

Cowdenbeath Area Committee

Willie Clarke Centre, Lochore Meadows Country Park, Lochgelly,
KY5 8BA – Blended Meeting



Wednesday, 4 September, 2024 - 2.00 p.m.

AGENDA

Page Nos.

- | | | |
|-----|---|-----------|
| 1. | APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE | |
| 2. | DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST - In terms of Section 5 of the Code of Conduct Members of the Committee are asked to declare any interest(s) in particular items on the agenda and the nature of the interest(s) at this stage. | |
| 3. | MINUTE - Minute of meeting of Cowdenbeath Area Committee on 12 June 2024 | 3 – 8 |
| 4. | OBJECTIONS TO PROPOSED ROAD HUMPS - FOULFORD ROAD, COWDENBEATH – Report by the Head of Roads and Transportation Services | 9 – 11 |
| 5. | PLAY SPACE STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION - COWDENBEATH AREA – Report by the Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods Service | 12 – 16 |
| 6. | ANNUAL ROADS PROGRAMME 2023/24 - FINAL REPORT – Report by the Head of Roads and Transportation Services | 17 – 23 |
| 7. | COMPLAINTS UPDATE – Report by the Executive Director, Communities | 24 – 45 |
| 8. | EDUCATION - PUPILWISE AND PARENTWISE SURVEYS – Report by the Head of Service, Education Directorate | 46 – 56 |
| 9. | AREA HOUSING PLAN 2024-25 – Report by the Head of Housing Services | 57 – 83 |
| 10. | COWDENBEATH AREA - ANTI-POVERTY WORK UPDATE – Report by the Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods Service | 84 – 114 |
| 11. | COWDENBEATH AREA SCHEDULES - UPDATE – Report by the Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods Service | 115 – 123 |
| 12. | PROPERTY TRANSACTIONS – Report by the Head of Property Services | 124 – 125 |
| 13. | COWDENBEATH AREA COMMITTEE WORKPLAN – the Executive Director, Finance and Corporate Services | 126 – 130 |

Members are reminded that should they have queries on the detail of a report they should, where possible, contact the report authors in advance of the meeting to seek clarification.

Lindsay Thomson

Head of Legal and Democratic Services
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28 August, 2024

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BLENDED MEETING NOTICE

This is a formal meeting of the Committee and the required standards of behaviour and discussion are the same as in a face to face meeting. Unless otherwise agreed, Standing Orders will apply to the proceedings and the terms of the Councillors' Code of Conduct will apply in the normal way

For those members who have joined the meeting remotely, if they need to leave the meeting for any reason, they should use the Meeting Chat to advise of this. If a member loses their connection during the meeting, they should make every effort to rejoin the meeting but, if this is not possible, the Committee Officer will note their absence for the remainder of the meeting. If a member must leave the meeting due to a declaration of interest, they should remain out of the meeting until invited back in by the Committee Officer.

If a member wishes to ask a question, speak on any item or move a motion or amendment, they should indicate this by raising their hand at the appropriate time and will then be invited to speak. Those joining remotely should use the "Raise hand" function in Teams.

All decisions taken during this meeting, will be done so by means of a Roll Call vote.

Where items are for noting or where there has been no dissent or contrary view expressed during any debate, either verbally or by the member indicating they wish to speak, the Convener will assume the matter has been agreed.

There will be a short break in proceedings after approximately 90 minutes.

Members joining remotely are reminded to have cameras switched on during meetings and mute microphones when not speaking. During any breaks or adjournments please switch cameras off.

THE FIFE COUNCIL - COWDENBEATH AREA COMMITTEE – BLENDED MEETING

Willie Clarke Centre, Lochore Meadows Country Park, Lochgelly, KY5 8BA

12 June 2024

2.00 pm – 4.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Alex Campbell (Convener), Linda Erskine, Rosemary Liewald, Lea McLelland and Darren Watt.

ATTENDING: Anne-Marie Vance, Community Manager, Cowdenbeath, Scott Blyth, Project Manager and Izzy Scott-Trimmm, Community Development Team Manager (Cowdenbeath Area), Communities and Neighbourhoods Service; Hazel Crielly, Community Inspector and John Nicol, Community Sergeant, Police Scotland; Jenny Murray, Station Commander – Lochgelly Fire Station, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service; Dawn Jamieson, Safer Communities Team Manager and Brian Westwater, Safer Communities Lead Officer, Housing Services; Mary Mckay, Education Manager, Education Service; Rob Bowditch, Service Manager - Public and Environmental Protection, Environmental Health; Keith Johnston, Technician Engineer, Traffic Management South, Roads and Transportation Service; Eleanor Hodgson, Accountant and Wendy MacGregor, Committee Officer, Democratic Services, Finance and Corporate Services.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillors Mary Lockhart and Bailey-Lee Robb.

128. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were submitted in terms of Standing Order No 22.

129. MINUTE

The committee considered the minute of the meeting of the Cowdenbeath Area Committee of 17 April 2024.

Decision

The committee agreed to approve the minute.

130. SUPPORTING THE LOCAL COMMUNITY PLAN - OPERATIONAL BRIEFING ON POLICING ACTIVITIES WITHIN COWDENBEATH

The committee considered a report by the Community Inspector, Cowdenbeath, Police Scotland updating elected members on policing activity in Wards 7 and 8 areas.

Decision

The committee noted the contents of the report and the policing activity undertaken to date and agreed to support Police Scotland to address priorities.

131. SCOTTISH FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE - COWDENBEATH AREA ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT

The committee considered a report by the Station Commander - Lochgelly Community Fire Station - Scottish Fire and Rescue Service providing incident information for the period 1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024. The incident information enabled members to scrutinise the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) Clacks-Fife-Stirling – Cowdenbeath Area against key performance indicators (KPIs).

Decision

The committee noted the progress across a range of KPIs detailed in the report.

132. SAFER COMMUNITIES TEAM UPDATE REPORT

The committee considered a report by the Head of Housing Services providing an update on the operational activity of the Safer Communities Team within the Cowdenbeath committee area during the 12 month period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.

Decision

The committee noted the contents of the report and activity to date.

133. PROPOSED RAISED TABLE – B920 LOCHLEVEN ROAD, BALLINGRY

The committee considered a report by the Head of Roads and Transportation Service providing a proposal to install a raised table on B920 Lochleven Road, Ballingry.

Decision

The committee, in the interests of road safety:-

- (1) agreed to the promotion of a Road Hump Order (RHO) for the installation of a raised table as detailed in drawing no. TRO24_28 (Appendix 1) with all ancillary procedures; and
- (2) authorised officers to construct the raised table within a reasonable period unless there were objections.

134. SUPPORTING THE PLAN 4 COWDENBEATH GROUNDS FOR GROWTH

The committee considered a report seeking agreement for a £10,000 allocation of funding from the Anti-Poverty budget which would be provided to Rural Skills Scotland. This funding would support the delivery of their Grounds for Growth project, providing training and employability work to local people.

Decision

The committee agreed to allocate £10,000 from the Anti-Poverty budget to Rural Skills Scotland to support the delivery of the Grounds For Growth Project.

135. COMMUNITY FOOD PROVIDERS FUNDING

The committee considered a report by the Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods Service seeking agreement for the allocation of £80,000 from the Anti-Poverty Budget to support the delivery of community food projects across the area, aimed to tackle food insecurity.

Amendment

Councillor Linda Erskine, seconded by Councillor Lea McLelland, moved to add an additional recommendation to the report, as follows:

'Officers would work with food providers to ensure that memberships and/or any charges do not present a barrier to users who are in need. This condition would be incorporated into the Food Providers' Service Level Agreement.'

Decision

The committee, having agreed to the Amendment proposed by Councillor Erskine, agreed:-

- (1) to a total contribution of £80,000 from the Anti-Poverty Budget, which would be distributed to Community Food Providers to deliver food support to those in need as follows:
 - (a) Oor Wee Cafe - £12,281
 - (b) Lo'Gelly Lunches - £16,040
 - (c) BRAG Pantry - £16,215
 - (d) Cardenden Community Fridge - £12,619
 - (e) Crossgates Foodbank - £2,136
 - (f) Max's Pantry - £11,390
 - (g) The Clearing - £2,071
 - (h) The Knights Templar - £7,248
- (2) agreed officers would work with Community Food Providers to ensure that membership arrangements and any charges would not present a barrier to members using the services of the Community Food Projects'.

136. REVIEW OF MOSSMORRAN AND BRAEFOOT BAY COMMUNITY AND SAFETY COMMITTEE – GENERAL ANNUAL REPORT 2022

The committee considered a report by the Head of Protective Services providing the findings of the latest 2022 general annual report for the operations at the Mossmorran and Braefoot Bay facilities in accordance with the agreed recommendation of the meeting of the Environment, Transportation and Climate Change Scrutiny Committee of 19 March 2024.

Decision

The committee noted:-

- (1) the contents of the general report and, in particular, the large reduction in complaints following investment in improvement technologies at the complex;

2024 CAC 72

- (2) the new noise and air quality monitoring arrangements introduced around the complex; and
- (3) the steps taken to improve communications between appropriate parties.

137. REPORT ON EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES 2022/23

The committee considered a report by the Head of Service - Education and Children's Services, providing details of the attainment outcomes achieved by pupils within the area's schools during the school year 2022/23. The report also provided an overview of the range of strategies being developed to support key priorities to raise attainment.

Decision

The committee:-

- (1) noted the overall progress in raising levels of attainment in 2022/23 and the strategies being implemented to raise attainment; and
- (2) acknowledged the retirement of Mandy Miller, Music Teacher from Lochgelly High School after 43 years' service of commitment and dedication to the young people of Fife. Members expressed thanks and appreciation to the service Mandy had provided and wished her well in her future endeavours.

The meeting adjourned at 3.30 pm and reconvened at 3.35 pm.

138. AREA CAPITAL BUDGET REQUEST

The committee considered a report by the Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods Service seeking agreement to allocate funds from the Area Capital Budget for Lochgelly Public Park and Hamburg Park Play Area in Crossgates. The projects were complete and had been funded from local community planning budgets, however, the spend was capital in nature therefore capital funding of £67,771 would be transferred into the local community planning budget.

Decision

The committee agreed to a total contribution of £67,771 from the Area Capital Budget for reimbursement of the following projects:

- (1) Lochgelly Public Park – Footpath and Lighting improvement - £60,000; and
- (2) Hamburg Park Play Area, Crossgates - £7,771

139. AREA SCHEDULES

The committee considered a report by the Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods Service providing an update on the 2024/2025 balances and expenditure against Ward 7 and Ward 8 Local Community Planning, Anti-poverty and Community Recovery Fund budgets.

Decision

The committee noted:-

- (1) spend on Ward 7 and Ward 8 Local Community Planning and Anti-poverty budgets (referenced within the report as Area Revenue Budgets) for 2024/2025 as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report; and
- (2) spend on the Cowdenbeath Area's Community Recovery Fund budget, as detailed in Appendix 2 to the report.

140. PLAN 4 COWDENBEATH 2023-2026 - VERBAL UPDATE

The Community Manager (Cowdenbeath) provided a verbal update on the Plan 4 Cowdenbeath 2023-26 providing assurance that partners had been working on delivering priorities in the area as follows:-

Tackling Poverty - Oor Wee Cafe was successful in winning the Fife Voluntary Action Volunteering Award on 5 June 2024. Volunteers were supported by a Community Education Worker, funded through the Community Recovery Fund, to develop the service ensuring the pantry and cafe continued to improve, working towards sustainability and meeting community needs - a well deserved award;

Raising Aspirations - Supported by Community Education Worker, funded by the Community Recovery Fund, a mountain biking course was delivered in Lochore Meadows to assist in tackling mental health and wellbeing for young men living in the Benarty area. The course focused on physical and mental health, demonstrating the positive impact fitness and socialising had on wellbeing, in reducing anxiety and increasing confidence. Positive feedback had been received from the participants which included an improvement in their mental health and feeling more relaxed overall.

Punched Beyond Project - A boxing initiative delivered through funding from Ward 8 and Police Scotland to reduce antisocial behaviour in the area. The project was aimed at selected young people and provided an insight into the consequences of violence. As well as boxing, specialist workshops took place demonstrating influences in violence, guidance on how to rationalise situations to assist in making good choices and also covered respect and discipline. Twelve young people had participated in the initiative which had the outcome of improved attendance at school. A fuller report on the initiative was available and could be shared with members on request.

Community Engagement - Cowdenbeath Area Partnership Group - The first training session on Fife Council Community Engagement Toolkit commenced in May 2024 ensuring the standards of engagement were at the forefront of any community consultation carried out, ensuring a good quality approach for engagement with communities. A further session would be held in September to reach any partners unable to attend the session.

Decision

The committee noted the updates.

141. COWDENBEATH AREA FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The committee considered a report by the Executive Director, Finance and Corporate Services, providing the workplan for future meetings of the committee.

Decision

The committee:-

- (1) noted the contents of the Forward Work Programme;
- (2) requested the following areas be included in the Area Housing Plan report due for submission to the committee meeting in September 2024 - update on new build properties at Lumphinnans and Lochgelly and turnaround of empty properties, to include number of unallocated properties in Wards 7 and 8; and
- (3) noted the end of year report on the Local Community Plan - Plan 4 Cowdenbeath 2023-26 update would be submitted to the committee meeting on 30 October 2024 and the planned verbal update on the Plan 4 Cowdenbeath would not be required for presentation at the September meeting of the committee.

4 September 2024

Agenda Item No. 4

Objections to Proposed Road Humps – Foulford Road, Cowdenbeath

Report by: John Mitchell - Head of Roads & Transportation Services

Wards Affected: Ward No. 7 - Cowdenbeath

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to allow the Cowdenbeath Area Committee to consider objections to a proposal to introduce road humps on Foulford Road, Cowdenbeath.

Recommendation(s)

It is recommended that Committee agrees to set aside the outstanding 2 objections to the proposed Road Hump Order (RHO) introducing road humps on Foulford Road, Cowdenbeath as shown in drawing no. TRO24_35 (Appendix 1), to allow the works to be constructed.

Resource Implications

This project has been given approval by the Cowdenbeath Area Committee through the Area Roads Programme for 2024/25.

Legal & Risk Implications

There are no known legal or risk implications.

Impact Assessment

The general duties section of the impact assessment and the summary form has been completed. No negative impacts have been identified.

Consultation

The local Ward Councillors, Police Scotland, and Cowdenbeath Community Council have been advised.

Formal consultation required by the Roads Scotland Act 1984 for the RHO process was carried out through the posting of legal notices in a local newspaper and on the affected length of roads. In addition, details for the proposed RHO were made available on www.fife.gov.uk.

During the formal consultation period 2 objections were received.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Foulford Road has a 20 mph speed limit and has road humps on the west and east ends of the street. There is a long section of Foulford Road that does not have road humps from Foulford Place to the High School.
- 1.2 On 28th February 2024, Committee agreed a traffic calming project for Foulford Road, Cowdenbeath [Minute 2024.CAC.58 Item 109 refers].

2.0 Issues and Options

- 2.1 During the statutory consultation period, 2 objections were received to the proposal. Both objections were received from the same household. The main elements of the objections and Service response to these are outlined below with full redacted correspondence available as a background paper.
- 2.2 *Road humps cause damage to vehicles.*
Service Response: There is no evidence that road humps cause damage to vehicles. National guidance stresses that vehicles travelling over road humps at appropriate speeds should not suffer damage.
- 2.3 *I am not against there being road humps on the street but not placed right outside my property.*
Service Response: During design for traffic calming features, various factors are considered to determine the best placing of road humps. These factors include consistent spacing between each hump, consideration of driveways, and other road features such as utility access covers. It is to be expected that road humps will need to be positioned outside someone's property and they are placed to avoid being directly in front of any driveways.

3.0 Conclusions

- 3.1 It is considered, in the interests of road safety, that the objections should be set aside allowing the road humps to be constructed.

List of Appendices

1. Drawing no. TRO24_35

Background Papers

1. Full Correspondence (Redacted) with Objectors

Report Contacts

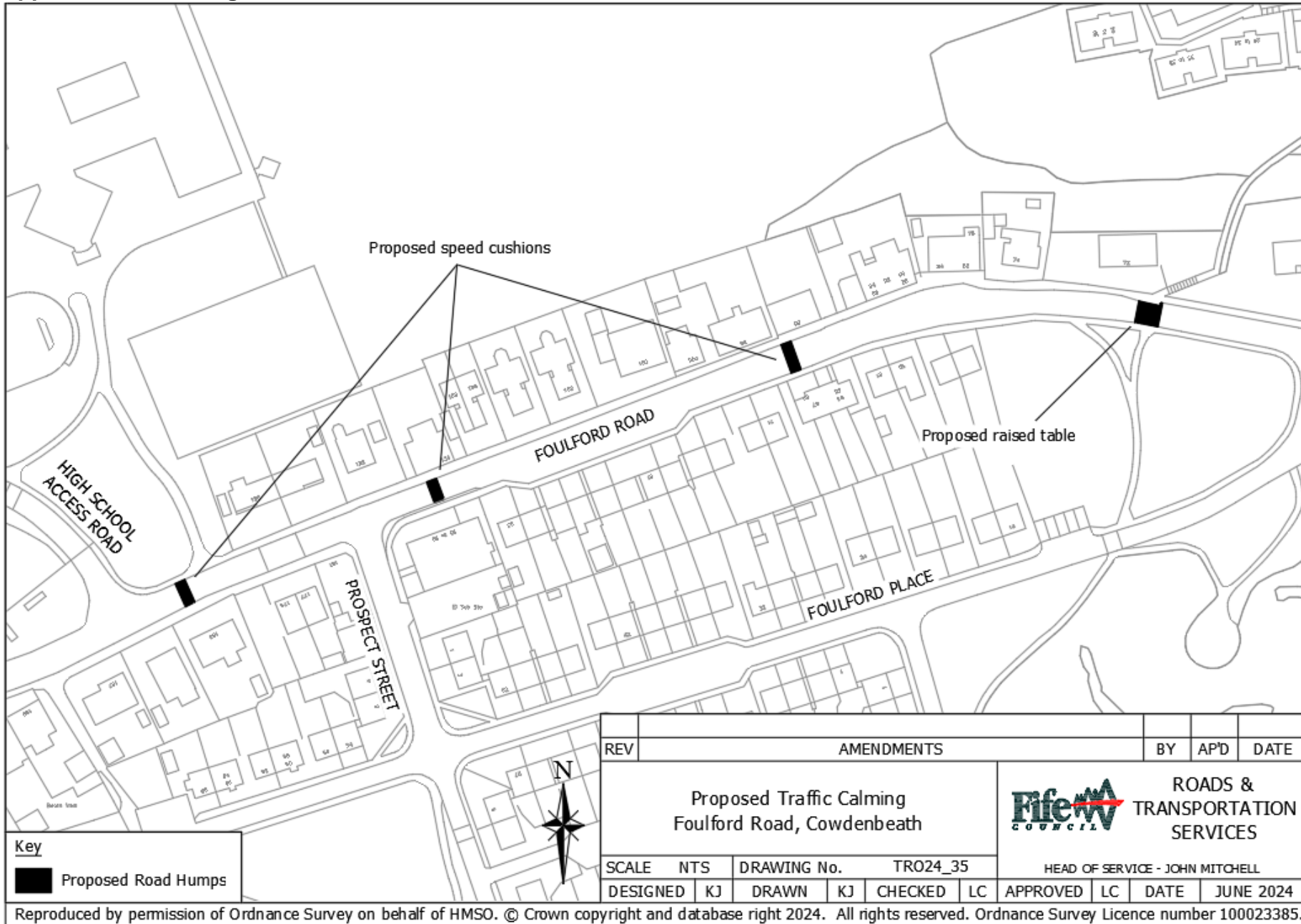
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Appendix 1 – Drawing no. TRO24_35



REV	AMENDMENTS				BY	AP'D	DATE
Proposed Traffic Calming Foulford Road, Cowdenbeath					 ROADS & TRANSPORTATION SERVICES		
SCALE	NTS	DRAWING No.		TRO24_35	HEAD OF SERVICE - JOHN MITCHELL		
DESIGNED	KJ	DRAWN	KJ	CHECKED	LC	APPROVED	LC
						DATE	JUNE 2024

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4 September 2024

Agenda Item No. 5

Play Strategy Implementation – Cowdenbeath Area

Report by: Paul Vaughan, Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods Service

Wards Affected: 7,8

Purpose

To share proposed play space strategy implementation programme for Cowdenbeath area and to ask committee members to approve the approach adopted for delivery and take cognisance of the issues noted around timescales for delivery based on resources, contractor market and funding availability.

Recommendation(s)

The Committee is asked to:-

1. endorse the suggested programme noting project sequencing and timescales for delivery as follows:
 - a) Ward 7
 - Cullaloe View in 24/25
 - Cowdenbeath Public Park in 25/26
 - b) Ward 8
 - Balgreggie Open Area in 24/25
 - Denfield Avenue in 25/26
2. agree the investment allocated to the above projects noted for delivery between 2024-2026.

Resource Implications

Following approval of the Cowdenbeath Play Space Strategy, there are 3 New play parks required, 19 sites identified for improvement, 11 sites to be maintained and 7 sites for repurposing to green/natural open space for play where appropriate.

Variables that impact on the programme for delivery include, but are not limited to, contractor market availability, procurement method, external funding, time sensitive funding, resources, land ownership, site viability, ground conditions, availability of community group partnerships, and inclement weather impact.

Legal & Risk Implications

It may become apparent in some cases that Fife Council are not the landowner of all play sites and/or ground conditions may not allow construction under current regulations. This information may not be discovered until site investigations are complete which may affect deliverability of play if a solution cannot be found.

Depending on value of works, planning permission may be required.

There is potentially insufficient Capital funding available to deliver the Fife Wide 10 year play park programme in full.

Impact Assessment

An EqIA is not required because the report does not propose a change or revision to existing policies and practices.

Consultation

Public consultation has concluded for the Play Space Strategy. Further consultation will be required with communities and local groups when concept designs are produced.

Elected members have been consulted on the proposed draft programme at an in-person event held in Kelty Community Centre.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The Play Space Strategy was approved at committee in 2021, devolving decisions to local area for agreement. Cowdenbeath Play Space Strategy was approved at December 23 Area Committee. Members requested that an implementation plan be brought forward to committee for approval.

2.0 Proposed Implementation Plan

- 2.1 The following criteria will be applied to each site to assist project prioritisation:
 - Lifespan of equipment
 - Health & Safety of equipment
 - Availability of Community group for partnership working
- 2.2 The 2023 annual independent inspection will assist somewhat in identifying remaining lifespan of equipment, combined with frontline knowledge from the play inspectorate team in Grounds Maintenance Service (GMS) who report reactive Health & Safety issues. Applying these criteria and subsequent recommendation is denoted in the comments column in the tables below.
- 2.3 Support is required from Community Manager and Community Development team to identify potential community groups available to assist with external fundraising, consultation on concept designs and to ensure we provide play equipment appropriate for the local community.
- 2.4 With current resources and implications noted we expect circa 14 “Improvement sites” is achievable **per annum across Fife**. This approximates to 2-3 sites per committee area. It should be noted that pre-construction phase, which includes concept design and

community consultation, can take around 6-12 months, therefore the projects noted in the proposed implementation plan will not likely be delivered until 2025.

- 2.5 Consideration will be given to each “natural/green open space” individually as each site is unique. We will work with members, area team and local communities to agree the future of each site. Depending on ground conditions, some sites will be naturally green, others will become open space with picnic tables/benches for all to use. Community Projects team, greenspace officers, Biodiversity Coordinator and GMS will be integrated into this partnership to ensure we provide the best possible space for our community. GMS colleagues will provide costs for repurposing each site.
- 2.6 Local Play Parks currently cost between £120,000 and £150,000 depending on the size of the site and the number of pieces of equipment. Cowdenbeath has 19 sites currently identified for improvement, therefore upwards of £2.000m investment is required to deliver the current programme over 10 years.
- 2.7 Ward 7 Implementation - Members agreed to progress Cullaloe View in 24/25 and the repurposing of Blairadam Park as equipment is end of life. Cowdenbeath Public Park enhancement will be delivered upon completion of Cullaloe

NAME (alphabetical)	Category	Comments	Suggestion
Church Street	local play park	Future programme	Programme later as equipment condition appears ok.
Cowdenbeath Public Park	town play park	Cone Climber already removed.	Deliver in late 24/25 or early 25/26
Cullaloe View	local play park	Very run down	Deliver in 24/25
Drover Hall Avenue	local play park	Previous anti-social issues.	Delay whilst no issues being reported.
Manse Road	local play park	Very run down	Consider for late 25/26 or early 26/27
Netherton Gardens	local play park	Very run down	Arrange concept design and programme for 25/26
Perth Road	local play park	Swings replaced in 21/22	Members requested some small aesthetic improvements. To be investigated further

NAME (alphabetical)	Current equipment	Comment	Suggestion
Blairadam Park	Slide, swing set, springy, seesaw, cone climber	GMS recommend removal. Equipment at end of life.	Programme removal of equipment for 24/25 and repurpose space.
Curling Knowe	Roudabout, swing set, 2 springies	Lifespan remaining	Remove/repurpose when equipment at end of life
Keir Street	Springy, slide, roundabout	Lifespan remaining	Remove/repurpose when equipment at end of life
Southfield Park	2x springies, 1 swingset	Lifespan remaining	Remove/repurpose when equipment at end of life

2.8 Ward 8 Implementation - Members agreed to progress XXX in 24/25 and the repurposing of Blairadam Park as equipment is end of life.

NAME (alphabetical)	Category	Comments	Suggestion
Balgreggie Open Area	local play park	£80k allocated to Bowhill Play Park from Scottish Govt Tranche 4.	Concept design arranged. Deliver 24/25
Brucefield Park	local play park		
Denfield Ave Dundonald	local play park	Old springer remains, all other equipment removed	Concept design arranged. Deliver early 25/26
Dundonald	local play park	Equipment looks ok	Programme for future year
Grays Road	local play park	Equipment looks ok	
Martin Crescent	local play park	Equipment looks ok	
New Flockhouse	local play park	Wooden equipment, bit dated	Arrange concept design
Paxton Crescent	local play park	Equipment dated	Programme for 25/26 - Arrange concept design
Timmons Park	local play park	Equipment looks ok	
Wallsgreen	local play park	Equipment looks ok	
West End Park	local play park	Equipment looks ok. Springies dated but climbing frame, swings and roundabout look good.	Programme for future year
Woodend	local play park	Equipment dated, prone to flooding	Adding in drainage to site will increase costs significantly. Arrange concept design and sales quote before programming

NAME (alphabetical)	Current equipment	Comment	Suggestion
Derran Drive	1 x springer, 1 x springy see saw, 2 picnic tables, 2 benches	Lifespan remaining	Remove when end of life. Consider as community growing space if local group available?
Lochore Park	4 x swings, Multi unit, cone climber, spinner pole, basketball hoop	Lifespan remaining	Remove when end of life. Easy greenspace, turf reinstatement when equipment out.

3.0 Funding and Investment

3.1 The Scottish Government awarded Fife Council just over £4.000m in 2021, to be awarded in Tranches until 2025. Each committee area has £584,571 equal share and Cowdenbeath spend profile to date is illustrated in the table below.

	Scottish Govt Tranche 1	Scottish Govt Tranche 2	Scottish Govt Tranche 3	Scottish Govt Tranche 4	Scottish Govt Tranche 5	Total (7th of Fife allocaton)
Allocated	44,246	0	20,000	110,000	410,325	584,571
Swing Replacement	19,246					
Humbug Park, Crossgates	15,000					
Health & Safety Allocation			20,000			
Keirs Brae, Cardenden				15,500		
Balgreggie Park				125,000		
Cowdenbeath Public Park					150,000	
Denfield Avenue					115,000	
Cullaloe View					115,000	
Ongoing H&S				10,000		
Spend to date	34,246	0	20,000	150,500	380,000	584,746
Budget remaining	10,000	0	0	-40,500	30,325	-175

3.2 There are options around the way we fund projects as follows:

- a. Fully fund using Scottish Government funding/FC Capital – However, funds depleted quickly but within timeframe of Scottish Govt funding timelines up to 25-26.
- b. Part fund future projects to allow community fundraising efforts – slower delivery as projects tendered individually however, match funding extends the lifetime of Capital fund and the potential to deliver more projects than if we were to fully fund each.

4.0 Conclusions

- 4.1 This approach provides a structure to prioritisation of the delivery of improvement to play parks in the Cowdenbeath area.
- 4.2 The programme of repurposing play spaces to natural/green open space is based on the criteria set out in this report.

Background Papers

The following papers were relied on in the preparation of this report in terms of the Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1973:-

- Cowdenbeath Play Space Strategy – Cowdenbeath Area Committee 20.12.2023.
- Play spaces strategy - Housing & Communities Committee August 2021

Report Contact

Louise Whyte, Capital Project Manager

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4 September 2024

Agenda Item No. 6

Area Roads Programme 2023/24 – Final Report

Report by: John Mitchell, Head of Roads & Transportation Services

Wards Affected: 7 & 8

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to advise the committee on the delivery of the 2023-24 Area Roads Programme (ARP).

Recommendation(s)

The committee is asked to note the contents of the report and appendices.

Resource Implications

The 2023-24 ARP was funded from capital and revenue and some ring-fenced budgets. Programmes of work were adjusted, if required, to ensure expenditure remained within the Service budget.

Legal & Risk Implications

There are no known legal or risk implications arising from the report.

Impact Assessment

An equalities Impact Assessment is not required because the report does not propose a change or revision to existing policies and practices.

Consultation

Members were consulted on the list of projects forming the 2023-24 ARP.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Committee agreed the list of projects forming the 2023-24 ARP on 1st February 2023 (2023 CAC 22, Para 37 refers)

2.0 Issues and Options

- 2.1 Attached are Appendices 1-5 which detail the final position on the progress of individual projects in the programme.
- 2.2 To improve information on how the programme is progressing throughout the year, an on-line system is in place and continues to be developed.

3.0 Conclusions

- 3.1 The attached appendices show the Cowdenbeath Area Programme for 2023-24. The type of works, work location and expenditure are provided for each project. Any underspend or overspend is carried through to the following years allocation for the committee area.

List of Appendices

1. Carriageway Schemes
2. Footway Schemes
3. Road Safety & Traffic Management Schemes
4. Lighting Schemes
5. Structures Schemes

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Cowdenbeath Area
Area Roads Programme 2023-24

Appendix 1

Carriageway Schemes Outturn

Ward	Town	Street	Location/Description	Estimate	Outturn Cost	Progress at 31st March 2024	Comments
8	Ballingry	B920 Lochleven Road	Ballingry Cres to Fife boundary	£224,000	£197,736	Complete	
7	Cowdenbeath	Mossend Terrace / Sinclair Drive / Woodend Place/ Craigton Pl	Mossend Terrace – Woodbank to Braemount, Sinclair Drive – Full length, Woodend Place – Full length	£121,030	£162,391	Complete	
7	Cowdenbeath	Seco Place	Church Street to extent of adoption	£18,166	£17,500	Complete	
7	Cowdenbeath	Rae Street / South Street	Full length including both cul de sacs	£40,950	£37,100	Complete	
8	Cowdenbeath	A909 & Bridge Street Overbridge		£210,000	£112,603	Complete	
TOTAL				£614,146	£527,330		

**Cowdenbeath Area
Area Roads Programme 2023-24**

Appendix 2

Footway Schemes Outturn

Ward	Town	Street	Location/Description	Estimate	Outturn Cost	Progress at 31st March 2024	Comments
7	Cowdenbeath	Meldrum Court	Adopted footways around cul-de-sac off Chapel Street	£43,000	£41,645	Substantially complete	Completed early April 2024
8	Lochgelly	Moffat Crescent		£15,208	£15,208	Complete	Completed 2022/23 – late invoice billing
8	Lochgelly	Paul Street Ph3	Parking bay opposite 28-36 to Park Street	£1,668	£1,668	Complete	Works complete 2022/23 – late invoice billing
8	Crosshill	B920 Main Street	o/s no.137 to Meadows Court	£59,000	£160	Postponed	Delayed due to contractor availability
TOTAL				£118,876	£58,681		

Cowdenbeath Area
Area Roads Programme 2023-24

Appendix 3

Road Safety & Traffic Management Schemes Outturn

Ward	Town	Street	Location/Description	Estimate	Outturn Cost	Progress at 31st March 2024	Comments
8	Cluny	Cardenden Road	Traffic calming	£60,000	£55,655	Complete	
7	Kelty	Station Road	Pedestrian Improvements	£20,000	£32,171	Complete	
7	Cowdenbeath	Broad Street	Puffin Crossing at school	£40,000	£51,321	Complete	
7	Crossgates	Kirkcaldy Road	Puffin Xing & Fway widening at Droverhall Avenue.	£50,000	£1,846	Postponed	Delayed due to contractor availability – completed May 2024
7	Kelty	Black Road	Replace give/take with speed cushions	£15,000	£13,632	Complete	
TOTAL				£185,000	£154,624		

**Cowdenbeath Area
Area Roads Programme 2023-24**

Appendix 4

Lighting Schemes Outturn

Ward	Town	Street	Location/Description	Estimate	Outturn	Progress at 31st March 2024	Comments
7	Cowdenbeath	Phase 8	Gateside Ct, Gordon St, Gilmour St, Hill St	£102,000	£112,005	Complete	
7	Kelty	Keltyhill Avenue & Crescent		£220,000	£209,235	Complete	
8	Lochgelly	Fraser Dr/ Johnston Cres		£55,000	£84,996	Complete	
TOTAL				£337,000	£406,238		

Cowdenbeath Area
Area Roads Programme 2023-24

Appendix 5

Structures Schemes Outturn

Ward	Town	Street	Location/Description	Estimate	Outturn	Progress at 31st March 2024	Comments
7	Cowdenbeath	Broad Street	Installation of traffic island in advance of bridge replacement works	£10,000	£0	Cancelled	Need for traffic island considered and found not required. Bridge Replacement project is progressing.
TOTAL				£10,000	£0		

4 September 2024

Agenda Item No: 7

Complaints Update

Report by: Mike Enston, Executive Director - Communities

Wards Affected: All Cowdenbeath Area Committee Wards (7&8)

Purpose

To provide an overview of complaints received relating to the Cowdenbeath area for the year from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.

Recommendation(s)

The Committee is asked to consider the report on complaints received noting the complaints responded to in target timescales and the proportionality of Service complaints.

Resource Implications

There are no direct resource implications arising from this report.

Legal & Risk Implications

There are no direct legal and risk implications arising from this report.

Impact Assessment

An EqIA has not been completed and is not necessary for the following reasons:
It is not required because the report does not propose a change or revision to existing policies and practices.

Consultation

No public consultation has been carried out in relation to this report however there is on-going consultation with key staff in Council services on complaint handling performance.

1.0 Background & explanatory notes

- 1.1 Reports on customer complaints to the Council are presented twice a year to Standards and Audit Committee. In November 2013, that Committee agreed to refer the report to Area Committees for consideration, with the addition of area-based complaints information.
- 1.2 This is now the eleventh annual report to area Committees, this report covering complaints relevant to the Cowdenbeath Committee area.
- 1.3 Scottish Councils must follow the model complaint handling procedure developed by the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman (SPSO). The model was designed to provide a simpler, more consistent process for customers to follow and encourages local authorities to make best use of lessons learned from complaints. A revised version of the procedure with minor changes was launched in April 2021
- 1.4 The analysis by area in this report is based upon the address of the complainant rather than the geographic location of the complaint itself. It should be noted that this may occasionally give odd results, e.g., complaints concerning beaches in Dunfermline.
- 1.5 The Council responds to millions of contacts from customers across Fife every year. Results from historic satisfaction surveys suggest that customers are generally satisfied with the services the Council provides. Where customers do have cause to complain about services received, we aim to resolve these quickly and to learn from feedback to improve future services.

2.0 Area Complaints

- 2.1 The following table provides the volume of complaints and the responsiveness to target timescales for the Cowdenbeath Area Committee.

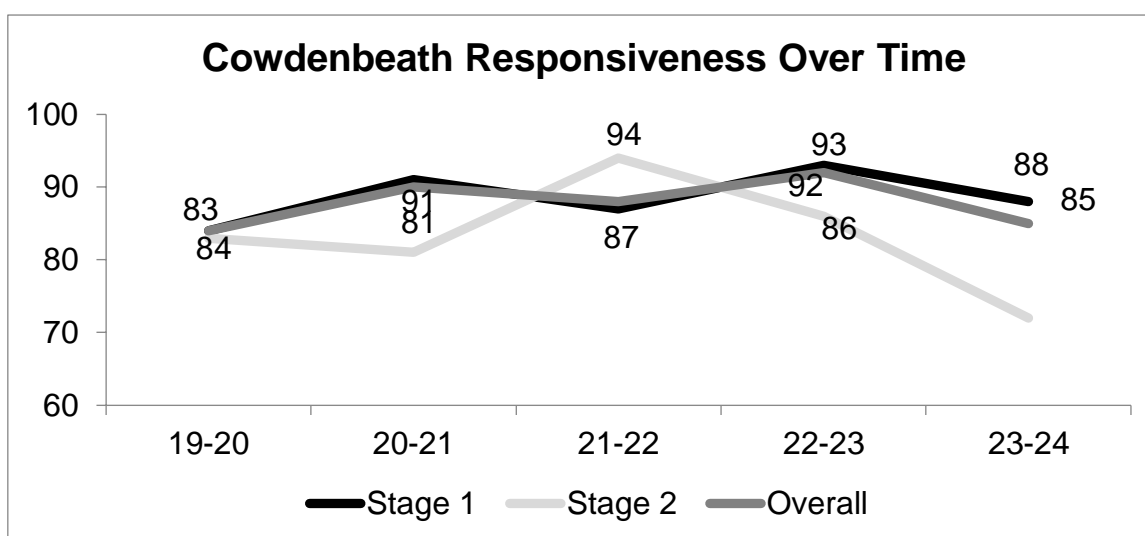
Stage	Total No. of complaints closed	No. closed in target timescales	% closed in target timescales
	298	254	85% (92% 22-23)
Stage 1 (5 days)	252 (85%)	221	88% (93% 22-23)
Stage 2 (20 days)	46 (15%)	33	72% (86% 22-23)

- 2.2 298 complaints were received relating to the Cowdenbeath Committee area in 23-24 of which 298 were closed. Complaints are categorised in the system upon closure. We aim to deal with stage 1 complaints immediately if we can but at least within 5 working days. Stage 2 should be dealt with in 20 working days, with updates if investigations will take longer. The procedure allows for extensions to these timescales, and these are frequently applied particularly in more complex cases.
- 2.3 Responsiveness has worsened when compared against last year yet was generally better than the Fife Council average. The average time to close all complaints was 5.7 working days which was slightly worse than last year's 5.2 working days yet better than the Council average of 6.5 working days.

2.4 The following table provides the volume of complaints and responsiveness to target timescales for Fife Council overall for comparison purposes.

Stage	Total No. of complaints closed	No. closed in target timescales	% closed in target timescales
	2,836	2,385	84% (84% in 22-23)
Stage 1 (5 days)	2,301 (81%)	1,984	86% (86% in 22-23)
Stage 2 (20 days)	535 (19%)	401	75% (76% in 22-23)

2.5 The recent trend shows a decline in stage 2 complaints completed in target timescales.

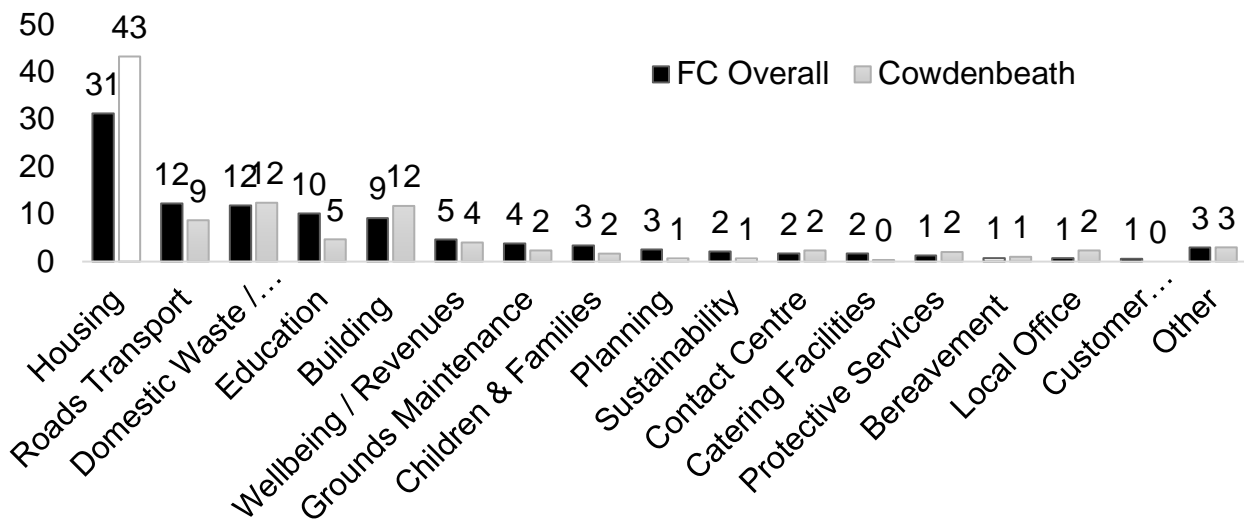


2.6 The contact channel used for complaints can be seen in the following table. There has been a small reduction in the use of the website when compared against last year (was 74% in 22-23) replaced by face-to-face visits.

Receipt Channel	Cowdenbeath	FC Overall
Web	64%	65%
Email	12%	16%
Contact Centre	8%	8%
F2F	9%	4%
Tel	2%	4%
Letter / Form	4%	3%

2.7 The following graph provides the proportionality of Service complaints (upheld as well as not upheld) compared with Fife Council as a whole.

% Service Complaints Comparison



2.8 Differences of note include that there are proportionally more complaints concerning Housing (43% against the Fife overall proportion of 31%) and Building Services (12% against the Fife overall proportion of 9%) where the largest category for Housing was poor communications including lack of notice, consultation & engagement and for Building Services the largest category was a failure to fix first time.

2.9 The following table shows complaint responsiveness by Services. Ordered by % all in timescale worst to best.

	Vol Stage 1	% Stage 1 In Time	Vol Stage 2	% Stage 2 In Time	Total	% All in Time
Legal	0	100.0%	1	0.0%	1	0.0%
Property	1	0.0%	0	100.0%	1	0.0%
Children Families	4	50.0%	1	0.0%	5	40.0%
Protective	2	50.0%	4	50.0%	6	50.0%
CLD	2	100.0%	1	0.0%	3	66.7%
Education	8	75.0%	6	66.7%	14	71.4%
Housing	110	82.7%	19	73.7%	129	81.4%
Roads	24	87.5%	2	50.0%	26	84.6%
Local Office	6	83.3%	1	100.0%	7	85.7%
Building	32	93.8%	3	100.0%	35	94.3%
Bereavement	3	100.0%	0	100.0%	3	100.0%
Catering Facilities	1	100.0%	0	100.0%	1	100.0%
Contact Centre	7	100.0%	0	100.0%	7	100.0%
Domestic Waste	35	100.0%	2	100.0%	37	100.0%

	Vol Stage 1	% Stage 1 In Time	Vol Stage 2	% Stage 2 In Time	Total	% All in Time
Financial	9	100.0%	3	100.0%	12	100.0%
Grounds	7	100.0%	0	100.0%	7	100.0%
Planning	0	100.0%	2	100.0%	2	100.0%
Sustainability	1	100.0%	1	100.0%	2	100.0%
Grand Total	252	87.7%	46	71.7%	298	85.2%

- 2.10 Please note that from the 44 cases that ran over timescale 31 of those cases had extensions agreed with customers (70%). This means that 96% of cases were completed in agreed rather than the procedural target timescale (extensions are a valid application of the complaints procedure).
- 2.11 Taking account of the valid extension greatly improves the tabled results e.g., Housing would have 97%, Education 100%, Children & Families 60%, and Protective Services 67%.

2.12 Table showing the “root cause” category of main complaints received to the top x7 Services (by volume) and compared with previous year (ordered alphabetically).

Service	Complaint Category	2022-23	2023-24
Building Services	Card left when tenant in property	0	2
	Council vehicle - driving behaviour/standards	0	1
	Council vehicle - parking	4	2
	Failure to attend at time advised / agreed	5	1
	Failure to fix first time	6	6
	Failure to meet timescales for job	3	0
	Failure to respond to previous complaint / request for service / enquiry / reported fault	1	0
	Health & safety / dangerous occurrence	2	0
	Inappropriate staff attitude / behaviour	2	2
	Noise levels from work activities	0	1
	Poor communications - advance notice of work not given	2	1
	Poor communications - poor regarding work being/to be undertaken	6	4
	Standard of workmanship - damage	4	3
	Standard of workmanship - mess	2	5
Standard of workmanship - tenant unhappy with work	3	4	

Service	Complaint Category	2022-23	2023-24
	Unsatisfactory response to previous complaint / request for service / enquiry / reported fault	0	3
Building Services Total		40	35
Contact Centre	Anything that doesn't fit within other categories	0	1
	Failure to respond to previous complaint / request for service / enquiry / reported fault	1	2
	Inappropriate staff attitude / behaviour	0	1
	Incorrect information given	1	0
	Poor communications including lack of notice, consultation & engagement	2	0
	Time taken to answer call	0	2
	Unsatisfactory response to previous complaint / request for service / enquiry / reported fault	1	0
	Wrong information given	0	1
Contact Centre Total		5	7
Domestic Waste and Street Cleansing	Bin not returned properly / bin is missing	2	2
	Bulky not collected / only part collected	2	4
Domestic Waste and Street Cleansing	Damage to vehicles / property during bin collection	0	3

Service	Complaint Category	2022-23	2023-24
Domestic Waste and Street Cleansing	Dissatisfaction with policy / collection arrangements e.g., number of bins; frequency of collection etc	18	4
	Dissatisfaction with policy / organisational arrangements (includes frequency of street cleaning, routes, methods etc)	1	3
	Dissatisfaction with standard of street cleanliness	1	0
	Dissatisfaction with Take Out & Return TOR service	8	4
	Failure to collect / empty bin	13	9
	Failure to respond to previous complaint / request for service / enquiry / reported fault	6	2
	Inappropriate staff attitude / behaviour	1	5
	Inconsiderate / inappropriate use of council vehicle	3	1
	Service cancelled outside of council control	1	0
	Unsatisfactory response to previous complaint / request for service / enquiry / reported fault	2	0
Domestic Waste and Street Cleansing Total		58	37
Education	Accidents Injuries e.g., Physical education fights etc.	1	0
	Anything that doesn't fit within other categories	3	1
	Bullying By Pupil	3	1

Service	Complaint Category	2022-23	2023-24
	Dissatisfaction with policy current arrangements	4	2
	Inappropriate staff attitude behaviour	1	4
	Poor communications including lack of notice consultation engagement	0	5
	Pupil Attendance	1	0
	Standard of supervision	0	1
Education Total		13	14
Financial Wellbeing and Revenues	Admin Error	1	5
	Disagree with Council policy	0	2
	Inappropriate staff attitude / behaviour	1	0
	Lack of/Incorrect information	0	3
	Poor communications (including lack of notice, consultation & engagement)	0	1
	Procedures/Policy	0	1
Financial Wellbeing and Revenues Total		2	12
Grounds Maintenance	Damage to Private Property	1	0
	Escalated to stage 2 based on timescale	1	0
	Fence Damage	0	1

Service	Complaint Category	2022-23	2023-24
	Grass Cutting	3	3
	Inappropriate staff attitude / behaviour	2	0
	Inconsiderate / inappropriate use of council vehicle	0	2
	Poor communications including lack of notice, consultation & engagement	1	0
	Untidy / Overgrown vegetation	3	1
Grounds Maintenance Total		11	7
Housing	Abandonment of Tenancy	1	0
	ASB neighbour dispute	0	1
	Assessment of FHR – Dissatisfaction with Common assessment of need/points awarded	4	1
	Assessment of FHR - Dissatisfaction with information/advice given	1	0
	Assessment of FHR - Dissatisfaction with time taken	1	1
	Debt management arrangements	2	0
	Delays in Start / Completion	2	7
	Discrimination race, gender, religion etc	1	1
	Dispute with Neighbours	3	4
	Disputed Recharges	2	0

Service	Complaint Category	2022-23	2023-24
	Dissatisfaction with decant procedure	0	1
	Dissatisfaction with policy / current delivery arrangements e.g. rent levels, rent increases, collection	0	1
	Dissatisfaction with policy / current delivery arrangements e.g. timescales, priorities, criteria	10	13
	Drugs	0	1
	Failure to respond to previous complaint / request for service / enquiry / reported fault	17	9
	Fencing	1	1
	FHR Partner - Fife Housing Group	1	0
	FHR process – Dissatisfied as process not meeting applicants needs	3	0
	FHR Process - dissatisfied with time on housing list waiting to be made a fair offer	6	2
	Gypsy Travellers	0	1
	Homeless - Offer of temporary accommodation	2	1
	Housing Technical Officer	0	1
	Inappropriate staff attitude / behaviour	7	13
	Internal communal areas includes cleanliness, lighting etc	1	0
	Internal System issues	0	1

Service	Complaint Category	2022-23	2023-24
	Issues with condition of property handed back from Buy Back Team.	1	0
	Management of Communal Areas includes grass cutting, overgrown trees & bushes	1	0
	Mutual repairs	4	4
	Pest control issues	0	1
	Pets & Animals	3	0
	Poor communications including lack of notice, consultation & engagement	15	23
	Poor Condition / Standard of Housing	3	5
	Poor standard/condition of property at start of tenancy	2	1
	Quality of Workmanship including mess/damage, unsatisfactory completion, quality of products etc	2	8
	Rubbish	2	5
	Snagging issues	1	0
	Unsatisfactory response to previous complaint / request for service / enquiry / reported fault	8	19
	Waiting Times	2	3
Housing Total		109	129
Local Office	Anything that doesn't fit within other categories	0	1

Service	Complaint Category	2022-23	2023-24
	Delay in receiving service	0	1
	Failure to provide a service	0	1
	Inappropriate staff attitude / behaviour	0	2
	Unsatisfactory response to previous complaint / request for service / enquiry / reported fault	0	1
	Wrong information input to system	0	1
Local Office Total		0	7
Roads & Transportation	Anything that doesn't fit within other categories	0	2
	Application process such as timescale/proofs/photographs/ Mobility Assessment	1	0
	Damage to vehicles / property	1	0
	Discrimination race, gender, religion etc	0	1
	Dissatisfaction of service provided	1	0
	Dissatisfaction with car parking provision / charging policy	3	0
	Dissatisfaction with emergency response to flooding	1	0
	Dissatisfaction with gritting / snow clearing policy including gritting routes, priorities etc	0	1
	Dissatisfaction with gritting / snow clearing response e.g., delayed response, poor performance, ineffective etc	1	0

Service	Complaint Category	2022-23	2023-24
	Escalated to stage 2 based on timescale	0	1
	Inadequate notice of road and footpath works including road closures	0	1
	Localised flooding due to blocked gullies / drainage e.g., roads, footpaths, gardens, property etc	1	2
	Noise / disruption / delays / inconvenience including restrictions in place, but no work ongoing	1	0
	Poor communications including lack of notice, consultation & engagement	2	0
	Poor condition of footpath / cycle path	0	1
	Poor condition of road markings e.g., white lining	1	0
	Poor or inappropriate road signage/other street furniture unlit signs, unlit bollards, vehicle safety barriers, pedestrian guardrails, street nameplates, bus shelters, grit bins, trees, verge marker posts, weather stations	0	2
	Poor site management barriers, cones, temporary signs, materials, equipment, and site plant/vehicles	0	1
	Poor standard of road repairs / maintenance work including incomplete work	0	1
	Position / intensity / adequacy of new street lighting	0	1
	Potholes / poor condition of road surface	7	5
	School transport operation of Service i.e. late / did not arrive/condition of vehicle/driver conduct/behaviour of other passenger/route issues/timetable issues	0	1

Service	Complaint Category	2022-23	2023-24
	Street light repairs	2	2
	Street lighting on all day 24/7	1	0
	Unsatisfactory response to previous complaint / request for service / enquiry / reported fault	1	1
	Use / provision of disabled parking including on-street and off-street disabled parking bays	2	3
Roads & Transportation Total		26	26

Complaint examples

2.13 The following table provides summarised examples of actual complaints made:

Service	Category	Complaint (summarised / redacted)
Housing	Poor communications including lack of notice, consultation & engagement.	<p>Neighbour complaint has been raised to HMO <i>name</i> via Lagan and by direct email multiple times over a lengthy period of time and there has been no communication response received at all regarding the serious incidents that are continuously occurring near to <i>address</i>.</p> <p>Outcome: <i>Complaint upheld. Apology offered. Agreed to discuss with HMO on their return re: required timescales. I have also agreed we will visit neighbour who is named in complaint to discuss issues and find resolution.</i></p>
Domestic Waste	Failure to collect / empty bin.	<p>Having issues with the take in and out bin service. Bins not being picked up and emptied and bin men stating that <i>name</i> is not eligible for this service even though <i>name</i> has permanent disabilities, handed in proofs, and was accepted onto the service over 2 years ago.</p> <p>Outcome: <i>Complaint upheld. Apology offered. Crew will be informed of bin location and customer has been placed on close monitoring.</i></p>
Building Services	Failure to fix first time.	<p>Dear Sir/Madam,</p> <p>Since myself and my partner became tenants in this property (6 years this <i>date</i>) our shower cubicle has leaked around the shower tray. It took several leaks (through to my upstairs hall and also into my kitchen) and approx. five attempts of removing and reinstalling before it was finally installed properly. After the final installation, I advised the then inspector it was still leaking through the seals at the bottom of the doors and side panel on to the floor when cleaning or rinsing off the cubicle, she advised not use the shower to rinse it down; I was flabbergasted and so fed up by that point and with everything that had happened in the house (happy to give full details) that at that point I left it as I just did not have the strength to continue fighting. Fast forward to today, we have had several plumbers</p>

		<p>out due to the leaking, they have put sealant in the inside and the outside of the cubicle as a temporary repair to try and curb the leaking and we have been told by one work person that the cubicle needs replaced fully as it has been fitted incorrectly. I contacted the inspector (via the contact centre) who arranged for a second worker to come out, the 2nd workmen just said it needed replaced. Since then, I have had no communication. The sealant on the outside of our cubicle is disgraceful, it is an untidy mess and is covered in black mould whereas the inside of the cubicle just has a couple of spots despite using Cillit Bang mould remover. I am fed up with the severe lack of consistency and the lack of communication. I would like someone who is qualified to attend and replace the cubicle. I hope to hear from you soon. <i>Name</i></p> <p>Outcome: <i>Complaint upheld apology offered. The plumber attended a few months ago and referred a representative from Housing to inspect the cubicle and recommend that it was renewed, unfortunately someone closed the ticket without referring it to Housing. I have agreed to attend the address with a plumber on date to see if we can either make repairs to the existing cubicle or again recommend a new one, the tenant was very happy regards the apology and also the fact we are now making progress with the issue of leaking shower doors.</i></p>
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3.0 Learning from Complaints

- 3.1 One key element of handling complaints is using customer feedback to rectify or improve upon the service provided. It has previously been reported that the improvements introduced allowed for more and better corrective actions to be captured.
- 3.2 Every upheld or partially upheld complaint presents an opportunity for the Council to address the failings identified and this is also a requirement of the procedure. Previous complaint update reports to this Committee have described gaps in the volume and quality of corrective actions.
- 3.3 A few instances remain where corrective action statements refer simply to the outcome of the complaint rather than specific actions that would potentially prevent future reoccurrence.

- 3.4 There are good examples when the Council listens to customer feedback and makes improvements to future service provision. Where complaints were about the actions of employees (behaviour, poor driving, wrong information provided, process / procedure not followed etc.) the complaint has been addressed directly with employees, so they are aware of the impact on their customers.
- 3.5 One of the reasons for creating the new Communities Directorate was to increase customer responsiveness and this included setting up the Escalation and Resolution team.
- 3.6 To date the team have focussed upon key aims, including:
- Improving upon current responsiveness rates, such as targeting poorer performing Services (more effective queue management and professional administrative support).
 - Improving the standard of customer communication, by increasing the volume of qualitative checks and supporting Services by peer review of resolution letters / emails.
- 3.7 Escalation & Resolution continue to support Elected Members, MP and MSP to resolve issues for constituents when the 'business as usual' process has not worked effectively. Support in the main has been to the local MP and MSP politicians that represent Fife. The team are resourced to have capacity to respond to local area Elected Members on constituent's cases and advise accordingly or indeed log any enquiry or complaint raised on behalf of Members.
- 3.8 The following tables provide the details of complaint decisions in the Cowdenbeath Committee area compared with the Fife Council overall results.

Cowdenbeath	Not Upheld	Partially Upheld	Resolved	Upheld
Overall	34%	14%	18%	34%
Stage 1	31%	12%	21%	35%
Stage 2	46%	26%	4%	24%

Comparison to the Fife Council overall results.

FC Overall	Not Upheld	Partially Upheld	Resolved	Upheld
Overall	35%	17%	17%	30%
Stage 1	32%	15%	20%	33%
Stage 2	50%	27%	4%	19%

4.0 Complaint Satisfaction

- 4.1 In historic reports to this Committee the data used to provide satisfaction with complaint handling amongst more general satisfaction was obtained from a generic transactional survey of four questions emailed out on a four-weekly basis. Following changes to both the Council's website and the customer management system this transactional survey became obsolete.
- 4.2 The complaints procedure requires that complainants are surveyed so the previous generic survey was replaced in January 2022 with a bespoke version that covers standard questions

as agreed from the Local Authority Complaint Handlers Network. These questions will ultimately allow benchmarking amongst network members.

4.3 The replacement complaint satisfaction survey methodology has us ask customers how much they agree or disagree with the following statements generally 4 weeks after their complaint has closed.

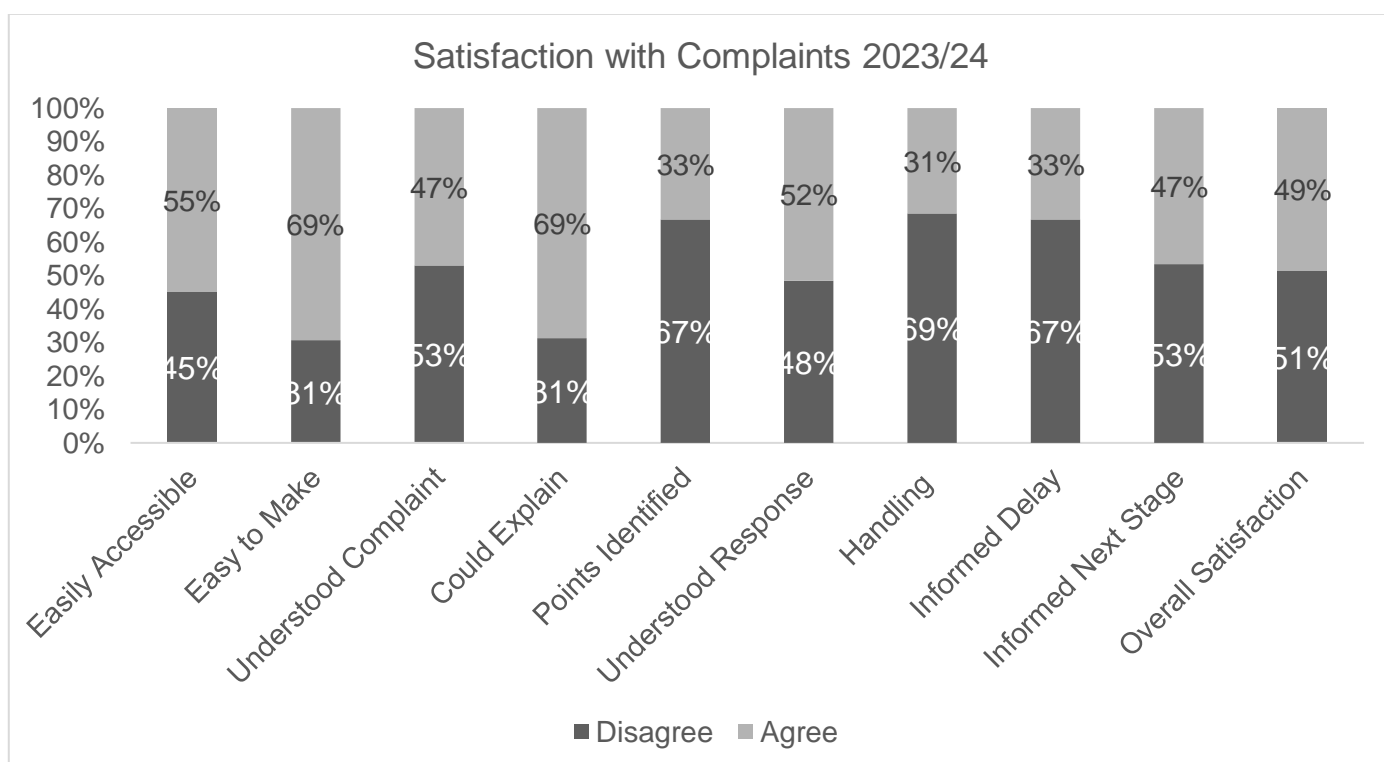
- Information about the complaint procedure was easily accessible.
- I found it easy to make my complaint.
- I was happy that the person considering the matter fully understood my complaint.
- I was given the opportunity to fully explain my complaint.
- The points of my complaint were identified and responded to.
- The response to my complaint was easy to understand.
- Overall, I was satisfied with the handling of my complaint.
- I was told if the response was going to take longer than the set timescales (five working days at stage 1 and 20 working days at stage 2).
- I was clearly told what the next stage of the complaints process was for me.

4.4 This replacement survey now requires a manual issue of these questions by email however has added benefit over the previous generic transaction survey as the text from a complainant's actual complaint is given as a reminder to make the survey more focussed.

4.5 There were 39 replies from complainants claiming residency in the Cowdenbeath Committee area. Comments included:

- Overall, I felt my complaint was dealt with quickly and did help with my peace of mind.
- It's a shame that it got to stage of being a complaint, but it was handled efficiently once complaint was made.
- Still didn't get a satisfactory answer to my complaint, currently waiting for the ombudsman to review.
- Very poor, neglectful, and distressing.

Overall satisfaction remains the same as last year at 49%. This is slightly lower than the Council overall performance of 50% overall satisfaction. Satisfaction with each question is as shown on the following graph.



- 4.6 It would appear from the result that improvement is required in identifying and responding to all complaint points raised, keeping complainants updated with any delay and being clear to explain the next steps in the complaint process.

5.0 Scottish Public Services Ombudsman Cases

- 5.1 The SPSO are the last part of the procedure for all Council complaints and therefore all stage 2 resolution letters must offer formal recourse to this organisation.
- 5.2 In 2023-24 there were 7 cases for the Cowdenbeath area that reached this final stage of the procedure.
- 5.3 The following table provides a list of Services and outcomes following the SPSO's consideration of the complaints. Not taken forward for investigation by the SPSO refers to where the SPSO consider the matter outside of their jurisdiction, the SPSO are satisfied that the Council have done all they can with the matter raised, or that the SPSO are unlikely to achieve the desired outcome of the complainant.

Service	Complaint Summary	SPSO Decision
Housing	Tenancy issues	Not taken forward for investigation
Education	School toilets	Not taken forward for investigation
Housing	Communal tenancy area	Not taken forward for investigation
Education	Composite classes	Not taken forward for investigation
Education	Pupil support plan	Not taken forward for investigation
Customer Service	Use of unacceptable actions policy	Not taken forward for investigation
Housing	Response to anti-social behaviour	Not taken forward for investigation

6.0 Other Customer Issues

- 6.1 The SPSO complaints procedure adopted by Fife Council includes a clear definition of a complaint which means that some customer issues are simply recorded as service requests rather than as complaints. Some of these issues may have been previously recorded as complaints (before April 2013) as the Fife Council definition at the time allowed issues to be considered as a 'complaint' where a customer requested this.
- 6.2 Historically the following table included data on street cleaning requests, reports of illegal dumping, dog issues and abandoned vehicles amongst others. Data provided has always come with the caveat that this was a very simple database extract and likely different data from what would be expressed by owning Services The only data now available to the author is the volume of missed bins.

Enquiry Type	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	Note
Missed bins	932	955	763	790	Actual complaints around missed bins will overlap with service requests.

6.3 Annual figures for such customer issues are available and likely to be included in this Committee's diet, many provided by Safer Communities.

7.0 Compliments

7.1 By adding a database marker we can now report compliments by area Committee level. Again, this analysis is based upon the address of the complainant rather than the geographic location of the Service being complimented. From the examples obtained it doesn't appear that this distinction matters.

7.2 The following table provides some details of the 17 compliments received from customers in the Cowdenbeath area, the Service areas complimented and some typical examples of the type of compliments received.

Service	Vol	Example
Building	3	Called in to thank the Gas engineer that attended today unfortunately I did not remember his name but was very helpful and polite was a really nice guy.
Contact Centre	4	The call handler was extremely helpful on the phone this morning and really listened and tried her best to resolve the ongoing situation with repairs to my property.
Domestic Waste	3	Following a missed bin the bin guys came without my knowing, collectors clearly came up the lane at the side of our flat, through our back gate, moved our blue bin to get to the grey bin, which was then emptied and returned. Above and beyond - please pass on my grateful thanks to everyone concerned. Delighted.
Education	1	I was hoping to compliment the staff member currently working alongside the primary class in the local primary. My little girl has been struggling with engaging with school for quite some time and they have picked up on this and have always been there to support and assist her in any way she can. As a parent it is difficult when your child is struggling but having such supportive staff like this in the class beside the kids is an absolute breathe of fresh air and such a comfort. They are an absolute asset not only to the school but also to the parents. I feel as a community we are very quick to judge and rant when a school is doing wrong ,so I find it important to also recognise and acknowledge when they deserve to be complimented.
Grounds	4	A big thanks to the squad of young men who have done a superb job clearing and tidying up of the weeds & long grass on the pavements, paths & roads in Cowdenbeath this past

Service	Vol	Example
		week. What a difference they have made, and a great job done. I hope this will get them the recognition they deserve.
Local Office	2	Would like to thank you very much for the help and support given at Brunton House from various members of the CS team who have assisted me with various council matters but have also signposted me to other agencies such as Age Concern. Because of this I have been given support from the DWP to help me apply for other benefits I am entitled to.

8.0 Conclusions

- 8.1 Responsiveness to complaints in target timescales has worsened when compared with last year's results however is generally better than the Fife Council overall result. Responsiveness is however less significant when procedural extensions are considered then 96% of all complaints are completed in standard or procedurally allowed timescales. The average working days to respond to all complaints remained comparable with last year and was better than the Council average. These figures are important as we consider responsiveness as a key driver of customer satisfaction.
- 8.2 The issues customers complained about within the Cowdenbeath area are broadly similar to those made across Fife as a whole, however, there were proportionally more complaints for Housing and Building Services. The main root cause category of these complaints were poor communications for Housing and a failure to fix first time for Building Services.

List of Appendices

None

Background Papers

1. SPSO revised model complaint handling procedure – [Link](#)

Report Contacts

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4 September 2024

Agenda Item No. 8

Education - Pupilwise and Parentwise Surveys

Report by: Angela Logue, Head of Service, Education Directorate

Wards Affected: All

Purpose

This report presents a summary of the Parentwise and Pupilwise survey process undertaken across Fife in academic session 2023/24, with a focus on the Cowdenbeath area results

Recommendation(s)

The committee is asked to:-

1. **Provide comments and feedback** on the findings and considerations of next steps.
2. **Note** that schools would welcome contact from elected members to discuss their approach to engaging with parents/carers and pupils, as well as how they are responding to the findings of the ParentWise and PupilWise 23/24 surveys.

Resource Implications

N/A

Legal & Risk Implications

There are no legal or risk implications identified at this stage

Impact Assessment

An EqIA has not been completed and is not necessary for the following reasons: no change or revision to existing policies is proposed by this report.

Consultation

Work to develop the surveys has involved consultation with a range of pupils, parents/carers and staff from across sectors, including strategic leads working to evidence progress on the Education Directorate Plan. These surveys represent the largest scale consultation activities undertaken by the Education Directorate.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) has now been enacted into law in Scotland. This legislation emphasises seeking pupils' views on their needs, involving relevant parties in discussions, and understanding how children wish to be treated. Additionally, the act acknowledges the rights and responsibilities of parents, offering support to empower them in fulfilling their roles as duty bearers within the convention.
- 1.2 As a directorate, Education is committed to ensuring that children, young people and parents/carers have their say about Fife nurseries and schools and that their views are listened to and acted upon. This paper provides information about work in Fife to gather views on a large scale using the Pupilwise and Parentwise online surveys, implemented this session for the fourth time.
- 1.3 The surveys were first introduced in session 2011/12. These were designed to complement the range of methods where views are gathered locally and nationally and as a way of encouraging pupil and parental participation to inform service evaluation and improvement planning. This approach allows schools to compare their individual profiles with the profile for their sector and cluster schools in Fife. The survey results provide data that supports the continual cycle of improvement, which in turn helps to raise standards and expectations of service provision across Fife.
- 1.4 The surveys normally take place every third school session, however, due to the global pandemic, there was no Parentwise or Pupilwise survey completed in session 20/21. Instead, schools sought views within their own establishments during this period. Gathering the information now is especially important, to help to form an accurate picture across Fife of parents and pupils' views as society recovers post pandemic.
- 1.5 The surveys have taken place four times since development, with the number of respondents increasing over time:
 - Session 2011/12: 14,249 pupils + 4,609 parents = 18,858
 - Session 2014/15: 23,047 pupils + 3,162 parents = 26,209
 - Session 2017/18: 23,440 pupils + 9,913 parents = 33,353
 - Session 2023/24: 27,418 pupils + 13,463 parents = 40,881

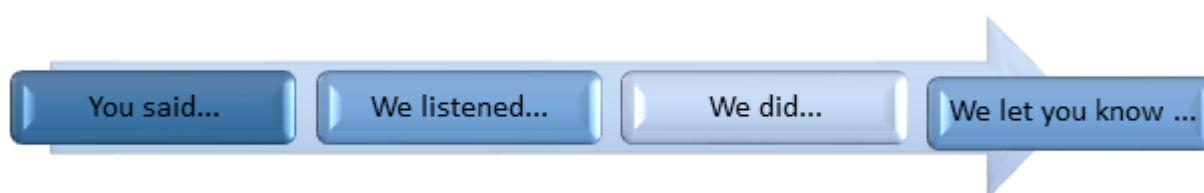
Pupilwise	2011/12	2014/15	2017/18	2023/24
No of responses	14,249	22,962	23,440	27,418
Total Fife Pupil Roll	35,158	54,400	55,386	54,816
Response Rate	41%	42%	42%	50%

Parentwise	2011/12	2014/15	2017/18	2023/24
No of responses	4,261	3,159	9,913	13,463
Total Fife Pupil Roll	35,281	54,400	55,386	54,816
Response Rate	12%	6%	18%	25%

Figure 1: Pupilwise and Parentwise surveys - Overall Fife Response rates

During this time, and in response to feedback, the surveys have been further developed and improved to adapt to changing contexts and to enable and encourage as many people as possible to take part. This aims to help make them more inclusive and accessible to younger children and pupils with additional support needs, as well as to ensure the questions remain relevant and worthwhile. Most recently, guidance has been devised for practitioners to support younger pupils to complete the process. Parentwise Surveys have been promoted through posters, Groupcall messages and the sharing of surveys via QR codes to promote and increase the number of parental respondents.

- 1.6 Gathering parental views is only an initial step in the parental involvement process, what happens next is what makes the difference. Parents should not only feel their views are listened to but that these are taken account of and further, it is essential that parents feel informed of what happens as a result of them sharing their views. This process can be simply described as:



2.0 Response Rates

2.1 *Pupilwise Response:*

- During the period January 2024 to March 2024, 27,418 children and young people took part in the Pupilwise survey. This is a 50% response rate which is an 8% increase in responses compared to the 17/18 Pupilwise survey.
- The number of respondents to Pupilwise can be broken down further, as follows: 1,901 children in nursery (33% response rate) 17,769 children in P1-7 (66% response rate) and 7,748 young people in S1-6 (35% response rate).
- With the majority of primary pupils responding to the survey and less than half responding in nursery and secondary, it is important to consider this when interpreting the results.

2.2 *Parentwise Response:*

- During the period January 2024 to March 2024, 13,463 parents/carers across Fife responded to the Parentwise survey, a 25% response rate which is a 7% increase in the number of responses from the 17/18 Parentwise survey.
- The number of respondents to Parentwise can be broken down further as follows: 1331 parents of children at nursery (23% response rate) 7872 parents of P1-7 children (29% response rate), 4,215 parents of young people in S1-6 (19% response rate) 45 parents of young people in Special Schools (28% response rate).

- While there was an overall increase in response since the last Parentwise survey, the response rate was less than half in all sectors. It is important to consider this when interpreting the results. Going forward, schools must continue to engage parents and carers to gather views using a variety of approaches in their parent engagement strategy.
- 2.3 *Parent/Carer responses* - This session, of the 13,463 responses, 86 identified themselves as being foster carers, 132 identified as Kinship Carers and 50 as Carer (which includes all other forms of care). There were 746 Fife looked after children at the time of the survey, as well as a further group of looked after pupils from outwith Fife, therefore an approx. 36% response rate. Work will continue to be done to look at these numbers closely and to notice patterns relating to area, individual establishment and age-group, so that follow-up work can take place.
- 2.4 The results from both surveys were shared with schools/nurseries in May 2024 to enable them to reflect on feedback and to consider next steps in their individual improvement plans for the coming session. Results will now be shared more widely, at cluster, local area level, authority and partnership levels, to ensure that the pupil and parental views influence wider self-evaluation processes and improvement planning.

3.0 Pupilwise Survey Findings

- 3.1 The Pupilwise survey poses a series of statements to children and young people relating to the Wellbeing Indicators (safe, healthy, active, nurtured, achieving, responsible, respected and included). The percentages shown below relate to the combined positive responses made to these statements from across the sectors in the Cowdenbeath area. The percentages are shown in *Italics* with the Fife-wide results shown in brackets.
- 3.2 Schools will feedback their results on surveys via their individual Parent Councils and wider parent forums and with pupils appropriate to age and stage. They will consider the data from their survey, alongside people views, direct observation and other data to inform their improvement planning.
- 3.3 **Safe and Nurtured**
- *74%* (73%) of pupils report that they feel safe at nursery/school.
 - *50%* (47%) feel that at least one adult knows them well in school/nursery.
 - *74%* (74%) say that they know who they can talk to in school/nursery if they are upset or worried about something.
 - *79%* (78%) report that they learn in school how to stay safe when using technology online to communicate with others (e.g. internet, social networking, mobile phones and email).
 - *49%* (51%) say that their school listens to their concerns about bullying.
 - *55%* (53%) say that their school takes action following reports of bullying.

3.4 **Healthy and Active**

- 83% (82%) of pupils report that their school encourages them to be healthy and to take part in physical activity (e.g. Physical Education, outdoor learning, extra-curricular taster sessions/events)
- 70% (67%) report that in school they learn about healthy life choices (such as healthy eating).
- 81% (81%) feel they have friends they can go to if they have a worry.
- 48% (47%) believe that school helps them to become more confident.
- 62% (58%) feel that school is helping them to make healthy life choices – sexual health.
- 76% (77%) feel school is helping them to make healthy life choices – the dangers of drugs, alcohol and smoking.
- 60% (61%) feel their school is helping them to become more resilient and to cope with challenges.
- 38% (42%) say that they like being at their school most of the time.

3.5 **Achieving and Responsible**

- 67% (64%) of pupils say that staff talk to them about how they can improve their learning.
- 72% (71%) think that they are making good progress in their learning.
- 69% (68%) report that people in school help them with their learning when they need it.
- 69% (66%) say that they can access support to enable them to achieve progress in their learning.
- 48% (49%) say that there is a positive behaviour ethos in their school which allows them to learn.
- 64% (61%) say that school has helped them know what skills they might need for a range of different careers.
- 55% (53%) believe that their school knows about the things they are good at.
- 30% (29%) believe that their school knows what they like doing when they are not in school.
- 65% (67%) report that their parents/carers talk to them about their learning at home.
- 60% (55%) feel that their school and parents /carers work together to support them (S1 to S6 only).

3.6 Respected and Included

- 65% (63%) of Fife pupils think that school treats them fairly and with respect.
- 67% (66%) report that staff listen to them and pay attention to what they say.
- 62% (61%) report that they feel welcome in their school.
- 75% (74%) think that school makes sure they know about their rights and responsibilities.
- 43% (45%) feel that they are treated with respect by other pupils in school.
- 50% (50%) say they get the chance to share their ideas about what they like most and least about school and how to make school better.
- 68% (63%) feel they were given help by school to feel prepared for their move from Primary to Secondary school.
- 60% (56 %) feel that when they started Secondary school that their lessons were at the right level at them in most of their classes
- 73% (64%) feel that they have been given support to think about what they want to do when they leave school.
- 70% (61%) feel that they have been given help to find out about possible next steps in preparation for leaving school.
- 53% (47%) feel that their school has helped to prepare them for the world of work.
- 85% (87%) say that they are happy.
- 82% (86%) say that they enjoy learning.
- 75% (78%) say they get the chance to share their ideas and choose to do things they like to do in school.

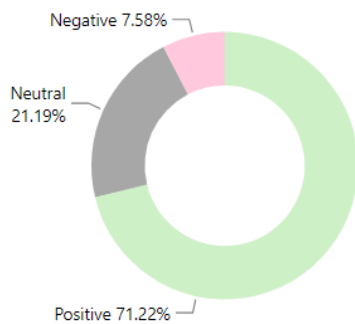
3.7 NEXT STEPS in response to Pupilwise results

Overall, in Fife, the majority of pupil responses to the survey are positive, averaging 63% positive responses across the three sectors. This suggests that pupils feel they have a good quality of wellbeing experience in Fife schools. This is echoed in the Cowdenbeath Area returns, with the majority responses are positive (averaging 64% across the sectors), and with sector responses as follows:

- Nursery: 71% (Fife Wide 82%)
- Primary: 70% (Fife Wide 69%)
- Secondary: 56% (Fife Wide 52%)

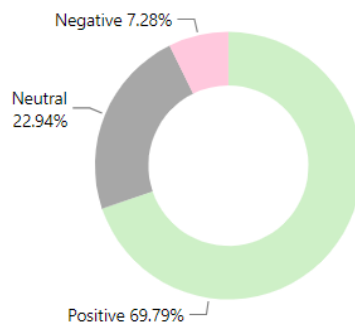
Nursery

Summary of Responses by Nursery



Primary

Summary of Responses by Primary



Secondary

Summary of Responses by Secondary

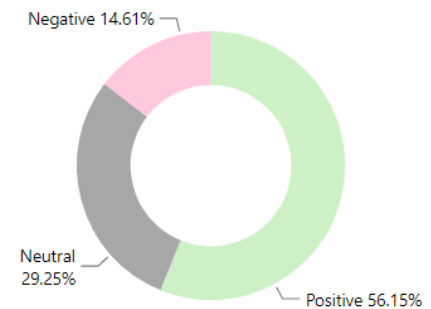


Figure 2: Pupilwise Survey 23/24: Cowdenbeath Area responses by sector.

3.8 Analysis of the data shows that most pupils (75% or above) responded positively about the following themes, these are therefore identified as **overall strengths**:

- *Safe and Healthy Environment*: Pupils feel they know who they can talk to if they are upset or worried and that school teaches them effectively about how to stay safe when using technology to communicate online.
- *Promoting Healthy Life choices*: School encourages healthy living and participation in physical activities and guidance to make healthy lifestyle choices.
- *Learning and Engagement*: Pupils report feeling happy and enjoying their learning experiences. Pupils get opportunities to share ideas and engage in activities they like.

3.9 Analysis of the data shows that less than half of pupils (49% or below) responded positively about the following themes, these are therefore identified as **aspects for focused attention**:

- *Behaviour & Relationships*: There is a need to continue to promote positive relationships and learning environments. This will include awareness raising around approaches used by schools (e.g. around bullying and managing children's behaviour).
- *Achievements*: Work will be undertaken to improve recognition and celebration of both in-school and out of school achievements. This will give feedback to pupils on skills development, supporting their self-awareness and contributing to building resilience, self-esteem and confidence.
- *Positive Destinations*: We will work to support pupils' development and awareness of transferable skills to support their decision making and preparations for life, learning and the world of work.

4.0 Parentwise Survey Findings

4.1 The Parentwise survey poses a series of statements relating to the Wellbeing Indicators (safe, healthy, active, nurtured, achieving, responsible, respected, and included). The percentages shown below relate to the combined positive responses of parents with children from across all sectors in the Cowdenbeath area. The percentages are shown in *italics* with the brackets show the Fife-wide results.

4.2 Safe and Nurtured

- *81%* (*78%*) of parents report that their child feels safe at school/nursery.
- *75%* (*69%*) feel staff really know their child as an individual.
- *89%* (*86%*) know who to contact if they are upset or worried about something that is affecting their child.
- *59%* (*60%*) of parents across all sectors feel that their child's school teaches their child how they can stay safe when using technology online to communicate with others (internet, social networking, mobile phones, and email).
- *55%* (*50%*) of parents feel that their child's school/nursery listens to concerns on bullying.
- *48%* (*44%*) of parents feel that their child's school/nursery takes action following reports on bullying concerns.

4.3 Healthy and Active

- *88%* (*82%*) of parents feel that the school encourages their child to be healthy and to take part in physical activity (e.g. Physical Education, Outdoor Learning, Extra-curricular, Taster Sessions/Events)
- *73%* (*65%*) feel that the school/nursery encourages their child to make healthy life choices – food and health.
- *71%* (*65%*) feel that the school/nursery supports their child's emotional wellbeing.
- *67%* (*60%*) feel that the school/nursery helps their child to learn how to make friends and develop good relationships
- *45%* (*45%*) feel that the school/nursery encourages their child to make healthy life choices – relationships, sexual health and parenthood.
- *44%* (*46%*) feel that the school/nursery encourages their child to make healthy life choices – substance misuse (i.e. The dangers of drugs, alcohol and/or smoking).
- *75%* (*71%*) of parents who took part in the survey feel that their child likes being at school/nursery most of the time.

4.4 Achieving and responsible

- *81%* (*78%*) of parents report that their school/nursery keeps them informed about their child's progress (e.g. reports cards, parents' nights).
- *77%* (*75%*) feel that their child is making progress in school/nursery.

- 66% (64%) know what their child needs to do next to make progress in their learning.
- 68% (63%) feel that their child has access to the relevant support to enable them to achieve at school/nursery
- 65% (60%) feel that there is a positive behaviour ethos in the school/nursery which allows for effective learning to take place.
- 61% (53%) feel that the school/nursery is teaching their child resilience skills and strategies to cope with challenges.
- 53% (54%) think that the school/nursery plans/offers opportunities for wider achievement.
- 66% (61%) agree that the school/nursery recognises and values their child's achievements within and outwith school.
- 68% (64%) think that the school/nursery provides opportunities for their child to develop their personal and social skills through a wide range of activities.
- 61% (58%) think that the school/nursery provides information about how they can engage with supporting their child's learning at home.
- 58% (49%) say that the school/nursery gives opportunities for family learning, which focuses on children and parents learning together.

4.5 Respected and included

- 74% (71%) of parents report that the staff in the school/nursery treat their child fairly and with respect.
- 60% (56%) of parents report that the school/nursery asks for, and considers, their views.
- 64% (56%) of parents report that the school/nursery provides opportunities for their child to progress and achieve from outdoor learning experiences.
- 66% (64%) of parents say that their child is able to participate in all school activities and the school has measures in place to minimise the cost of the school day.
- 59% (54%) of parents say that the school has clear guidance and supports in place to ensure that no child is disadvantaged by personal circumstances.
- 75% (73%) of parents say that they feel welcome in the school/nursery.
- 78% (79%) say that the school provides regular information about the life of the school/nursery (e.g. information letters, newsletters, email, school/nursery websites etc.).
- 49% (48%) report that they know about the school/nursery priorities for improvement.
- 62% (59%) say that the school helps to prepare their child for all transitions (e.g. from nursery to primary, primary to secondary, for leaving school or for when moving school).
- 70% (67%) say that they are given opportunities to participate in the school/nursery community.

Next steps in response to Parentwise Feedback

- 4.6 Overall in Fife, the majority (63%) of parental responses to the survey are positive and indicate a good level of confidence in Fife schools and nurseries. In the Cowdenbeath Area the majority (66%) of parental responses are positive, 3% higher than Fife overall.

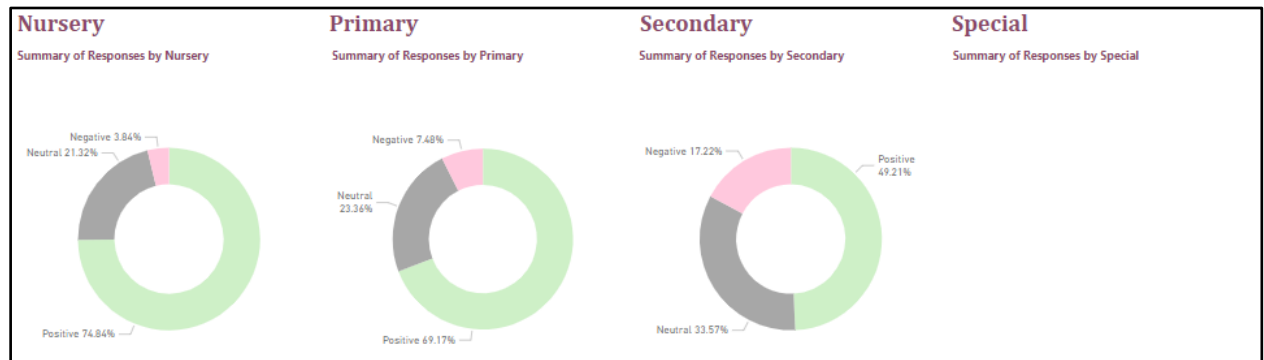


Figure 3: Parentwise Survey 23/24: Cowdenbeath Area responses by sector

The overall positive responses can be broken down further by sector (see Figure 3 above). For the Cowdenbeath area, the data is as follows with percentages shown in italics with the Fife-wide results in brackets. For the Cowdenbeath area 75% nursery, 69% primary and 49% secondary.

- Nursery: 75% (74%)
- Primary: 69% (69%)
- Secondary: 49% (47%)

- 4.7 Analysis of the data shows that most (75% or more) parents responded positively about the following themes, these are therefore identified as **overall strengths**:

Safe and Healthy Environment: Parents/Carers feel that their child is safe in school and know who to contact if they are upset or worried about something that is affecting their child and that the school encourages their child to be healthy and take part in physical activity.

Parental Engagement: Parents report that they are kept informed about their child's progress through report cards, parents' nights and that their child is making progress. Parents feel suitably informed about the life of the school through information letters, newsletters, email and websites.

- 4.8 Analysis of the data shows that less than half of parents (49% or below) responded positively about the following themes, these are therefore identified as **aspects for focused attention**:

Healthy Life Choices: Further consideration needs to be given as to how the school/nursery promotes learning about healthy life choices appropriate to age and stage, for a) relationships, sexual health and parenthood, and b) substance misuse.

Communication, Relationships and Behaviour: Continued reflection is needed on how to improve communication, parental awareness and confidence in nurseries/schools' approaches to managing behaviour and building positive relationships (to include reflection on communication and handling of bullying concerns).

Parental Involvement & Family Learning: Further consideration is needed around approaches to engaging with parents, how to promote opportunities for family learning that focus on children and parents learning together and how to improve parental engagement in schools'/nurseries' priorities for improvement.

5.0 Conclusions

- 5.1 The Pupilwise and Parentwise surveys have been effective in gathering the views of a significant number of pupils and parents/carers across Fife. The results will be used to identify strengths and areas for focused attention across all sectors, at individual educational establishment level and at Fife-wide strategic level. We seek comments and suggestions from the Cowdenbeath Area Committee, regarding next steps and any other potential aspects for consideration.
- 5.2 To effectively recognise and realise children's rights, it is crucial for all educational establishments to integrate the principles of the UNCRC into their parental engagement strategies and approaches to pupil participation and engagement. Fostering a collaborative environment that prioritises the well-being and development of every child.
- 5.3 Educational establishments will build on their successes and continue to work hard to enhance parental partnership and engagement further. It is essential for all sectors to improve their approaches to parental engagement, which incorporates parental involvement and family learning, by working together, we can ensure that our children and young people in Fife thrive and flourish, supporting their learning and achievements.

List of Appendices

N/A

Background Papers

N/A

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4 September 2024
Agenda Item No. 9

Area Housing Plan 2024-25

Report by: John Mills, Head of Housing Services

Wards Affected: 7 & 8

Purpose

The report seeks Area Committee approval for a revised area housing plan which sets out area performance, service delivery and highlights key housing issues for Members' consideration.

Recommendation

Members are asked to consider and approve the Cowdenbeath Area Housing Plan for 2024 – 2025.

Resource Implications

Work is taking place within agreed HRA local and capital budgets.

Legal & Risk Implications

There are no legal / risk implications arising from this report.

Impact Assessment

An EqIA (Equality Impact Assessment) is not required because the report does not propose a change or revision to existing policies and practices.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The Council has a vision to create a Fairer Fife where all residents live good lives, make informed choices and have a sense of control so that they can reach their full potential and where all children are safe, happy and healthy. At the heart of the Plan for Fife is the aim to reduce inequalities and to promote fairness in everything that we do. It is recognised that having a fairer Fife will benefit everyone. Housing Services, as the largest landlord in Fife, can improve the lives and opportunities of its tenants through effective neighbourhood management and community led improvement initiatives.
- 1.2 The Area Housing Plan shows how we work with partners and local communities to improve housing services in the area. Tenant and residents have told us their concerns and issues where they live and together, we have identified what we can do to address these issues. We have looked at how well we are doing managing our homes to prioritise which services we need to improve.
- 1.3 The plan links into different policies and strategies across Fife including; Plan 4 Fife, Local Housing Strategy, Cowdenbeath Local Community Plan, Area Lettings Plan and Pathway to Improvement (Annual Return on the Social Housing Charter).

2.0 Development of the Area Housing Plan

- 2.1 The previous Area Housing Plan covered the period 2023-26. Since then, we have developed a new annual Area Housing Plan focusing on key performance areas in line with discussions with the Area Committee Conveners and Vice-Conveners.
- 2.2 Tenant participation is a key part of our housing strategy. Being part of organised groups gives our tenants and residents a greater voice when talking about local issues. We work closely with Tenant and Resident Associations and carry out area walkabouts with representatives and partner services to identify areas of concern, creating action plans and reporting on progress.
- 2.3 The Area Housing Plan highlights performance and states tenants in Cowdenbeath Area are 83.7% satisfied with the overall service provided. 68.4% of tenants are satisfied with the management of their neighbourhoods.
- 2.4 In Cowdenbeath over recent years, the Council has delivered Affordable Housing. Currently, there is an acute need for more council new build properties in this Area. We have linked in our Strategic Housing Investment Plan (SHIP) to give Members the opportunity to explore potential new build sites in the Cowdenbeath Area.
- 2.5 We have highlighted the role of the Housing Investment Programme and the Council's intention to continue to invest in council houses. Investments include; kitchens, central heating, bathrooms, roofs, rewiring, smoke detectors, secure door entry systems, structural works, electrical testing and external walls.

3.0 Local Issues Action Plans

- 3.1 It is recognised there is a need for more affordable housing in the Cowdenbeath Area. In year 2023/24, 7 properties were bought in the Cowdenbeath area. A further 97 properties are under development in Lumphinnans; 19 under development in Cowdenbeath and 51 in Lochore. The new development at Jenny Gray House, Lochgelly will provide 44 properties for older persons housing.

The lack of family housing / specific needs housing is recognised as a key housing issue throughout the area. We will provide feedback on the number of tenants who have downsized using the Tenant Incentive Scheme, we will build larger family homes, we will ensure 30% of the affordable housing programme is for specific needs customers including 6.5% for wheelchair housing and will carry out adaptations to existing homes to keep tenants at home where feasible.

- 3.2 We are committed to a number of projects throughout the area which will see improvements to the communal areas of some of our flatted properties. We have also committed to carrying out more estate walkabouts so that we can work together with the tenants and residents to identify further issues that they feel are important to address.
- 3.3 We will continue to work in partnership with Safer Communities and take robust action against perpetrators of anti-social behaviour. We will utilise allocation discretion where appropriate and increase the number of "Housing First" tenancies within the area.

4.0 Area Lettings Plan

- 4.1 There are more people looking for rehousing in the Cowdenbeath area than we have housing becoming available. There is a lack of larger properties within the area and we are committed to identifying areas for development to include larger family homes.
- 4.2 We continue to offer housing options advice which provides applicants with information on all tenure types which are available, maximising their opportunities for re-housing.
- 4.3 The Home Swap scheme continues to see increased number of households registering their interest in moving to more suitable properties with 53 completed exchanges taking place last year.

5.0 Conclusions

- 5.1 Through the Area Housing Plan, we have identified local issues through engagement with local communities and elected member and create action plans to address these. This is intended to encourage member scrutiny of our work to address those concerns and demonstrate improved outcomes.
- 5.2 The Area Lettings Plan sets out the stock profile, identifying where there is housing need and how we intend to improve the lack of larger family homes, as well as a plan to create a balanced community.

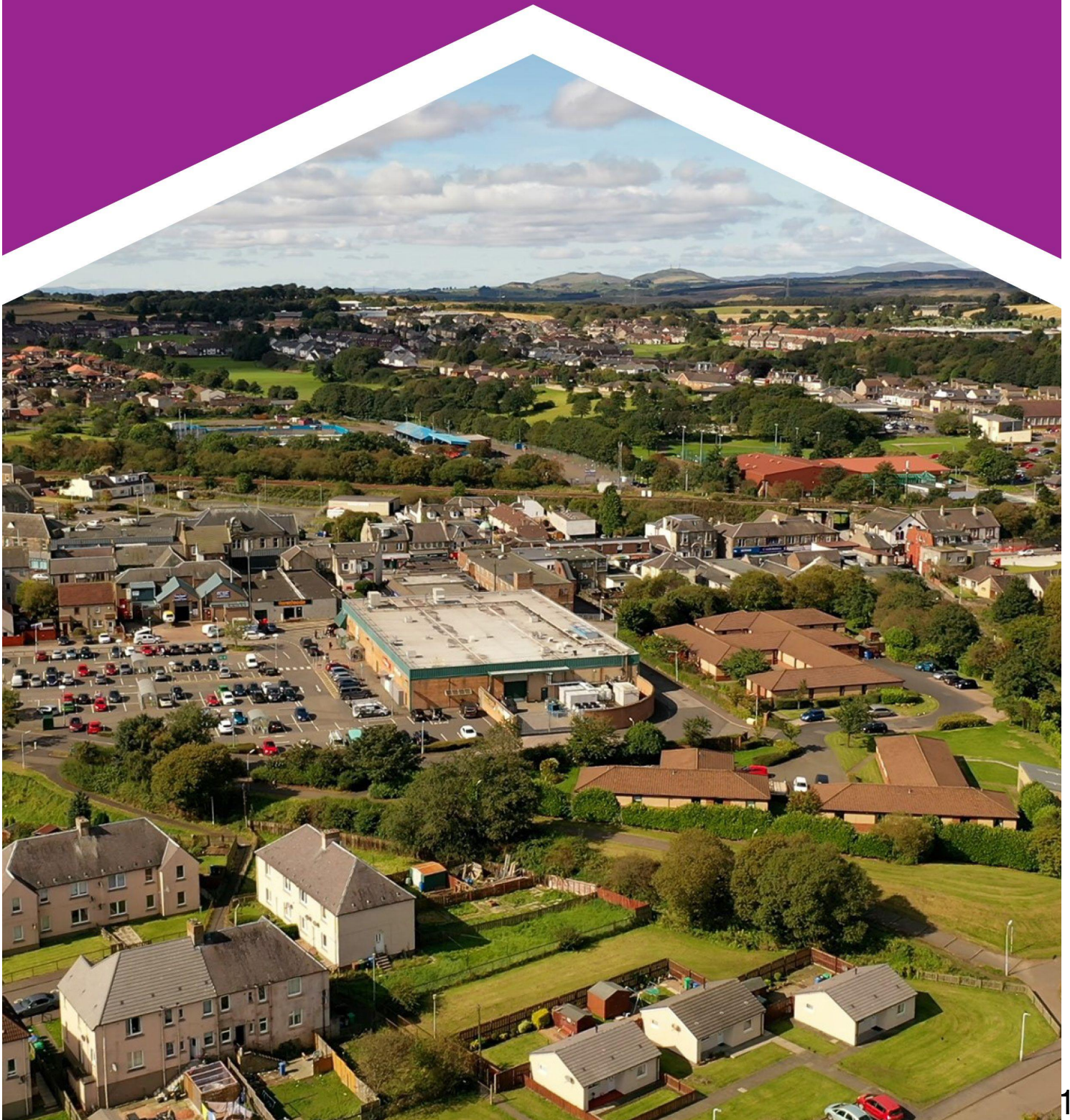
List of Appendices

1. Cowdenbeath Area Housing Plan 2024-25
2. Cowdenbeath Area Lettings Plan 2024-27

Report Contact

Amanda Cathrew
Cowdenbeath Area Housing Manager
Brunton House, Cowdenbeath
Amanda.cathrew@fife.gov.uk

Cowdenbeath Area Housing Plan 2024/25



Introduction

Fife Housing Partnership supports the [Scottish Governments Housing to 2040](#) vision for everyone in Scotland to have a safe, high-quality home that is affordable and meets their needs in the place they want to be. [The Fife Housing Partnership Local Housing Strategy 2022-2027](#) is the strategic plan in which the key areas of focus are outlined:

1. Ending Homelessness
2. More Homes in the Right Places
3. A Suitable Home
4. A Quality Home
5. A Warm Low Carbon Home

Whilst the Local Housing Strategy sets out the strategic plan for Fife, the area housing team are responsible for the delivery of local plans for and with local people. This Area Housing Plan aims to illustrate how Cowdenbeath area housing team works with our partners and local communities to improve how we deliver housing services in the local area.

The area housing plan is our commitment to the ongoing work required on:

- New Homes,
- Letting Empty Houses,
- Improving Property,
- Looking after tenancies.

Working in partnership with tenants, residents and elected members we have identified the key areas of focus for improvement, which have been described with in the content of this Cowdenbeath Area Housing Plan. The Cowdenbeath Area Housing Plan was approved by Cowdenbeath Area Committee on 04/09/2024 (To be confirmed pending approval)

This plan supports Fife Council wider strategies, policies and plans. The below infographic demonstrates the link between this area housing plan and the wider strategies, policies and plans that it supports:-



Cowdenbeath Area is part of the Cowdenbeath and West Fife Housing Market Area and includes the electoral wards of:


Ward 7- Cowdenbeath; Kelty; Lumphinnans; Hill of Beath; Crossgates

Ward 8- Ballingry; Crosshill; Lochore; Lochgelly Cardenden; Benarty

Through the [Fife Housing Register](#) webpage, you can now view our new [interactive map](#) which shows where all housing partners have properties. This will help you make an informed decision about your preferred areas of choice if you want to submit a Fife Housing Register application.

Performance Information

Fife Council is the largest landlord in the Cowdenbeath area. The stock profile below shows that we are responsible for the management of 5526 homes.

	Stock by type	Fife	Stock by size	Fife
	Sheltered	180	Bedsit	31
	Flat/Maisonette	133	1 bed	992
	4 in a block	1582	2 bed	2539
	Flat/Tenement	779	3 bed	1730
	High rise flat	0	4+ bed	234
	House	3032		
		1253		256
		1659		7422
		8152		14680
		4910		7515
		706		1220
		15666		

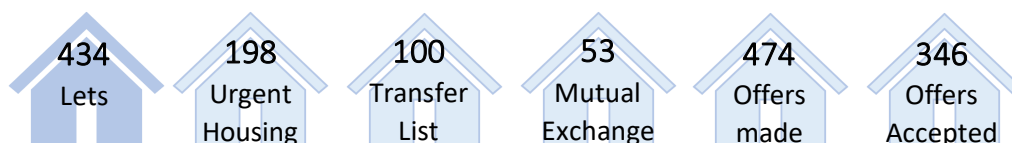
Cowdenbeath area contains 18% of all Fife Council stock, of which 96% is lettable. This means that we have 5282 properties that are available to let as tenancies. Stock that is not available for let is due to housing regeneration and stock improvements (see stock improvement section) or the properties being used for other purposes such as temporary accommodation. Our stock profile is consistent with the overall stock profile of Fife.

Every year in the Cowdenbeath area more people apply for housing than what becomes available. Our annual Letting Plan sets out the profile of properties we expect to become available in the following year and how we intend to distribute those properties between the different groups of applicants:

- Urgent Housing
- Transfer list
- Housing List

Allocations play a key role in ensuring that we make best use of housing stock, and we have committed to allocate properties fairly across all applicant categories.

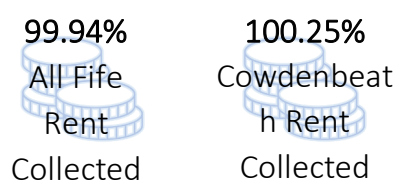
The Fife Housing Register waiting list shows that on the 14th August 2024, 1726 applicants have Cowdenbeath areas as their first area of choice, this accounts for 13.39% of all applicants. In 2023/24 Cowdenbeath area, made 474 offers of housing of which 74% were accepted.



Alongside our Letting Plan we also have Community Lettings Initiatives, or CLIs. CLI's allow a more flexible use of the allocations policy to address local need and demand and are developed in partnership with the local community. *For further information on any current CLI's, please see appendix 2.*

The Cowdenbeath housing team work hard to meet a range of housing needs. The cost-of-living crisis and economic uncertainty is making it difficult for some households to pay basic bills or access benefits.

Our percentage collection rate is calculated by dividing the Total Rent Collected by the Total Rent Charged and multiplying by 100%. In the simplest sense a collection rate of above 100% means that we have collected more rent than we have charged over the course of the year, and that rent arrears are decreasing. A collection rate of below 100% means that we have collected less than we have charged, and arrears are increasing. Fife's year end figure that has to be reported to Scottish Housing Regulator sat at 100.09%.



We can provide support with money advice, please speak with your housing management officer if you would like further information.

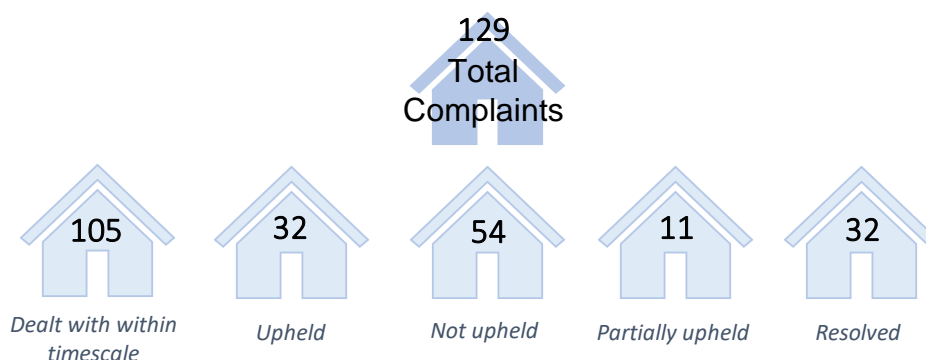
In our introduction, we confirmed that we support the Scottish Government Housing to 2040 strategy, and this includes addressing fuel poverty. It is estimated that 24% of Fife households are living in fuel poverty, through a partnership approach we continue to work towards reducing fuel poverty across Fife for all tenants and residents.

Every year, a customer satisfaction survey is carried out providing you the opportunity to tell us how you think we are performing as your landlord. The

satisfaction survey is also used to report the annual return on the charter. The most recent satisfaction survey showed us that:

	Cowdenbeath	Fife
% satisfied with overall service provided by Fife Council	83.7%	83.14%
% who think we are good at keeping you informed about our services and decisions	69.4%	81.69%
% satisfied with the opportunities we give you to participate in our decision-making process	78.6%	78.00%
% satisfied with the quality of their home	84.8%	83.00%
% satisfied with the repair service we provide	81.4%	83.94%
% satisfied with our contribution to the management of your neighbourhood	68.4%	84.57%
% that think their rent is good value for money	68.4%	77.25%

The customer satisfaction results help us to identify areas we need to improve. Alongside our customer satisfaction survey, housing complaints are also a valuable source of information that help to identifying recurring or underlying problems.



The top reasons for all complaints in Cowdenbeath of **2023/24** are as follows:

Complaint Reasons	Total number
Poor communications including lack of notice, consultation & engagement	22
Unsatisfactory response to previous complaint / request for service / enquiry / reported fault	16
Inappropriate staff attitude / behaviour	13
Failure to respond to previous complaint / request for service / enquiry / reported fault	9
Quality of Workmanship including mess/damage, unsatisfactory completion, quality of products etc	8

Annual Area Housing Budget

Housing Services activities are taking place within agreed Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budget. The HRA Capital Investment Plan for 2022–25 was approved at full committee on the 24 of February 2022 and remains the approved capital investment plan for the HRA.

The area housing budget that was approved for Cowdenbeath area by elected members was £380,116 for this financial year. The area housing budget is used for local projects, and to date we have spent £134,961 on local projects in Cowdenbeath area. These projects include:-

- Tenancy Assistance
- Estate Improvements
- Estate Clearances
- Garden Works
- Fencing

In the next 6 month period, we have identified the following project(s):-

- Parking
- Public Walkway Improvements
- Communal Drying Area Improvements
- Continued Tenancy Assistance

Looking forward...

We will continue to identify area projects through consultation with local communities and agree throughout the year with elected members at area Ward meetings.

Estate Management

Estate Management refers to services that aim to give tenants and residents quiet enjoyment of their home in a safe and secure environment they can take pride in. It is not simply about looking after buildings and the physical environment around them. Cowdenbeath area housing team recognise that Estate Management is an important aspect of our role as the landlord, it is an important service not only for tenants but all residents in Cowdenbeath.

We monitor our neighbourhoods by carrying out regular walkabouts with tenants, residents and partner agencies. We monitor changes to the [Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation](#) (SIMD) and [Place Standard Tool](#) this highlights estates that require attention.

Housing Regeneration

A Housing Regeneration Programme for the period 2022-25 has been agreed, the programme ensures that People and Place are at the heart of the process. As part of the regeneration programme, significant improvements are being made to the Martin Crescent area in Ballingry. The 24 properties within 3 blocks at Martin Crescent, are scheduled for demolition commencing October 2024. There are currently no plans for the site, following demolition the area will be covered with grass seed.

Stock Improvement and Affordable Housing Programme

The Plan for Fife 2017-2027 through the 'Thriving Places' theme identifies the challenge of a rapidly changing population with around 20,000 new homes, of all tenure, needed over ten years. To achieve this, we are committed to building new homes and in the Cowdenbeath area we have built 36 new homes in Cardenden, 29 in Cowdenbeath and 6 in Lochgelly since 2017. We recognise that under the Right to Buy Scheme which was active between 1980 – 2016, 6428 properties were sold in the Cowdenbeath area, we are now purchasing properties back from the open market in the areas of greatest demand to assist those in the greatest need of housing. In the previous year 2023/24, 7 properties were bought in the Cowdenbeath area.

- 97 properties are under development in Lumphinnans
- 19 underdevelopment in Cowdenbeath
- 51 in Lochore.

The new development at Jenny Gray House, Lochgelly will provide 44 properties for older persons housing.

You can find out more about what is planned in Cowdenbeath by viewing our [Strategic Housing Investment Plan](#) projects.

As a landlord, we are committed to ensuring that our properties meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard. The Scottish Housing Quality Standard sets priorities to ensure our houses are:

- Above tolerable standard
- Free from serious disrepair
- Energy Efficient
- Provided with modern facilities.
- Healthy Safe and Secure

We have Housing Improvement Programmes that help us in meeting the standard, below are a list of items we class as an element that we have renewal programmes for:

- Central Heating
- Double-glazed windows
- External doors
- Extractor fans for kitchen and bathroom
- Hard-wired smoke detectors
- Kitchen
- Roofs and rainwater goods
- Roughcasting
- Upgrading of electric consumer units
- Bathrooms

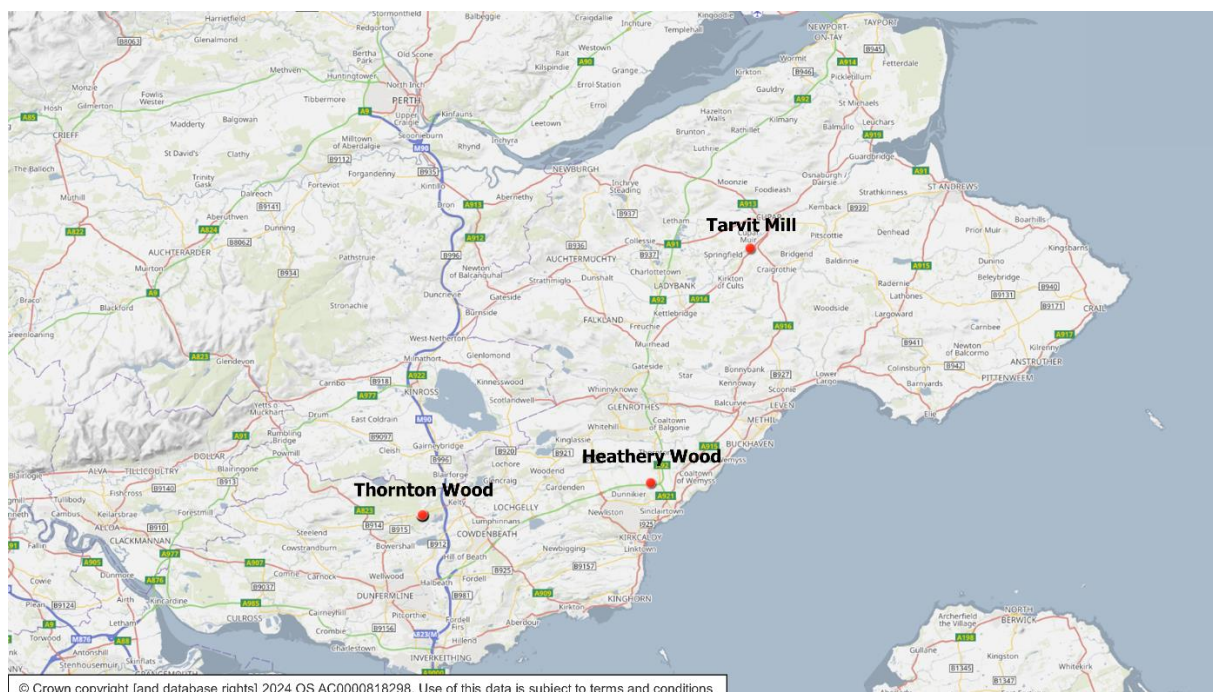
The Scottish Housing Quality Standard compliance rate for Fife as at 31/03/2024 is 92.15%, compared to the Scottish average of 83.87%.

The Energy Efficiency Standards for Social Housing (EESH) encourages landlords to improve the energy efficiency of social housing. In Fife we achieved a 89.47% compliance rate, against the Scottish average of 91.79%.

Gypsy Travellers are dedicated to living a travelling lifestyle and see travelling as an important part of their identity. In Fife we have three Gypsy Traveller sites which are undergoing improvement works, starting at Tarvit Mill site, to provide better facilities.

Thornton Wood site is part of the Cowdenbeath area. Thornton Wood is the smallest site of three across Fife.

The site has 12 pitches, and 1 bungalow currently used as an office. The tenants rent an amenity unit from us. This is a brick-built structure with pitched roof. It has a very small kitchen and bathroom. The Travellers sleep in their own caravans but cook and bathe in the amenity unit.



Safer Communities

Our Safer Communities team works to deliver community safety across Fife. Community safety covers a range of issues including crime, antisocial behaviour, public perception of crime and safety in our homes and on our roads. We have dedicated officers who work with colleagues across the council and partner organisations to improve the local environment, make people feel safer and reduce crime, its causes and the fear of crime.

Our Safer Communities team has responsibility for the enforcement and issuing of fixed penalty notices, in 2023-24 the following cases were reported within the Cowdenbeath area

Fixed Penalty notice / Order	Total number
Dog fouling fixed penalty notices	0
Fly tipping fixed penalty notices	6
Littering fixed penalty notices	3
Noise fixed penalty notices	0
Antisocial Behaviour Orders (ASBO)	1

We recognise that antisocial behaviour is not acceptable and that it can have a significant impact on the quality of life of individuals, families and the community as a whole. We are committed to tackling antisocial behaviour in our neighbourhoods and identifying the causes of such behaviour.

We are committed to working in partnership with other agencies to focus on early intervention and prevention of antisocial behaviour. This focus means that we recognise the need to take action at an early stage by:

- supporting people in changing their behaviours and reducing risk
- working closely with individuals and communities to help them find solutions to local problems
- offering tenancy assistance to encourage tenancy sustainment.

In the past year there has been **43** cases reported of Antisocial behaviour in the Cowdenbeath area.

Effective participation gives tenants an opportunity to influence decisions about the housing services they receive. We want to make sure that the tenant's voice is heard, influences decisions and shapes how service are improved to benefit our communities in the Cowdenbeath area. We also deliver our Down Your Street magazine to our tenants' tri-annually, this is another useful tool to help you keep informed. Getting involved gives you a greater voice, please visit our [Tenant Participation](#) webpage for more information.

The best way to get involved is through one of the local Tenant and Resident Associations, we have 3 in the Cowdenbeath area:

- Cardenden Residents Association Cardenden
- Ore valley Tenants Association Cardenden
- Sunnyside Court Tenants Association Cowdenbeath TRA

Looking forward...

During this year's walkabouts, tenants & residents of the Broad Street area, Cowdenbeath, showed enthusiasm to setting up a Tenant & Resident Association. The Tenant Participation Team and Cowdenbeath area team are currently assisting them with this.

Useful Information



Housing Services are a part of Fife Councils Communities directorate.

 03451 55 00 33

 Housing Services, Fife Council, Fife House, North Street, Glenrothes, KY7 5LT

[Cowdenbeath Customer Service Centre](#)

[Benarty Customer Service Point](#)

[Kelty Customer Service Point](#)



Area Lettings Plan Cowdenbeath 2024/25

Welcome

Welcome to the Cowdenbeath Local Lettings Plan. We have produced a Housing Area Plan with our customers for each of the 7 Areas in Fife. This plan sets out how we aim to make the best use of housing available, respond to Council pressures and challenges as well as plan for new build and other changes within the housing stock in the area.

We will give 6 monthly updates on progress with the plan to the Committee, and in between times we will update <https://www.fife.gov.uk/kb/housing> with events, progress and completed actions.

Link to other Documents:

Allocations Policy - [Housing Allocations Policy-March22.pdf](#)

Area Housing Plan - [Cowdenbeath Area Housing Plan](#)

Fife Council

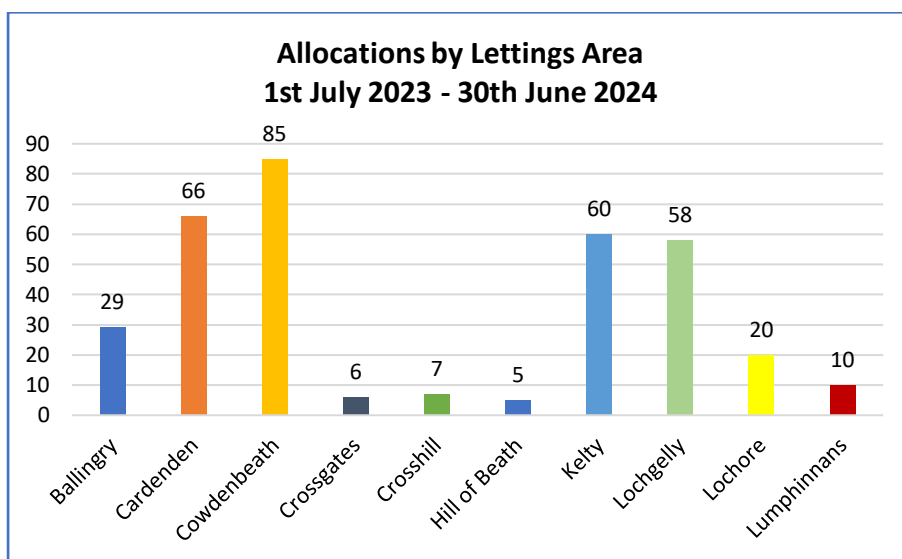
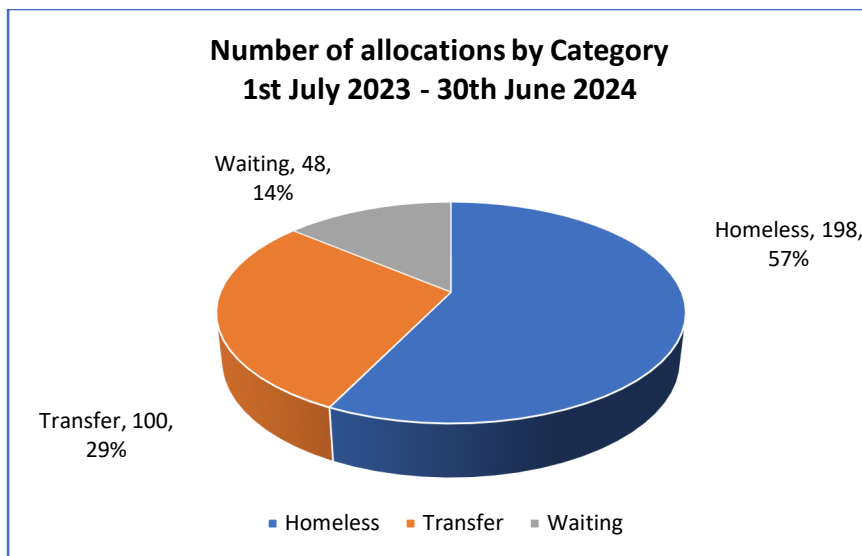
There are 10 Lettings Areas within the Cowdenbeath area which are:

Kelty	Hill-of Beath	Cowdenbeath	Lochgelly	Crossgates
Ballingry	Crosshill	Lumphinnans	Cardenden	Lochore

Fife Council has a total of 5282 lettable properties in the Cowdenbeath area. The chart below details the breakdown of the housing stock by property type and number of bedrooms.

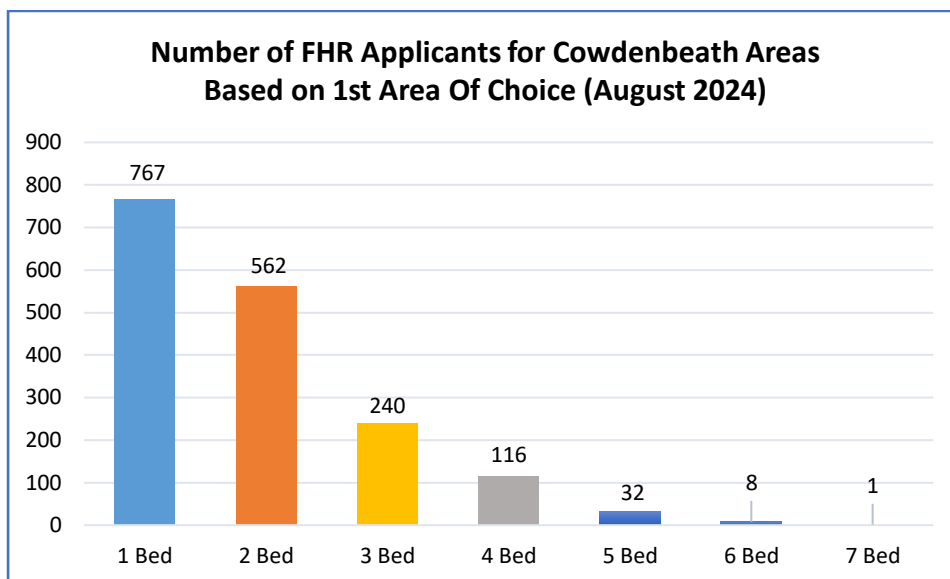
Lettable Stock	Description	Bedsit	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed	5 bed	6 bed	7 bed	5282
	BSH - Bungalow Sheltered	0	39	11	0	0	0	0	0	50
	BUN - Bungalow	0	296	81	24	7	1	1	0	410
	GF4 - Ground Floor 4 in Block	0	171	388	186	0	0	0	0	745
	GFL - Ground Floor Flat	2	132	139	20	0	0	0	0	293
	GSH - Sheltered No Stairs	10	75	29	9	2	0	0	0	125
	HSE - House	0	13	1142	1169	191	23	5	3	2546
	MAS - Maisonette	0	2	63	18	0	0	0	0	83
	UF4 - Upper Flat 4 in block	0	143	359	202	0	0	0	0	704
	UFL - Upper Flat	0	64	205	57	0	0	0	0	326

Applicants Housed



Allocation Priorities

Every year, more people apply for housing than there is available, so we have to set priorities. We must meet our legal duty and respond to a number of other challenges...



Our priority is to prevent homelessness wherever possible. Where this is not possible, through our Lettings Plan we aim to;

- help families with children move through temporary accommodation as quickly as possible
- provide a proportion of two-bedroom properties to single people in response to mismatches in supply and demand
- link offers of housing with appropriate help, support or care to ensure sustainable tenancies.
- Increase the number of Housing First Tenancies in partnership with Rock Trust
- Identify Young Care Leavers on fife Housing Register providing enhanced support to sustaining a tenancy.

We work as part of the Health and Social Care Partnership to;

- Help to prevent people going into hospital and return home as soon as possible
- Help children to move through the care system and sustain independent tenancies
- Assist households affected by domestic abuse to sustain tenancies without the fear of intimidation or harassment

Making the best use of available housing stock

- Support families who are overcrowded or under-occupying to move to more suitable homes. Look to provide assistance through Transfer Incentive Scheme to those eligible.
- Transfer led allocations to general needs properties, to create a chain of allocations to assist more households in housing need

- Assist households affected by illness, disability or other health conditions to live independently within their own home

Allocations Targets

Housing Needs Group	Target 2024 -25	1st July 23 - 30th June 24
Homelessness	65%	57%
Transfer/Priority General Needs	35%	43%

New Build Properties

During 2024/25 the following new build sites are scheduled:

Allocations will be transfer led to general needs properties, to create a chain of allocations to assist more households in housing need.

Cowdenbeath, Valley House, Hill Street

A total of 19 properties of the following property type and size

- 6 x 2 bedroom, general needs
- 5 x 2 bedroom, specific needs, including 1 wheelchair-adapted property
- 4 x 3 bedroom, general needs
- 2 x 4 bedroom, general needs
- 2 x 5 bedroom, general needs

Lochore, New Flockhouse

A total of 51 properties of the following property types and size

- 16 x 2 bedroom, general needs
- 8 x 3 bedroom, general needs
- 2 x 4 bedroom, general needs
- 4 x 1 Bedroom amenity bungalow
- 2 x 2 Bedroom amenity bungalow
- 3 x 2 Bedroom wheelchair bungalow
- 4 x 1 Bedroom cottage flats
- 12 x 2 Bedroom cottage flats

Lumphinnans, Lochgelly Road

A total of 97 properties of the following property types and size

- 4 x 2 bedroom, specific needs wheelchair cottages
- 2 x 3 bedroom, specific needs wheelchair cottages
- 14 x 2 bedroom, specific needs amenity cottages
- 25 x 2 bedroom, general needs terraced villas
- 26 x 3 bedroom, general needs semi-detached villas
- 21 x 4 bedroom, general needs semi-detached villas
- 3 x 5 bedroom, general needs semi-detached villas
- 2 x 6 bedroom, general needs semi-detached villas

In Addition to the above, work will also commence at the Jenny Gray, site at Lochgelly. These older person properties are currently estimated for completion in 2026.

Housing Options

FHR Partner Stock

Ore Valley Housing Association

Ore Valley have the largest FHR partner stock in the Cowdenbeath area with 670 properties. 60% of their stock are two-bedroom properties with 26% being 3 bedroom, 12% 1 bedroom and 2% being 4 bedrooms.

Their largest stock types are houses with 396 and upper flatted accommodation with 115. The remainder of stock is made from other flatted accommodation and bungalows.

Ore Valley have stock in the following lettings areas: Cardenden (447), Lochgelly (150), Lochore (36), Ballingry (21), Cowdenbeath (8), Lumphinnans (5), Crossgates (2) and Kelty (1).

Kingdom Housing Association

Kingdom Housing has the second largest FHR stock within the Cowdenbeath area with 473 properties. 64% of their stock are 2-bedroom properties with far smaller numbers of 1, 3, 4 and 5 bed properties.

The largest stock type is houses with 255 and bungalows with 90 – the remaining stock is made up of smaller amounts of flatted and four in a block accommodation.

Kingdom Housing have stock in the following lettings areas: Ballingry (165), Cardenden (104), Cowdenbeath (100), Lochore (30), Lochgelly (29), Crosshill (14), Kelty (13), Lumphinnans (11) and Hill of Beath (7).

Fife Housing Association

Fife Housing Association have a stock level of 265 in the Cowdenbeath area. 59% of stock is made up of 2-bedroom properties, 32% of 3-bedroom properties and the

remaining 9% consisting of bedsits, 1 bedroom, 2 bedroom and 4 bedroom properties.

Their highest stock type is Upper flatted accommodation with 108, houses with 94, ground floor flatted accommodation 57 and 6 bungalows.

Fife Housing have stock in the following lettings areas: Lumphinnans (94), Hill of Beath (69), Lochgelly (58), Cowdenbeath (40) and Lochore (4).

Cairn Housing Association

Cairn Housing Association has a smaller stock level compared to other FHR partners of 30 properties.

The majority of their stock is 2-bedroom flatted accommodation with 23 properties and have 7 properties that are 1 bedroom which is also flatted accommodation. 10 are ground floor flats and 20 are upper flats.

Cairn Housing have stock in the following lettings areas: Cowdenbeath (18) and Kelty (12).

Hillcrest Housing Association

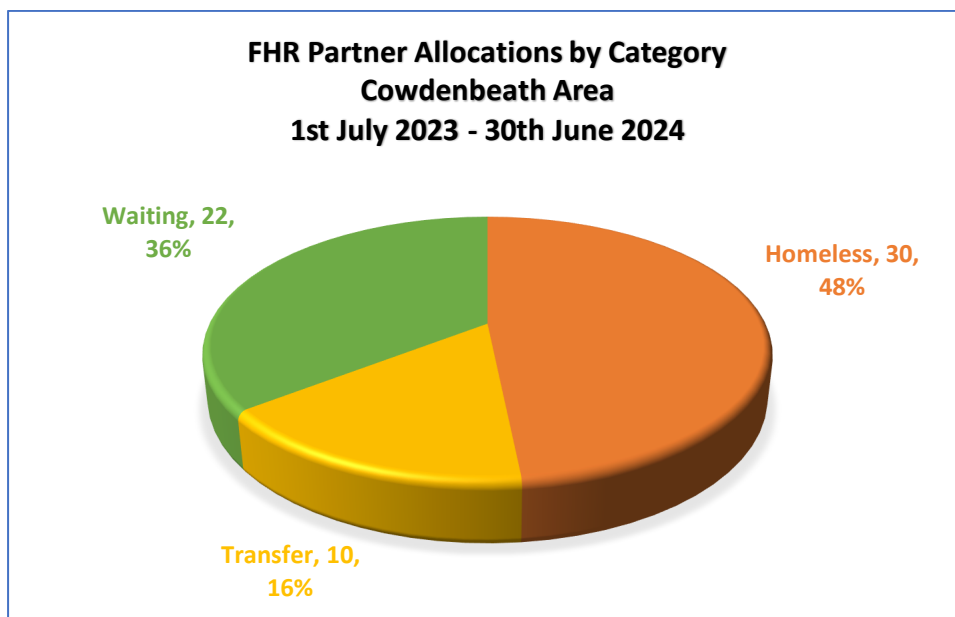
Hillcrest Housing Association have the lowest stock of all FHR partners with 22 properties. All of Hillcrest's stock in Cowdenbeath is flatted accommodation with 6 being ground floor flats and 16 being upper floor flats.

13 properties are 1 bedroom and 9 are two-bedroom properties.

Hillcrest Housing only have stock in Lochgelly.

FHR Partner Allocations:

Total of 62 allocations within the Cowdenbeath area.



Low Cost home ownership

There are currently no low-cost home ownership opportunities in Cowdenbeath area at this time.

Mid-Market Rent

Mid Market Rent properties provided by Ore Valley Housing Association aim to help people who may have difficulty accessing social rented housing or buying their own home. For further information see the link below:

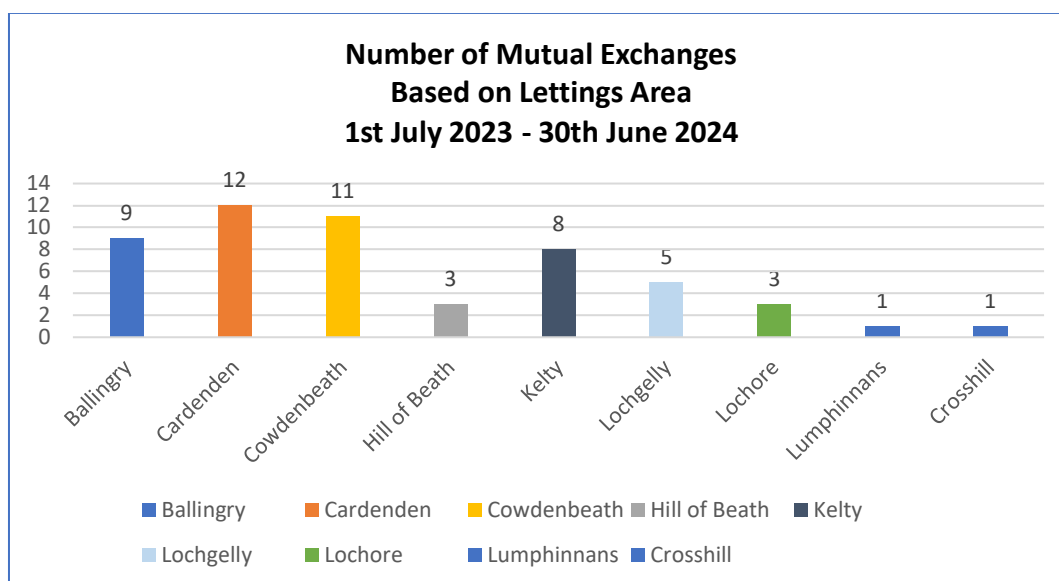
<https://www.orevalleyha.org.uk/mid-market-rent-tenants>

The table below shows a list of Mid-Market Rent properties that Ore Valley Housing Association have within the Cowdenbeath area:

Street	Area	Property type	Property size
Town House, Lochgelly	Cowdenbeath	4 x flats	1 & 2 beds
Seafar Drive, Kelty	Cowdenbeath	4 x flats	2 bed
		6 x House	2 Bed
		6 x House	3 Bed
Rosewell Drive, Lochore	Cowdenbeath	28 x flats	Mix of 2 and 3 beds
		3 x house	4 bed

Mutual Exchange & Home Swap

A total of 53 Mutual Exchanges were completed



If you are a tenant and would like to move home, sometimes looking for a swap is an option worth considering. A swap can help you move quickly, and gives you control in deciding where you stay.

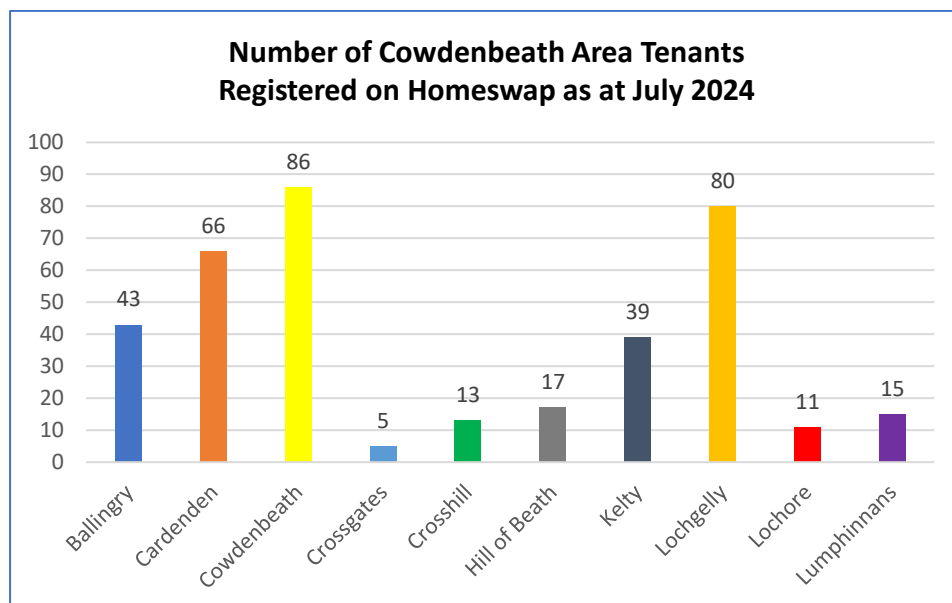
Fife Council tenants can swap with each other, tenants of another Local Authority, or tenants of a Housing Association. All tenants involved must have a Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement.

Swaps are not limited to 2 households, and Mutual Exchange 'chains' can be created, with 3+ properties involved in the swap.

When you find someone to swap with you must request the Mutual Exchange in writing. A paper application form is available at your Local Office or [can be printed from the publication list below](#). Fife Council tenants can also request their exchange [online](#).

Your rent should be up to date and your home kept in good order. All Mutual Exchange requests will be considered however some rules do apply.

[Home Swap | Fife Housing Register](#)



Private Rented Sector

Data is provided from the Registers of Scotland. The local areas that the Cowdenbeath data is incorporated are as shown.

Area	Districts	Burgh's
Cowdenbeath & Central Fife District	Ballingry, Cardenden, Cluny, Cowdenbeath, Crossgates, Kelty, Kinglassie Lochgelly	Lumphinnans, Hill of Beath, Lochore, Fordell, Coaledge, Cantsdam Glenraig, Crosshill, Lassodie

Number of Registered Private landlords	Number of Private Rented Properties	Number of Houses of Multiple Occupancy (HMO)
1954	1597	2

Average rents per size vs Local Housing Allowance figures as at July 2024. These figures are based on current advertised market figures.

Area	Average Cost Per Month			
	1 Bed	2 Bed	3 Bed	4 Bed
Kelty				

Lochgelly				
Lochore				
Ballingry		£695	£800	
Cardenden				
Cowdenbeath		£638		
Crossgates				
Crosshill				
Hill of Beath				
Lumphinnans				
Local Housing Allowance	£414	£543	£658	£1,511

Renting a property from a private landlord is an option for anyone over the age of 16 and there are all sorts of different properties available from flats, houses, shared accommodation and bedsits to rooms rented out in the landlord's house.

When renting privately you will generally be expected to pay a deposit (usually equal to one month's rent) and a month's rent in advance before moving into the property. From 1st December 2017 all private tenants are issued with a Private Residential Tenancy (PRT). This tenancy offers more security for tenant's whilst still ensuring the appropriate safeguards for landlords.

Fife Private Rental Solutions are an organisation which cover the whole of Fife and can assist any person who has an interest in the private rented sector. The team can help with:

- Advice and guidance on best housing options
- Identifying a suitable property
- A Deposit Guarantee (in lieu of cash deposits)
- Rent Resolution
- Issue Resolution/Mediation between Tenant and Landlord
- Advice service for Landlords

Trust in Fife,
Craig House,
Ellon Road,

Kirkcaldy,
KY2 6FB

<https://www.trustinfife.org.uk/services/fife-keyfund-fife-private-rental-solutions/>

Fife Housing Group offer properties to let in the private sector through their subsidiary, PACT Enterprises which is responsible for acquiring homes in Fife and

letting them through the private rental market. They currently manage 11 private let properties in Lochgelly.

You can find out more about renting in the private sector via the websites below:

www.fifehg.org.uk

rentingscotland.org

scotland.shelter.org.uk

[Local Housing Allowance Scheme](#)

Your Community

The lettings plan is part of the Local Community Plan. Fife Council produces Local Community Plans to help make Fife a better place to live, and cover topics like employment, local facilities, improving health and welfare.

Your community plan is available online at [Plan-4-Cowdenbeath-2023-26.pdf](#)

If you want to know more it, your Area Services Manager is: Anne-Marie Vance

4 September 2024

Agenda Item No. 10

Cowdenbeath Area – Anti-poverty Work Update

Report by: Paul Vaughan, Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods Service

Wards Affected: Ward Nos. 7 & 8

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to update members on the activity and outcomes of the anti-poverty work undertaken in the Cowdenbeath Area. The work within this report aligns with the key priorities for the Cowdenbeath Area Local Community Plan 2023-2026.

Recommendation(s)

It is recommended that members note the content of this report.

Resource Implications

There are no additional resource implications arising from this report.

Legal & Risk Implications

There are no legal or risk Implications.

Impact Assessment

An EqIA has not been completed and is not necessary as this report does not propose a new or revised policy or practice.

Consultation

This report is a summary of work undertaken to support the Cowdenbeath Area Local Community Plan, working directly with the Cowdenbeath Area Partnership Group and Cowdenbeath Poverty Action Group.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 There are a number of national and Fife-wide poverty interventions which support households in tackling both financial challenges and secondary impacts of poverty. To ensure our communities are connected with these critical supports, area staff work alongside partners to promote and link our community to the most appropriate mix of support which can deliver the outcomes they need to address crisis and prevent poverty.
- 1.2 Although there are a number of national sources for support, this fails to meet all the needs of local households. Tailored support which reflects local needs and makes best use of local resources is therefore provided to ensure a holistic package of support is available.
- 1.3 Each Committee Area has been tasked with addressing issues of poverty and inequality that meet the needs of the local area. On that basis there will be variations to the approaches across Fife, based on the rurality of an area, demographic pressures, 3rd sector support, etc.
- 1.4 Anti-poverty budgets exist in each area, with the Cowdenbeath Area currently receiving £270,000 per annum to support local poverty work. This supports both Council led initiatives and 3rd sector projects, aimed at tackling poverty and supporting the Local Community Plan.
- 1.5 The Covid pandemic and Cost of Living Crisis in 2022 resulted in the need to deliver crisis support within the community. As we've moved away from the pandemic and the cost of living has stabilised, there is now a need to move towards preventative measures, rather than a crisis response. This is delivered in a number of ways including income maximisation, support with employment, education, debt advice and wellbeing support. Supporting individuals to become independent and resilient provides a dignified response to poverty, which delivers long-term benefits.
- 1.6 The Cowdenbeath Area Local Community Plan (LCP) was developed during 2022/23 and identified the main themes of Tackling Poverty, Raising Aspirations and Community Engagement as a focus for local service delivery. Development of the LCP resulted in an action plan to deliver improvements, which all services and partners should contribute to and local budgets should support.
- 1.7 The Tackling Poverty action plan can be seen in appendix 2. This helps identify key actions to be delivered to help reduce the impact of poverty within the Cowdenbeath Area.
- 1.8 In March 2023 a Cowdenbeath Poverty Action Group (CPAG) was formed, bringing together services, 3rd sector partners and Councillors to develop and deliver poverty interventions, share best practice and to work in partnership to tackle poverty. The CPAG has a remit to deliver on the Tackling Poverty action plan as part of the delivery of the LCP. Introduction of the CPAG has supported closer partnership working, which translates to better holistic support and access to appropriate services for the community.

2.0 Issues and Options

- 2.1 Appendix 1 provides statistical analysis of poverty indicators within the Cowdenbeath Area, which can be compared to the Fife wide figures. Some of the key figures include:
- Labour Market – Cowdenbeath has a claimant rate of 4.2%, compared to 3.2% for Fife. This highlights a need to support people into work, helping reduce unemployment and support lifting people out of poverty.
 - Poverty & Deprivation – The number of children in low-income families within the area (28.6%) and the percentage of the Cowdenbeath Area who are income deprived (17.3%) are higher than the Fife average. This highlights the ongoing need for support within the area, which has remained the case since before 2015 and is similar to other ex-coalmining communities.
- 2.2 Various projects were delivered throughout 2023/24 to support tackling poverty. A number of these projects are highlighted in Appendix 1.
- 2.3 Engaging and building trust with people in the community who need support is key to delivering on poverty prevention. This can only be achieved through tailoring and flexing how we engage to best meet people's needs, reducing barriers to support and building strong partnerships with community organisations.
- 2.4 As we continue to support people experiencing poverty, it's critical that we continue to deliver preventative measures which are dignified and empower the community to navigate a path out of poverty.

3.0 Conclusions

- 3.1 The key activities noted in appendix 1 to this report represent a selection of projects to meet the needs of our local communities.
- 3.2 The advantages of taking a local approach, is an ability to develop and implement new and innovative initiatives quickly, by working with local communities and the partner agencies involved in supporting people.
- 3.3 It is hoped that the work highlighted in the appendices to this report demonstrates the level of creativity and commitment to tackling poverty in Cowdenbeath Area and the strength of local partnerships.

List of Appendices

1. Key statistics & local projects
2. Tackling Poverty Action Plan (Plan4Cowdenbeath 2023-26)

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Cowdenbeath Area Committee

AREA CONTEXT

The Cowdenbeath Area is located in the south west of Fife, bordering the larger urban area of Dunfermline. Much of the area is characterised by low, undulating, arable landscape sitting to the south east of the Ochil Hills. Cowdenbeath, and the towns and villages that make up the Area, owe much to their historical links with coal mining and the extensive coalfields that characterised the area.

POPULATION

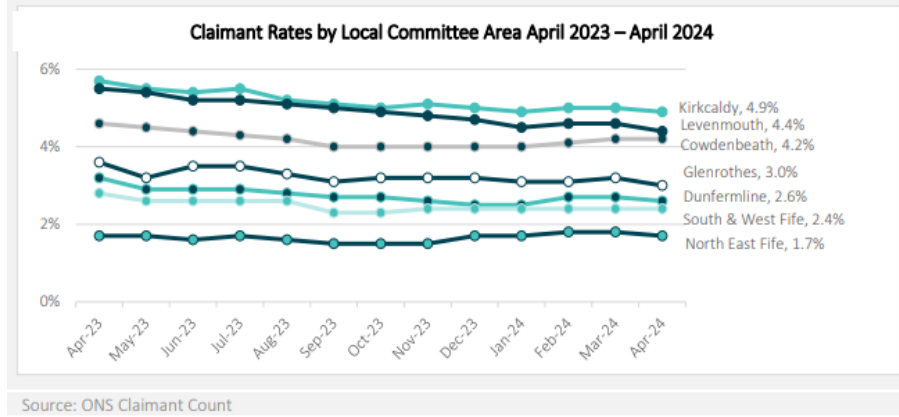
	Cowdenbeath	Lochgelly, Cardenden and Benarty	Cowdenbeath Area	Fife
Total population	22,519	19,248	41,767	374,730
Children (0-15 years)	4,063	3,655	7,718	63,680
Working age (16-64 years)	13,942	11,824	25,766	231,635
Older adults (65+ years)	4,514	3,769	8,283	79,415

NRS 2021 Population estimates. For further information see Cowdenbeath area profile [Cowdenbeath-Area-Profile.pdf \(fife.scot\)](#)

LABOUR MARKET

April 2024	Claimant Rate	Monthly change	Annual change	Claimant Count	Monthly change	Annual change
Cowdenbeath	4.2%	0.0 ▬	-0.5 ↓	1,080	-5 ↓	-110 ↓
Dunfermline	2.6%	-0.1 ↓	-0.5 ↓	995	-35 ↓	-190 ↓
Glenrothes	3.0%	-0.2 ↓	-0.6 ↓	910	-55 ↓	-180 ↓
Kirkcaldy	4.9%	-0.1 ↓	-0.8 ↓	1,785	-45 ↓	-315 ↓
Levenmouth	4.4%	-0.2 ↓	-1.1 ↓	1,000	-40 ↓	-245 ↓
North East Fife	1.7%	-0.1 ↓	-0.1 ↓	835	-10 ↓	-25 ↓
South & West Fife	2.4%	0.0 ▬	-0.4 ↓	735	+10 ↑	-125 ↓

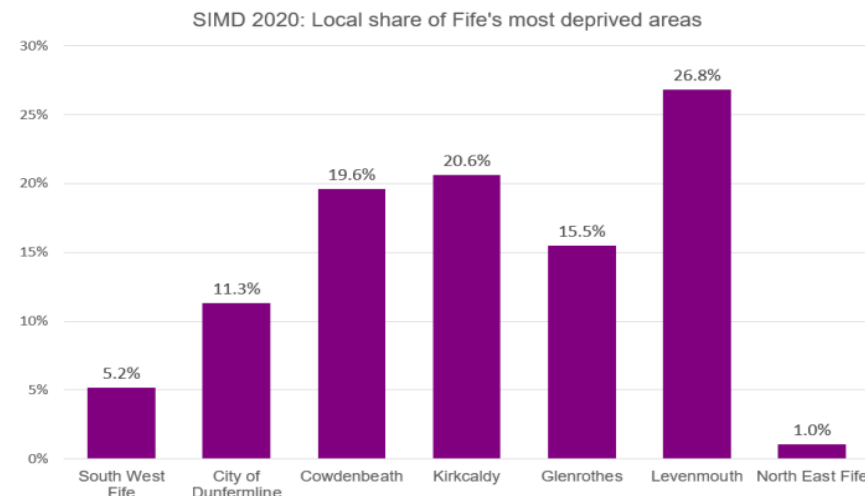
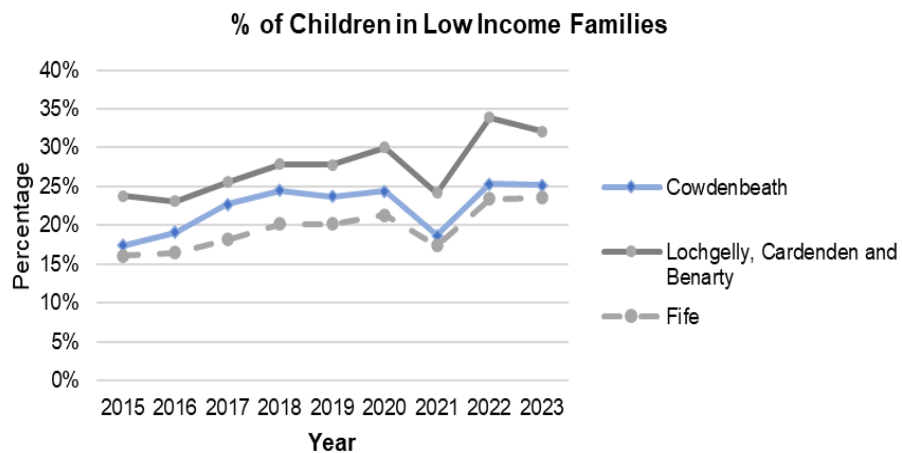
Source: ONS Claimant Count



April 2024	Cowdenbeath Area	Fife
Claimant rate	4.2%	3.2%
Female claimants	3.2% (420)	2.5% (2,905)
Male claimants	5.4% (660)	3.9% (4,430)

ONS Claimant Rate. For further information see monthly economic updates [Economy | InvestFife](#)

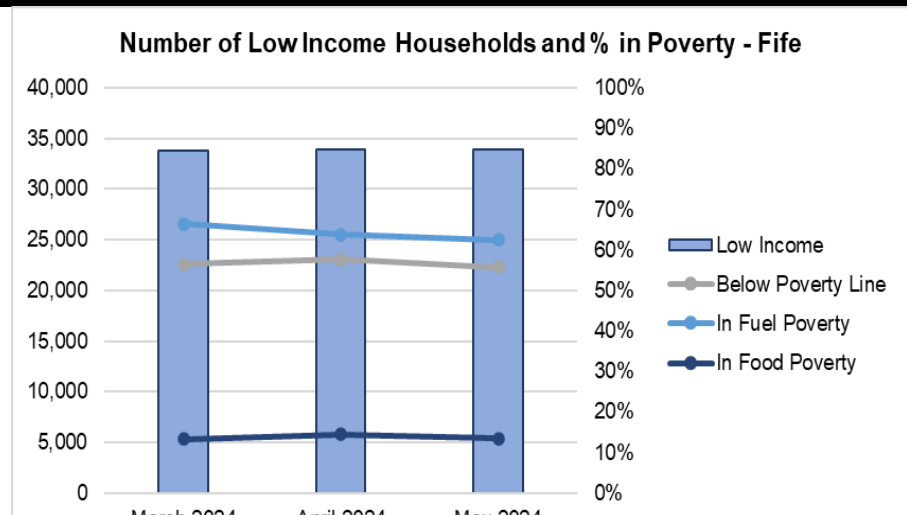
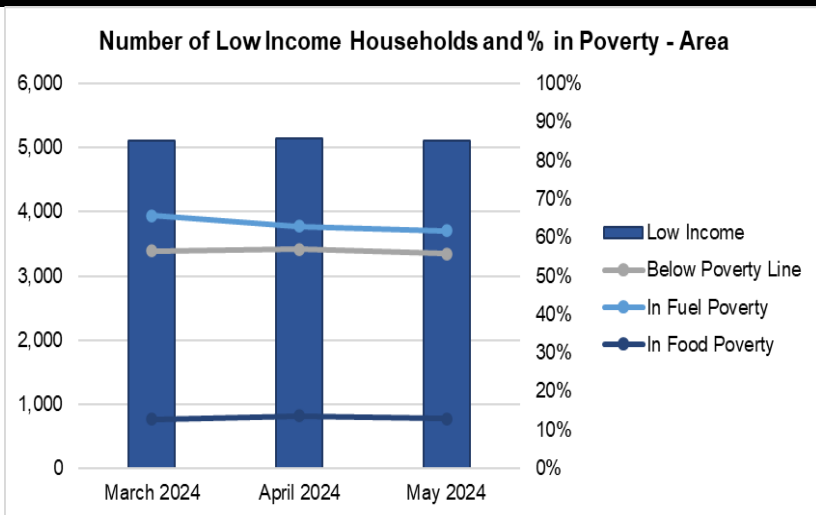
POVERTY AND DEPRIVATION



	Cowdenbeath	Lochgelly, Cardenden and Benarty	Cowdenbeath Area	Fife
Children in low income families (relative poverty)	25.2%	32.1%	28.6%	23.6%
% of working age employment deprived	11.6%	14.9 %	13.2%	9.4%
% of total population income deprived	15.1%	19.6%	17.3%	11.9%

DWP Children in Low Income Families: local areas statistics: [Children in low income families: local area statistics 2014 to 2023 - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/children-in-low-income-families-local-area-statistics-2014-to-2023)

LOW INCOME FAMILY TRACKER

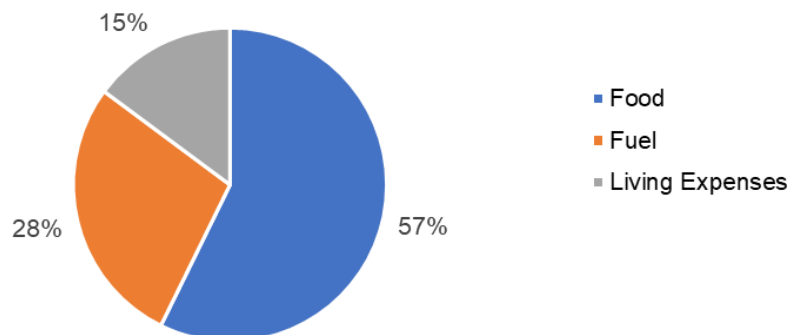


May 2024	Cowdenbeath	Lochgelly, Cardenden and Benarty	Cowdenbeath Area	Fife
No of low income households	2,356	2,754	5,110	33,843
No of households below poverty line	1,291	1,562	2,853	18,890
No of households in fuel poverty	1,423	1,731	3,154	21,122
No of households in food poverty	314	347	661	4,562

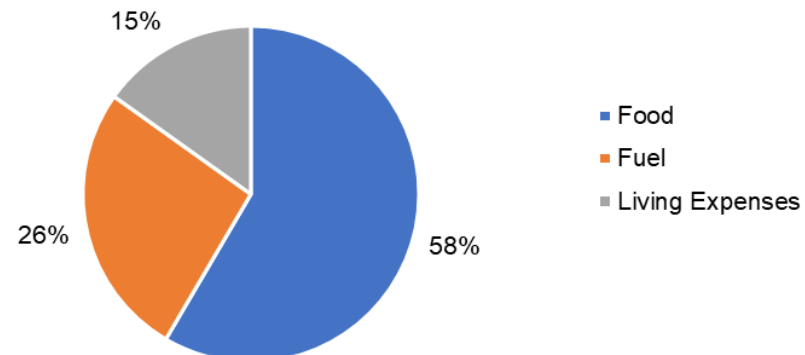
Data taken from the Low Income Family Tracker (LIFT)

SCOTTISH WELFARE FUND

Percentage of Awards - Area
(April 2023 - March 2024)

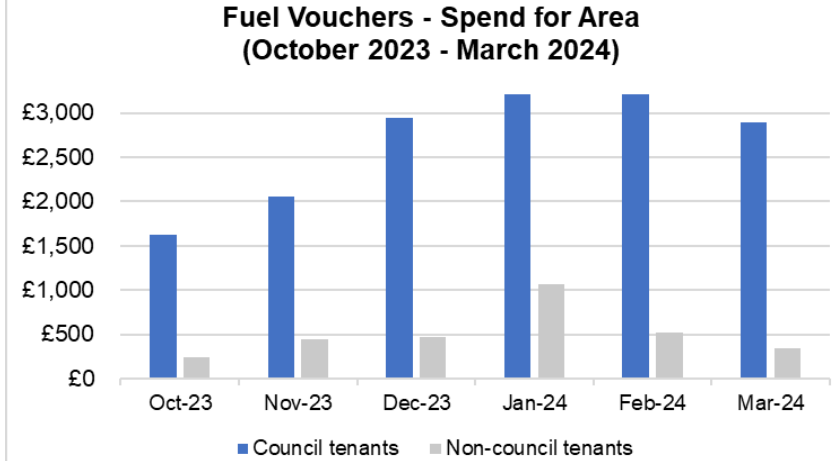
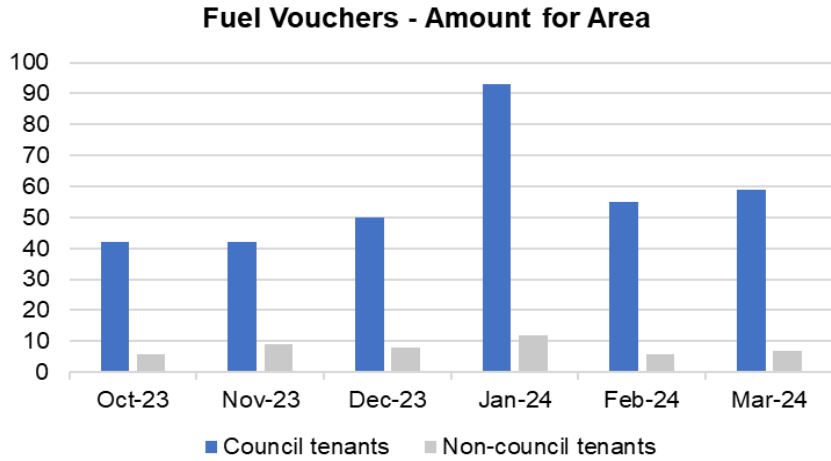


Percentage of Awards - Fife
(April 2023 - March 2024)



SCOTTISH WELFARE FUND	Cowdenbeath Area	Fife
Crisis Grants – Amount Awarded for Food	£240,858	£1,337,194
Crisis Grants – Amount Awarded for Fuel	£116,072	£596,482
Crisis Grants – Amount Awarded for Living expenses	£62,464	£346,372
Crisis Grants – Total Amount Awarded	£420,491	£2,280,048

FUEL BANK REFERRALS



REFERRALS AND SPEND (October 2023 to March 2024)

Cowdenbeath

Total Amount of Referrals Council Tenants

341

Total Amount of Spend Council Tenants

£22,582

Total Amount of Referrals Non-Council Tenants

48

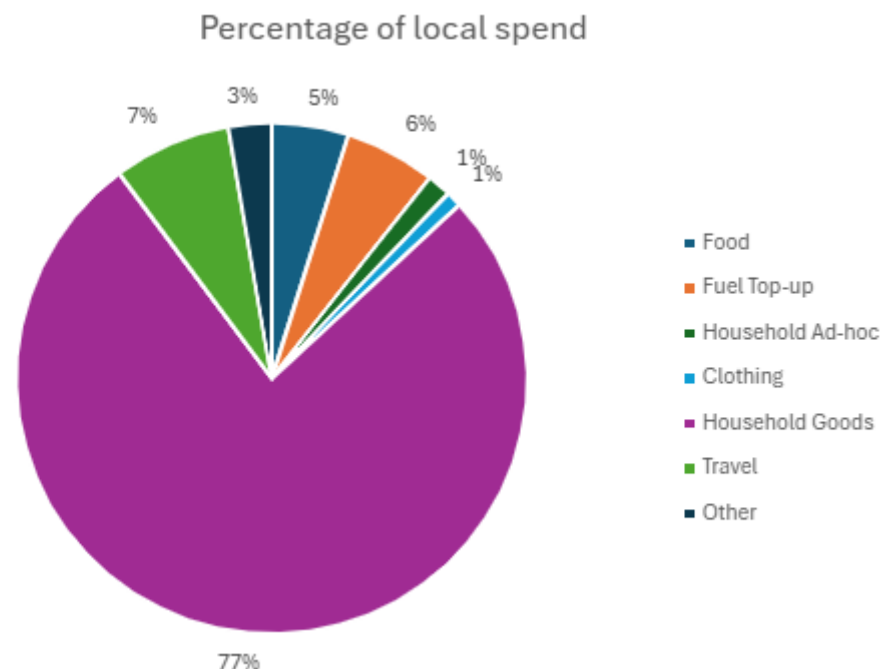
Total Amount of Spend Non-Council Tenants

£3,083

OTHER LOCAL HARDSHIP SUPPORT

These figures represent spend across the Immediate Response Fund and Cowdenbeath Resilience Fund.

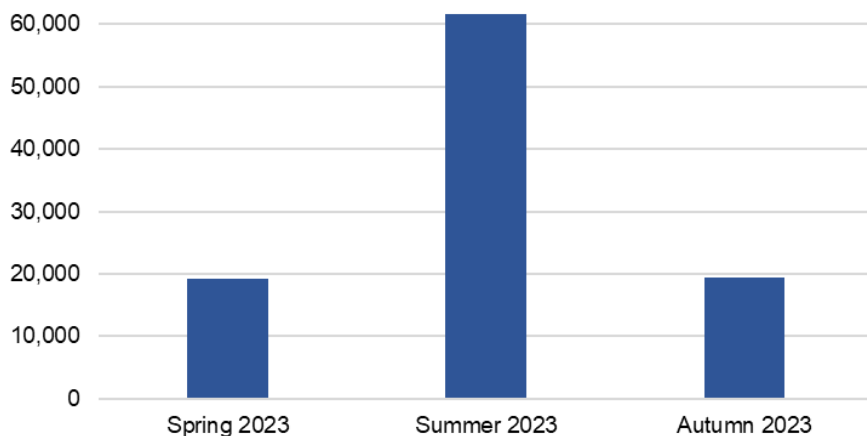
The money spent on 'Other' includes vehicle fuel support for Lo'Gelly Lunches work, a mobile phone, SIM top-ups and sanitary products.



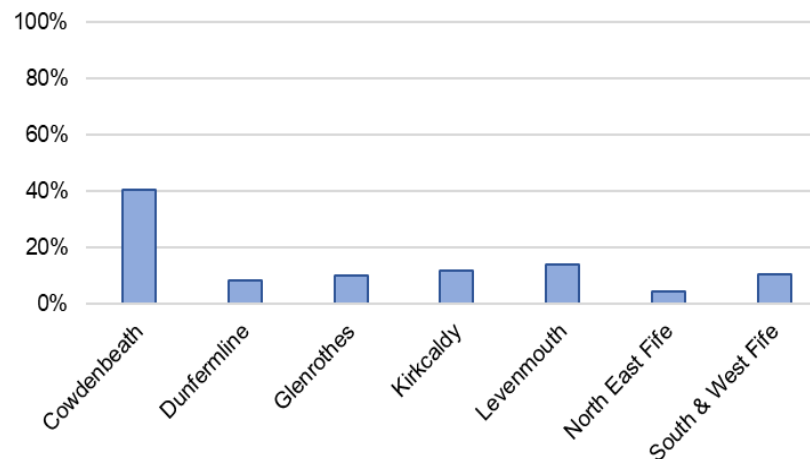
LOCAL SUPPORT – SPEND (2023-2024)	Cowdenbeath	% of Total Area Spend
Food Support	£728.75	5%
Fuel Support	£865.00	6%
Clothing	£150.00	1%
Ad-hoc Household Items	£226.90	2%
Household Goods (Castle Furniture)	£11,525.00	77%
Travel Vouchers	£1,118.00	7%
Other	£412.01	3%

CAFÉ INC

Number of Meals for Area per Season - 2023



Percentage of Meals Provided per Area - 2023



CAFÉ INC (Spring – Autumn 2023)

Cowdenbeath Area

Fife

Number of Meals Provided

100,042

245,596

% of Total Meals Provided

41%

Cafe Inc Venues across the Cowdenbeath Area

- Cowdenbeath Primary School
- Benarty Primary School
- Kelty Primary School
- Lochgelly Town Hall
- Bowhill Community Centre
- Hill of Beath Community Centre
- Lumphinnans Bowling Club (Community volunteer led)
- Crossgates Community Centre

Support & Connect (Education Services)

Locality ↓	F	M	Clients
City of Dunfermline	3	1	4
Cowdenbeath	8	2	10
Glenrothes	14	3	17
Kirkcaldy	20	5	25
Levenmouth	8		8
North East Fife	7	1	8
South West Fife	8	1	9
[Not Known]	9	1	10
Grand Summary:	77	14	91

£10,024
**financial gains through Support &
 Connect in the Cowdenbeath
 Ward in 2023/24.**

Support and Connect is an education initiative which includes a one-to-one support service and a group work provision and aims to coordinate welfare support, financial inclusion, and income maximisation across the education service. Families must need support with relevant issues such as benefits, budgeting, debt, or income maximisation and not be able to deal with these without support. This could be due to lack of understanding or health issues ranging from mental to physical health. Families must have at least one child who is in education.

AREA ANTI POVERTY ACTIVITY / PROJECTS

Project	Partners	Action	Amount	Outcomes	Update	Lead
Welfare Support Outreach	CARF	Deliver welfare support in various locations and at groups to reach people who don't access services within Council venues.	N/A	<p>Reached new customers requiring advice and support.</p> <p>Raised profile of welfare support throughout the community.</p> <p>Reduced poverty through preventative interventions.</p>	<p>The CRF budget supported recruitment of two FTE Welfare Support Assistants on a temporary basis, allowing the team to deliver outreach work across the area.</p> <p>Staff have been visiting a variety of venues and groups to provide advice and support, helping connect people with services who may not have been aware of what is available.</p>	Scott Blyth
Community Job Clubs		<p>Deliver a programme of job clubs across the area.</p> <p>Promote job clubs within the community.</p> <p>Connect with employability work in other services or organisations.</p>	N/A	<p>Individuals supported to fulfil claimant commitments for benefits.</p> <p>Individuals supported with CV writing, job searches and advice.</p> <p>Communities have access to IT required to seek employment.</p> <p>Individuals connected with wider</p>	<p>Numbers attending Community Job Clubs have increased over 2023/24, with clubs available in Cardenden, Kelty, Cowdenbeath, Benarty and Lochgelly.</p> <p>New marketing materials were produced early 2024 to better promote the clubs both locally and on social media.</p>	Scott Blyth

				employability support and opportunities. Individuals connected with welfare support.		
Welfare Support Drop-in sessions	CARF	Deliver welfare support within community venues across the area, so members of the community can drop in or be referred for advice and support.	N/A	Communities have a point of contact for welfare support. Raised profile of welfare support available within the community. Crisis support is accessible. Support is available for the community to connect with wider services.	Welfare drop-in services previously ran in tandem with job clubs, which were at times a barrier to participation. Early in 2024, these were split to help encourage participation with new marketing materials produced and distributed both locally and online. Sessions are designed to offer crisis support, but this is delivered alongside preventative work such as income maximisation.	Scott Blyth
Welfare Roadshow	Various	Deliver a welfare roadshow in each of the 8 communities during 2023.	£2,800	Raised profile of welfare support within the community. Partners are more connected through networking opportunities. Individuals connected with support.	Roadshows were delivered across 8 venues, with a number of partners available to offer support to attendees. These events raised awareness of the support available with partners, community groups and the community.	Scott Blyth

					Community attendance was low, despite efforts to market the events, remove barriers and attract participants.	
Benefit Checker & Energy Advice Training	NHS Health Promotion Cosy Kingdom CARF	Connect people across services and other organisations with training on delivering benefit checks and providing energy advice.	N/A	More staff and volunteers are able to deliver benefit checks. More staff and volunteers are equipped to provide basic level energy advice. The network of basic welfare support is increased to better serve the community.		Scott Blyth

<p>Winter Support</p>	<p>Various</p>	<p>Deliver 'warm welcome' services across the area.</p> <p>Distribute 'winter warmer packs' to vulnerable households.</p> <p>Enhance routes to support within centres and community groups, to increase awareness of welfare support available and routes to access this.</p>	<p>£57,659</p>	<p>The community have a dignified warm space to access during the winter.</p> <p>Socialisation opportunities are delivered over the winter.</p> <p>Information, advice and support is enhanced over the winter period.</p> <p>Warm welcome packs are distributed to people rationing energy.</p>	<p>A variety of warm welcome venues were established, offering activities and socialisation for the community. A number of these provided drinks and food and were linked with welfare support information.</p> <p>Participation was mixed, with some venues busy and some quiet.</p> <p>Winter warmer packs were distributed, with positive feedback on the support they provided over winter.</p> <p>Additional information was circulated locally and on social media to connect people with welfare support.</p>	<p>Scott Blyth</p>
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Cafe Inc (lunch provision)		Provision of lunches during school holidays for young people and families.	£355,071 (Central Cafe Inc budget)	<p>Providing access to lunches during the school holidays to children and young people.</p> <p>Connect Cafe Inc users with access to other support, such as Welfare support or energy advice.</p>	<p>Welfare staff and Cosy Kingdom attended Cafe Inc venues over the holidays, helping inform users of the other support and advice available.</p> <p>A large number of lunches were provided across the area over the holiday periods.</p> <p>Families were encouraged to 'sit in', where they could relax and socialise while they had lunch. However, take-away remains the more popular option.</p> <p>A Fife-wide survey of Cafe Inc users was conducted in Summer 2023 to gain feedback on the project.</p>	
Cafe Inc (additional funding)		Provision of additional food and drink items to users of Cafe Inc.	£71,372		Funding was used to purchase additional food and drink items which were handed out to those accessing Cafe Inc across the Cowdenbeath Area.	

Supporting New Scots	Fife International Forum Fife Voluntary Action	Ensure services can support asylum seekers, immigrants and minority groups. Remove barriers to support, such as language and cultural barriers.	N/A	Minority groups living in the Cowdenbeath Area are able to access support and integrate with the community.	Working with Fife International Forum to reduce barriers to support and connect people with services. Working with FVA to understand barriers New Scots find with integration.	Scott Blyth
Immediate Response Fund		Support immediate financial relief through vouchers or purchase of items/energy.	£2,382.66	No of people supported in 2023/24.	This provides immediate crisis relief and has been essential in supporting members of the community. This project continues in 2024/25, providing a cash first, dignified, response to crisis. Support is always provided alongside holistic, preventative, support.	Scott Blyth
Cowdenbeath Resilience Fund	Castle Furniture	Support provision of white goods and other household essential items for households which are financially vulnerable.	£16,500	Households are supported to ensure they do not end up in crisis when essential household items are needed or breakdown.	This project has successfully supported households and will continue in 2024/25. The available items will be updated to reflect current needs and a repair service explored.	Scott Blyth

Community Food Providers (CFP) Support	Various food providers	<p>Funding distributed to support CFPs.</p> <p>Advice offered to support sustainability.</p> <p>CFPs aware of wider poverty support measures and national initiatives / strategy.</p>	£39,462	<p>CFPs have improved governance and sustainability.</p> <p>CFPs are able to offer a dignified and sustainable service.</p> <p>CFPs are supported in connecting with the national food and poverty strategies.</p>		Scott Blyth
Community Growing	Various	Cardenden and Kelty areas allocated funding for growing projects and green spaces.	Funding allocated, but no spend in 2023/24.	<p>Increased access to local growing spaces.</p> <p>Opportunities for community groups to access growing spaces, which can be shared between groups, reducing pressure for individual groups to maintain spaces.</p> <p>Create connections between growing spaces and supporting groups which tackle food insecurity.</p>	Kelty allotment partners group have met to plan a way forward in partnership, will include larger allotment area for community groups to learn and share together, working with allotments officer improvements to be made to allotments infrastructure.	Izzy Scott-Trimmm

Holiday Programme	Police, clued up, fire service, primrose trust.	Activities offered Easter, Summer and October holidays.	£72,949 (£90k allocated, with remaining funds used for family residential).	Young people have the opportunity to participate in a variety of activities over the holiday periods which offer learning and enrichment.	The staff team worked with young people to put together a suite of opportunities which were well attended. Feedback was given to the area committee in December 23 showing the impact this made for young people in the Cowdenbeath area.	Izzy Scott-Trim
Travel Vouchers		Provide bus travel vouchers to support people in poverty access essential services (eg. job interviews, foodbank) to remove barriers to services and support employment opportunities.	£1,118	Remove barriers to vulnerable members of the community accessing services. Support access to essential services for those in poverty (employment opportunities, Foodbank, essential appointments, etc.).	Welfare Support Assistants continue to engage and support members of the community. They provided travel vouchers where necessary, helping support vulnerable members of the community. The travel vouchers are an essential tool in supporting people living in poverty which will continue through 2024/25.	Scott Blyth
Grounds for Growth	Rural Skills Scotland	Engage local people interested in working in the land based sector. Offer training opportunities and qualification to make them as work ready as possible.	£7,000	Support local unemployed people receive training and experience. Contribute to maintenance of Lochore Meadows.	The Grounds for Growth project is progressing well based at Lochore. The team have been carrying out a number of tasks across the park in conjunction with the Park Manager improving biodiversity, security and the general visitor experience to the park.	Izzy Scott-Trim

				<p>Participants gain qualifications.</p> <p>Participants are well placed to secure paid work in terms of skills, qualifications, experience and confidence.</p>	<p>Ground for growth team have provided regular updates at area committee showcases the successes of this programme.</p> <p>It continues to operate and provide opportunities for local people interested in the land based sector.</p>	
Shoebox		Provision of grant funding through schools and CLD workers to support young people across the area with footwear which supports full school participation.	£72,148	<p>Children living in poverty are able to access good quality footwear and have choice in what they wear.</p> <p>Improved participation in both school and school activities (gym/PE).</p>	<p>Funding was distributed throughout schools, where schools could purchase footwear for pupils.</p> <p>CLD staff were able to purchase footwear for young people they were engaged with.</p> <p>More than 2400 pairs of shoes were able to be provided to young people across the area.</p>	Lesley Kirk
Breakfast Clubs & After School Activities		Grant funding to schools to support free breakfast clubs and after school opportunities.	£55,504	<p>Young people are nourished, ready to start the school day.</p> <p>Barriers to nourishment are removed.</p> <p>Young people are better placed to learn at school.</p>	<p>Funding supported schools in providing breakfast clubs.</p> <p>Schools reported good participation, with pupils socialising and better placed to learn.</p> <p>Breakfasts were delivered in a dignified way and</p>	Patricia Galfskiy

				<p>Participation is improved as is socialisation.</p> <p>Financial barriers to accessing activities are removed.</p>	<p>improved relationships within the schools.</p>	
DigiCom - Phones		Where a client has been working with the welfare team and has no digital access, a smartphone can be provided to support them in accessing essential digital services and connect with support.	£720	Clients working with the welfare team are not digitally excluded.	<p>A new initiative from the Job Centre helped provide digital devices, helping support some of the welfare clients.</p> <p>Although some phones have been provided, there are still some in stock to support clients when the job centre initiative ends.</p>	Scott Blyth
DigiCom - Sims	National data bank	Provision of free data SIM cards to people in poverty to ensure they can keep connected and supported.	N/A	Members of the community in hardship are able to stay connected, fulfil claimant commitments, manage appointments, maintain support links and contact services.	<p>Free SIMs are accessed through a national initiative. There is no direct cost to Fife Council, other than staff resources to manage the ordering and provision of SIMs.</p> <p>This support has been a lifeline to many in helping them access support, fulfil claimant commitments to avoid sanctions and to job search.</p>	Scott Blyth

Welfare Support

Client was in a *'very dark and lost place'* and experienced *'abusive and trauma their entire life, emotionally, physically, financially and psychologically'* and *'felt lost with no self-esteem, no self-worth, no hope'*.

They met with one of the local Welfare Support Assistants (WSA) who was able to provide a smart phone which allowed the client to connect with their support network, provide an east of Scotland monthly rider so they could travel for support and engage with employability, supported re-housing which helped them get out of a challenging situation in their current area. They were provided with vouchers to purchase food, easing the financial stress and ensuring they had nourishment in a dignified way. The WSA listened, didn't judge, understood and empathised with the clients situation. Following the initial support provided, the WSA continued to follow up on the client to ensure they were connecting with the support necessary.

Following the support provided the client has been able to settle in a new property away from the challenges they faced in their previous accommodation, start a new job and begin to build a new life. Their physical and mental health has improved and they've been able to move away from crisis support and build resilience for the future.

Cowdenbeath Resilience Fund

Resident had a faulty washing machine, which was old and in disrepair. He was having to take his clothes, bedding, etc to friends and family, who kindly done his washing for him. However, after a few months of doing this it was becoming intolerable. He didn't want to constantly ask for help from people as this impacted his feelings of dignity and self-worth.

He works 15 hours p/w on minimum wage and is also currently paying back rent and council tax arrears, which absorbs a lot of his income. He has been in his home for 31 years and is trying to ensure he keeps his tenancy. He does get part of his rent paid but is still on the breadline and struggles to keep up with his bills.

He sought support from a local Welfare Support Assistant, who applied for a washing machine through the Cowdenbeath Resilience Fund, which is delivered in partnership with Castle Furniture. This application was approved, with the washing machine delivered and installed for him and the old machine removed. He was extremely grateful.

Had he not been given the washing machine, he would have struggled to save up enough to buy one and he could have ended up in further debt. The situation was also having a negative effect on his mental health, so receiving a new washing machine helps address more than simply washing.

With the referral going through a Welfare Support Assistant, it also means that additional support around income maximisation, debt services, food and fuel support can also be provided. This is essential to ensure that any crisis intervention is backed up with preventative work to help mitigate future crisis and fully support members of the community.

Citizens Advice & Rights Fife (CARF), Cosy Kingdom and FC – partnership work

Officers from CARF have been working alongside welfare support assistants across the Cowdenbeath Area in community venues, offering fast access to advice at the point of need. A regular user of the Maxwell Pantry refused to disclose any financial information and was a very private individual. Despite this, it was clear he was struggling financially and used the pantry for regular food support and the Max's Cafe for socialisation.

Following a conversation with a welfare support assistant, it was agreed to have a Cosy Kingdom energy advisor visit his home for support. During this visit, there was a brief mention of not receiving a pension. Thanks to the close partnership working between Cosy Kingdom, Fife Council and CARF, they were able to engage and build trust with the client together, allowing them insight into some of the challenges he faced.

It transpired that he had never claimed a state pension (having been eligible for 5 years). Working alongside CARF and the welfare support assistant, the client was able to make a pension claim and get a back-dated pension payment. This resulted in him receiving around £13,000 of backdated money and around £12,500 of income annually going forward, which has transformed his life whereby he can now afford new clothes, food and essentials.

Community Food Providers

The Pantry@BRAG received an email from a resident in Cardenden, who desperately needed assistance for himself and his dog during the winter months. He had no money left, having spent most of this on his energy bills and energy debt. He had mobility problems due to arthritis in both legs, making it hard to walk. He asked for food support as he said both he and the dog were 'desperate and hungry'.

Although Cardenden isn't an area Pantry@BRAG cover, they immediately made up a welfare pack consisting of five bags of groceries and a 4kg bag of dog food. They delivered this to the clients door within an hour of receiving the email. They provided him with information on the nearest foodbank and pantry, alongside signposting information on welfare and energy support.

Grounds for Growth

One participant came to the programme having worked as a delivery driver with some experience of working outdoors. He got on very well with the other trainees and helped younger members who were unsure of themselves. He thoroughly enjoyed the certified training he received and always looked for opportunities to consolidate his training. He completed fence work, path work, some small tree work, plenty of grass cutting, trail work, placing of signs and posts, repairs to wooden benches and other general grounds maintenance. He completed his National Progression Award in Rural Skills (SQA accredited). Following this, he secured employment as a seasonal member of staff in the maintenance team at Lochore Meadows.

Support & Connect

A family was referred to Support & Connect from Beath High School as they had been receiving crisis support from the school (food shopping vouchers), which was becoming an ongoing need and the school wanted the family to get support to try to address the underlying issues and to alleviate the recurring crisis.

Support & Connect staff met with the parent, completed an assessment which took into consideration their income and expenditure and completed a benefit check on the Fife Benefit Checker tool. It was identified that they were having issues with expenditure being more than income, exacerbated by multiple health conditions the parent had. Support was provided to apply for Adult Disability Payment from Social Security Scotland and to look at how the families outgoings may be reduced. Following the support, the family managed to reduce outgoings by £100 per month through contracts naturally coming to an end and negotiations with suppliers of TV and internet. A referral to Cosy Kingdom was made as the family were spending a large part of their income on energy, which was having a huge impact on their expenditure.

The parent is now receiving Adult Disability Payment and received a backdated amount of £3334.16 and an ongoing 4 weekly payment of £514.60 for enhanced daily living & standard mobility. The family are managing much better with their finances as a result of this and are effectively more than £600 per month better off. This has helped to mitigate ongoing crisis and provide resilience in a dignified way.

Appendix 2 – Local Community Plan Action Plan (Tackling Poverty)

	Improvement Area	Action			Planned Outcome
TP1	Work with partners and communities to move from crisis support towards poverty prevention, unpicking the reasons for poverty and looking to address the problem at its root to make transformative change that creates a more sustainable, longer-term solution for individuals and communities.	TP.1.1	Ongoing	Meet regularly (8 weekly) with the Poverty Action Group to share information, seek preventative work and explore opportunities to tackle poverty. Kept the partnership group up to date with developments from the Tackling Poverty and Preventing Crisis Board. e.g. Poverty Training, Benefit Checker.	Poverty work in the Cowdenbeath Area has a focus on preventative work. There's a better understanding of the reasons and impact of poverty within the area, shared across partners. This new insight supports planned interventions, which seek to prevent and/or lift people out of poverty, rather than just deliver crisis support where people are locked into poverty.
		TP.1.2	Ongoing	The Poverty Action Group will provide regular feedback to the Partnership Group.	
		TP.1.3	Ongoing	Deliver a programme of presentations to the CPAG from partners and other organisations to raise awareness of different projects, research and initiatives.	
		TP.1.4	Medium	CASH FIRST - Develop a cash first trial in Cowdenbeath Area to identify the impacts of a cash first approach in the community.	
		TP.1.5	Medium	Credit Union - Promote the Credit Union and local development work to support people to save and budget, helping to reduce the likelihood of future crisis, and helping people access safe loans at times of need.	
TP2	Undertake community engagement around poverty challenges, with an engagement event to take place in five venues throughout the area during 2023/24.	TP.2.1	Medium	Undertake engagement work with the community to better understand the local causes of poverty and the potential solutions for easement.	Welfare support across the area has had a greater reach, capturing people who previously hadn't received support. Awareness of available support has increased within the community.
		TP.2.2	Complete	Deliver a welfare roadshow within communities to inform people of the support available including financial, benefits, wellbeing, social.	

		TP.2.3	Long	Lived Experience - Seek to gain increased insight through input from people with lived experience and case studies. [Need to develop relationships and be clear on ask and value.]	
		TP.2.4	Medium	Investigate opportunities to hold a Hold Knowing Me, Knowing You event (TBC)	
		TP.2.5	Ongoing	Contribute to Social Policy discussions, including highlighting social policy issues so they can be considered for wider challenge and campaigning.	
		TP.2.6	Short	Pilot 121 sessions and engagement in partnership with Fife International Forum. This is aimed to better support immigrants, asylum seekers and minority groups engage with support and integrate locally.	
TP3	Increase outreach work in local communities, connecting people most in need with welfare support and other services and offer additional support to those who experience barriers to self-service.	TP.3.1	Complete	Deliver a welfare roadshow within communities to inform people of the support available including financial, benefits, wellbeing, social.	Greater opportunities to connect with staff locally for support around wellbeing and welfare issues. Stronger links between professionals and schools/community groups. All schools have been connected with Welfare Staff to support families receive support and advice.
		TP.3.2	Ongoing	Using additional resource provided through CRF recruit and deploy additional Welfare Staff resource to allow outreach sessions within schools and other community venues, providing welfare support to people who don't use traditional engagement methods.	
		TP.3.3	Medium	Develop parents & children evening drop in sessions. Providing an opportunity for parents/carers to visit the school and speak with both school staff and other support services.	
		TP.3.4	Short	Increase outreach welfare work and connections with the Foodbanks to ensure that signposting is supported and we're connecting with foodbank users to help tackle poverty at the point of crisis.	

		TP.3.5	Ongoing	Deliver benefit checker and energy advice training to CPAG members. Promote training to a wider audience to include community groups and representatives, to ensure there is a wide network of support across the area to deliver this first level advice.	
		TP.3.6	Complete	Deliver Social Security Scotland drop in sessions to support people with ADP and CDP applications in the area.	
		TP.3.7	Ongoing	CARF Community Based workers available in the community for support. Increased links both direct with CARF staff and through direct links between welfare staff and CARF to reduce waiting times for support.	
TP4	Increase support for families with the cost of the school day to both support family finances and boost attendance and participation in schools.	TP.4.1	Short	Support development of School breakfast clubs across the area.	Poor attendance linked to family finances is reduced. Opportunities to participate in all the school has to offer is available to everyone in the school community.
		TP.4.2	Medium	Consider inclusivity of school trips and potential financial barriers to participation. Work to remove barriers.	
		TP.4.3	Short	Promote and encourage free school meals entitlement uptake. Develop a marketing campaign to encourage people to apply.	
		TP.4.4	Medium	Support and connect. Promotion, engagement and expansion to ensure everyone who needs support is aware of it and able to access it.	
		TP.4.5	Medium	Eco Wardrobe - investigate and support development of Eco Wardrobes or uniform swap shops for both new and used clothes available through the school at low or no cost. Supports parents in accessing school clothing items, particularly any school branded items (ties, blazers, etc).	
TP5	Increased awareness of the support available to businesses in Cowdenbeath Area to thrive and adopt 'good work' principles for employees. E.g. the real living wage, work placements and training opportunities.	TP.5.1	Short / Medium	Promotion of Scotland Loves Local with businesses to increase participation in the scheme. Consider opportunities to use SLL cards for crisis intervention, promotions, etc.	Businesses in Cowdenbeath Area are well connected with Council support and know where to go for information and advice.
		TP.5.2	Short	Raise awareness of Business Gateway Fife business support services and knowledge of self employment opportunities for unemployed people.	
		TP.5.3	Medium	Investigate paid placements for students on college courses to alleviate issues of poverty to allow people to earn and learn.	

		TP.5.4	Short / Medium	Support businesses accessing information on how to attract, recruit and support apprentices, including business benefits associated with apprenticeships.	
TP6	Increase both availability and awareness of educational opportunities, which will upskill people to improve employment prospects and personal development.	TP.6.1	Short / Medium	Map ABE and other training courses which provide basic skills around numeracy, literacy, technology, health, budgeting, etc. to assess any gaps.	Increase in availability and awareness within the community on the educational opportunities available and how to access them.
		TP.6.2	Short / Medium	Identify, support and develop training/education opportunities which support routes to work.	
		TP.6.3	Long	Explore and promote online courses (eg. delivering skills to apply for roles such as Education Support Assistants), online to allow lone parents etc to learn without childcare issues and seek roles which can fit around childcare commitments.	
		TP.6.4	Medium	Capture all area learning opportunities in one place, so the community can see what's on offer and find something that works for them.	
Host an event with all training providers where they can promote courses and opportunities for the community to attend and get information and advice on where to start.					
TP7	Investigate barriers to work, such as childcare and travel, so we can support people back into the workplace or increase working hours. Support breakfast clubs and after school provision, which offer good nutrition, socialisation and strengthen sense of community.	TP.7.1	Medium	Work with Gingerbread to understand barriers to families undertaking work/increasing hours.	Increased opportunities for families to take up or increase working hours, through reduced barriers, such as access to childcare and transport.
		TP.7.2	Short	Continue to promote and deliver job clubs in Cowdenbeath Area and increase attendance.	
		TP.7.3	Medium	Investigate breakfast/after school clubs, which can support parents in securing work and support young people with socialisation opportunities. (See TP.4.1)	Schools have support for breakfast clubs and after school provision, which offer good nutrition, socialisation and strengthen sense of community. This in turn supports removal of barriers to work.
		TP.7.4	Long	Investigate barriers around transport which can impact access to work.	
TP8	Work to build capacity with community food providers to	TP.8.1	Medium	Resource CCB officer to help development of Community Food providers.	Community food providers have access to information and support

	meet local needs, expand volunteering opportunities and strengthen communities. Support community food providers to become more sustainable.	TP.8.2	Short	Develop a Community Food Resilience Network, to bring together food providers to share information and support one another.	to allow them to operate sustainably and deliver services within the community which are dignified, support poverty prevention and encourage volunteering.
		TP.8.3	Medium	Training/awareness raising for community food providers linked to whole systems pilot work and Cash First approaches, linked in with the aims of ending the need for foodbanks.	
		TP.8.4	Short	Support trials of alternative community food provision, such as meal in a bag, helping remove barriers providers may have in testing different approaches.	
		TP.8.5	Short	Trial community online grocery shopping group, where members of the community can get support and access to place online orders with the main supermarkets, taking advantage of the lower prices when compared to small convenience stores.	
TP9	Develop community growing initiatives and promotion of 'grow your own' to support household access to healthy food, community food projects, local food security and to help address climate change.	TP.9.1	Medium	Investigate opportunities for 'free growing boxes' within towns and villages.	Communities are able to access growing initiatives which support food production, learning, socialisation and mental wellbeing. Growing initiatives are able to link in with community food providers, to support distribution of surplus stock within the local area.
		TP.9.2	Medium	Develop of community growing spaces and allotments - potential to be linked to community food providers.	
		TP.9.3	Medium	Develop and deliver training opportunities to support skills development around 'grow your own'.	
TP10	Deliver energy support and advice to our communities ensuring they are informed, confident and efficient when using home energy helping to reduce bills, fuel poverty and tackle climate change.	TP.10.1	Short	Look to recruit energy champions in the community who are trained to deliver first level energy advice.	Households are informed around energy conservation and use, helping them plan and manage their energy consumption to create a comfortable living environment, while reducing their impact on climate change.
		TP.10.2	Short	Support energy advice to households within the area.	
		TP.10.3	Medium	Deliver a Handy Service in the area, which supports energy saving improvements to low income households.	

TP11	Deliver a flexible programme of free and low-cost activities to ensure people in all of our communities have access and opportunities to participate.	TP.11.1	Short	Vouchers for free access to community use facilities/activities, to be distributed throughout the community. This not only helps people access free activities and be physically active, but also encourages use of our centres aiming to put them back at the heart of our communities.	Our community has access to free and low-cost activities which encourages participation and provides opportunities. Activities should be valuable in delivering on local priorities such as wellbeing, socialisation, personal development, and physical exercise.
		TP11.2	Short	OnFife offer free activities in library, exhibitions, warm spaces. - music instrument library and project. Potentially relevant related activities if fully funded.	
		TP.11.3	Short	Provide free access to Outdoor Education services/activities for low income households throughout the area. HSCP has provided funding for Active Options provided through FSLT to be reduced to £1 - promotion of this	
		TP11.4	Short	Active Adults Programme' set up to provide cost-effective, sustainable access to physical activity https://active.fife.scot/_data/assets/pdf_file/0028/469270/ACTIVE-Adults-Cowdenbeath-Sept23.pdf	

4 Sept 2024
Agenda Item No. 11

Cowdenbeath Area Schedules - Update

Report by: Paul Vaughan, Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods Service

Wards Affected: Wards 7 and 8

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to update members on the 2024/2025 balances and expenditure against the Ward 7, Ward 8, Local Community Planning, Anti-poverty and Community Recovery Fund budgets.

Recommendations

It is recommended that members of the committee:-

1. Note spend on the Ward 7, Ward 8, Local Community Planning and Anti-poverty budgets (referenced within the report as Area Revenue Budgets) for 2024/2025 as shown in Appendix 1.
2. Note spend on the Cowdenbeath Area's Community Recovery Fund budget, as shown in Appendix 2.
3. Approve the reallocation of £30,000 from the Anti-Poverty budget Community Growing proposal to the Minto Wood project.
4. Approve that, going forward, area budget spend will be presented yearly to Cowdenbeath Area Committee on the first committee date after recess. This will inform on the areas budget spend for the previous financial year.

Resource Implications

There are no additional resource implications arising from this report.

Legal & Risk Implications

There are no Legal & Risk Implications.

Impact Assessment

An EqIA has not been completed and is not necessary as this report does not propose a new or revised policy or practice.

Consultation

This report is to update members on the Cowdenbeath Area Revenue budgets and Community Recovery Fund budget, therefore no consultation was undertaken. These are

discussed with elected members at Ward meetings and funding recommendations shared with members for feedback.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Cowdenbeath Area manage the Local Community Planning, Anti-Poverty, Ward 7 and Ward 8 budgets. The budgets are allocated each year to support activities linked to the priorities in the Cowdenbeath Local Community Plan and to support local partnership working. The budgets are designed to be flexible and respond to community needs and to support projects that support the communities within the Cowdenbeath Area.
- 1.2 On the 29 March 2023 the committee agreed to fund, from the Cowdenbeath Anti-Poverty budget, the sum of £60,000 to support the development of community food growing initiatives across the Cowdenbeath Area. This was divided between the two wards within the Area, providing £30,000 to each. The Ward 7 project has progressed. The Ward 8 project, after further investigation, has been unable to develop as hoped. As a result, there was discussion at ward meetings about the best way forward that still support the needs of the local community. This report requests approval to redirect the £30,000 that was secured for Ward 8 from the growing initiative to the Minto Path project. This will still see the investment support the community and will help progress a project that is well underway and that will provide a route which links Ward 7 and Ward 8 together.
- 1.3 At the December 2022 Area Committee members allocated funds to a number of projects and requested that regular updates be provided at ward meetings and at Area Committee on spend against the projects and the area budgets. As a result, an area schedule update report has been presented at all Cowdenbeath Area Committee meetings, keeping members abreast of project progress and spend. Now all projects are complete members are asked to remove the Area Schedule update as a standing item on the agenda. Budget monitoring will continue to be provided regularly at ward meetings to allow members to raise questions as necessary and a report will be presented annual to the Cowdenbeath Area Committee. This will inform the areas budget spend from the previous financial year. Briefings can also be provided to members on an ad hoc basis to inform and answer queries accordingly.
- 1.4 In March 2023, the Area Committee approved a number of projects to be delivered through the Community Recovery Fund (CRF) allocation. Officers will keep members informed of progress and spend as these projects develop through ward meetings and at Area Committee. A workshop was held on the 14 November 2023, 26 March 2024, 14th May 2024 and on 6th August 2024 in relation to the CRF budget.

2.0 Budget Update

Area Revenue Budgets

- 2.1 The table below shows the available Area Revenue budgets and spend at 31st July 2024 across a number of budget headings. A detailed breakdown of the budget spend is shown in Appendix 1.
- 2.2 Carry-over funding from 2023/24 is yet to be confirmed for each of the budget headings. Once this is known, members will be updated via ward meetings. The carry-over is sufficient to ensure there is no over-spend within the Local Community Planning budget.

Budget Heading	Carry Over from 2023/24	2024/25 Budget Allocation	Total Budget 2024/25	Spend / Committed to Date**	Remaining Budget
Local Community Planning	Not known at this time	21, 337	48,837.00* ***	36,299	12, 538
Anti-Poverty	Not known at this time	272,653.00	272,653.00 ***	244,114	28,538
Ward 7	Not known at this time	84,320.00	84,320.00***	63,485	20,835
Ward 8	Not known at this time	66,408.00	66,408.00***	48,612	17,796

* includes allocation agreed at April committee for community events

** figures calculated on 31st July 2024.

*** will increase when the carry-over is known.

Community Recovery Fund (CRF)

- 2.3 Projects agreed at the March 2023 Area Committee are being progressed. The CRF is currently available until the end of March 2025, with the funding allocated to date shown in the table. This provides an interim update on the CRF spend to date. Further details of the project spend can be found in Appendix 2.
- 2.4 A workshop with Councillors took place on 6 August 2024 to discuss further opportunities which could be supported by the CRF budget, which are also being presented to the September Area Committee.

	Total Budget	Spent/Allocated to Date	Remaining Budget
Community Recovery Fund	£1,297,000	£1,018,140	£268,860
		£1,297,000**	0

* calculated 31st July

** if approved at Sept area committee

4.0 Conclusion

- 4.1 Members are requested to note the spend in 2024/2025 across all budgets shown in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2.
- 4.2 Members are asked to approve the reallocation of £30,000 from the Anti-Poverty budget from the Community Growing proposal to the Minto Wood project.
- 4.3 Members are asked to approve that, going forward, area budget spend will be presented yearly to Cowdenbeath Area Committee on the first Committee after recess. This will inform on the areas budget spend for the previous financial year. This will remove the Area Schedule update report as a standing item on the agenda.

List of Appendices

1. Budget Monitor for Local Community Planning, Anti-Poverty, Ward 7 and Ward 8 Budgets 2024/25
2. Budget Monitor for Community Recovery Fund budget

Report Contact:

Anne Marie Vance

Community Manager

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Appendix 1

A41811 - COWDENBEATH AREA

LCP

Approved Budget	£48,837.00
Current Budget	
Carryover 2023/24	
Actuals to date	£16,199.00
Outstanding Spend on Projects	£20,100.00
TOTAL Remaining Budget	£12,538.00

Project Name	Area Budget Contribution & Proposed Project Contribution	Expenditure & Income Processed
Cowdenbeath Area DRR Awards 2024-25	£8,549.00	£4,499.00
Annual Community Grants Events/Floral/Christmas Trees	£27,500.00	£11,450.00
Warm Spaces Cowdenbeath Community Choir	£250.00	£250.00
TOTALS	£36,299.00	£16,199.00

A41785 - COWDENBEATH Anti-Poverty 2024/25

Approved Budget	£272,653.00
Current Budget	
Carryover 2023/24	
Actuals to date	£113,407.76
Outstanding Spend on Projects	£130,706.74
TOTAL Remaining Budget	£28,538.50

Project Name	Area Budget Contribution & Proposed Project Contribution	Expenditure & Income Processed
Football for All Cowdenbeath - Cowden in the Community	£2,425.50	£2,425.50
Community Growing Projects Cowdenbeath Area	£60,000.00	
Welfare Reform Immediate Response Fund	£6,000.00	£132.26
Holiday Programme 2024/25	£50,000.00	£50,000.00
Shoe Box Project	£10,320.00	£10,320.00
CLD Resource Contribution - CEW Yr 2	£15,244.00	£15,244.00
Community Resilience Fund - Castle Furniture	£10,000.00	
Community Food Project	£125.00	£125.00
Grounds for Growth	£10,000.00	£10,000.00
Community Food Project - Oor Wee Cafe	£12,281.00	£4,094.00
Community Food Project - Lo'Gelly Lunches	£16,040.00	
Community Food Project - Cardenden Community Fridge	£12,619.00	£4,207.00
Community Food Project - Max's Pantry & Max's Light Bites	£11,390.00	
Community Food Project - Crossgates Foodbank	£2,136.00	£2,136.00
Community Food Project - The Clearing	£2,071.00	£2,071.00
Community Food Project - The Knights Templar	£7,248.00	£7,248.00
Community Food Project - Pantry @ BRAG	£16,215.00	£5,405.00
TOTALS	£244,114.50	£113,407.76

A41810 - COWDENBEATH LCP	
Approved Budget	£84,320.00
Current Budget	
Carryover 2023/24	
Actuals to date	£55,398.42
Outstanding Spend on Projects	£8,086.30
TOTAL Remaining Budget	£20,835.28

Project Name	Area Budget Contribution & Proposed Project Contribution	Expenditure & Income Processed
Default	-£333.34	-£333.34
Annual Community Grants Events/Floral/Christmas Trees	£16,750.00	£16,750.00
CLD Programme 2024/25	£10,000.00	£10,000.00
Drink Safety Campaign 2024	£2,121.00	£2,121.00
CLD Resource Contribution - CEW Yr 2	£15,244.00	£15,244.00
Cowdenbeath WWM - Installation of Gate	£3,103.06	£1,000.00
The Clearing Eco Upgrade EPC	£350.00	£350.00
Humbug Park Pavilion Remedial Works	£5,000.00	£5,000.00
Annual Events - YOCAR, Volunteering Celebration, International Womens Day etc	£5,000.00	£5,000.00
St Brides PS - Fence/Barrier	£1,250.00	£266.76
TOTALS	£58,484.72	£55,398.42

A41809 - LOCHGELLY AND CARDENDEN	
Approved Budget	£66,408.00
Current Budget	
Carryover 2023/24	
Actuals to date	£46,812.00
Outstanding Spend on Projects	£1,800.00
TOTAL Remaining Budget	£17,796.00

PROJECT NAME	Area Budget Contribution & Proposed Project Contribution	Expenditure & Income Processed
Away Dressing Room Shower Upgrade	£2,580.00	£2,580.00
Annual Community Grants Events/Floral/Christmas Trees 2024/25	£10,750.00	£10,750.00
CLD Programme 2024/25	£7,500.00	£7,500.00
Friends of Lochore Meadows (FOLM) - Cafe Experience Enhancement	£3,496.00	£3,496.00
Ward 8 ChargeUp with Steph - group sessions - Lochgelly Primary Schools feeding into Lochgelly HS	£1,200.00	£1,200.00
Ward 8 Charge Up Group - Cardenden Primary School Invoice No: 015	£600.00	£600.00
CLD Resource Contribution - CEW Yr 2	£15,244.00	£15,244.00
Punch Beyond - Lochgelly High School	£442.00	£442.00
Annual Events - YOCAR, Volunteering Celebration, International Womens Day etc	£5,000.00	£5,000
Minto Wood, Path Design & Costings	£1,800.00	
TOTALS	£48,612.00	£46,812.00

Appendix 2 - Community Recovery Fund (CRF) Projects

Budget allocations at 31st July 2024

Project	Budget	Committed / Spent	Remaining budget
Welfare Support	£102,000	£102,000*	£0
Community Education Workers	£185,000	£185,000*	£0
Funded outdoor education courses	£20,000	£20,000	£0
Youth work development	£50,000	£50,000	£0
Community Social Work	£350,000	£83,192	£266,808
Mental Health – High Schools	£60,000	£60,000	£0
Lochgelly Town Hall	£10,000	£10,000	£0
Lochgelly Civic Space	£10,000	£10,000	£0
Lumphinnans Play Park	£150,000	£150,000	£0
Kiers Brae Play Park	£40,000	£40,000	£0
Participatory Budgeting	£48,000	£48,000	£0
Hill of Beath	£50,000	£50,000	£0
Tree Growing, Ballingry	£10,000	£10,000	£0
Community Orchard, Cardenden	£10,000	£10,000	£0
Crossgates Primrose Trust	£200,000	£200,000	£0
Budget yet to be allocated	£2,000	£268,808	£268,808
Total	£1,297,000	£1,297,000	£268,808

*Funding allocated to staffing

4 September 2024

Agenda Item No. 12

PROPERTY TRANSACTIONS

Report by: Alan Paul, Head of Property Services

Wards Affected: 7 and 8

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to advise Members of action taken using the List of Officer Powers in relation to property transactions.

Recommendation(s)

The Committee is asked to note the contents of this report.

Resource Implications

There are no resource implications arising from these transactions, as any expenditure is contained within the appropriate Service budget.

Legal & Risk Implications

There are no legal or risk implications arising from these transactions.

Impact Assessment

An EqIA is not required and is not necessary for the following reasons: the items in this report do not propose a change or revision to existing policies and practices.

Consultation

All consultations have been carried out in relation to this report.

1.0 Background

- 1.1** In dealing with the day to day business of the Council there are a number of matters relating to the purchase, disposal and leasing of property and of property rights. This report advises of those transactions dealt with under powers delegated to officials.

2.0 Transactions

2.1 Acquisitions

2.1.1 74 Torbeith Gardens, Hill of Beath

Date of Acquisition: 7 June 2024

Price: £150,000

2.1.2 32 Stewart Crescent, Lochgelly

Date of Acquisition: 26 April 2024

Price: £65,000

3.0 Conclusions

- 3.1** These transactions are reported back in accordance with the List of Officers Powers.

List of Appendices

1. N/A

Background Papers

The following papers were relied on in the preparation of this report in terms of the Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1973:

N/A

Report Contact

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5 September 2024

Agenda Item No. 13

Cowdenbeath Area Committee Forward Work Programme

Report by: Eileen Rowand, Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Services)

Wards Affected: 7 and 8

Purpose

This report supports the committee's consideration of the workplan for future meetings of the Committee.

Recommendation(s)

It is recommended that the committee review the Forward Work Programme and that members come forward with suggestions for specific areas they would like to see covered in any of the reports.

Resource Implications

Committee should consider the resource implication for council staff of any request for future reports.

Legal & Risk Implications

Committee should consider seeking inclusion of future items on the Work Programme by prioritising those which have the biggest impact and those which seek to deal with the highest level of risk.

Impact Assessment

None required for this paper.

Consultation

The purpose of the paper is to support the committee's discussion and therefore no consultation is necessary.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Each Area Committee operates a Work Programme which contains items which fall under three broad headings: items for decision, supporting the Local Community Plan and Scrutiny/Monitoring. These items will often lead to reactive rather than proactive scrutiny. Discussion on the workplan agenda item will afford members the opportunity to shape, as a committee, the agenda with future items of business it wishes to review in more detail.

2.0 Conclusions

- 2.1 The current Forward Work Programme is included as Appendix 1 and should be reviewed by the committee to help inform scrutiny activity.

List of Appendices

1. Cowdenbeath Area Committee Forward Work Programme

Report Contact

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Cowdenbeath Area Committee of 30 October 2024			
Title	Service(s)	Contact(s)	Comments
Minute - 4 September 2024			
Local Community Plan 2023/26 - End of Year 1 Annual Report	Communities and Neighbourhoods Service	Anne-Marie Vance	
Area Budget and Project Progress report	Communities and Neighbourhoods Service	Anne-Marie Vance	
Forward Work Programme			
Community Recovery Fund (CRF) Update	Communities and Neighbourhoods Service	Anne-Marie Vance	

Cowdenbeath Area Committee of 11 December 2024			
Title	Service(s)	Contact(s)	Comments
Minute - 30 October 2024			
Carriageway Repairs	Roads & Transportation	Sara Wilson / Gordon Henderson	
Play Spaces Categorisation - Progress Report and Implementation Plan	Communities and Neighbourhoods Service	Kevin Okane	
Common Good and Settlement Trust Funds Annual Report 2022-2023	Finance and Corporate Services	Eleanor Hodgson	
Community and Learning Development Holiday Programme – Summer & Autumn 2024	Communities and Neighbourhoods Service	Izzy Scott-Trimmm	

Cowdenbeath Area Committee of 5 February 2025			
Title	Service(s)	Contact(s)	Comments
Minute - 11 December 2024			
ARP Report 2024-25, including report on Road Defects (potholes etc)	Roads & Transportation	Vicki Storrar/ Gordon Henderson	

Cowdenbeath Area Committee of 5 February 2025			
Title	Service(s)	Contact(s)	Comments
Annual Update report on status of the Lochore Meadows Development Plan	Communities and Neighbourhoods Service	Sarah Roxburgh	
Forward Work Programme			

Cowdenbeath Area Committee of 30 April 2025			
Title	Service(s)	Contact(s)	Comments
Minute - 5 February 2025			
Health and Social Care Annual Report	Health and Social Care	Jacquie Stringer	
Forward Work Programme			

Cowdenbeath Area Committee of 25 June 2025			
Title	Service(s)	Contact(s)	Comments
Minute - 30 April 2025			
Police Scotland Annual Update	Police Scotland		
Scottish Fire and Rescue Service Annual Update			
Community Safety Annual Update			
Forward Work Programme			

Unallocated			
Title	Service(s)	Contact(s)	Comments
Single Amendment to the Core Path Plan Cardenden	Communities and Neighbourhoods Service	Sarah Johnston	TBC
Children's Services in Fife	Education		TBC
Local Community Planning Budget	Communities and Neighbourhoods Service	Anne-Marie Vance	

Unallocated			
Title	Service(s)	Contact(s)	Comments
Area Capital Update Report	Communities and Neighbourhoods Service	Ann-Marie Vance, Andy Maclellan	TBC
Mary Pit Head - Restoration Work	Communities and Neighbourhoods Service	Sarah Roxburgh	No report available, ongoing.
Community Learning and Development Holiday Programme Update	Communities and Neighbourhoods Service	Izzy Scott-Trimmm	TBC
For information - Standing Item for each meeting - Plan 4 Cowdenbeath 2023-2026 - Progress report	Communities and Neighbourhoods Service	Anne-Marie Vance	For information only - Minute of meeting on 06.09.23 para 77(5) - standing item on each Agenda
Report on Cowdenbeath High Street and BRAG Enterprises Ltd	Finance and Corporate Services	David Grove	TBC
Annual Report on spend on repair to roads defects across Cowdenbeath - to accompany Area Roads Programme	Roads & Transportation	Sara Wilson/Gordon Henderson	For information only.