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## Councillor Robin Currie, Leader, Argyll and Bute Council

Scottish councils are living in interesting times, as the saying goes – and that has been the case for the past decade and more. Climate change; well-documented financial challenges; the ongoing reverberation of the impact of Covid; living costs; adapting to evolving national priorities; community aspirations and ambitions; these are just a few of the major shifts and challenges which Scottish local government has to contend with.

I am not, though, going to say that Argyll and Bute is no different – because we are different. We do indeed have the same larger-scale issues to face, but we must also do so in the context of our uniqueness – our mix of remote, rural and island communities, interspersed with some larger towns, the likes of which few other public agencies have to deal with.

And, for Argyll and Bute, there are some characteristics which remain constant and which give us the ability to evolve, to innovate, to learn, to improve, to respond, to take action, to prepare, even when so much of the local government landscape around us is shifting at pace.

In this Annual Report for Argyll and Bute Council, 2022/23, you will find more about these hallmarks of Argyll and Bute Council's approach, and how they are helping us to make the most of new opportunities and deal with existing and emerging challenges.

Our track record in efficient financial management has, yet again, allowed us to continue to invest in the key areas of council business which mean the most to our communities and help us to secure success now and in the future. At the same time, we have been able to minimise the impact on jobs and services. The sterling efforts of our dedicated, agile, committed workforce are key in all of this and none of it would be possible without them.

No council can resist change – but here in Argyll and Bute we are working hard to make change work for our communities who depend on our core services. We rely on our proven strengths – like good partnership working and financial prudence – and we strive for improvement, making space to learn and ensuring we stay flexible and innovative in such a rapidly changing national environment.

## Pippa Milne, Chief Executive, Argyll and Bute Council

It is with pleasure that we present the Argyll and Bute Council Annual Report for the financial year 2022/23. This report provides overview of your council's activities, achievements, and challenges over the past year. As we navigate through the evolving landscape of local government and strive to meet the needs of our diverse and vibrant communities, this document offers transparency into our actions and progress toward the collective goals we have set for the region.

The past year has been marked by unprecedented challenges, from the cost of living crisis to economic uncertainties, and through





## Appendix 2 – Summary of Draft Council Annual Report 2022/23

1. Online and in person training has been delivered to over 50 community councillors.
2. Building Standards exceeded all targets for the 5 key national performance targets for 2022/23
3. New operational arrangements to deliver the short-term let licensing regime were developed.
4. Over 300 Ukrainian refugees have been welcomed to Argyll and Bute through the Scottish and UK Government's sponsorship

1. In order to improve outcomes for children and young people a new Counselling in Schools Service was implemented.
2. A sustained low number of exclusions for care experienced children and young people continues to remain below 5.
3. Bespoke training to support practitioners to increase their skill and confidence in delivering play and learning outdoors was delivered.
4. Argyll and Bute's free period provision 'My Tribe' brand has been identified as an exemplar of good practice across Scotland.
5. We won the Health and Nutrition Award 2023 for our school meals drone delivery pilot.

1. Eight schools have undertaken training and participated in using a Quality Improvement approach to support writing attainment at 1<sup>st</sup> level.
- 2.

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1. We have progressed our assessments, watercourse clearance works, flood incident investigation and provision of flooding advice.
2. Construction of the Campbeltown Flood Protection Scheme started on site in September 2022.
3. **All our ferry routes operated according to timetable with additional sailings put on**

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[Consultation Results |](#)