Annual Performance Report 2017/18
This Performance Report presents how our Council, working with our communities and partners, has fulfilled our vision of – A Better Life. Collectively we have worked to improve economic growth, close the attainment gap and ensure our resources are directed to support those who need them most.

We want all our residents to flourish in safe, sustainable and creative communities supported by a Council that is open, engaging and caring, so that everyone has a choice about how they live and can be confident about how to achieve their ambitions and aspirations.

The Council has improved year-on-year across a wide range of our services, which resulted in our award as the Association of Public Service Excellence (APSE) UK Council of the Year for 2017. This was a fabulous recognition for the Council, our staff, councillors and of course every one of our communities.

As the financial challenges continue to increase we need more and more help from our partners and businesses to succeed. We want - and need - to work with you to understand how our services can be delivered in the best way and what our priorities should be. We know that no two areas are the same which is why we have introduced our Locality Partnerships, Community Investment Fund and our Shaping North Ayrshire Participatory Budgeting programmes – to let you decide where the money goes in your community.

Over the last year we have worked hard to improve equity by driving forward with our Fair for All strategy focusing on alleviating poverty, taking an inclusive approach to economic growth, improving the health of our residents, increasing access to affordable food and putting children and young people at the centre of our thoughts. Over this period we also became the first Child-Centred Council in Scotland to make sure we give our young people the best possible start in life.

For us all to work together to make North Ayrshire the best place to live, work and grow up we need to trust in each other and that is why we want to hear what you think about our performance and what we can do to improve.

Please take the time to let us know.
Our mission is to improve the lives of North Ayrshire people and develop stronger communities.

In 2017/18, North Ayrshire Council had five strategic priorities:

1. Growing our economy, increasing employment and regeneration
2. Working together to develop stronger communities
3. Ensuring people have the right skills for learning, life and work
4. Supporting all of our people to stay safe, healthy and active
5. Protecting and enhancing the environment for future generations

The following pages highlight a few of the many achievements that we have made along with our partners across the private, public and third sectors, and communities throughout the year.

Our Performance at a Glance

Below are some of the key areas where we have continually improved our performance over the last number of years:

- **91% increase** in the number of unemployed people who have progressed to employment through Council funded or operated schemes over the last three years.
- **76% reduction** in the number of Children referred to the Scottish Children’s Reporter Administration for offences over the last eight years.
- **31% increase** in the number of school leavers attaining literacy at National 5 and **27% increase** in the number of school leavers attaining numeracy at National 5 over the last six years.
- **24% reduction** in our Carbon Emissions over the last five years.
- **84% of our customers** were delighted with the Customer Service they received.
A Year of Key Events

North Ayrshire Creating Active Communities Conference

Formal Opening of the State of the Art Garnock Community Campus

Official Opening of Cheviot Gardens Housing Development, Irvine

Launch of the ‘Period Poverty’ initiative – the first of its kind in Scotland – to give young women and girls struggling to afford basic sanitary products access to a free supply at their secondary school

Aberdeen Asset Management Scottish Men’s and Ladies Open Golf tournaments, providing a significant boost to the local economy

200th Anniversary of completion of Beith Townhouse

Delivery of successful Local Government Elections

Floors Open Day – various locations

Official opening of the integrated Fullarton Community Hub, Irvine

Formal openings of our fabulous facilities at the Townhouse and Portal

Official Opening of the 206-bed Woodland View Hospital, Irvine

The Council was awarded APSE Overall Council of the Year for Service Delivery

DrEAM (Drop Everything and Move) events across North Ayrshire

Challenge Poverty Week and the acclaimed Challenge Poverty Conference

First Council in Scotland to approve a policy of exempting care leavers from Council Tax

Council agreed to build social housing in Arran

Launch of the Better Off North Ayrshire service

Keep North Ayrshire Warm this Christmas campaign

Council online budget engagement

Official Opening of Sweeney Court/Sweeney Street Ardrossan Cunninghame Housing Association Event

Council Budget Setting for 2018/19

Opening of Kilwinning Employability Hub

Provost’s Civic Pride Awards Charity Dinner which recognised community heroes and raised over £19,000 for charity

Scottish Modern Apprentice Week

Reopening of refurbished Kilwinning Library

North Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership Strategic Plan consultation

Holocaust Memorial Day Service with Irvine Royal Academy pupils and Royal British Legion

North Ayrshire Creating Active Communities Conference

Doors Open Day – various locations

Official Opening of the integrated Fullarton Community Hub, Irvine

Formal Opening of the 206-bed Woodland View Hospital, Irvine

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DrEAM (Drop Everything and Move) events across North Ayrshire
KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- We have made major progress in our bid to secure and deliver the Ayrshire Growth Deal. This major partnership initiative with all three Ayrshire Councils, and the Westminster and Scottish Governments, will trigger investment into key projects and infrastructure essential to drive our economic growth.

- Our Modern Apprenticeship programme continues to provide opportunities for our young people. A total of 93 Modern Apprentices were recruited by the Council during 2017, meaning we are on track to achieve our three year target of 270 places. During 2017, we also ring-fenced five places for care experienced young people.

- We were the first local authority in Scotland to automatically exempt care leavers from Council Tax, immediately benefiting 185 young people.

- We are working with the City of Edinburgh Council, Glasgow City Council and Fife Council to undertake a Basic Income Pilot Feasibility Study. The pilot will provide an unconditional, regular payment instead of benefits, with the aim of cutting welfare bureaucracy and reducing poverty.

We will only achieve our ambition of a fair and equitable society in North Ayrshire if everyone is able to prosper. This is Inclusive Growth and is a key economic strand of our Fair for All strategy. During 2017/18 we have continued to make real progress in this area.
Better Off North Ayrshire is a service funded by the European Social Fund and the Big Lottery Fund. The service provides people with advice on the benefits they are entitled to and help to apply online. The service also provides information on how to find and apply for jobs.

We supported a client facing the threat of eviction. By moving their high cost debt to more affordable sources of credit we freed up £90 per week, meaning the family could meet the shortfall in rent due to the benefit cap. A budget banking account was also opened to assist with managing money.

A client who was overspending was provided with budgeting support, and after reviewing their outgoings, a saving of £4,320 per annum was achieved.

Better Off North Ayrshire clients

“The Modern Apprentice programme continues to deliver exceptional outcomes. Stacey* began her Customer Service Level 2 Modern Apprenticeship in October 2017. Due to her commitment and the support of the team, she excelled throughout her qualification, achieving her certificate ahead of schedule. Since then, Stacey has secured a full time post within North Ayrshire Council and continues to deliver excellent services for our residents.”

Priority in Action

Better Off North Ayrshire

As a mum to two young children, Claire* participated in our Skills for Life programme – a 6 month employability programme that provides support for long-term unemployed participants built around a vocational work placement. During the programme, thanks to assistance with childcare arrangements and costs through a Scottish Government pilot, Claire and her family were able to benefit financially from her work. Last autumn she was offered a contract during school hours and six months on she has sustained her employment within North Ayrshire Council and is looking forward to the future.

Priority in Action

“Very helpful, explained things in detail and in a language I could understand. Would gladly recommend.”

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“We really value our time together as a wee family. Being part of the Skills for Life programme has been great for me and my girls.”

*names have been changed

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“It’s not just about the money. I think we all enjoy spending better quality time together when I get home from work. We really value our time together as a wee family. Being part of the Skills for Life programme has been great for me and my girls.”

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Better Off North Ayrshire clients
£408,476 additional income was generated for residents through Better Off North Ayrshire

Our innovative Team North Ayrshire has supported the creation of 588 new jobs by local business

644 businesses received support from our Business Development Service

143 start-up enterprises were assisted through Business Gateway

We helped 818 unemployed people move into jobs through our employability programmes

Total investment of around £10 million at the Irvine Enterprise Area (IEA) has been completed

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Working together to develop stronger communities

Our sector-leading Locality Planning work continues to set the standards for other Councils. We are providing forums for our community voices to be heard in shaping the services that we deliver to meet local needs and aspirations.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- We have seen an increase in the number of active community councils to 13. This is also supporting the ongoing development of the North Ayrshire Community Council Forum, with greater numbers of more active members sharing their knowledge and experience.
- We have actively engaged our young people in a wide range of the Council’s work. Levels of participation in our online Participatory Budgeting (PB) were the highest in Scotland with 6,814 young people voting during the Youth PB Digital Vote. Their participation enabled 58 projects to secure funding. This excellent work was acknowledged through receiving a COSLA Gold Award.
- In December we became Scotland’s first “Child-Centred Council”. This means that children and young people are at the heart of everything we do.
- We are stepping up the fight against poverty and inequality in our communities. Our Fair for All Commission brings together a wide range of partners working to eliminate child poverty. This is supported through initiatives such as our Challenge Poverty action plan and the development of a community food strategy.

“ This safe space funded by PB has provided a much needed resource in the area, young people who access the facility have taken great pride and responsibility in its creation.”

“ PB funding allowed our LGBT group to organise a celebration event which was a great success. It brought LGBT young people together from all over North Ayrshire.”
Our PB approach, Shaping North Ayrshire, has allocated £145,000 of Council (and other partners’) money to groups across North Ayrshire. We had record numbers of citizens involved in a powerful process of networking, sharing resources, and joint decision-making. Some participants described the benefits of attending the events.

“Having my eyes opened to events I had no idea were going on.”

“The community spirit.”

“Sense of participation and involvement in community improvements.”

“Meeting other groups in the same area and mixing with organisers.”

The Garnock Valley Men’s Shed is a place where men can meet to socialise and work together on a wide variety of projects and hobbies. Using the well-equipped workshop, men of all ages, backgrounds, and interests share their skills working shoulder-to-shoulder on personal and community projects. In the social area, men can relax with friends and have a laugh over a cup of tea or coffee.

“My main learning has been around the whole concept of the Men’s Shed organisation. Visiting established sheds at Westhill and Inverurie has been invaluable as we as a group were able to see first hand how a shed has been successfully established and flourished and the benefits it has brought to the community. Funding applications and generating interest in the project have been my main learning areas.”

“The learning experience has allowed me to gain SCQF level 3 in volunteering skills set by the Scottish Qualifications Authority with a little help from my friends at Scottish Learning Partnership and the Council’s Community Learning Development workers.”

“The Men’s Shed does exactly what it is designed for by getting men of all ages out of the house and socialising in an informal environment.”
1,328 votes were cast at Locality Participatory Budgeting events.

10,259 opportunities for promoting democracy were accessed by Young People including online voting and participation in local and national youth committees.

8 new Community Management and Ownership initiatives have been approved.

100% of community groups feel the Council is an effective partner in helping them deliver their aspirations.

15,524 Council provided adult learning opportunities were accessed by local residents.

Figures for Men’s and Ladies’ Scottish Open Golf Tournaments July 2017:

- 60,000 visitors
- 78% of overnight stays were in Ayrshire and Arran
- £4,052,840 gross visitor spend

Over 350 adult volunteers were involved.

Over 11,500 pupils saw the Open Championship Trophy and learned about golf.

106 pupils attended "Give Golf a Go".

15 young people played with professional female golfers and were invited to advance their skills.

Coaching, media, TV advertising, marketing support were just some of the volunteering opportunities accessed by our young people.

"MADE IN AYRSHIRE" business events were held to improve local business network.

650 young people from across 15 schools are involved in legacy activities.
Ensuring people have the right skills for learning, life and work

Our schools continue to deliver excellent education to our young people. This was acknowledged through the school inspections carried out by Education Scotland during the year.

**KEY ACHIEVEMENTS**

- We have made great strides in closing the poverty-related attainment gap:
  - In early years, we have made solid progress in the proportion of children meeting their developmental milestones at the point at which they start school rising to 77% in 2017.
  - Attainment in literacy and numeracy is on a steadily increasing path and is in line with national performance in primary schools.
  - There is a strong increase in S3 Literacy performance and the poverty-related attainment gap in literacy and numeracy has considerably decreased.
- Our Family Learning Team continues to build greater relationships between schools and families, allowing parents to be more engaged in their children’s learning, leading to a positive impact on attainment.
- Place2be (a national charity providing emotional support to children) is well established in six of our schools. Over 2,000 individual and group counselling sessions took place over the last academic session. All schools have reported a positive impact on learners’ social and emotional wellbeing.
- Counsellors are now available in all our secondary schools. Over 100 pupils have been supported with their mental and emotional wellbeing through the counselling service.
- The opening of the new Largs Campus, and significant improvements delivered at other high schools in North Ayrshire, complements our portfolio of state-of-the-art learning and leisure facilities.
- Schools are offering a broad range of options to pupils including vocational learning. We are ensuring that those in our most disadvantaged areas have increased access to degree level study on leaving school.

We have continued to invest in our nurturing approach, supporting the mental and emotional well-being of some of our most vulnerable children. We now have 20 primary school nurture groups, improving social and emotional skills for 95 children. Our secondary school nurture groups are providing support for 117 young people and initial reports show very positive outcomes. Our early years nurture intervention is now established in nine early years settings and this is already making a substantial difference.

"Nurture has made a huge difference to both children who attend on a daily basis. They understand much better how they should behave in class. They also seem so much more settled in the classroom setting."

**Class Teacher**

"I love my job. I love the children who attend nurture. They are all individuals with different requirements. They make me so happy to be part of their lives. They also teach me things which I am truly grateful for."

**Teacher**

"I like coming to school because it makes me happy."

**Child**

"I’m happy when I’m playing in the Cosy Corner."

**Child**

"My daughter has really benefited from nurture and has come on great. I am really happy with her progress."

**Parent**

We now have **20** primary school nurture groups
of participants in parenting programmes report an increase in their levels of interaction with their children

65.6% of young people are choosing to stay on in school until the end of S6 (highest rate recorded in the past 10 years)

81.6% of school leavers are attaining literacy at Level 5 or better

66.9% of school leavers are attaining numeracy at Level 5 or better

School exclusion rates have dropped consistently over the last 5 years and are better than National performance

93.4% of pupils entered a positive destination

Supporting all our people to stay safe, healthy and active

We continued to build on our successful partnerships providing a co-ordinated response to the health, social and emotional needs of everyone in North Ayrshire.

The Health and Social Care Partnership (the Partnership) has begun to realise some of the benefits of the integrated system working. For example in supporting older people to remain at home or get home from hospital as soon as possible. The Partnership has also worked with our education team to deliver the Children’s Services action plan and with our housing services who provide high quality homes. These partnerships add significant value and support the ambitions of our Fair for All strategy.

An Annual Performance Report has been published by the Partnership which shows what has been achieved and the impact it is having to ensure ‘All people who live in North Ayrshire are able to have a safe, healthy and active life.’ The report can be found on our website at: www.nahscp.org/partnership-strategies-plans-reports/

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

HOUSING

- We completed 34 new build properties at Cheviot Gardens in Irvine, increasing our stock of quality, energy efficient homes. We continue to work in partnership with Registered Social Landlords, to deliver a new Strategic Housing Investment Programme that will see the construction of over 1,500 new social homes by 2023.

- We achieved an Excellent (level 6) rating by the Care Inspectorate for our Housing Support service and Ardrossan Short Stay Hostel when inspected in February 2018.

- Our Tenant Participation Strategy 2017/22 - Customer Connections – was launched to actively develop and support tenant participation. This strategy is underpinned by a commitment to continue to provide excellent services that meet our customers’ needs.
KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

COMMUNITY SAFETY

• We continue to work with our Community Planning Partners to increase community safety in North Ayrshire, including through delivery of the Fair for All strategy Environmental Pledges which include satisfaction with open areas, neighbourhoods and reducing fuel poverty.

• The annual crime statistics have demonstrated improved performance across North Ayrshire in the last 12 months including:
  • Common assault has reduced by 9.8%
  • Overall violent crime has reduced by 8.0%
  • Road traffic casualties have reduced by 13.7%
  • Disorder complaints have reduced by 5.4%
  • Domestic abuse has reduced by 4.1%

SUPPORTING PEOPLE

• Our acclaimed school holiday meal programme increased the number of meals served by 79.4% during the year. We reached over 22,000 young people, ensuring that some of our most vulnerable children were kept warm and fed during the school holidays. Expanding the meal programme from schools into community centres and halls helped us to reach new communities across North Ayrshire.

• We developed a Bereavement Charter, in conjunction with undertakers and local clergy. The Charter sets out pledges to bereaved families about the standards of service and care they should expect to receive following the death of a loved one.

• Our award-winning Money Matters team helped some of our most vulnerable members of our communities access over £8.6m of additional income. The excellent work of the team was recognised nationally when they won the Herald Society Team of the Year.

• We continued to welcome Syrian refugees, bringing the total to 97 as part of our five year humanitarian commitment to resettle 160 refugees in North Ayrshire.

A reduction in total crime of
6.7% - 11,574 fewer incidents
Our ‘Housing First’ pilot scheme has resulted in minimising repeat homelessness and the use of temporary accommodation for those selected to take part in the initiative. The pilot focused on six individuals who were previously using temporary accommodation and homeless services but had yet to sustain a tenancy in the long term. Each of these individuals had a long history of offending behaviour, were affected by mental health, and had long standing addiction issues. By offering permanent accommodation and intense support from the offset this ensured these tenants still remain settled in their tenancies one year later. In addition to this, none of the individuals have re-offended, they have accessed the support provided and engaged well to turn their lives around in a very positive way.

We have completed our latest development at Cheviot Gardens, Irvine delivering 34 new homes for North Ayrshire residents. The site includes 23 general needs homes and nine amenity bungalows which provide independent living for older people. Two homes at Cheviot Gardens were designed to meet the specific needs of local families to enable them to live more independently. These are fully wheelchair accessible homes and the tenants directly influenced the design and internal layout of their properties. The site incorporates Solar PV panels and other features which contribute to our sustainability agenda.

Before works commenced on site local people were invited back to ‘Meet the Builder’.

**We just love our new home, it’s just lovely.”**

**Tenant**

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KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- We continue to protect our stunning natural environment for future generations with a further 7% reduction in carbon emissions in the past year. Our ambitions and plans for carbon emissions are detailed in our Environmental Sustainability and Climate Change Strategy.

- We are delivering cheap renewable heating to Glencairn Primary School and the Glencairn House sheltered housing complex through our first district heating project.

- Our streets are cleaner through our work to reduce environmental crime. We have seen a 1.6 per cent increase in street cleanliness standards.

- We continue to be one of Scotland’s star performers in recycling waste. We recycled over 55 per cent of our household waste, re-affirming our commitment to reduce the impact of waste on our environment.

- We delivered a number of capital projects including:
  - 28 new Sheltered Housing Units at Glencairn House in Stevenston
  - "3G" synthetic football pitch at Kilwinning Academy
  - Refurbishment of Robert Service Court Sheltered Housing Unit
  - Refurbishment and extension of Loudoun Montgomery Primary School
  - New education campuses at Largs and Glengarnock, providing state-of-the-art school and leisure facilities

- We strengthened our approach to communicating with the public by our Roads Service supporting the delivery of projects, in particular the winter maintenance programme.

We are committed to ensuring environmental factors are an integral part in the decision-making process and working with communities to develop the local priorities for environmental improvement.
Priority in Action

We developed a Community Engagement Strategy to support the delivery of grounds maintenance through participatory budgeting. A significant proportion of the grounds maintenance budget was set aside to provide residents and businesses within communities the opportunity to influence the delivery of these services.

We piloted workshops in the Three Towns to identify local priorities. Ideas included planting of community orchards, fruit bushes, vegetables and potatoes to provide free fresh food, as well as community adoption of these sites. To support this, advice surgeries will also be held in the Three Towns to encourage people to select and grow plants that are best suited to the environment and soil. This pilot will be used to inform and improve participatory and environmental processes, to be rolled out across all Localities next year. This will contribute to ensuring at least one percent of all Council spend is done this way by 2021.
Supporting our Priorities

Our priorities can only be met if we have a sound financial base and a clear focus on what our customers and communities need. We also need good governance, good communication and most importantly highly-motivated staff who work well together.

**KEY ACHIEVEMENTS**

- We successfully introduced webcasting of Council meetings, with the February 2018 Council meeting attracting over 400 ‘live’ views.
- We successfully managed two election events.
- We improved customer satisfaction and reduced costs through innovating our processes and the service delivery model for Council Tax. We have also improved benefit processing times whilst implementing Universal Credit.
- There has been a significant 12% increase in the number of residents using our self-service routes this year. We have also increased the volume of web chats from 100 in 2015 to 600 per quarter in 2017.
- Our General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) project team has delivered excellent engagement and joint working which ensured we were on track to meet the new legislative requirements.
- The development of an innovative on-line budget engagement tool enabled the public to engage with the budget development process and inform the identification of key expenditure and savings priorities.
- We established a clear vision to support our transformation agenda through our Technology Strategy.

In 2017 the Revenues and Benefits Business Improvement Team conducted a review of Council Tax processes. The objective was to provide the best service possible for our customers, getting it right first time and avoiding repeat contact. The review looked at the delays and what caused issues for the team. A new One Team approach has now been implemented which has resulted in:

- 96% of transactions being dealt with at the first point of contact.
- Transactions are now completed immediately rather than within 10 working days.
- Processing times have been reduced by 19 minutes for change of address.
- Customer satisfaction had increased to 95%.
- 10% increase in the percentage of delighted customers.
- Customer complaints have decreased by 36.6%.

Priority in Action

10% increase in the percentage of delighted customers

Customer satisfaction had increased to 95%
1,190
number of weeks
employment through
community benefits clauses

84%
of our customers
were delighted
with the service received

36.7%
of Self Service Transactions
now accessed online by
members of the public

£0.378m
Financial Recoveries for
Corporate Fraud Team

9.6
days sickness absence
days per employee

19,200
Twitter followers
(as at March 2018)

91%
of STAGE ONE
complaints were
handled on time

91.83%
of invoices paid
within 30 days

5,802.8
Staff (FTE)

£198k
of income generated from
Extended Catering offers

2017/18 Performance Indicators

More data about our performance measures and how our performance compares with other councils is available at our North Ayrshire Performs portal on our website at:

How did we spend your Council Tax?

- **Financing Costs** £85.87
- **Other Corporate Services** £26.74
- **Chief Executive and Democratic Services** £12.82
- **Finance & Corporate Support** £59.95
- **Health and Social Care Partnership** £329.08
- **Education and Youth Employment** £380.33
- **Economy and Communities** £78.00
- **Place** £213.77

**Band D** £1,186.56 2017/18
What do you think?

Please take a few minutes to tell us what you think about this Annual Report by completing our survey online: https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/CMW68QK

Alternatively you can complete this page and return to Policy and Performance, Democratic Services, Cunninghame House, Friarscroft, Irvine KA12 8EE

Call us on: 01294 324140 or email us at: northayrshireperforms@north-ayrshire.gov.uk

1. How do you rate the design and layout of the Annual Report?
   - [ ] Very good
   - [ ] Fairly good
   - [ ] Average
   - [ ] Poor

2. How easy is it to read and understand?
   - [ ] Very easy
   - [ ] Fairly easy
   - [ ] Not very easy
   - [ ] Not at all easy

3. How useful is it in informing you about the work of your Council?
   - [ ] Very useful
   - [ ] Fairly useful
   - [ ] Not very useful
   - [ ] Not at all useful

4. Which sections did you find particularly useful?

5. What other information would you like to see in a future Annual Report?

6. Other comments

Thank you for your feedback.

We will use your feedback to improve future publications.