



Working together for Orkney  
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# Working together for Orkney

Welcome to our council plan for 2023-2028. This plan sets out how we will deliver our ambitions for Orkney's future and deliver the very best for our community and businesses.

Our plan doesn't cover the wide range of council services that are delivered daily, but it provides clear direction and focus on some important priorities that we will work towards and the positive effect we will have on our community. We are in uncertain times and recognise the effect the cost-of-living crisis is having. In the short term, we will continue to work with our Community Planning Partners and the cost-of-living taskforce group to identify further help and support for those who need it most. With the effects of the cost-of-living crisis likely to continue for some time, the first couple of years of this plan could be the most challenging and we will focus our efforts on supporting the community and local businesses.

It's important to emphasise that the essential services we provide are always our top priority. Throughout the life of this plan we will continue to maintain the ones that are high quality and improve the standards of others.

This plan aims to focus on our ambitions to help improve our local economy. We will assess strategic projects to identify those that could provide additional income to fund services or contribute to economic growth in our community. We know that much of Orkney's economic growth will come from our flourishing renewables sector, and many of tomorrow's jobs will be in the green economy (a sector that focuses on low-carbon, energy-efficient economic activities which benefit people and the environment) and the blue economy (a sector that focuses on the sustainable use of ocean resources for economic activities and development). Our task as a council is to make sure that everyone in Orkney benefits from this change of focus, and nobody is left behind.

To support growth, our infrastructure – the basic physical and organisational structures and facilities (for example, ferries, buildings, roads, power supplies) we need – must be fit for purpose, and we will be considering the potential to deliver some major projects during the coming years. We will be making important decisions on progressing with, for example, the Community Wind Farms, the Islands Growth Deal and the Harbours Masterplan. In all our work we need to make sure that everything we do contributes towards us becoming 'net zero', where we achieve a balance between the amount of greenhouse gas we produce and the amount removed from the atmosphere.

It's fair to say that we have set out an ambitious plan for ourselves, but we recognise the need to regularly review the plan and remain flexible so we can adapt it to the changing circumstances over the next five years.

Many of our communities have their own plans and ambitions, and we will support them to pursue their aims. We will protect the most vulnerable in our community and make sure that everyone has a fair share in Orkney's future success.

We must also be fit for purpose. We experienced major change and challenges during the pandemic and have emerged more versatile, mobile and adaptable in how we do things. Like all employers, we must attract and retain the best staff. We will invest in our

employees, transform our working practices and streamline our offices and workplaces to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of everything we do.

A vital part of our job is to represent Orkney in national forums and push for action to meet our needs. Our campaign for better transport and digital connectivity, such as broadband, will not stop until our services are as good as the equivalent anywhere in the world. We are gearing up for further change and challenge in areas such as social care, energy, housing, land reform and climate change, and we are ready to champion Orkney every step of the way.

Whatever lies ahead, you can be certain that your council will be working together tirelessly to secure the best possible future for you and your community.



James Stockan  
Council Leader



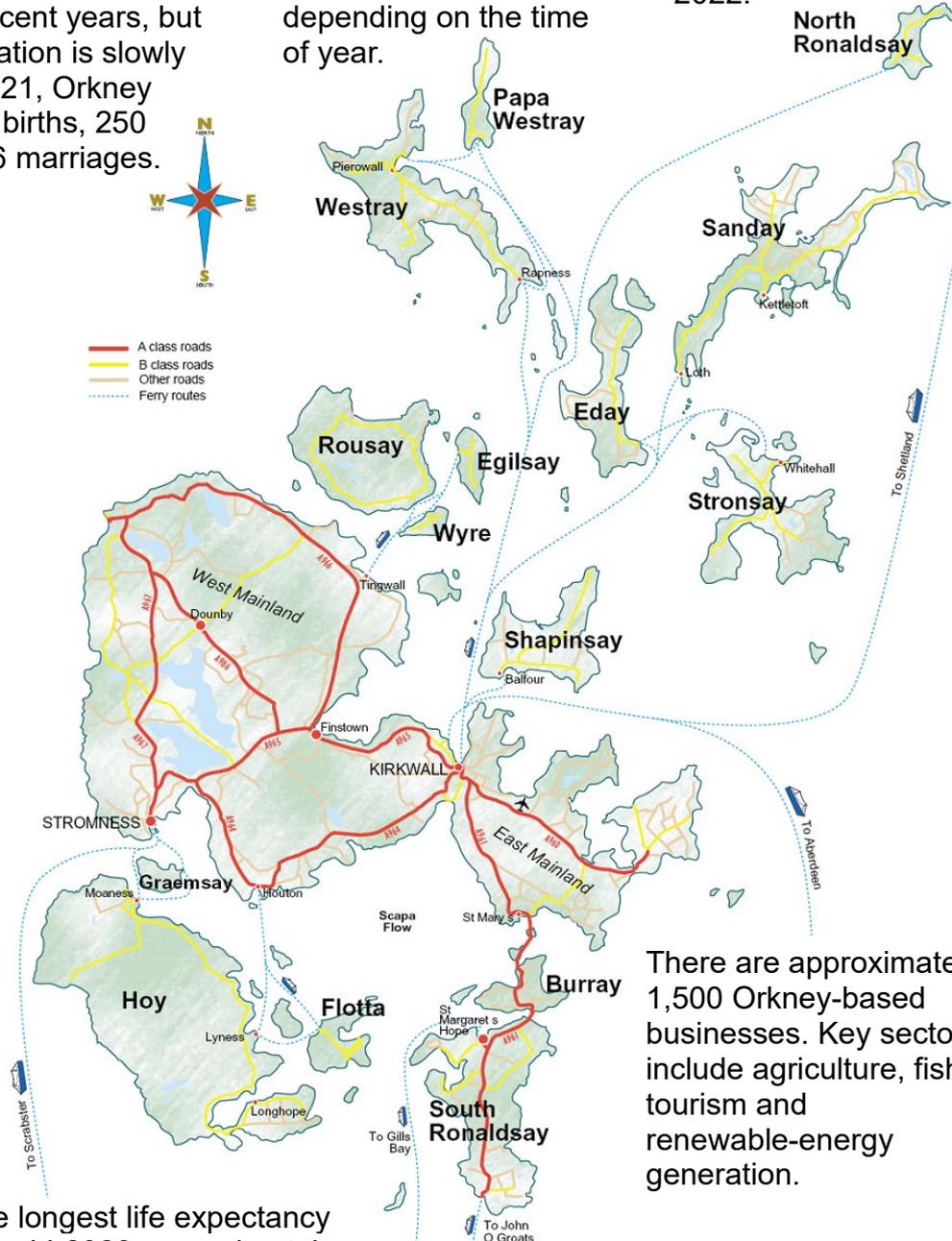
Oliver Reid  
Chief Executive

# Orkney and our community

Orkney's estimated population in mid-2020 was 22,400, making up 10,635 households. The Orkney Mainland population has increased in recent years, but the Isles population is slowly reducing. In 2021, Orkney registered 169 births, 250 deaths and 116 marriages.

Orkney is made up of more than 70 islands and skerries, with a total land area of 1,000km<sup>2</sup>. Around 19 islands are lived on, depending on the time of year.

Employment rates in Orkney are high, with only 250 people (1.9%) claiming unemployment-related benefits in January 2022.



Orkney has the longest life expectancy in Scotland. In mid-2020 approximately 2,519 people (11% of the overall population) were aged 75 or over. By 2028, this is forecast to rise to 3,221 people (14.4% of the population).

There are approximately 1,500 Orkney-based businesses. Key sectors include agriculture, fishing, tourism and renewable-energy generation.

The Scottish index of Multiple Deprivation shows that Orkney's most prosperous areas are St Ola (East of Kirkwall) and North Stromness. The highest levels of deprivation are in Kirkwall and the ferry-linked isles.

## The strategic context of our council plan

When developing our council plan, councillors must take many factors into account. As well as residents' priorities, which we learned through consultation and engagement activities, the plan reflects the core services we provide day-to-day. It must take account of new legal and regulatory duties, together with improvements recommended by audit and inspection teams. The plan also includes a small number of long-term actions carried over from the previous council plan.

We work closely with other agencies (our Community Planning Partners) through the Orkney Partnership. Five agencies share in leading and running the partnership: us, NHS Orkney, Police Scotland, the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service and Highlands and Islands Enterprise. Many other partners are members of the Orkney Partnership Board, which helps to steer the planning and delivery of services. Orkney's Community Plan (also called the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan) addresses the strategic priorities which all agencies need to take joint action on, while each individual partner's plans – such as our council plan – set out the priorities and actions to be delivered by that particular agency.

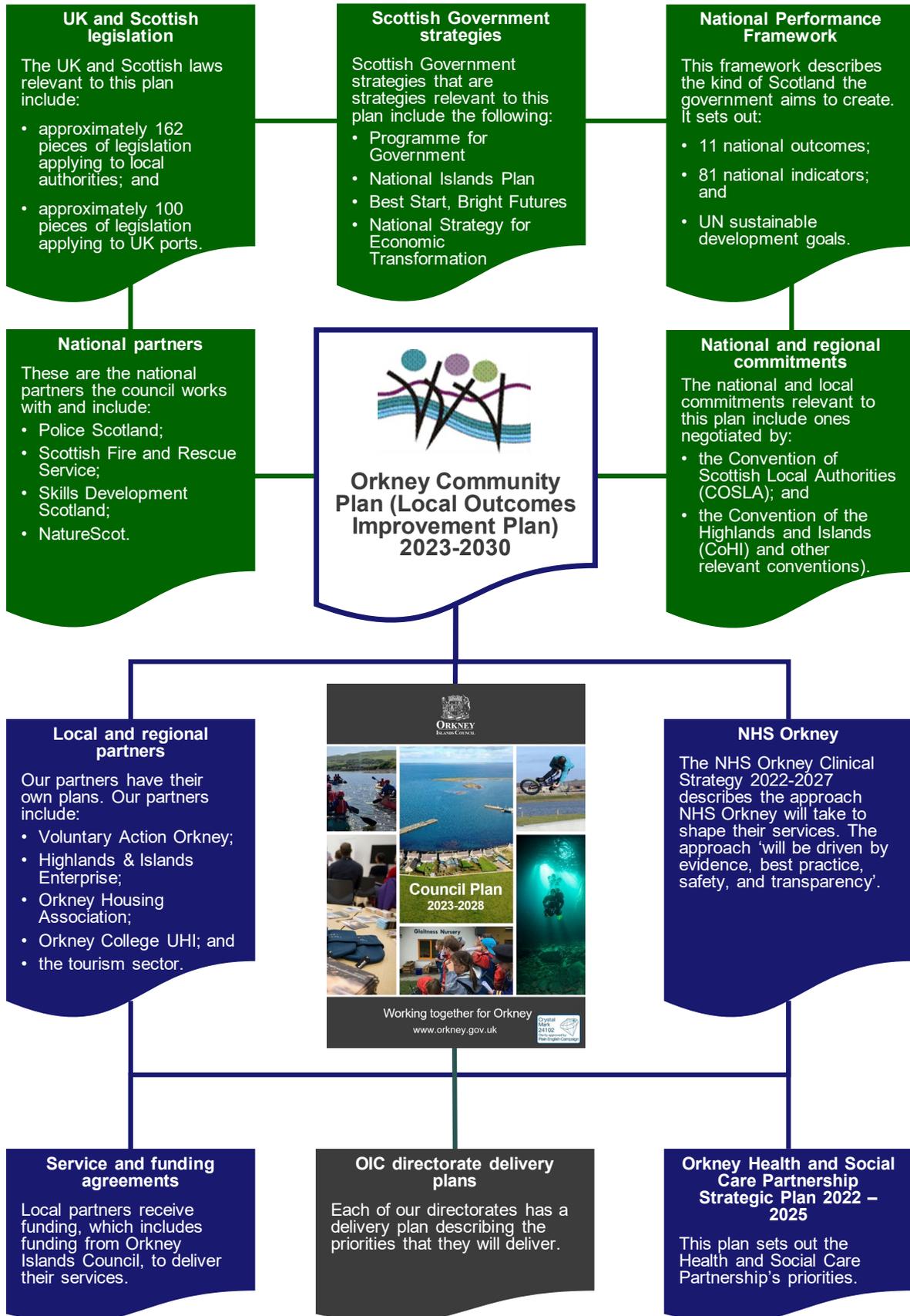
All of our plans take into account and work within the strategic framework set by the UK and Scottish Governments. We must navigate the policy areas controlled by the UK Government (for example, defence and telecommunications) as well as those devolved to the Scottish Government for them to control (for example, health and education). We support UK and Scottish national policy where it furthers our ambitions for Orkney. Developments in renewable energy have generated significant investment and Orkney is a major contributor to achieving Scotland's net-zero target. The National Islands Plan has focused attention on many areas vitally important to Orkney, including transport, housing and declining populations. However, we will always challenge national policy that disadvantages Orkney or has unforeseen consequences for island communities. The Islands (Scotland) Act 2018 has given us new powers to hold Scottish Ministers to account.

One of our long-term ambitions is to create a Single Public Authority for Orkney. This would see several public agencies formally joined together to reduce bureaucracy, merging their governing bodies and senior management in order to free up more resources for front-line services. We will explore this concept further during the life of this plan.

This plan does not sit in on its own. There is an accompanying Delivery Plan which describes some of the projects, services and policies which will help us deliver our priorities and achieve real positive outcomes for Orkney. There are linked strategies and plans which support this plan. Examples of these are listed below, but there are many more.

- Orkney Child Poverty Strategy 2022-2026
- Orkney's Children's Services Plan 2021-23
- The Orkney Play Area Strategy
- The Orkney Local Biodiversity Action Plan 2018-2022
- Orkney Islands Council Carbon Management Programme 2016-2026

The diagram below shows how this plan fits in with national and local strategies. It outlines how this plan relates to national legislation, government priorities and other plans which are part of our Community Planning Partnership.



## Strategic context | affordability

We live in uncertain times. We must budget for the continuing effects of Brexit, social and economic recovery from COVID-19 restrictions, and political uncertainty and unpredictable international relations. Funding pressures are likely to be extreme during the life of this plan.

We are already seeing inflation rates not experienced since the early 1980s, with rates being pushed up by supply shortages in fuel and materials. The Scottish Government provide the majority of our funding, and they are unlikely to raise that funding to meet increasing pressures. Ultimately there will be real-term funding reductions. And with interest rates at levels not seen since 2008, resulting in increased costs of borrowing, we will need to make difficult decisions in order to deliver this plan.

So what can we do?

- We need to maximise the return from the investments of our financial reserves, which increasingly need to be used to fund front-line services.
- We have to find efficiencies – not necessarily cuts, but better ways of doing things.
- We need to make it easier for customers to access services and for staff to do their jobs, and increase contact with service users when necessary.
- We have to sell Orkney – promote it, develop industries, attract investment, create jobs, maintain an economically active population and develop Orkney as a sustainable destination for visitors.

Not every decision we make to deliver this plan will be popular, but they will all be made with Orkney people, its communities, its heritage and its environment at their heart. We must work to create a sustainable future for us all to live in, and a legacy for those who follow. It's a difficult balancing act.





Orkney Matters recorded the views of all of Orkney’s communities, including residents of the ferry-linked isles, young people and people who are harder to reach or less likely to have their say. The survey identified the following main priorities.

### Your priorities

- Communication and the approaches used for consultation
- Volunteering
- Single community-led plan for each community
- Housing
- Digital connectivity
- Climate change
- Transport
- Sense of community
- Enjoying Orkney’s outdoor areas and the environment
- Equality
- Health
- Economic opportunities

Some of these issues require action to be taken by agencies working together, and the Orkney Partnership have chosen them to be ‘strategic priorities’.

The partnership’s plans to address these priorities are set out in the new Community Plan (also called the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan) for 2023-2030. Other issues are matters primarily for us to address, and these are included in our council plan.

National consultation also played a part in developing of this plan. In October 2020, 790 Orkney residents took part in the first National Islands Plan survey, answering questions on their experience of employment and business opportunities, transport, housing, fuel poverty, digital connectivity, health and social care, the environment, climate change, culture and education. The survey is due to be repeated in 2023 and then every two years for the life of the National Islands Plan. Results are published online, with responses from Orkney Mainland and Isles residents displayed separately, making this a useful resource for measuring progress. Our plan includes action to improve our consultation and engagement activities in response to Orkney Matters, taking advantage of new online channels if people prefer to use them, but not forgetting the need for traditional methods. Sometimes, there is no substitute for a proper talk, in person, over a cup of tea.

## Our strategic priorities

The strategic priorities in this plan explain how we will work to improve the lives of the people of Orkney.

As well as the projects set out in this plan, we also provide a wide range of core services all year round. Some of these are very noticeable from day to day, such as schools, roads and waste collection, while others are there in case of need, such as social care services. These core services are those which we must provide by law, either direct or through outside providers.

It's important to emphasise that maintaining the core services we provide is always our top priority, and we will try to maintain or improve the standards of them throughout the life of this plan. A key element of this is to make our processes as efficient as possible to make sure as many resources as possible are put towards front-line services.

There is very little money left over after our essential services have been paid for, but we make savings where we can, and we can sometimes raise additional resources from external sources.

We know that it may be better for some council services to be delivered by others, such as the third sector, which is made up of community groups, charities, social enterprises and voluntary groups. To make the most from our funding we work in partnership with other organisations to make sure that our services are delivered by those who can best provide them.

Councillors are committed to spending any extra money on projects which will make the most difference to local communities. These projects are set out in the Delivery Plan that sits alongside our council plan, and the actions needed to maintain core services are set out in Directorate Action Plans.

Our council plan describes our pledges to you over the next five years.

Our pledges are as follows.

- 

**Maintain** our existing high standards of service wherever possible.
- Improve** services and outcomes for the people of Orkney where needed.
- Develop** and deliver projects for the benefit of our communities.

We will meet these pledges through a number of aims and outcomes grouped under three priority themes – growing our economy, strengthening our communities and developing our infrastructure.

The aims are what we want to achieve, and the outcomes are the positive changes we are working towards for the benefit of our communities.

These aims and outcomes will be supported by a number of priorities under an overall theme – transforming our council – to provide the foundations for staff to deliver outstanding customer service and performance.



The three priority themes are built upon core principles, which will guide future decision-making relating to all our aims.

Our core principles are as follows.

- Protecting our environment and combating climate change.
- Equality, fairness and inclusion, particularly for vulnerable and remote communities like the ferry-linked isles.
- Sustainable and accessible services for all.
- Community wellbeing and mental health.
- Community wealth building for future generations.

## Growing our economy

This plan was written at a time when economic pressures were one of the biggest concerns for our entire population. Whether due to political uncertainty, falling global markets and pension funds, the post-COVID ‘normal’ or the cost-of-living crisis, the economy is at the forefront of everyone’s mind. Some of our main industries, such as fishing, farming, food and drink and tourism, have been hit particularly hard by the pandemic and current economic crisis, and it’s vital that the right support is identified.

Despite challenging market conditions, this plan aims to deliver sustainable growth that creates jobs and tackles poverty by creating opportunities to get on.

We need to create a diverse and thriving economy which helps us to keep our young people, and attract new people who can contribute to our islands, so we can be more self-reliant. This will include balancing the need to protect Orkney’s unique environment with the need for realistic innovative developments which can generate a return for the communities which support businesses.

We need to maximise investment to reduce the impact of cuts in public funding and increase the skills of our workforce, while reducing any negative effect on the environment. We are committed to the principle of community wealth building (redirecting wealth back into the local economy, and placing control and benefits in the hands of local people) and to the development of a circular economy (transforming our throwaway economy into one where waste is eliminated, resources are recycled and reused, and nature is regenerated), to benefit future generations.

Aim	Outcome
<p><b>We will reduce poverty and disadvantage and minimise the effects of the cost-of-living crisis.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We target support at those most at risk from the cost-of-living crisis.</li> <li>• We have reduced persistent poverty and disadvantage relating to social or economic factors.</li> <li>• The benefits of economic growth are shared.</li> </ul>  <p>Poverty</p>
<p><b>We will create favourable conditions for sustainable economic growth.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local businesses in key sectors are thriving and creating better employment opportunities.</li> <li>• Investment into Orkney is increased across vital areas.</li> <li>• Our economy is growing in a sustainable way that balances social and environmental priorities.</li> <li>• We have a growing population that is contributing to the economy.</li> </ul>  <p>Economic growth</p>
<p><b>We will work towards becoming net zero.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Orkney is on track to become net zero by 2030.</li> <li>• We have reduced the carbon used during the course of our direct and indirect activities.</li> <li>• We have grown our green and blue economies.</li> <li>• Everyone in Orkney has reduced their carbon footprint (the greenhouse gases generated by their actions).</li> </ul>  <p>Carbon usage</p>

## Strengthening our communities

We have a strong sense of community across Orkney and this is one of our key strengths. We want to build on this by giving people a real say in the decisions that matter most to them, and we want to work with communities so that they feel they can influence decisions that affect them.

We will encourage our communities to grow at the pace they choose and help them attract the skills, assets and people they need for the future. To make sure that inequalities do not increase, we will direct targeted support, resources and opportunities towards those most in need.

A key element of this priority theme is developing skills and knowledge, and improving the availability of further and higher education. This theme covers a wide range of topics that will meet the needs of our local community and businesses while preserving our culture and heritage for generations to come. Orkney is unique in having a locally controlled college, Orkney College (UHI), with the flexibility to meet emerging local needs through further education and higher education (in partnership with the University of the Highlands and Islands).

We recognise that this theme has links with all the other themes in our council plan, as well as the strategic priorities in Orkney’s Community Plan. We will work together with partners and communities to combine existing skills, knowledge and assets in our chosen priority areas.

Aim	Outcome
<p><b>We will support communities to develop local solutions and deliver what is important to them.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engagement with communities is effective and clearly influences decisions and drives improvement.</li> <li>Communities feel in control of their priorities and the decisions that affect them.</li> </ul>  <p>Community satisfaction</p>
<p><b>We will establish the highest standards of public support and protection.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More people live independently with increased choice over support and services.</li> <li>We invest in proactive measures to prevent harm and improve the life chances of those in need.</li> <li>Everyone shares responsibility for public support and protection.</li> </ul>  <p>Quality of life</p>
<p><b>We will widen access to opportunities for better learning, achievement and wellbeing.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Our public spaces and environment promote the wellbeing of our communities.</li> <li>All learners are actively supported to reach their potential.</li> <li>Access to opportunities is fairer.</li> <li>Our cultural heritage is invested in to preserve and improve our unique identity.</li> </ul>  <p>Attainment</p>

## Developing our infrastructure

Infrastructure is the nuts and bolts that hold our communities together – the buildings, transport, roads and telecommunication networks that allow communities to thrive. Our infrastructure underpins everything we do. For example, an improved telecommunication network allows us to make better use of digital technologies to:

- support businesses to offer flexible and remote working opportunities;
- develop our young people and employees with the skills to support businesses;
- make sure all households have the online access they need to meet their work and leisure needs; and
- use TeleCare to make it possible for more older people and those with a disability to continue to live in their own homes.

In some areas, developing our infrastructure will affect existing core services such as housing and education. We will consider this when making decisions on major developments. The infrastructure challenges sit alongside an existing shortage of housing, which is a major concern in our communities. We are already working hard to identify solutions and increase the availability of housing to meet the needs of our current and future residents.

We will continue to identify and agree the development of long-term projects. The onshore wind projects at Quanterness, Faray and Hoy will provide essential income to offset the cuts in public funding. The Harbours Masterplan identifies several projects that bring significant opportunities for attracting investment into our Islands. Lastly, the Islands Growth Deal brings investment from both the UK and Scottish Governments to the three Islands Authorities (Orkney, Western Isles and Shetland) through an ambitious programme for development. One of our biggest challenges will be securing a new fleet of green ferries.

Aim	Outcome
<p><b>We will invest in homes, supporting choice, inclusion and economic growth.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More quality homes to rent or buy in various locations, providing more choice.</li> <li>• Social and private housing is more energy efficient.</li> </ul> <div style="text-align: right;">  <p>More homes</p> </div>
<p><b>We will remove barriers to digital connectivity and vital transport.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We have the digital connectivity needed to support sustainability and equality across our communities and businesses.</li> <li>• Our transport infrastructure meets the needs of our communities and visitors.</li> </ul> <div style="text-align: right;">  <p>Improved connectivity</p> </div>
<p><b>We will invest in projects that further our economic ambitions.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We have delivered the Orkney Community Windfarms Project.</li> <li>• Vital projects identified within the Harbours Masterplan have been delivered.</li> <li>• We have secured investment funding and delivered 50% of the Islands Deal Programme.</li> </ul> <div style="text-align: right;">  <p>Construction completed</p> </div>

## Transforming our council

To deliver the ambitions set out in our council plan, we need a workforce which is effective and engaged, and adds value to everything we do. That is why we have a priority theme that focuses on transforming our council. We are committed to improving the services we provide and how we provide them, as well as future-proofing our ability to meet the needs of our communities for many years to come.

We need to continue to attract, grow and retain the right people. We are working to find new solutions to the national skills and staffing shortages that are affecting us locally. This means that we are looking at different ways to attract people, offering a variety of routes for people to come to work for us, and are supporting our employees so they feel valued for the part they play in delivering our services for every member of our community, so that we can all take pride in working together for Orkney.

Our staff are a vital part of our communities and should reflect the diversity of those communities. We are transforming the way we work to put people at the heart of everything we do, offering choice and flexibility to meet the changing needs of our customers and service users.

### Foundation to enable delivery

Aim	Outcome
<p><b>We will develop ways of working that put people at the heart of what we do.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our new guiding principles are obvious in the way we do things.</li> <li>• Organisational barriers to change are minimised.</li> <li>• Our governance arrangements are dynamic and make delivering the right things easy.</li> <li>• Our facilities reflect the future needs of our communities and our organisation.</li> </ul>
<p><b>We will establish a culture that motivates staff to do the right things at the right time.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our leaders are confident in their role and we have a shared leadership culture.</li> <li>• Our employees feel valued and recognised.</li> <li>• We have created flexible career pathways for staff at every level, and these help us sustain outstanding performance.</li> </ul>
<p><b>We will develop business approaches that are fit for purpose and give people direct access to services wherever possible.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We design key services with communities from start to finish.</li> <li>• Our services are designed to be available online, efficient and automated, giving customers choice and control.</li> <li>• We have improved the quality of our data to help improve our performance.</li> <li>• We have diversified our funding base and have created the conditions for financial sustainability.</li> <li>• We have strengthened our national and international relations to advance the interests of Orkney and its community.</li> </ul>

## What will success look like?

We strive to be an outcomes-focused and performance-driven council, putting our community at the heart of everything we do.

In order to monitor and review progress we have developed performance measures and specified targets for each theme – the three priority themes and the overall theme of transforming the council. Some performance measures and targets are taken from the Orkney Partnership’s Community Plan and some are taken from the Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF). This allows us to compare our performance against the Scottish average and other similar councils.

Council services produce their own information to monitor performance and guide decision-making. Working with our services, we have chosen the key measures to assess progress against our priorities, and performance against these will be reported each year. Also, our progress on the key projects we aim to deliver, and the targets we have set ourselves, will be regularly scrutinised by councillors.

The measures below are designed to stretch us as we strive to achieve our ambitions. Despite these uncertain times, we must be bold in what we aim to achieve and not settle for simply maintaining the current position.

The measures for success for each theme are set out in the following four tables.

Note: Much of the text in the tables is established in national indicators and we have not been able to change it. For that reason, Plain English Campaign’s Crystal Mark does not apply to the tables.

Growing our Economy		
Measuring our success	Baseline 2020/2021	Target 2027/2028
Claimant Count as a percentage of Working Age Population	3%	2.5%
Employment (16 to 24 years)	82% 2020	90% 2027
Percentage of households in fuel poverty	31%	19%
% of children living in poverty (after housing costs)	18%	9%
Percentage of procurement spent on local enterprises	38%	45%
CO2 emissions area wide per capita (in tonnes)	11	9
CO2 emissions area wide: emissions within scope of local authority per capita (in tonnes)	5	4

## Strengthening our Communities

Measuring our success	Baseline 2020/2021	Target 2027/2028
Community council satisfaction with their involvement in community development and engagement	2023 64%	90%
Percentage of adults supported at home who agree that they had a say in how their help, care or support was provided	86%	93%
The percentage of adults supported at home who agree that their services and support had an impact in improving or maintaining their quality of life	87%	93%
Percentage of adult protection referrals made by the public	1%	3%
Percentage of children being looked after in the community	76%	85%
Percentage of pupils gaining 5+ awards at level 5	73%	80%
Percentage of P1, P4 and P7 pupils combined achieving expected Curriculum for Excellence level in literacy	68%	85%
Percentage of P1, P4 and P7 pupils combined achieving expected Curriculum for Excellence level in numeracy	75%	90%
Your people remaining in a positive destination after 6 months	96.5%	97%
School attendance rate (looked after children)	2018/19 84%	90%
Proportion of pupils entering positive destinations	97%	98%
Percentage of adults taking part in some form of sport or exercise, including walking, in previous four weeks	86%	90%

## Developing our Infrastructure

Measuring our success		Baseline 2020/2021	Target 2027/2028
Percentage of Council dwellings that met the Scottish Housing Quality Standard		2021/2022 82%	90%
Percentage of Council dwellings that are energy efficient		88%	90%
Houses built in Orkney (all sectors)		2021 – 82 2022 – 53	2027 125
Percentage of Orkney residents whose internet connection at home is fast enough to do what they want online	Orkney Mainland	2020 70%	2027 91%
	Ferry-linked isles	2020 45%	2027 84%
Percentage of Orkney residents who agree "When I make journeys to or from my home, it is easy connecting between different forms of transport"	Orkney Mainland	46%	60%
	Ferry-linked isles	29%	45%
Percentage of Islands Deal Programme delivered		0%	50%
Orkney Community Windfarm and Harbours Master Plan projects		Indicator to be established if projects approved.	

## Transforming our council

Measuring our success	Baseline 2020/2021	Target 2027/2028
Level of customer satisfaction experienced by the public with queries handled by customer service staff	2022/2023 87%	95%
Orkney Islands Council recognised as an Investors in People (IiP) Platinum Organisation	Does not apply	Achieved
Overall staff satisfaction with working at Orkney Islands Council	58%	More than 80%
Staff satisfaction with our leadership style and culture	58%	More than 80%
Percentage of operational buildings that are suitable for their current use	88%	90%
Actual outturn as a percentage of budgeted expenditure	103%	100%
Staff turnover	2021/2022 5.14%	4%
Cost of agency workers as a percentage of our staff budget	2021/2022 3.7% tbc	2%
Sickness absence days per teacher	2021/2022 8.2	6
Sickness absence days per employee (non-teacher)	2021/2022 12.6	9

## Impact assessments

Under UK and Scottish law, we must assess the impact new plans and policies would have in three specific areas: equality, the environment, and island communities. These assessments (known as impact assessments) must be developed alongside and at the same time as the relevant plan or policy is being developed. Impact assessments help to identify any unintended consequences a proposed plan or policy may have on particular stakeholder groups, and determine any measures which should be included in the plan or policy to overcome or reduce these effects. Impact assessments are particularly effective in revealing gaps in knowledge, which can then be filled by consulting the groups likely to be affected. The impact assessments we must carry out are explained below.

Equality Impact Assessments need to be carried out to consider the impact a proposed plan or policy would have on groups of people with 'protected characteristics', as defined by the Equality Act 2010. Protected characteristics include age, sex, race, disability and sexual orientation (sexuality or sexual preference). Scottish councils must also meet the Fairer Scotland Duty to consider the impact a proposed plan or policy would have on those who are experiencing socio-economic disadvantage (disadvantage due to social and economic factors). This plan is expected to improve outcomes for people of all age groups, with younger people benefiting from increased opportunities for families to stay in Orkney, and older people receiving more choice in support and services. Specific measures in the plan are proposed to benefit carers, people who are care experienced (that is, have been in the care system), those with disabilities and those who are socio-economically disadvantaged.

Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEAs) are designed to evaluate the environmental implications of proposed plans and programmes. In Scotland, a strategic plan which sets priorities for future development, such as our council plan, should be submitted for a decision on whether a full SEA needs to be carried out. The SEA process is guided by three statutory authorities – NatureScot, Historic Environment Scotland and the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA). We have drafted and submitted an SEA Screening Report which indicates that our council plan would not benefit from a full SEA because it is an outline strategic plan. Any project which is progressed further as a result of this plan will need have an SEA in much greater detail than is possible at this stage. The statutory authorities have agreed with the view expressed in the screening report that the plan was unlikely to have significant environmental effects.

Island Communities Impact Assessments (ICIAs) are unique to Scotland and were introduced by the Islands (Scotland) Act 2018. Their purpose is to determine whether a proposed plan or policy has different effects on, or different unintended consequences for, any particular island community compared with other island or mainland communities. Island residents must be consulted to gather their views on any perceived disadvantages to their communities, and any measures they would like to be put in place. In Orkney, we routinely consider the impact a new policy would have on the ferry-linked isles, as these communities are the most likely to be disadvantaged. Our ICIA considers evidence from a range of sources, including Orkney Matters and the National Islands Plan survey, and takes account of some of the measures already in this plan which are designed to improve equality of outcomes for isles communities. This plan also contains proposals which will improve outcomes for Orkney in general compared with Scottish mainland communities. We welcome further feedback during the consultation period to help improve this plan.



## Equality Impact Assessment

The purpose of an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) is to improve the work of Orkney Islands Council by making sure it promotes equality and does not discriminate. This assessment records the likely impact of any changes to a function, policy or plan by anticipating the consequences, and making sure that any negative impacts are eliminated or minimised and positive impacts are maximised.

<b>1. Identification of Function, Policy or Plan</b>	
Name of function / policy / plan to be assessed.	The Council Plan 2023 – 2028.
Service / service area responsible.	Strategy, Performance and Business Solutions.
Name of person carrying out the assessment and contact details.	Emma Chattington <a href="mailto:Emma.chattington@orkney.gov.uk">Emma.chattington@orkney.gov.uk</a>
Date of assessment.	Revised EqIA – January 2023
Is the function / policy / plan new or existing? (Please indicate also if the service is to be deleted, reduced or changed significantly).	New – this Council Plan replaces the previous Council Plan 2018-2023.

<b>2. Initial Screening</b>	
What are the intended outcomes of the function / policy / plan?	<p>The Council Plan sets out the Council's strategic priorities for the period 2023-2028.</p> <p>The priorities do not represent everything that the Council does and are over and above the day to day activity undertaken by services. The draft intended outcomes are:</p> <p><b>Growing our economy:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will reduce poverty and disadvantage and minimise the effect of the cost-of-living crisis.</li> <li>• We will create favourable conditions for sustainable economic growth.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will work towards becoming net zero.</li> </ul> <p><b>Strengthening our communities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will support communities to develop local solutions and deliver what is important to them.</li> <li>• We will establish the highest standards of public support and protection.</li> <li>• We will widen access to opportunities for better learning, achievement and wellbeing.</li> </ul> <p><b>Developing our infrastructure:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will invest in homes, supporting choice, inclusion and economic growth.</li> <li>• We will remove barriers to digital connectivity and vital transport.</li> <li>• We will invest in projects that further our economic ambitions.</li> </ul> <p><b>Transforming our council:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will develop ways of working that put people at the heart of what we do.</li> <li>• We will establish a culture that motivates staff to do the right things at the right time.</li> <li>• We will develop business approaches that are fit for purpose and give people direct access to services wherever possible.</li> </ul> <p>The overarching principles which will underpin all priorities within the Council Plan are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protecting our environment and combating climate change.</li> <li>• Equality, fairness and inclusion: in particular for vulnerable and remote communities like the ferry linked isles.</li> <li>• Sustainable and accessible services for all.</li> <li>• Community wellbeing and mental health.</li> <li>• Community wealth building for future generations.</li> </ul>
Is the function / policy / plan strategically important?	Yes.
State who is, or may be affected by this function / policy / plan, and how.	Whole communities, groups or individuals residing in Orkney. Visitors to Orkney, Employees of Orkney Islands Council.
How have stakeholders been involved in the development of	An extensive consultation exercise run by the Council, Voluntary Action Orkney and the

<p>this function / policy / plan?</p>	<p>LEADER Local action group took place between October 2021 and March 2022. This consultation, Orkney Matters, used a variety of methods to encourage and engage members of the community including those lesser-heard voices, residents of ferry-linked isles and young people. Evidence has also been drawn from the National Islands Plan Survey conducted in October 2020 in relation to issues including employment, transport, housing, fuel poverty, health and social care, climate change and education.</p> <p>Public consultation on the draft plan further evidences the need to address the increasing cost of living and impact of socio-economic disadvantage. In addition, feedback highlights need to prioritise wellbeing and accessible transport, and these are identified as underpinning core principles of the Council Plan which will guide future decision making across all the aims.</p> <p>The Council Plan focusses on key strategic priorities rather than the full range of services delivered by the Council. Feedback from the public consultation will also be used to help inform plans and projects developed to deliver the identified outcomes through specific Equality Impact Assessments of their own.</p> <p>The impact on islands communities is addressed in a specific Islands Communities Impact Assessment.</p>
<p>Is there any existing data and / or research relating to equalities issues in this policy area? Please summarise. E.g. consultations, national surveys, performance data, complaints, service user feedback, academic / consultants' reports, benchmarking (see equalities resources on OIC information portal).</p>	<p>There is a growing body of research on equalities issues on islands, much of which is concerned with socio-economic inequality, and unequal access to services, in addition to the protected characteristics in the Equality Act 2010.</p> <p>The Orkney Partnership has long considered peripherality to be an equality issue and this is reflected in the <a href="#">Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation</a>, last issued in 2020. Orkney's most deprived datazones overall are heavily skewed towards the ferry-linked isles and certain areas of Kirkwall. Looking at individual domains within the SIMD, 14 of Orkney's 29 datazones are among the most deprived 10% in Scotland for 'Access' (to services) with a score of 698 or less, with Hoy, Walls and Flotta scoring only 12.</p> <p>The ferry-linked isles were selected as the area covered by Orkney's first Locality Plan 2018-21 and a Place Standard consultation was conducted to inform this plan, the results of which can be found <a href="#">here</a>.</p>

	<p>The Scottish Government's Islands Team commissioned a survey in 2020 from the James Hutton Institute to inform the implementation of the National Islands Plan. This survey covered all six local authorities with islands in Scotland and, in response to requests from the island LAs, divides respondents into "mainland" and "isles" so for Orkney, they are reported as Orkney Mainland (including the linked south isles) and Orkney Outer Isles. Fieldwork took place in October 2020 and it is planned to repeat the survey every two years, providing a resource for longitudinal analysis. The first <a href="#">National Islands Plan Survey report</a> was published in July 2021 and the base data can be interrogated in detail in a <a href="#">data explorer</a>.</p> <p>The most reliable source for data relating to the Equality Act's protected characteristics is Scotland's Census. Census equality data from 2011 is now out of date and has not been included in the new Council Plan for that reason. The new census data should be available for review from 2023 onwards.</p> <p>A key equality issue over the past two year has been the impact of Covid-19 and the Scottish Government research on this is available <a href="#">here</a>. Many inequalities have been deepened by the pandemic and these impacts remain ongoing.</p>
<p>Is there any existing evidence relating to socio-economic disadvantage and inequalities of outcome in this policy area? Please summarise.</p> <p>E.g. For people living in poverty or for people of low income. See <a href="#">The Fairer Scotland Duty Guidance for Public Bodies</a> for further information.</p>	<p>Our Strategic Planning Framework ensures that our priorities and activities align to achieve positive outcomes for our communities. The Council Plan is a high-level strategic plan and its strategic priorities aim to address persistent inequality of opportunity and socio-economic disadvantage. A wide range of evidence has been considered in helping to inform the plan with the main sources being:</p> <p><a href="#">Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation</a>  <a href="#">National Islands Plan Survey report</a>  <a href="#">Scottish Government Child Poverty Dashboard</a>  <a href="#">Scottish Household Survey</a>  <a href="#">Scottish House Condition Survey</a> (includes data on fuel poverty and home energy efficiency)</p>
<p>Could the function / policy have a differential impact on any of the following equality areas?</p>	<p>(Please provide any evidence – positive impacts / benefits, negative impacts and reasons).</p> <p>Equality, fairness and inclusion are overarching principles for the delivery of the Council Plan and each project will have an individual Equality Impact Assessment as part of the usual</p>

	governance process demonstrating due regard to the aims of the Equality Act (2010).
1. Race: this includes ethnic or national groups, colour and nationality.	No differential impact currently identified.
2. Sex: a man or a woman.	No differential impact currently identified.
3. Sexual Orientation: whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes.	No differential impact currently identified.
4. Gender Reassignment: the process of transitioning from one gender to another.	No differential impact currently identified.
5. Pregnancy and maternity.	No differential impact currently identified.
6. Age: people of different ages.	Likely positive impact for all age groups. A significant area of focus in the plan is increasing opportunities for young people, and families with children to remain in or move to Orkney to improve the demographic imbalance in Orkney. Outcomes also seek to improve experiences for older people in terms of increased choice over support and services.
7. Religion or beliefs or none (atheists).	No differential impact currently identified.
8. Caring responsibilities.	Likely positive impact. Outcomes seek to improve experiences for people in terms of increased choice over support and services.
9. Care experienced.	Likely positive impact. Outcomes relating to access to opportunities being fairer and more equitable and flexible pathways in employment support improved experiences for those who are care experienced.
10. Marriage and Civil Partnerships.	No differential impact currently identified.
11. Disability: people with disabilities (whether registered or not).	(Includes physical impairment, sensory impairment, cognitive impairment, mental health) Likely positive impact. The Council Plan seeks to focus on the most vulnerable in the community and accessibility is identified as an overarching principle for the delivery of the plan. Outcomes relating to living independently with increased choice, access to opportunities being fairer and more equitable and flexible pathways in employment support improved experiences for those with disabilities. Outcomes also seek to promote the wellbeing of our communities

	including improved mental health
12. Socio-economic disadvantage.	Likely positive impact. Many people have experienced hardship during the pandemic, which has exacerbated underlying long term disadvantage. Others have experienced socio-economic disadvantage for the first time. Outcomes address hardship with a key focus on the reduction of poverty and disadvantage.

### 3. Impact Assessment

Does the analysis above identify any differential impacts which need to be addressed?	Yes.
How could you minimise or remove any potential negative impacts?	The Council Plan is intended to impact positively on the groups above.
Do you have enough information to make a judgement? If no, what information do you require?	Yes.

### 4. Conclusions and Planned Action

Is further work required?	Yes.
What action is to be taken?	<p>Consultation on the draft Council Plan has been taken into account in the further development of this EqIA.</p> <p>Implementation of the Council Plan via the Delivery plan and other actions plans.</p> <p>Individual council services will develop relevant EqIAs for the related projects and plans to identify and mitigate any negative impacts and seek to improve equality outcomes.</p>
Who will undertake it?	<p>Consultation on the draft Council Plan has been undertaken by the drafting team from SPBS headed by the Improvement and Performance service.</p> <p>Implementation of the plan will be headed up by the Corporate Leadership Team.</p>
When will it be done?	<p>Consultation on the draft Council Plan took place in January 2023.</p> <p>Implementation will take place over the duration of the Council Plan.</p>

How will it be monitored? (e.g. through service plans).

Council Plan Monitoring.

Signature:



Date: 09 February 2023

Name: Alex J Rodwell

(BLOCK CAPITALS).

Please sign and date this form, keep one copy and send a copy to HR and Performance. A Word version should also be emailed to HR and Performance at [hrsupport@orkney.gov.uk](mailto:hrsupport@orkney.gov.uk)