

# **Renfrewshire Council Plan**

## **2017-2022**

# **Thriving People, Connected Communities**

“Working together for a thriving, connected Renfrewshire,  
creating opportunities for all”

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## Introduction from the Leader and Chief Executive

This is an exciting, yet challenging time for Renfrewshire. The Council, with its partners, has recognised that there is a real opportunity to transform the future of our place and its people by building a shared vision for Renfrewshire which will improve life chances in a fair and inclusive way.

Our approach is very much about building on our strengths. Renfrewshire is a place with a rich history, strong resilient communities and great economic potential. We need to use these strengths to address the widening inequalities that exist in terms of outcomes such as attainment, employment, poverty and health. Whilst drawing geographical boundaries is not the answer, we need to do more to address the fact that the life chances for people living just a few streets apart can be starkly different. We need to make sure that everyone is able to benefit from the economic growth that we are aiming to achieve.

Key to this is our children and young people. We need to keep working hard to give them the best start in life and to improve life chances, working closely with families and providing support where this is needed. With partners, we will look at working in different ways with some of the most vulnerable children and adults that we support, aiming to improve outcomes and supporting more people to live safely and independently within their own homes and communities. We will work to lift people out of poverty, promoting skills and learning for life and ensuring that local people are able to gain the skills and training they need to access sustainable employment.

Our population is changing. Like other areas in Scotland, we need to respond to the needs of an increasingly ageing population and encourage more people to live and work in Renfrewshire to increase our working age population. Ensuring people live in well designed places, with good quality and affordable housing, and good schools, leisure facilities and transport links will be critical to our success.

However we need to get the business as usual right. Local people and businesses rely on the Council, and on the statutory role that we have to make sure that the environment in which people live provides good quality of life. We will continue to focus on improving the customer experience - getting it right for customers first time – whether this is a housing repair or a special uplift, it's important that local people have confidence in the quality of service being provided.

The financial challenges facing this council are significant, with savings of approximately £20m per annum potentially required over the next few years. At the same time, the needs and expectations of our customers are changing. We will progress our transformation plans for the organisation, and ensure that we do more to involve local people, groups and organisations in the changes that the Council will need to make going forward. Community empowerment legislation provides new opportunities to support communities to get more involved in influencing and delivering services.

The Council as an organisation is well placed to face these challenges, and embrace new opportunities which arise. We provide good quality services and we have a great workforce, with people going above and beyond every day to ensure people get the support they need. We will continue to develop and support our employees to ensure they have the skills and flexibility required to deliver our shared vision for Renfrewshire.

The call for action is to **work together for Renfrewshire, creating opportunities for all.**

## **Our place**

Renfrewshire is a place of outstanding natural beauty, home to Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park and a vast range of parks, woodlands and green space. Covering an area of some 270 square kilometres, the Renfrewshire area hosts major towns such as Paisley, Renfrew and Johnstone, and a number of attractive villages and settlements.

In terms of population, Renfrewshire is the 10<sup>th</sup> biggest local authority area in Scotland with a population of around 176,000. Over the 15 year period to 2010 the population did decline, but has in recent years increased and is projected to remain relatively stable at the current level. This brings challenges with a projected decline in the working age population of in the region of 13% over the next 20 years coupled with 79% increase in the number of people aged 75+ over the same period.

Renfrewshire is a thriving area for business and economic activity, with Glasgow Airport within its boundaries and excellent transport links across the West of Scotland, nationally and internationally. Employment levels in Renfrewshire have returned to levels experienced before the crash of 2008, with key sectors of employment being in the health and care sectors, transportation and manufacturing.

The area itself is an attractive place for people to move to, with property prices on average being lower than the national average. Levels of crime have also been falling, with a 3% reduction in reported crimes over the past 5 years.

Renfrewshire has a proud cultural heritage, with Paisley having the second highest concentration of listed buildings in Scotland. From historic museums, civic buildings, mills and observatories, the area has a rich history and thriving local cultural scene which is driving local regeneration plans and supporting the development of the area as a prospective tourism destination.

Renfrewshire has lots to offer and many strengths and assets to build on. One of the most critical challenges for the Council and its partners is addressing the gap that has emerged between different communities in Renfrewshire, with the life chances of some being very negatively impacted by poverty, poor health, and unemployment.

More than 1 in 5 children are growing up in poverty in Renfrewshire. According to the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation, 13 areas (or datazones) are within the 5% most deprived in Scotland.

Alcohol and drug misuse are major elements of ill health in Renfrewshire, contributing to the 6th highest rate of drug related deaths in Scotland and the fourth highest rate in Scotland of hospital stays that are related to alcohol use. Parental neglect and addiction have a significant impact on Renfrewshire's children. Almost 700 children in Renfrewshire are looked after by the authority – the fifth highest in population terms in Scotland.

With partners, we continue to take forward focused programmes of work which aim to engage differently with local people and communities to address these challenges and to reduce differences in life chances. Critical to this approach is “inclusive growth” – making sure that opportunities from growth and investment are available to everyone, particularly those most disadvantaged.

## **Our organisation**

With a net budget of approximately £380m, and over 7900 employees, Renfrewshire Council provides a diverse range of services to local people, businesses and communities.

The Council has a vital role to play locally; shaping the places which people live and work in, driving the local economy, providing education and learning, supporting and caring for vulnerable people and facilitating local democracy.

The findings from recent audits and inspections confirm that Renfrewshire Council is performing well, managing its resources effectively and making a positive difference to local communities. The recent Best Value Audit Assurance report published by the Accounts Commission states:- “Renfrewshire Council continues to improve and is making encouraging progress in the performance of its services”.

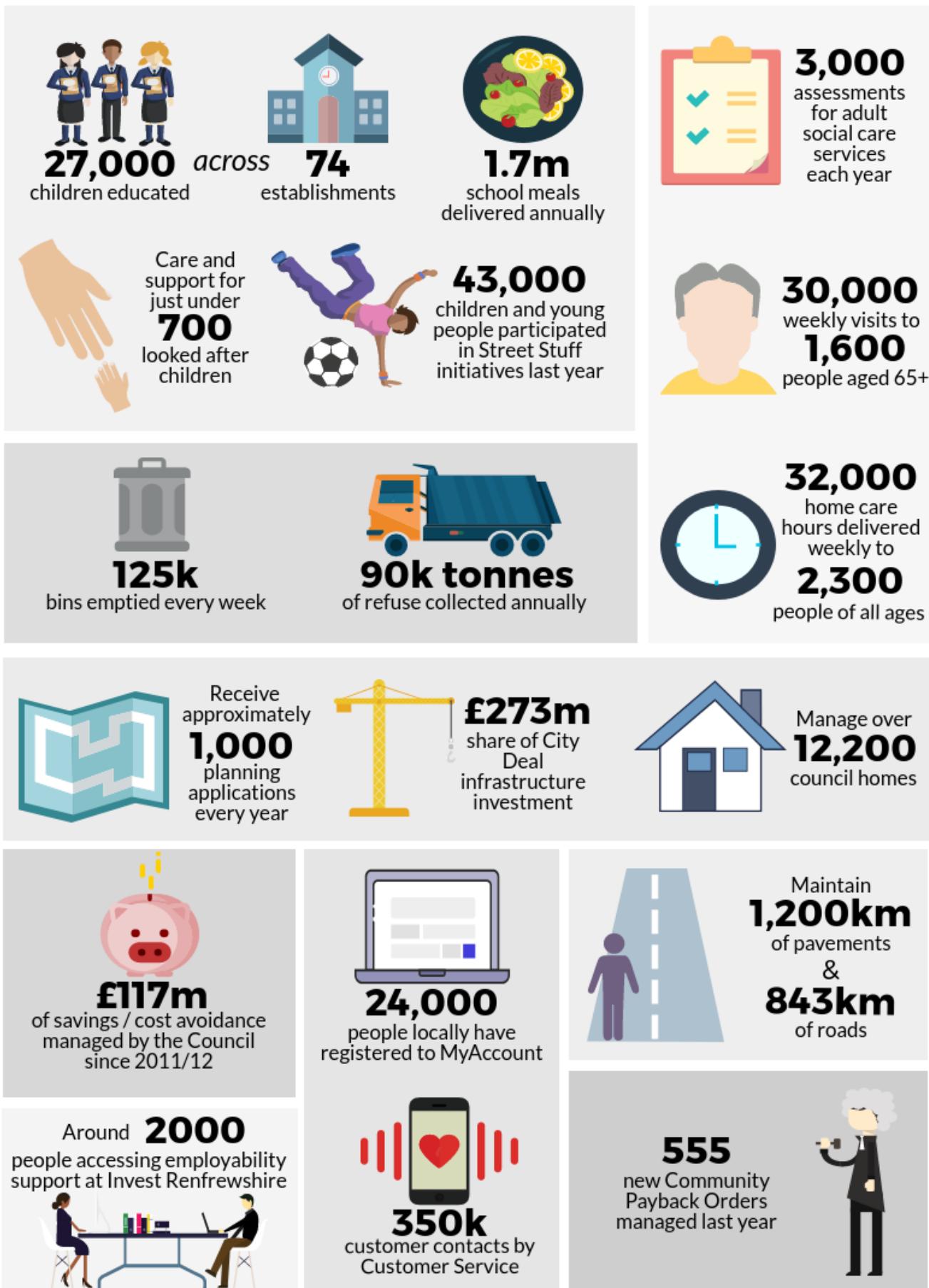
The organisation has a strong track record of innovation and embracing new approaches to service delivery. Since 2011/12, the Council has managed a total of £117 million of savings and cost pressures. The Better Council Change Programme has been an important element of the Council’s approach to transformation and supporting longer term financial sustainability.

Partnership is key to what we do in Renfrewshire. From driving economic and cultural regeneration to providing housing and education, the Council works with a range of partners across the business, public, third and community sectors to improve outcomes. There is a strong partnership focus on early intervention and prevention, working together to ensure that we get the best use of the resources we have and focus on improving outcomes for local people.

## **What difference do we make?**

- 83 % adults agree Renfrewshire is a safe place to live.
- 92% residents surveyed have positive perception of their quality of life.
- Income maximisation initiatives linked to tackling poverty in Renfrewshire have put over £4m back into the pockets of local people over the past 2 years of the programme.
- For the first time in Renfrewshire, pre-5, primary and secondary education for children with additional support needs is now available in the new-build Riverbrae School.
- 94% of our school leavers last year have accessed a training, education or employment placement.
- Over 100 Families have taken part in our Functional Family Therapy programme. Twenty-five young people deemed to be at high risk of being accommodated have been supported to remain at home.
- Partnership initiatives in relation to community safety have led to a 65% reduction in the number of reports of antisocial behaviour between 2009/10 and 2016/17.
- Over 800 affordable houses were built in Renfrewshire between 2011-2016.
- The Carbon Management Team has successfully reduced carbon emissions across public buildings, fleet, waste, street lighting and staff travel by over 20% (from 2012/2013 baseline).

## Key facts



# Strategic Outcomes

## Our vision: Working together for a thriving and connected Renfrewshire, creating opportunities for all

We will work together with partners, businesses, local people and communities to target 5 outcome areas, creating opportunities for all. These are outlined below and the key areas of activity which we will progress are highlighted under each of the 5 outcomes.

### I. Reshaping our place, our economy and our future

- Driving economic and cultural regeneration
- Maximising the benefits from City Deal and City Region investment
- Growing our working age population
- Supporting youth employment
- Promoting learning and skills for life
- Fostering “Inclusive Growth”
- Driving our local economy / new sectors
- Regenerating town centres
- Delivering required infrastructure
- Being ready for Brexit
- Promoting tourism
- Embracing digital opportunities

### 2. Building strong, safe and resilient communities

- Empowering communities
- Ensuring availability of affordable housing
- Working with partners to keep people safe
- Driving housing regeneration
- Embedding community justice arrangements
- Supporting independent living and social isolation
- Protecting children and adults
- Providing high quality care and support services
- Supporting vulnerable people
- Tackling issues related to private landlords
- Delivering community based services
- Tackling serious and organised crime
- Leading on civil contingencies and resilience planning

### 3. Tackling inequality, ensuring opportunities for all

- Promoting skills and learning for life
- Tackling the poverty related attainment gap
- Fostering “Inclusive Growth”
- Driving attainment for all
- Developing new approaches to tackle in-work poverty
- Delivering on expansion of early years provision
- Tackling drug and alcohol misuse
- Ensuring young people achieve positive, sustainable destinations
- Celebrating youth!
- Supporting Young carers
- Improving mental health and wellbeing
- Celebrating diversity
- Addressing health inequalities
- Promoting active lifestyles

### 4. Creating a sustainable Renfrewshire for all to enjoy

- Driving carbon management activities
- Keeping local places clean and attractive
- Leading on local environmental management issues
- Facilitating increased recycling and reducing waste
- Addressing flood management issues
- Supporting access to woodlands, public spaces, and cycling paths
- Ensuring effective business regulation
- Promoting sustainable food
- Supporting fairtrade

## **5. Working together to improve outcomes**

- Ensuring financial sustainability
- Providing good quality services
- Delivering the Better Council Change Programme
- Being ready for potential structural change e.g. education governance
- Strengthening our partnership approach
- Embedding a new approach to self evaluation
- Improving the customer journey / My Account
- Implementing our agreed approach to workforce planning
- Promoting learning and development opportunities for employees
- Achieving employee recognition
- Embracing new ICT developments and opportunities

# I. Reshaping our place, our economy and our future

We want everyone to know that Renfrewshire is “open for business”. Our economy is of national importance, with a significant proportion of Scotland’s manufactured exports coming from the area. The area has had its challenges however, with a sustained period of decline for industry and investment having a long term negative impact on employment and population growth.

In recent times positive opportunities for growth and investment have emerged, and the Council and its partners have shared ambitions to maximise opportunities arising from City Deal and participation across the wider Glasgow City Region, from culturally-led regeneration, tourism and emerging digital and manufacturing sectors locally.

Renfrewshire has a number of great assets which we can use as a catalyst for growth:- the potential accessibility of our towns and town centres with great connectivity through major transport hubs and Glasgow Airport; our heritage and culture which we will use to encourage visitor numbers and tourism; and the skills and potential of local people who must be able to reap the benefits of this growth.

Critical to our success will be our ability to grow Renfrewshire’s working age population which is anticipated to decrease by 13% between 2014 and 2039. The current economic climate will make it challenging to fund the infrastructure that is needed to support economic and population growth including housing, schools and roads, and in our cultural assets and heritage. The Council will be ambitious in its approach, ensuring that there is a lasting legacy for the Paisley 2021 bid.

## What are our priorities?

- Driving the local economy by identifying and supporting growth in new sectors which provide employment and training opportunities for more people.
- Delivering significant programmes of economic and cultural regeneration which will transform Renfrewshire and its prospects.
- Investing and delivering on infrastructure, promoting accessibility and attracting investment in our area.
- Making Renfrewshire a truly “Digital” location, which is ready to embrace and maximise the benefits of digital change.
- Promoting Renfrewshire as a place to live, work in and visit.
- Achieving recognition for local cultural excellence.

## What we will do:

- Deliver our City Deal Projects - the Glasgow Airport Investment Area, the Airport Access Project, Clyde Waterfront and Renfrew Riverside and City Region wide employment programmes.
- Support the Regional Economic Framework and locally driving economic progress through the Renfrewshire Economic Leadership Panel.
- Progress our digital ambitions, implementing free public wi-fi across our town centres and working with partners to promote digital skills and development.
- Invest in our cultural and economic infrastructure, transforming Paisley Town Hall, Paisley Learning Hub and Paisley Museum.
- Deliver on the ambitions of our town centre strategies, and specifically working with partners to transform Paisley Town Centre.
- Continue to invest in infrastructure to support growth – from road and rail links to bridges, cycle and pedestrian routes.
- Implement our destination marketing plans.
- Deliver a range of diverse and exciting events to increase visitor numbers and grow local event attendances.
- Work to increase the number of new business and social enterprise start ups in Renfrewshire, using innovative approaches to encourage entrepreneurship and innovation.
- Proactively work with absent landlords to bring some of the area’s most valued assets back into use.
- Support growth activity in relation to emerging manufacturing, digital, culture and food industries locally.

## **2. Building strong, safe and resilient communities**

Renfrewshire's people and communities are our best asset. There is a thriving network of community groups, organisations and expertise locally, with real potential to maximise emerging opportunities arising through new community empowerment legislation.

The places and houses in which people live are fundamental to quality of life. We have worked hard in recent years to progress significant housing regeneration programmes, and we will need to do more to ensure that quality, affordable housing is available to meet the changing needs of Renfrewshire's population.

With partners, we will continue to focus on public protection. In Renfrewshire, we have seen a 3% reduction in crime since 2013/14, with a 65% reduction in the number of incidents of antisocial behaviour over the last 5 years. Initiatives such as the Community Safety Partnership Hub have been recognised as best practice approaches nationally. Challenges remain in relation to levels of gender based violence, cyber crime, drug-related crime and wilful fire-raising. In terms of wider protection issues, there are increasing levels of individual vulnerability that partners will continue to work together on. For example, Renfrewshire has high numbers of children impacted by parental neglect and drug and alcohol misuse and has also seen a significant increase in the number of adult protection concerns raised.

Partnership work in relation to counter-terrorism and civil contingencies will also be a key priority for the Council going forward, ensuring that the Renfrewshire area is able to respond effectively to challenges that emerge.

### **What are our priorities?**

- Working with partners to ensure local communities are safe and vibrant places to live.
- Protecting vulnerable people, and ensuring people receive the care and support they need to live safely and independently within their own homes and communities.
- Ensuring that local people have access to quality, affordable housing.
- Strengthening existing community networks and empowering local people to become more involved in their area and the services delivered there.
- Working with communities to support the regeneration of some of our most disadvantaged areas.
- Ensuring all towns and villages in Renfrewshire are better connected and able to participate in social, cultural or economic activities across the Renfrewshire area.

### **What we will do:**

- Deliver the Local Housing Strategy to ensure good quality and affordable housing is available which meets the needs of the local population going forward.
- Work to tackle unregistered private landlords to ensure required housing standards are met.
- Implement recommendations flowing from the national reviews of child protection and the care system.
- Continue to develop residential provision in childcare.
- Work with key partners in local areas to empower people to develop and deliver services, assets and facilities in their local communities.
- Develop and deliver strategies for how the Council will respond locally to the risks posed by serious organised crime and terrorism.
- Design a new way of working with key partners to improve outcomes for the most vulnerable adults in our area, ensuring they get the right support at the right time.
- Along with our key partners we will monitor and review the impact of the range of services we provide to homeless people and those threatened with homelessness.
- Develop and deliver phase 2 of the Renfrewshire Community Safety Partnership Hub.
- Implement a new approach for Local Area Committees.
- Work with communities to develop local action plans to tackle the issues people care about most.
- Make Renfrewshire a leader in supporting volunteering within communities.
- Continue to modernise our school estate, maximising opportunities for communities to benefit from new facilities.

### **3. Tackling inequality, ensuring opportunities for all**

Significant inequalities exist across Renfrewshire's communities. The economic challenges of the past have had a long term impact on the life chances of local people with a widening gap evident in terms of educational attainment, employment, health and wellbeing and poverty.

Renfrewshire is home to some of the most deprived areas in Scotland, but we can no longer think of deprivation and inequality as solely being related to where we live. There is a need to think bigger and tackle the "new face" of poverty:- poverty affecting those who are working and still struggling to make ends meet. This needs a different approach:- taking forward initiatives which target the inequalities being experienced by specific groups of people, whilst ensuring that everyone is able to access opportunities which will improve their lives. We will ensure there is a focus on "inclusive growth", so everyone can benefit from Renfrewshire's regeneration.

A key focus for the Council will be children and young people. We will drive improvements in educational attainment for all, whilst tackling the poverty-related attainment gap. Working with partners, we will ensure that children get the best start in life and thrive in supportive learning environments, homes and communities. We will work hard to celebrate the achievements of young people and involve them meaningfully in services and in the work of the Council.

Renfrewshire is a place where diversity can be celebrated. We will continue to work with partners and communities to recognise the different needs that people may have, and ensure that we continue to listen to the voices of those not often heard.

#### **What are our priorities?**

- Lifting communities out of poverty and ensuring that everyone is able to benefit from economic and cultural regeneration plans.
- Ensuring our children get the best possible start in life and thrive in supportive learning and care environments.
- Focusing on the poverty related attainment gap, and working with partners to make sure young people can achieve success after leaving school.
- Tackling health inequalities, promoting healthy lifestyles, physical activity and positive mental health.
- Celebrating diversity within our communities, and ensuring that the voice and needs of different groups within society are heard.

#### **What we will do:**

- Deliver a range of interventions to support financial inclusion across Renfrewshire.
- Take forward a "Celebrating Youth" programme, offering young people in Renfrewshire the chance to get involved and to participate in a range of social, cultural, digital and sport activities.
- Introduce a youth and equalities forum as a key element of local engagement.
- Ensure Renfrewshire is a "Child Friendly" place where children are nurtured and thrive.
- Further develop our early years curriculum to support new legislation and in particular the additional hours being allocated for early learning and childcare.
- Provide high quality education and support to narrow the poverty related attainment gap.
- Deliver approaches to help mitigate the impacts of welfare reform.
- Working with local equalities led community groups and employees to implement specific and meaningful equalities outcomes.
- Develop innovative approaches for tackling social isolation across all groups in society.
- Take forward targeted action to address the number of drug related deaths in Renfrewshire.
- Maximise use of leisure assets in Renfrewshire, promoting positive health and mental wellbeing.
- Review support for young carers, identifying opportunities to improve life chances.

## **4. Creating a sustainable Renfrewshire for all to enjoy**

Renfrewshire has a rich and varied natural environment. We have wildlife and nature conservation sites of national and international importance, protected woodlands, parks and green spaces.

The Council has a lead role and a duty to protect the environment and the health of local people living in our communities. Working with partners, we have made great progress: - introducing energy efficient street lighting, increasing our use of alternative fuel, making Council buildings more energy efficient and actively working to increase recycling and reduce waste sent to landfill.

Climate change is critical to us all and we will continue to work to drive energy efficiency, monitor and improve air quality and to put into place appropriate flood management plans. Going forward an emerging area will be our focus on sustainable food. Food is an important but often overlooked part of daily life, from how it is grown to how it is transported and consumed. We want to celebrate food locally and plan to work with partners to achieve Sustainable Food Cities Status and promote the whole system of food. There are clear links to our work in relation to food poverty and healthy lifestyles.

We also want to do more to encourage people to enjoy our green spaces, get more active, try woodland walks, enjoy physical activity in our parks and gardens, and be supported to use allotments and get growing themselves.

### **What are our priorities?**

- Working with local communities to make Renfrewshire a cleaner place in which to live, visit or do business in.
- Promoting sustainable approaches to everyday life, minimising waste, increasing recycling levels and energy efficiency.
- Developing a new approach to the local food system – from the food that we grow and eat, to promoting the area as place to visit for good food.
- Developing our outdoor places and spaces and encouraging communities to use and enjoy them.
- Leading the way in terms of sustainability, ensuring council assets are energy efficient, and increasing use of alternative energy sources.

### **What we will do:**

- Work to meet the challenging targets set in our carbon management plan – through our council fleet, street lighting, public realm and floodlight strategy for example.
- Ensure a residual waste treatment and disposal facility is fully operational by 2019 as part of the Clyde Valley Waste Management Solution to ensure that all waste collected by authorities is diverted from landfill.
- Deliver the requirements of the Scottish Household recycling charter and related service charges.
- Finalise the delivery of the project to replace all street lighting in Renfrewshire with LEDs.
- Deliver a refreshed Air Quality Action Plan to improve air quality for Renfrewshire.
- Review and update Renfrewshire's Sustainable Food Strategy and achieve Sustainable Food City Status.
- Deliver the Team Up, Clean Up campaign throughout Renfrewshire, involving local communities.
- Ensure that the Council's integrated enforcement policy is adhered to, ensuring businesses and communities are treated fairly and consistently.

## **5. Working together to improve outcomes**

The Council has a strong track record of managing its resources effectively, as recognised recently by Audit Scotland. The financial challenges facing the Council are unprecedented. It's estimated that the Council may have to save up to £40m over the first two years of this Council plan alone.

At the same time, the organisation needs to keep up with both the pace of change and the needs of local people. We have been working to change the way in which customers can engage with the Council through services such as My Account and investing in the back office systems that we use, but we recognise the need to do more. Meaningful consultation and engagement with local people, businesses and communities will also need to be a priority as we move forward with transformation plans.

To support our staff to deliver this chance, we will continue to develop a culture of innovation and of staff recognition within the organisation. We will invest in learning and development opportunities for staff to ensure that the organisation is flexible and ready to face future challenges.

### **What are our priorities?**

- Ensuring the Council remains financially sustainable and continues to provide good quality and efficient services.
- Continuing to invest, develop and engage with staff, ensuring that the organisation can address challenges and maximise opportunities.
- Fostering a culture of innovation and improvement and using greater business intelligence to ensure that services are designed and delivered to meet future needs.
- Strengthening local and national partnership working, maximising the opportunities arising from policy and structural change.

### **What we will do:**

- Continue to manage the Council's resources, ensuring financial sustainability of the organisation.
- Take forward opportunities for transformation, innovation and efficiency through our Better Council Change Programme.
- Review existing strategic partnership agreements and work with community planning partners to identify opportunities to share and connect resources.
- Develop our data and analytics function, working with partners to build a better picture of how to improve outcomes for local people, businesses and communities using an early intervention approach.
- Continue to modernise our services, taking advantage of new technologies to deliver better, more accessible and more efficient services that meet customer needs – such as My Account.
- Engage with proposed changes to education governance and local democracy, maximising opportunities for the organisation and communities.
- Implement an action plan for the organisation, addressing any recommendations from the recent Best Value Audit.
- Roll-out the Performance Development and Review programme across the Council
- Implement new leadership and management development programmes.
- Fully embed our staff "intrapreneurship" programme and recognising staff for success.
- Implement our workforce plan for Renfrewshire Council.

## How will this Plan work?

Renfrewshire Council has a robust strategic planning framework, which ensures that the Council works effectively at partnership, organisational and service level to plan and deliver services, and improve outcomes for local people, businesses and communities.

The Council Plan is one of three important sets of documents that, taken together, describe what the Council is trying to achieve over the coming years and how it is going to do this:

- The Council Plan summarises the Council's priority objectives over a 5 year period and the high level actions it will take to deliver these objectives.
- The Community Plan summarises the priorities for Renfrewshire that the Council and its community planning partners (the other public bodies and third sector organisations that deliver services within Renfrewshire) have identified and agreed that can best be achieved by working closely together.
- Service plans detail the activity that each Council service will be undertaking to contribute to the successful delivery of the Council Plan and the Community Plan.

As set out in this Council Plan, the organisation and the services we provide will need to change in response to both the challenges and opportunities ahead.

Our staff are at the heart of the services we deliver across Renfrewshire and it is their skills, performance and commitment that will determine the extent to which the organisation can deliver the priorities set out in the Council Plan.

The organisation's workforce plan sets out how we intend to support our employees through this process of change. It has been developed in consultation with trade unions and internal stakeholders.

We will continue to involve and engage staff as we modernise and improve services, seeking views on how to implement effective change.

Thinking outwards, we are committed to strengthening the way we engage with our communities, supporting them to influence the way in which services are delivered.

## How will we know what difference we have made?

The Council Plan is a key strategic document for the organisation, setting out for partners, elected members, employees, local people, businesses and communities the key priorities which we will focus on going forward.

It's important that we provide regular updates on our performance against these priorities. To provide assurance and confidence about progress made, we will:

- Develop and agree a suite of performance actions and measures which we will report progress on to members every 6 months.
- Find out what local people think about our plans and our performance through for example our Public Services Panel
- Tell you more about our progress through our annual performance report – “Its All About You”
- Develop initiatives in response to this Plan which we tell you about within our Service Improvement Plans and in our Renfrewshire Magazine. Progress reports on service improvement plans are provided to members every six months and are available publicly.