolved that Councillor Ivan A Taylor be appointed Chair for this meeting.

Councillor Ivan A Taylor took the Chair for the remainder of the meeting.

2. Revenue Expenditure Outturn

After consideration of a report by the Head of Finance, copies of which had been circulated, the Sub-committee:

Noted:

2.1. The revenue expenditure outturn statement, in respect of service areas for which the Asset Management Sub-committee was responsible, for financial year 2022/23, attached as Annex 1 to the report by the Head of Finance, indicating an overspend of £1,551,400.

2.2. The revenue financial detail by service area statement, in respect of service areas for which the Asset Management Sub-committee was responsible, for financial year 2022/23, attached as Annex 2 to the report by the Head of Finance.

The Sub-committee scrutinised:

2.3. The explanations given and actions proposed in respect of significant budget variances, as outlined in the Budget Action Plan, attached as Annex 3 to the report by the Head of Finance, and obtained assurance that appropriate action had been taken with regard to significant budget variances.

3. Revenue Expenditure Monitoring

After consideration of a report by the Head of Finance, copies of which had been circulated, the Sub-committee:

Noted:

3.1. The revenue financial summary statement, in respect of service areas for which the Asset Management Sub-committee was responsible, for the period 1 April to 30 June 2023, attached as Annex 1 to the report by the Head of Finance, indicating a budget overspend position of £138,700.

3.2. The revenue financial detail by service area statement, in respect of service areas for which the Asset Management Sub-committee was responsible, for the period 1 April to 30 June 2023, attached as Annex 2 to the report by the Head of Finance.

The Sub-committee scrutinised:

3.3. The explanations given and actions proposed in respect of significant budget variances, as outlined in the Budget Action Plan, attached as Annex 3 to the report by the Head of Finance, and obtained assurance that action was being taken with regard to significant budget variances.

4. Corporate Asset Maintenance Programmes

Revenue Expenditure Outturn

After consideration of a report by the Head of Finance, copies of which had been circulated, the Sub-committee:

Noted:

4.1. The summary outturn position of revenue expenditure incurred against the approved corporate asset maintenance programmes for 2022/23, as detailed in section 4.1 of the report by the Head of Finance.

The Sub-committee scrutinised:

4.2. The detailed analysis of revenue expenditure and project updates, attached as Appendix 1 to the report by the Head of Finance, and obtained assurance that action had been taken with regard to significant budget variances, together with progress made with delivery of the approved corporate asset maintenance programmes for 2022/23.

5. Corporate Asset Maintenance Programmes

Revenue Expenditure Monitoring

After consideration of a report by the Head of Finance, copies of which had been circulated, the Sub-committee:

Noted:

5.1. The summary position of revenue expenditure incurred, as at 30 June 2023, against the approved corporate asset maintenance programmes for 2023/24, as detailed in section 4.1 of the report by the Head of Finance.

The Sub-committee is invited to scrutinise:

5.2. The detailed analysis of revenue expenditure and project updates, attached as Appendix 1 to the report by the Head of Finance, and obtained assurance with regard to significant budget variances and progress being made with delivery of the approved corporate asset maintenance programmes for 2023/24.

6. Corporate Asset Improvement Programmes

Expenditure Outturn

After consideration of a report by the Head of Finance, copies of which had been circulated, the Sub-committee:

Noted:

6.1. The summary outturn position of capital expenditure incurred against the approved corporate asset improvement and replacement programmes for 2022/23, as detailed in section 4.1 of the report by the Head of Finance.

The Sub-committee scrutinised:

6.2. The detailed analysis of capital expenditure and project updates, attached as Appendix 1 to the report by the Head of Finance, and obtained assurance with regard to significant budget variances and progress made with delivery of the approved corporate asset improvement and replacement programmes for 2022/23.

7. Corporate Asset Improvement Programmes

Expenditure Monitoring

After consideration of a report by the Head of Finance, copies of which had been circulated, the Sub-committee:

Noted:

7.1. The summary position of capital expenditure incurred, as at 30 June 2023, against the approved corporate asset improvement and replacement programmes for 2023/24, as detailed in section 4.1 of the report this report.

The Sub-committee is invited to scrutinise:

7.2. The detailed analysis of capital expenditure and project updates, attached as Appendix 1 to the report by the Head of Finance, and obtained assurance with regard to significant budget variances and progress being made with delivery of the approved corporate asset improvement and replacement programmes for 2023/24.

8. Surplus Property

After consideration of a report by the Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Service Manager (Estates), the Sub-committee:

Noted:

8.1. The status of potentially surplus property reported to the Asset Management Sub-committee on 22 March 2018, together with an update on the current status of the surplus property, as detailed in section 3 of the report by the Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.

8.2. Progress made with the Change Review in respect of Property Asset Management, as detailed in section 4 of the report by the Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.

8.3. The impact of the increased delegation, following revisions to the Scheme of Administration and the Scheme of Delegation to Officers recommended by the Policy and Resource Committee in February 2018, as detailed in section 6 of the report by the Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure.

8.4. That the existing governance arrangements would continue to be used to dispose of redundant, surplus assets as officers continued to identify potentially underused and unwanted properties that would be suitable for disposal.

9. Information Technology Strategy – Delivery Plan Update

After consideration of a report by the Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure, copies of which had been circulated, and after hearing a report from the Service Manager (ICT), the Sub-committee:

Scrutinised the updated Information Technology Strategy Delivery Plan, attached as Appendix 1 to the report by the Corporate Director for Neighbourhood Services and Infrastructure, and obtained assurance that progress was being made in implementing actions contained in the Delivery Plan.

10. Conclusion of Meeting

At 10:50 the Chair declared the meeting concluded.

Signed: Ivan A Taylor.