



ANNUAL
PERFORMANCE
REPORT 2020-2021

*Delivering Excellence at the
Heart of our Communities*

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Thank you for taking the time read our Annual Performance Report. This report summarises the work undertaken across all Tayside Contracts' activities during 202/21, to deliver the best possible services, and achieve the best possible outcomes for the communities of Tayside. We are proud of what we do, and the report presents us with an opportunity to celebrate our successes, and highlights our major strengths, whilst also identifying where we need to do further work, to improve what we do – particularly as we move towards recovery and renewal from the global pandemic.

The period covered in the report represents one of the most extraordinary times in global history, and our activities have understandably been shaped by the response to COVID-19. For the first four months of the year virtually the entire organisation was placed on standby as part of the national lock down.

Since then, our people have had to be incredibly flexible, dedicated and agile, as we have sought to deliver our vital services, through a series of further lock downs, and ever changing restrictions. Naturally this has meant that some of our original aspirations for the year – set out before the pandemic – have had to be deferred. Therefore much of our performance reporting in this document relates to the extensive Covid - enforced changes in our service delivery, during this unique period of time.

The impact of COVID-19 on communities within Tayside has been significant and this will continue for some time to come. We are proud that our people in Tayside Contracts have worked alongside our constituent Councils, communities, businesses and partners to support each other and the people of Tayside. We will continue to strengthen these relationships, ensuring effective joint working to collectively support the achievement of the ambitions of our constituent Councils, as we face an uncertain future.

In facing the future, we also reflect on a successful past. In 2021, Tayside Contracts celebrated its 25-year anniversary, and did

so with pride in what we have achieved so far, as the longest serving local authority shared service in Scotland, with many outstanding achievements over the last quarter century.

We have set out our achievements under the four themes of the 2017-21 Business Plan. These themes are:

- » People
- » Performance
- » Partnership
- » Perception

Future Annual Performance Reports will be sen out under the `5Cs`, which are the themes of the new Business Plan approved by the Joint Committee in February 2021. These themes are:

- » Confidence, Trust and Relationships
- » Commercial Approach
- » Collaboration and Sharing
- » Continuous Improvement and Performance
- » Communities, Councils and Customers

All we are in Tayside Contracts, and all we can be, is achieved through our people, who work so hard, and so selflessly, every day to deliver excellent services to our communities. The pandemic has severely challenged what we do, and our people in Tayside Contracts have reacted magnificently – as we have had to adapt constantly, to deliver our vital services. Their inspirational response to such uniquely demanding circumstances, whilst still delivering vital public services, deserves our deepest gratitude and respect.



Bailie Christina Roberts
Convener of Tayside Contracts



Keith McNamara
Managing Director



'making sure we provide high quality and cost effective services, we are enhancing the communities of Tayside'

Who We Are, and What We Do

Who we are

For the past 25 years, Tayside Contracts has been the collaborative and commercial operating arm for the three Councils in Tayside (our constituent Councils):



We are not a private company, and we are not an independent legal entity. We are governed by a Joint Committee of 18 Elected Members from the three Councils.

We provide essential public services to the **400,000** residents in Tayside on behalf of the three Councils.

We currently employ **2,559** people

Our annual Turnover is around **£76 million**

What We Do

We are very proud of what we do in Tayside Contracts;

» We are the largest civil engineering construction organisation in Tayside and carry out **£38 million** of road repairs, maintenance and construction, winter maintenance and street lighting.

» We are also Tayside's largest catering organisation – serving over **5 million** meals every year to schools and community customers - that's **30,000** meals each day.

» Our Facilities Management team keep over **400 hundred** buildings clean and well maintained, and help ensure all the occupants are safe.

» Our School Crossing Patrollers help to keep the children of Tayside safe when travelling to and from the **175** schools in Tayside

» During the winter we treat over **355,000 kilometres** of roads, to protect the travelling public.

» All of these activities are supported by our highly professional Human Resources, Safety and Training, IT, Finance, Communications, Equalities and Business Support Admin teams – who are invaluable to our success.

We operate as a business and carry out work for other public bodies, private firms and the wider public. Every pound we make through our commercial activities is reinvested in our public services and local communities.

By doing this, and making sure we provide high quality and cost effective services, we are enhancing the communities of Tayside.

We know we have a talented and skilled workforce who demonstrate their passion and commitment to public service, through their skill, resourcefulness and professionalism each and every day.

We place great value on our people and recognise that their knowledge, expertise and performance have a direct impact on the performance of the organisation, and the achievement of our Business Plan objectives.

Our ambitions can only be achieved by everyone in Tayside Contracts working as one team, whilst also operating as part of a larger team with colleagues in our partner Councils, and operating in an environment where everyone is engaged, empowered and know they have something important to offer. This has never been more necessary than the past year, when our people achieved great things to keep our services going, and support our communities, during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Here are some of the highlights of our 'People' activity during 2020/21:

Wellbeing

We recognise the need to continually prioritise the health, safety and wellbeing of our employees through our Wellbeing Strategy and Action Plan and our robust Safety Management System.





Case Study: Our Wellbeing Strategy

In 2019, we introduced a Wellbeing Strategy which aims to be a balance of promoting and encouraging good physical and mental health and well as providing support mechanisms to deal with health problems. The focus is on giving employees the tools to improve the overall quality of their working life. Tayside Contracts recognises the value of our employees, and hopes to enable and empower employees to improve their physical, mental and financial wellbeing so that they are more likely to be resilient to the pressures that could otherwise lead to stress and stress related illnesses/absences.

This strategy outlines Tayside Contracts' plan for the future, with a focus on building a culture where negative wellbeing issues can be identified, managed and minimised before impacting on employees and can be viewed in full [here](#).

Supporting, encouraging and enabling employees to maintain a healthy balance between their work and other interests and responsibilities in their life is a core principle which underpins our Wellbeing Strategy. While the pandemic has impacted on the delivery of some points in our Wellbeing Action Plan, Mental Health Awareness Training (provided by the Headtorch organisation) was delivered to 85 managers, over 12 sessions.

This training underpins the Action Plan and is key in ensuring our managers understand employee wellbeing and their role – and that of Tayside Contracts – in supporting it. This was prioritised, as mental wellbeing was recognised as a significant issues for staff, in coping with the lockdowns and COVID related pressures on service delivery.

<p>During 2020 we worked with our Occupational Health provider (PAM OH) to set up a dedicated COVID-19 Advice Teleconsultation service for employees to call for occupational support and guidance on work related matters relating to the COVID-19 situation, for example mental health problems exacerbated by COVID-19, or physical issues related to new/adapted working practices as a result of COVID-19. This service ran concurrently with normal management of wellbeing and sickness absence and was put in place as an additional source of support for employees, not as a replacement of normal line management support, for normal assessment of fitness for work.</p> 	<p>Contact calls were held with all employees during the lockdown period, to keep them up to date with what was happening at work and to discuss their wellbeing. For employees who were either stood-down or furloughed, calls were held at least once per week to 'check-in' with the employee. For those employees at work these were held on a regular basis, either in-person, on the phone or via MS Teams, to discuss any issues they were experiencing and how they were coping at work.</p> 	<p>An Employee Wellbeing section was created on our website, titled 'Looking After Your Health and Wellbeing During COVID-19' with information on a number of topics available, including dealing with feelings of anxiety on returning to the workplace. Our Mental Health and Wellbeing Resources Contact List was constantly reviewed and kept up to date to ensure managers were well equipped to signpost employees to the most appropriate source of support.</p>
<p>Our Training and Development Adviser achieved accreditation to deliver Scotland's Mental Health First Aid training, and a roll out programme will commence once restrictions on delivery of this course are removed.</p> 	<p>Tayside Contracts has a robust absence management strategy in place to help manage sickness absence in the workplace. Further analysis of sickness absence trends can be viewed in Tayside Contracts' annual Sickness Absence report to the Joint Committee here. It is well documented that over the last decade there has been a fundamental shift in the top 5 reasons for sickness absence in the workplace with mental health related absences featuring at the top of the table, a pattern which is evident across most sectors.</p>	<p>A number of 'All Employee Communications' have been issued during the pandemic, with several of these focusing specifically on employee wellbeing and sources of support available to employees.</p> 

Health and Safety

Tayside Contracts takes its responsibilities very seriously as an employer to provide a healthy and safe environment for all employees. Health and Safety arrangements and assessments are underpinned by continual training and awareness sessions. Our annual Health and Safety report to the Joint Committee can be found [here](#).

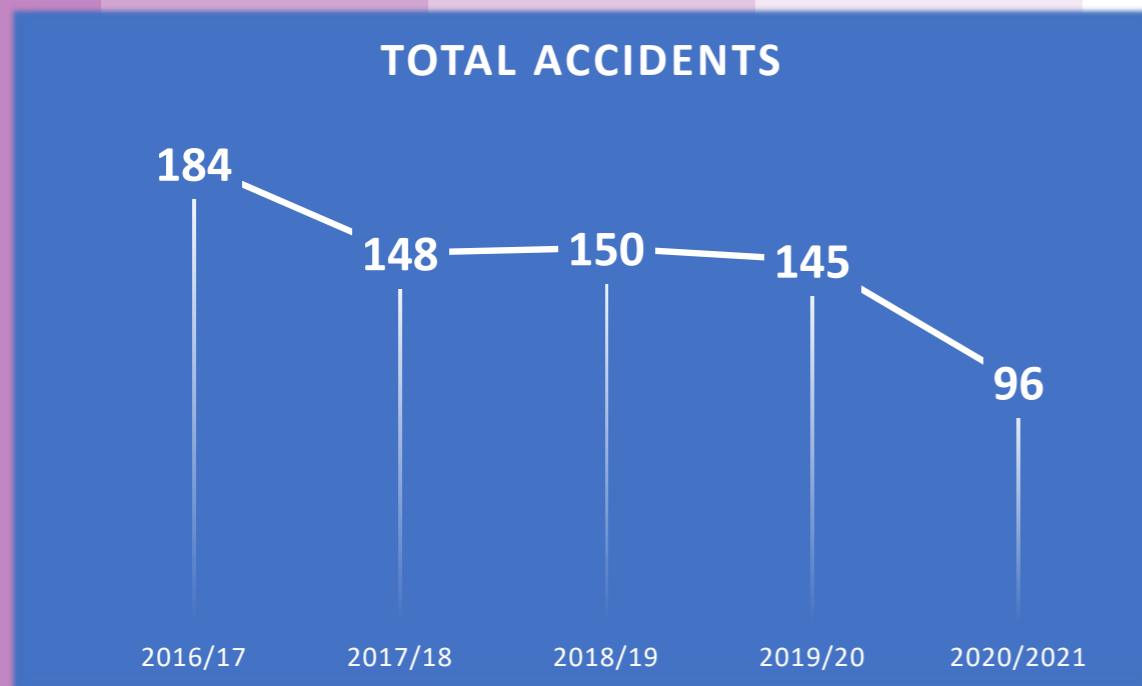
During 2020-21, the most significant Health & Safety challenge was responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. To ensure the health and safety of all employees, prompt action was taken to review Scottish Government Guidance and implement strict control measures through risk assessments to provide a COVID secure workplace for the 240 sites where we operate. In addition to the management of sites, 8 overarching COVID risk assessments were also developed for Tayside Contracts working activities. For those 120 employees experiencing a sudden transition to home working, assessments were developed to support each employee to create a suitable and safe working environment at home.

Scottish Government and Health Protection Scotland COVID-19 guidance was reviewed daily to keep up-to-the-minute with any changes effecting employees. COVID-19 risks assessments were reviewed in light of any guidance changes, or, at

a maximum, these risk assessments were fully reviewed every 3 months. These reviews were based around not only government guidance but also consultation with employees through regular Trade Union meetings, and also working closely with NHS Tayside and Local Environmental Health professionals.

In addition to risk assessments, supporting guidance such as safe working arrangements, general guidance and frequently asked questions were developed to keep employees informed and up to date with the current COVID controls. All COVID-19 risk controls, information and general advice was cascaded to all 2,500 employees through specially prepared COVID-19 Toolbox Talks.

The total number of accidents during 2020/2021 was 96, a decrease from 145 compared to 2019/20. The long-term improvement trend is as shown in the graph below:



During 2020/21, the number of reportable accidents under RIDDOR decreased compared to 2019/2020 from 16 to 9.

Although it is pleasing to report reduced accident numbers in 2020/2021, it should be taken into consideration that COVID-19 restrictions and reduced services during the year is likely to have had a bearing on the figures.



Training

Tayside Contracts is committed to training, developing and realising the potential of all our employees, and fostering a culture which actively encourages innovation.

Investment during 2020/21:

£140K invested into employee development

5,262 training occasions were held

COVID-19 Activities 2020/21:

3,599 COVID-19 Toolbox Talks

155 Train the Trainer sessions

218 'Clean 1' Training sessions for Covid-19 control

89 Homeworking Risk Assessments



Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the restrictions imposed on in-person training as a result, there was a significant reduction in the level of training during 2020/21. Therefore our priority had to change to delivering essential health and safety training, with a focus on COVID-19 training.

Apprenticeships

We are committed to developing and growing our people for example, through the Modern, Technical and Professional apprenticeship work-based learning programmes. During 2020/21 Tayside Contracts contributed **£175,451** to the Apprenticeship Levy and has received **£102,825** in apprentice training funding and **£15,000** from the Flexible Workforce Development Fund. The following details our apprentice numbers since the introduction of the Apprenticeship Levy in 2017.

Modern Apprentice	2020/21 intake	Total no of apprentices	Total no of graduated apprentices in employment with Tayside Contracts
(16-19) Roadworkers	6	6	10 including Project Agent, Chargehand and Roadworker status
(16-19) Mechanics	2	6	12 including Workshop Supervisor, Chargehand and Mechanic status

Our apprentice training programme for mechanics has demonstrated further successes with two apprentices completing their four-year fixed term apprenticeships and being offered permanent positions at their respective Tayside Contracts workshops. They have been replaced by two new apprentices. As well as their training within the workshops they will also complete the 'modern apprenticeship' element of their training through Edinburgh College.

Leadership

Based on our own self-evaluation and valued feedback from our stakeholders, we realise that our leadership has to evolve, for Tayside Contracts to survive the changing conditions, and thrive into the future. We carried out a collective review of our leadership roles and responsibilities between the Executive, corporate and senior leadership teams, including devolving responsibility to those closest to the operational activity.



We have delivered a leadership development programme to our leaders using the 'Strengthscope' assessment tool and utilising a 360-degree feedback approach. The approach is designed to develop employee performance, maximise people's potential, identify core capabilities of employees, and ensure everyone is utilising them in the correct manner.

To supplement this approach, we also engaged with the Interpersonal Dynamics Inventory (IDI) behaviour assessment tool to assist our leaders see how their behaviour is perceived by others, to help build stronger, more transparent relationships between individuals and within teams.

To recognise good leadership, we have created a 'LEADS by Example' Tayside Excellence Award which is open to any Tayside Contracts employee who displays who displays exceptional performance and the characteristics of an effective leader.

Equalities

EQUALITIES

Celebrating equality and diversity is vital to have a vibrant, mixed workforce, and to promote equality of opportunity for all within our communities. Our work during 2020/21 included the following activities:

- 

Continuing our accredited 'Living Wage Employer' status.
- 

Providing an in-house, professional Polish/English interpreter/translator service for our high proportion of Polish employees and ensuring that all key employment policies, procedures, documents and correspondence are translated (an interpreter/translator service is also provided on request for other languages).
- 

Policies, procedures and training are also provided in British Sign Language format.
- 

Becoming an accredited 'Disability Confident' employer.
- 

Promoting diversity and inclusion through our website, digital signage system and social media.



Next Steps

Tayside Contracts' latest Investors in People accreditation re-assessment (which was due to include a three phased plan and completion of the IIP employee survey) was interrupted by the pandemic during 2020-21. The employee interviews part of the re-assessment originally scheduled for March and April 2020, had to be rescheduled a number of times due to the restrictions brought about by the pandemic. The assessment period has now been extended to December 2021 and so it is expected that the interviews will be able to go ahead.



The outcome of the IIP work will help shape our approach to supporting and developing our people in the future. As we learn from the pandemic and look to 'build back better'.

Our new Business Plan, approved by the Joint Committee in March 2021 sets out the priorities for our People development – these include:

- Develop an Organisation Development Plan for Tayside Contracts
- Establish a staff engagement programme around the shared objectives in the Business Plan
- Incorporate our Business Plan priorities into our programmed review of our policies and procedures
- Develop a communications programme to encourage engagement and empowerment
- Review our succession planning support arrangements.

The need to make sure we are delivering excellent public services at the right time, in the right way, and to the right people, has never been greater. We need to ensure we perform to the best of our abilities, as the communities of Tayside depend on what we do.

we deliver. Every pound of public money must go further. Therefore, we need a focus like never before on improving performance, through greater innovation, continuous improvement, and rigorous performance management.

As most of our services are publicly funded, we understand that we must gain maximum value from the money available, and be accountable to the public for the spending decisions that we make and the services that

The extraordinary circumstances of the COVID 19 pandemic meant that we had to channel much of our performance and priorities, to responding to the changing and challenging pressures as the various phases of the pandemic unfolded over the year.

Our performance related highlights are reflected below:

Performance Excellence

Despite the significant impact of the pandemic on the operation of the organisation's financial performance for the year exceeded initial expectations and resulted in an overall trading surplus of £1.993 million. Although our catering service income was significantly affected by lengthy lockdown periods, the Construction and Cleaning teams experienced higher levels of income than budgeted, largely due to Covid related works and additional cleaning requirements.

Despite the extreme challenges of 2020/21, External Auditors have issued an unqualified audit opinion on our 2020/21 Annual Accounts, stating our financial statements gave a true and fair view of our financial position for the year 2020/21. The auditors noted that overall, Tayside Contracts has appropriate and effective governance arrangements in place to support scrutiny of decision-making, and that the revised governance arrangements put in place to respond to the pandemic were appropriate and continue to support good governance and transparency.

Our internal Audit Annual Report 2020/21 prepared by the audit firm Wylie and Bisset, found that the auditors were satisfied with the adequacy and effectiveness of Tayside Contracts' risk management, control and governance processes. Auditors concluded Tayside Contracts have adequate and effective risk management, control and governance processes to manage achievement of our objectives, and we have proper arrangements to promote and secure value for money.

Benchmarking was undertaken by Willie and Bisset, comparing Tayside Contracts' performance with recommendations made for audits carried out of a similar nature, with other organisations. The results were very favourable, showing that Tayside Contracts has a lower number of recommended points for action, in comparison with other similar organisations, especially in relation to 'high' and 'medium' graded recommendations (see Table 1).

Table 1 – Audit Benchmarking Comparison with other Organisations

Area	High	Medium	Low	Total
Average number of recommendations in similar audits	1	7	11	19
Recommendations at Tayside Contracts	-	-	9	9

Caste Study: Construction - Maintaining Accreditation during a Pandemic - Internal British Standards Institute (BSI) Audits via Teams

Tayside Contracts Construction Division have two externally accredited management systems: ISO 9001:2015 for quality and ISO 14001:2018 for environment. To maintain these accreditations a range of audits must be completed annually by the external auditor from BSI.

The changes brought about by working remotely during the Covid pandemic, meant we had to adapt to suit the needs of the business. To maintain our accreditations for Construction we successfully carried out four audits remotely via Teams.

By creating a 'Team' within Teams we were able to carry out video calls with external auditors and supervisors at multiple sites. Initially this was a leap into the unknown but quickly we realised how conveniently powerful this new way of working is.

The BSI Assessors were very complimentary of the processes and systems we had in place for the Quarry, Surface Dressing, Slurry Surfacing and Sign Shop. The audits were a great success with only some minor recommendations made for the further improvements.

Our employee turnover Key Performance Indicator (KPI) for 2020/21 was set at 11%. During the year employee turnover was 9.6%, which is a favourable result, at 1.4% lower than the KPI target. Compared to last year's results, employee turnover has decreased by 1.9%.

The Labour Stability Index measures the number of employees with one or more years' service at the beginning of the year compared to the end of the year. A high index number denotes a stable workforce, Our labour stability Key Performance Indicator for 2020/21 was set at 90%. Labour stability for the financial year 2020/21 was 90.2%, which is 0.2% higher than the KPI target. This is an increase of 1.3% in labour stability when compared with 2019/20. The retention of longer serving employees is particularly important and a favourable stability percentage result for 2020/21, is indicative not only of a stable workforce, but of a return being achieved on our employee development investment which produces a better trained, more competent and effective workforce.



Improving Service Delivery

Our performance related highlights are reflected below:

Our winter maintenance service has adopted many innovative new processes and techniques, including route optimisation, which has reduced costs and improved winter maintenance coverage; gritter tracking now means that the public can see online where our gritter vehicles have been ; the switch to mined rock salt from marine salt delivers financial savings of **£400,000** per annum (this is based on the average salt used in a year); and use of dual-purpose vehicles for the delivery of the winter service. 60% of the frontline winter maintenance fleet is now dual-purpose which reduces costs through these vehicles being able to be utilised all year round.

Our Street Lighting teams have installed over 9,000 LED lights which will save **2.5 million kWh of energy** – equivalent to the power consumed from watching TV by the entire population of Tayside for one week.



Case Study: *Successful Introduction of Tay Cuisine (CPU)*

Our innovative cook freeze unit at Tay Cuisine (also known as the Central Processing Unit, or CPU) will not only deliver year on year savings of over £500,000 to Angus and Dundee City Councils and protect catering jobs and services long into the future, it also creates tremendous commercial opportunities. This unit is currently scheduled to produce around 5 million nursery, school and community meals but has the potential capacity to produce up to 20 million meals per year.

It also 'future proofs' the participating Councils from the advent of Universal Free School Meals for primary pupils - which will require an estimated 1.5 million extra meals to be produced across Tayside to meet demand. The CPU project has been one of the largest initiatives ever embarked upon by Tayside Contracts, with an investment of £1.9m and years of planning and development. The move to the new Central Production Unit delivery model for nursery and primary school meals, required major changes to the Catering workforce, with the new model no longer requiring the post of Cook in Charge or Assistant Cook. Discussions and consultations were held with all of the affected employees and, while a number of employees chose to take the opportunity of a redundancy package, it was possible to find alternative employment for everyone who wanted to stay with Tayside Contracts. We are delighted to report that these changes were achieved with no compulsory redundancies.

The move to the CPU model was a detailed process, which was extended further by the COVID-19 pandemic and our employees rose admirably to the challenge of maintaining service delivery in the most difficult of circumstances, against the backdrop of knowing that the school meal service was to be overhauled.

Since the model was launched in February 2021 our employees have embraced the new service delivery model, delivering a choice of safe, healthy, nutritious and delicious meals that fully comply with the regulatory nutritional requirements for food and drink in schools - serving 14,000 primary and nursery pupils every day across Dundee City and Angus Council areas. Feedback from our customers on the quality of our meals has been very positive.

Performance Excellence in Supporting our Frontline Services

The rollout of Office 365 prior to the pandemic, allowed us to quickly implement an agile approach to allow staff to work safely and securely from home during periods of lockdown. If we did not have this capability, it would have been impossible to work as effectively as we have during the lockdowns and other pandemic related restrictions. This has, in turn, resulted in a significant step forward towards new and more efficient long term new ways of working, where we are less reliant on expensive property costs. We are also looking to use mobile phones and smart digital devices to extend connectivity and communication as far as possible to our frontline operational staff out on site, to share the benefits of technology with these colleagues.

We take cyber security seriously and we have implemented leading-edge email and web security measures, allowing us to safeguard the organisation from malicious cyber threat and loss of data. This includes sending test messages to staff similar to genuine malicious emails. If people respond to test messages incorrectly, it is an opportunity to raise their awareness to risks to ensure proper protections are in place.

Streamlining processes and identifying efficiency opportunities has always been a priority, however, the reactive nature of the COVID-19 pandemic necessitated the need for this to happen quickly to ensure that vital HR services continued to be delivered to employees and managers at a time when they were needed more than ever. The HR Services Team rapidly re-designed their existing processes and

procedures and ensured continuity of service and support in the fight against COVID-19 by implementing the following changes to the way they work:

- Remote meetings via tele or video conferencing.
- Occupational health referral appointments via tele or video conferencing.
- Counselling and Wellbeing appointments via tele or video conferencing.
- Easy to follow user guides to support employees with the use of tele or video conferencing.
- Electronic communication of HR related correspondence directly to personal email addresses.
- Arranging access to private and safe meeting rooms and technology for those who could not access services from home.

These changes enabled our employees to access vital services using technology, and receive important information quickly whilst supporting the 'stay at home' and 'do not travel' instructions from the Government. The success of these initiatives has been incorporated into our 'build back better' philosophy and will continue to be available going forward.

The workshop staff throughout Tayside were back to full operation earlier than the rest of the Operations workforce so that our vehicle fleet (which in many cases had stood idle during the worst of the pandemic) was inspected and roadworthiness was ensured, in advance of the full return of operational staff.



Case Study: *Construction Recovery Groups*

With the introduction of a nationwide lockdown in March 2020, across the UK employees were sent home and local authority services were reduced to essential work only. Maintaining the roads network is an essential public service and Tayside Contracts` Head of Operations established a Construction Recovery Steering Group and Working Group, to manage the challenging situation.

The Steering Group consisted of senior managers from Human Resources, Health & Safety, Estimating Services and Operations. The Working Group was represented by management from additional operational areas including Transport, Collace Quarry and Street Lighting, with all levels of Tayside Contracts management from Angus, Dundee and Perth & Kinross operational areas, making it a strong balance of people and skills to progress quickly with the challenge ahead. The group soon developed the core strategy of the recovery plan. The decision was taken to engage the Trade Unions early in discussions, to accommodate their concerns and to listen to their suggestions. This was appreciated by the Trade Unions, as evidenced by the following message from one of the Trade Union representatives.

“It was important that the Trade Unions had a voice around the table regarding the recovery plan. Health and Safety had to be at the forefront to make sure that all Construction and Transport workers came back to work safely. It was good to engage with our employers and have a say on how mitigation was put into practise in the workplace.”

A collaborative approach was the key to success, dealing with the continually changing messages and constantly updated requirements announced by the Government. Everyone involved played an important part in making the plans become reality. The Transport Unit were quick sourcing mobile facilities; Health and Safety were adapting and writing new Covid-19 safe working arrangements to incorporate social distancing, hand

washing, sanitising of vehicles and equipment; while Human Resources were helping to develop policies and procedures to conform to new and changing Government, advice, guidance and legislation.

At the early stages of the pandemic, ensuring supplies of protective equipment for our employees were essential. Despite the national and local challenges to source disinfectant and Personal Protective Equipment supplies, the Procurement team managed to source the required items, therefore keeping everyone safe and allowing a smooth recovery process.

Tayside Contracts Sign Shop in Blairgowrie gave an outstanding response when staff were asked to produce the signage for our depots, offices and other Council requirements. The team responded instantly providing all the signage required for the various Covid-19 instructional and guidance signage designs. The signs were produced very quickly and displayed in depots and offices, given the short time after the designs were agreed by the Working Group.

Through collaboration, working as a team and applying the ‘One Construction’ vision of everyone working together for a common purpose, was the key for the success of our quick recovery.

Tayside Contracts Construction Division was proud to be able to adapt its resources quickly and make the recovery process possible and provide the essential services requested by the constituent Councils, while always considering our employees’ health and wellbeing as the top priority in our return to the ‘New Normal’ to learn the lessons of our experience over the last year.



Next Steps

The ongoing financial impact of the Covid-19 pandemic will place additional pressure on the budget of Tayside Contracts in future years. We will work with our constituent Councils to identify savings and efficiencies that can be delivered across all activities undertaken by the organisation. This will ensure a coordinated approach that delivers benefits for all three councils and the public purse.

The school meal service was significantly affected by the pandemic, and in 2021/22, meal uptake numbers have not recovered to their pre-pandemic levels largely due to ongoing absences in the school population. We have an Action Plan to increase school meal uptake (which was initiated prior to COVID 19). With the post-pandemic challenges of reduced meal numbers, this Action plan is even more important, and will be a main focus for the organisation in 2021/22 and beyond.

The decision by Perth & Kinross Council to adopt the Tay Cuisine (CPU) model of meals delivery, and the implementation of Universal Free School Meals for primary pupils across Tayside, gives tremendous opportunities to extend our meal services, to provide healthy, safe nutritious and delicious meals for around **1,500, 000** additional meals per annum. This will be a major project to ensure successful delivery in 2021/22.

We will focus on our Business Plan key priority actions to develop our performance even further.

These are:-

- ✓ Review our office and other property requirements, including sharing opportunities with partners
- ✓ Investigate extending operating hours for our plant and equipment to maximise the best uses of these assets
- ✓ Implement an Improvement and Innovation Programme
- ✓ Review our performance management, measuring and reporting processes, to identify priority areas for improvement
- ✓ Review our benchmarking networks and processes, to highlight improvement opportunities



As the longest serving local authority shared service in Scotland, our whole foundation is built on partnership - with our constituent Councils; with our workforce and our affiliated Trade Unions; with our customers and communities; and with our Elected Members. Tayside Contracts can only survive and thrive if we have the strongest possible relationship of transparency, honesty, mutual respect and trust with our partners.

As one of the largest employers in the area with a firm commitment to corporate social, ethical and environmental responsibility, we

are in a strong position to support the wider ambitions of our constituent Councils and our communities, to enhance the lives of everyone in Tayside. We have a responsibility to share in delivering the Council's strategic aims around equality and fairness; economy and education; community empowerment; tackling climate change and building community wealth.

Our strong partnerships were a feature of the collective response to the global pandemic, as some of the examples of our partnership achievements in 2020/21 demonstrate below:

Partnering with our Councils

- Our successful Formal Partnering Agreements in place with each of the three Councils for the delivery of Facilities Management services, proved their worth through the close working relationships with the Councils' Education Services. This ensured that Tayside Contracts staff were able to work in a remarkably agile way in responding to the many variations to Education, Catering and Facilities Management Services, to keep school staff and pupils safe during the changing phases of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- A strong link between colleagues in Councils and Tayside Contracts is vital to effective communications and seamless service delivery to our customers. For example, our Facilities services, working in partnership with our Head Teachers, Council Business Managers' and clients, was an ideal platform for us to engage and communicate messages our services such as school meals, giving our customers the opportunity to understand what services we could provide for them, and how we could meet their needs and expectations, during ever changing circumstances.
- The positive trust developed through the strong working relationship between Angus Council colleagues and our vehicle workshop maintenance staff was vital to

Tayside Contracts providing an effective, seamless service, and keeping Angus Council staff on the move. The success of this partnership can be demonstrated by Angus Council agreeing to an extension of the Agreement for Tayside Contracts to provide the Councils Fleet Maintenance Service, by a further two years.

- Street Lighting is a core service delivered by Tayside Contracts through a tri Council integrated partnership model established in 2019, maintaining a large scale illuminated asset to keep people safe – this includes **72,000** illuminated columns, **4,560** illuminated signs and **1,380** illuminated bollards. The Partnership also undertakes a variety of electrical and lighting commissions for private sector clients and developers. Our recently expanded tri-Council Partnership for Street Lighting now includes Angus Council, which will benefit from our collaborative approach to service provision. Throughout the lockdown period our emergency response teams attended to emergencies such as knocked down columns and cable faults, keeping the lights on for the members of the public who were making the most of the outdoors and walking around our towns and cities at all times of the day.

- The development of Roads Maintenance Partnerships in Dundee and Perth and Kinross, the Street Lighting Partnership across all three Council areas, and the transfer of fleet services from Angus Council have contributed to greater efficiencies and service improvements. It is estimated that these integrated arrangements have saved over **£200,000** in staff costs alone.
- Construction – Tayside Contracts was the only local authority organisation in Scotland to carry out surface dressing during the Covid-19

affected year. Although the programme is usually completed by the end of July the disruption due to lockdown meant that we laid surface dressing into September. Even with the late start to the programme we will still carried out in excess of **£1.6 million** of works. These works required excellent programming and organisation, and are a credit to the supervisors and all the operatives involved to ensure that this has been a successful season, considering all the challenges involved.



Partnering During the Pandemic

- Tayside Contracts' response to the COVID-19 pandemic called upon a high level of effective partnership working, including partners within sectors where we had never worked previously such as the care home sector. We collaborated with Dundee City, Perth and Kinross and Angus Councils to establish a pool of employees who were available to assist within care homes which were experiencing significant staffing shortages. We also provided services such as marshalling and clerical support to the mass vaccination clinics set up as part of the national COVID-19 vaccination programme.
- There were numerous essential services operating throughout the pandemic, none more so than the Waste operation operated by Angus Council. Key to keeping that service operation working was the Tayside Contracts workshop staff at Peasiehill in Arbroath. During weekly conference calls with the Angus Council Waste Management team, Council colleagues constantly expressed their gratitude for the efforts of the workshop staff in keeping their fleet on the road throughout that really difficult time.
- In Perth, our mechanics were called on to inspect and repair vehicles for Perth & Kinross Council due to COVID related shortages in the Council's staff. Again, this work was greatly appreciated by our partner Councils.
- Our Business Support Section have been involved with the Mass Testing Programme in schools, assisting our vital cleaning operations, to ensure public safety and reassurance, by providing ongoing data to each school on a weekly basis to allow them to keep track of employees who have given consent to testing. Our team has also assisted Dundee City Council with the Mass Vaccination programme in the Caird Hall by providing data logging support.
- We value positive working relationships with our affiliated Trade Unions and hold regular meetings and engagements to ensure we support our people. This valued relationship has been strengthened more recently by the intense joint work we and the Trade Unions have been engaged in, to respond to the ever-changing COVID pandemic challenges.
- Almost immediately following the onset of the pandemic in March 2020, regular remote meetings were established between management, HR, Health and Safety and our three recognised Trade Unions – GMB, Unite and Unison. These meetings proved to be critical in allowing us to communicate effectively and quickly with our Trade Unions, engage with our workforce and keep them fully informed in what was a rapidly and ever-changing landscape. In total, there have been over 80 COVID-19 meetings held with the Trade Unions over the course of the pandemic to date.



Next Steps

We believe that Tayside Contracts is well positioned and structured to deliver further mutually beneficial shared services for our constituent Councils, whether through integration with 'client' services to remove duplication of effort and improve cohesion (such as our joint work with Roads Maintenance and Street Lighting Partnerships, and Integrated Facilities Management Services) - or through providing complementary activities, currently carried out by private contractors for our Councils.

We are not complacent, and the establishment of shared services requires a particular set of skills. We will assess our skills and capabilities, and where necessary, train and develop our people to hold the skills and mindset needed to work successfully in partnership with our Councils; develop robust business cases; and implement large scale projects successfully.

We want to become a nationally recognised centre of excellence for co-creating and successfully implementing shared services.



What our elected members, our partners, our customers, our communities and our employees think of Tayside Contracts is vital to our success. We rely on Councils to trust us to deliver shared services on their behalf, based on their confidence in our ability.

This is even more vital as we look to develop our collaborative and commercial opportunities even further, to grow the organisation, and for our customers to choose Tayside Contracts, for how we do things - for anticipating their needs,

providing high quality services, and delivering best value for them.

Within our organisation, our strong collective culture, focus on agreed priorities, and positive working relationships, will secure the confidence we need our Councils to have, in what we do. Our people are ambassadors for the organisation, and how they feel about working for Tayside Contracts is vital to our reputation.

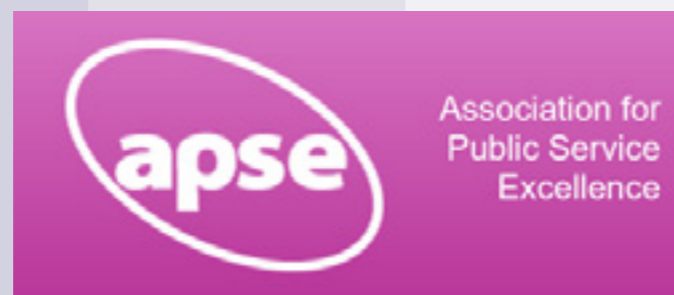
Here are some examples of how we have enhanced the perception of Tayside Contracts:

National Recognition

✔ Tayside Contracts’ outstanding performance was recognised at UK wide level, at the national Association for Public Service Excellence Awards, where we were shortlisted for the following categories:

- » **Best Performer in Transport, Operations, and Vehicle Maintenance**
- » **Most Improved Performance in Catering**

✔ We went one better in the category of **‘Most Improved Building Cleaning’**, where we were awarded the overall winner. These are considerable achievements, especially considering these awards cover the entire United Kingdom.



✔ We were also a finalist in the UK National Highways Awards, for our innovative technology project (See case study) in partnership with Dundee City Council.



Dundee City Council and Tayside Contracts have successfully integrated mobile technology for use in all routine and reactive works, from defect identification to on site completion of repairs. This has led to significant improvements across all measurable performance indicators as a result of enhanced ability to plan works on a target basis, and much improved flow of information between inspectors, supervisors and front-line operatives.

Historically we relied on defect inspections to be raised as works orders, which were passed to the operational management team, who then issued paper orders to the frontline ops team. The frontline operation team would then carry out the works, sometimes after multiple visits due to lack of information, incorrect information or because the defect had already been attended to by another squad.

Once the defect had been repaired, dated and signed, paperwork verifying the repair was completed was returned to the supervisor who would then pass to the inspection team to close the defect and mark as completed. This approach did not promote the efficient planning of work, and also created a ‘silo mentality’. In some instances, paperwork was lost and multiple visits were carried out by operational teams to already completed defects, or indeed some defects were left incomplete and ultimately were not repaired within response times.

Therefore we set out to:

- Eliminate multiple site visits through ineffectual repair records.
- Eliminate defects not being repaired within service standard due to paperwork being lost or incomplete.
- Remove point failures in service delivery, due to staff unavailability resulting in defect orders not to be raised, works not to be issued, or paperwork not being returned and as result defects not closed.
- Increase efficiency through targeted deployment of resources and greater transparency of network defects and deadlines for repair.
- Eliminate material wastage and reduce carbon emissions through reduction in journeys via more effective programming of works.
- Create a robust system of record keeping detailing defect repair from inspection identification to repair which would assist in challenging any public liability claims received.

By utilising technology, it was not only possible to continue to identify safety critical work (via driven and walked inspections where required), but also to organise, manage and deliver all works without any staff stepping foot into an office building or handling a single item of

paperwork during the lockdown phase of the pandemic, minimising the risk exposure to all staff delivering a key service during the peak of the pandemic. Attesting to the quality of the system, there were no service failures throughout the lockdown period with all safety critical defects (2,834) completed within timelines laid out in policy (100% compliance).

Other significant and tangible improvements to the road user and the community as a whole have been achieved, including:

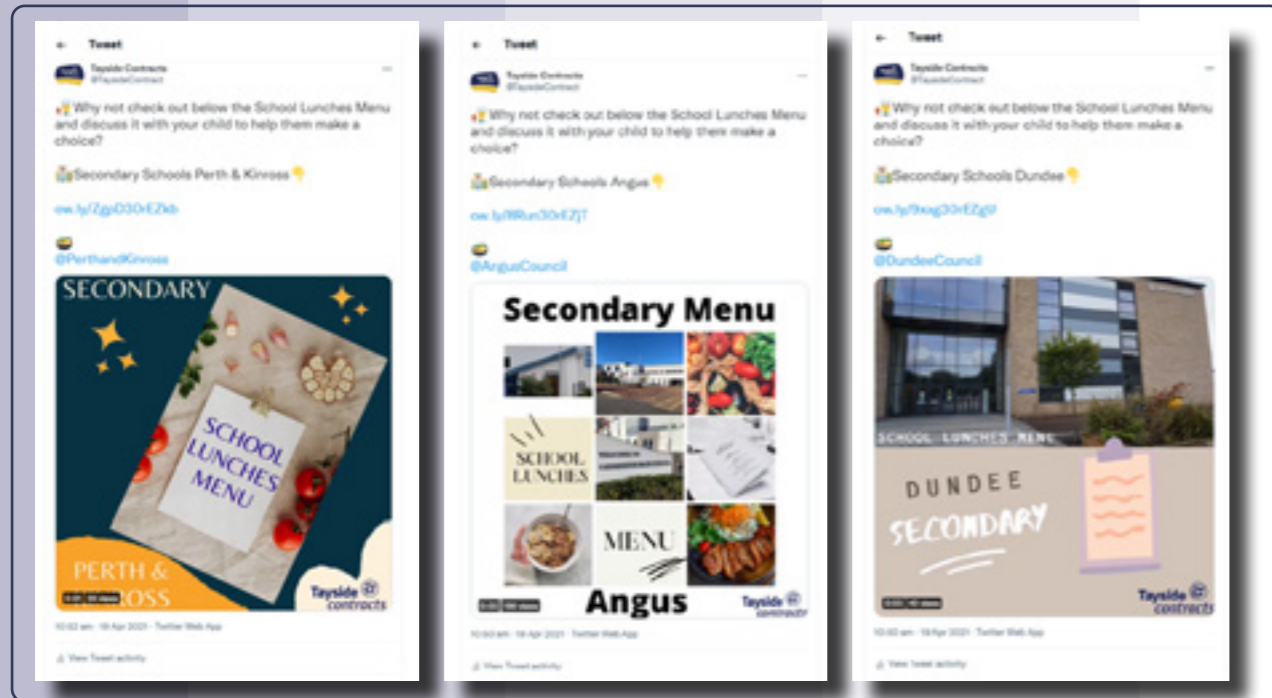
- 99.5% of defects completed within target time despite the challenges of the pandemic and the worst winter weather since 2010/11.
- Average response time falling from 5.75 days in 2019/20 to 4.5 days, despite a 15% increase in defects.
- By working in a more co-ordinated and ultimately efficient manner, additional capacity has been created allowing more first-time permanent pothole repairs to be completed compared to temporary ‘splodge’ patching.
- A 58% reduction in pothole repair costs year on year, with a 55% overall reduction from project inception.
- Like for like defects repaired quicker and to the same service standard.
- Reduction in repair costs through more efficient programming, facilitated by the systems technology.
- Full transparency of outstanding workload (including deadline peaks) created by all defect expiry dates being clear, allowing management the facility to easily identify the requirement for extra resource when required, well in advance of deadlines to ensure repair standards are met.
- Slicker out of hours service with defects able to be recorded there and then, with the intention of completing a permanent intervention (i.e. a make safe repair is completed out of hours) with a permanent repair completed once materials are ordered and the correct road space is organised.

The groundwork carried out by Dundee City Council and Tayside Contracts (Dundee Roads Maintenance Partnership) and our software supplier WDM allows other Councils to adopt this technology for their own benefit. Indeed, as part of Tayside Tri-Partite Road Collaboration Group, Angus Council have indicated that they intend to adopt the systems that have been developed in Dundee.

The success of this project was recognised at the UK Highways Awards, where we were a finalist in the ‘Best New Technology’ category.

Perception of Communities and Partners

- There are numerous instances of Tayside Contracts people 'going the extra mile' during this extraordinary year. For example, the two cleaning staff who walked miles in the early morning in heavy snow to reach the Caird Hall Mass Vaccination centre when the local bus service was withdrawn due to the weather – because they wanted to do their jobs, to make sure staff and the public were safe, when the centre opened later in the day. This dedication does so much to enhance the reputation of our organisation.
- Our commitment to a sustainable future is evident, and positively impacts on others' perception of us. For example **95%** of construction materials which we excavate is recycled into various approved aggregates for reuse. This reduces the volume of new aggregates required, delivering financial and environmental benefits, with a reduction to landfill of **70,000 tonnes** annually.
- Our new Tay Cuisine unit provides energy/environment benefits. For example, the unit uses **75,000 hours** less energy for food production, as well as a reduction in fuel usage and carbon emissions by reducing the number of food runs, and increased use of smaller delivery vehicles.
- Our Occupational Health Service procurement, included a community benefit clause, where the service provider must hold a minimum of 5 activities each year, spread across the Tayside geographical area, to include work experience placements and awareness raising sessions focusing on health improvement in the workplace.
- Social media is an essential platform to communicate quickly and effectively with our communities. We aimed to improve our perception of school lunches and promoted the menus via Twitter for both primary and secondary menus. This demonstrated our openness with access to all the recipes, ingredients, and nutritional values of every menu item.



- We also engaged with schools to promote International School Meals Day in March 2021 - the responses and drawings from children below show their level of engagement with our competition, whilst allowing us to promote our safe, healthy, nutritious and delicious school meals.



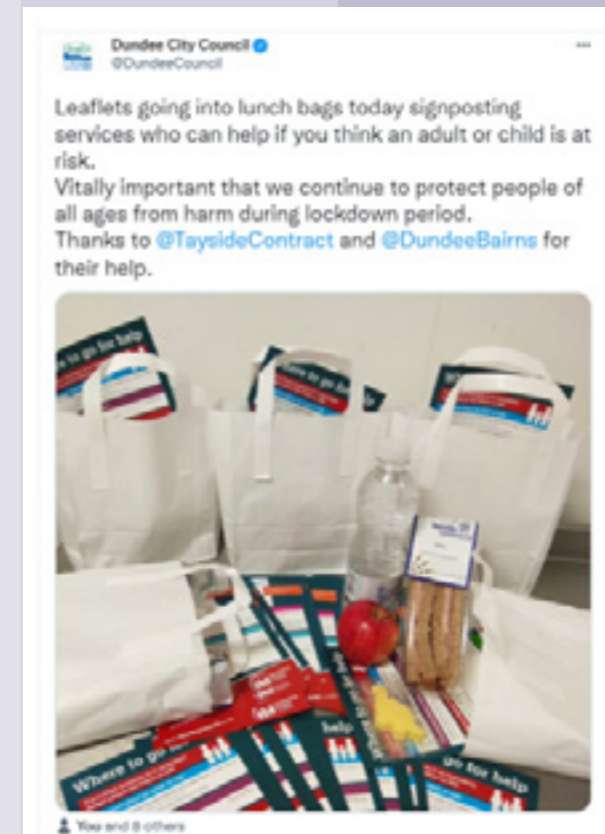
- Often it's the small acts that make a difference - for example supporting the maintenance of rescue poles at the River Tay gained us more recognition and thanks – see left and right:



- We are proud to have worked in partnership with the Dundee Bairns Fun and Food Programme since April 2016. During that period we have supported the provision of more than 300,00 meals to children who need additional support, across the city of Dundee. This service has been even



- more critical during the year, as more families struggled with the challenges of the pandemic. Our people were there all the way to ensure that people in need received a healthy, nutritious meal throughout the pandemic.



Perception of our People in Tayside Contracts

- The ability to communicate with our 2,500 employees quickly and effectively has never been so critical as it was during the COVID-19 pandemic. To this end, management quickly established 'all employee' COVID-19 communications from the Managing Director which were sent out by emails to employees and published on our website. Since the start of the pandemic in 2020, we have communicated 53 briefings to all employees. This was more difficult to start with as we didn't have as many employees personal email addresses as we would have preferred to have had. However, our managers encouraged their teams to provide their email so we could communicate with them more effectively and timely as so many updated briefings were being distributed and this worked very well.
- Our COVID-19 employee briefings were translated into Polish, Latvian and Lithuanian and all published on our website for ease of access.
- All COVID-19 related employee briefings were always shared with the trade unions representatives and Full Time Officials, and these were well received and appreciated.

Case Study: COVID-19 Employee Survey

In December 2020 Tayside Contracts issued a COVID-19 Employee Survey.

The main aims of the survey were to:

- gain a more focused and accurate picture of how employees felt Tayside Contracts had responded and adapted to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- identify what was done well but more importantly areas management needed to continue to work on to improve our approach.
- understand how employees feel they have coped and are coping, ensuring that all employees are fully supported throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

The survey consisted of 6 mandatory sections totalling 32 questions, with an additional 3 sections of 16 questions for areas around Homeworking, Shielding and Furlough.

Designated Senior Managers attended briefing sessions on the results, and action plans were developed to respond to the issues raised, which also links into the new Business Plan.

The results of the survey showed that the investment by people in the organisation in supporting colleagues and ensuring their safety and wellbeing has been welcomed and appreciated by our workforce.

48%

Return Rate (1,158 surveys)

88%

Satisfaction Rate with the measures put in place by the organisation

Over 90%

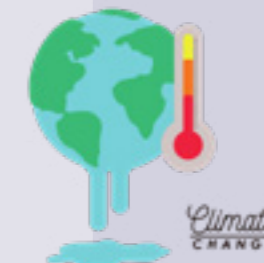
- received their COVID-19 Toolbox Talk
- consistently adhered occupational health and safety control measures in place during COVID-19
- believed they were coping well at work
- believed that Tayside Contracts was a fair and reasonable employer during the pandemic.

+90%

Next Steps

Our new Business Plan has a particular focus on Communities. We recognise we have a responsibility to share in delivering the Council's strategic aims around equality and fairness; economy and education; community empowerment; tackling climate change and building community wealth. To achieve this, we will:

- Review community benefit provisions in our procurements
- Develop a Tayside Contracts Community Fund to support local community empowerment
- Establish a Volunteering Policy as part of our Wellbeing Strategy
- Review and update our equality impact assessments
- Develop a plan for Tayside Contracts to support the 'Empowered and Inclusive' Tay City Deal aspirations for employability and skills development
- Work with Education colleagues to establish a plan to support educational development in schools
- Produce a Climate Change Plan for Tayside Contracts.



Our new Communications Plan will place an emphasis on proactive communications to our communities and stakeholders, to share the incredible achievements of our people in Tayside Contracts, particularly through the instant access of social media.



SUMMARY OF KPIs AND TARGETS

Strategic Goals

	KPIs	Target 2018/19	Actuals
EXCELLENCE IN SERVICE DELIVERY	1.0 Increase the level of stakeholder satisfaction	1.1 Achievement of a satisfaction level of Community meals >90% School Meals >70% IFMS >70%	1.2 N/A due to COVID-19
EXCELLENCE IN CHANGE MANAGEMENT	2.0 Increase the number of employees who are rated in terms of management performance as competent or excelling in current role	2.1 >85% rated competent or excelling	2.2 Cancelled due to COVID-19
EXCELLENCE IN COMMERCIALISATION	3.0 Increase income as a proportion of cost	3.1 101.2%	3.2 102%

Enablers

	KPIs	Target 2018/19	Actuals
LEADERSHIP	4.0 Positive leadership results from either Investors in People or employee survey	4.1 >80%	4.2 Delayed due to COVID-19
PEOPLE	5.0 Reduce number of days lost due to sickness absence	5.1 <6.2%	5.2 6.2%
FINANCE	6.0 Achieve the greater of the required rate of return or the required budgeted surplus by the constituent Councils	6.1 >£750k surplus	6.2 £1,993k

Strategic Themes

	KPIs	Target 2018/19	Actuals
CORPORATE GOVERNANCE	7.0 Improving our Corporate Governance standing in accordance with CIPFA/Solace 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government: Framework (2016)'	7.1 >80% compliance	7.2 84%
COMMUNITY BENEFITS	8.0 Increase where possible local (Tayside and surrounding area) procurement spend	8.1 >50%	8.2 43%
BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT	9.0 Increase diversity of our business activities	9.1 1 or more new business streams	9.2 No new business streams
PARTNERSHIP	10.0 Increase the % of partnership and collaborative turnover	10.1 50%	10.2 41.6%
SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY	11.0 Achieve and retain accreditation of a Living Wage employer	11.1 During 2020/21	11.0 Achieved
EQUALITY & DIVERSITY	12.0 Completion of an Equal Pay Audit and publication of an Equal Pay Statement	12.1 Achievement of a satisfactory outcome from audit	12.2 Completed





**INVESTORS
IN PEOPLE**



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