

North Ayrshire Council

Community Wealth Building (CWB) Commission

Note of Meeting of CWB Commission held on 14 June 2023

Present

Councillor Marie Burns, Leader of North Ayrshire Council (Chair)

Councillor Anthony Gurney, North Ayrshire Council

Councillor Margaret Johnson, North Ayrshire Council

Councillor Bob Pollock, South Ayrshire Council (online)

Craig Hatton, Chief Executive, North Ayrshire Council

Audrey Sutton, Executive Director (Communities and Education), North Ayrshire Council

Russell McCutcheon, Executive Director (Place), North Ayrshire Council

Louise Kirk, Interim Head of Service (Economic Development and Regeneration), North Ayrshire Council (Lead Officer – CWB Commission)

David McDowall, Head of Economic Growth, East Ayrshire Council (Observer)

George Hunter, Assistant Director Communities, South Ayrshire Council

Mark Greaves, Coordinator – Places, South Ayrshire Council (Observer) (online)

Kaileigh Brown, Executive Director, The Ayrshire Community Trust (TACT) (online)

Graham Saunders, Interim Strategic Manager and Programme Manager, Ayrshire Growth Deal (online)

Derek Frew, Ayrshire Division Partnership Lead Officer, Police Scotland (online)

Jude King, Programme Manager (Ayrshire Growth Deal Community Wealth Building Programme), North Ayrshire Council (Observer)

Secretariat

Mhairi Paterson, Community Wealth Building Coordinator, North Ayrshire Council

Guests

David Hammond, Head of Sustainability, Corporate Property & Transport

Jennifer Wraith, Acting Service Manager, Sustainability, North Ayrshire Council

Apologies

Councillor Tom Marshall, North Ayrshire Council

Councillor Douglas Reid, Council Leader, East Ayrshire Council

Councillor Jim McMahon, East Ayrshire Council

Councillor Maureen McKay, East Ayrshire Council

Caroline Cameron, Director, Health and Social Care Partnership, North Ayrshire Council

David Davidson, Assistant Principle for HR and OD, Ayrshire College

Lesley Bowie, Board Chair, NHS Ayrshire & Arran

Derek McCrindle, Head of Place, Scottish Enterprise

Ian McMeekin, Area Commander, Local Senior Officer for Ayrshire, Scottish Fire & Rescue Service

Emma McMullen, Senior Manager, Economic Policy, North Ayrshire Council

1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence

The Chair noted the apologies submitted and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Minutes from the Previous Meeting

The Minutes of the last meeting held on 24 March 2023 were approved with no further matters arising.

3. Lead Officer Working Group Update

Louise Kirk provided an update from the latest meeting of the Lead Officer Working Group on 22 May which included the following items: updates on the Fair Employment, Land and Assets and Procurement workstreams, Ayrshire Growth Deal Community Wealth Building Programme, the Ayrshire Regional Economic Strategy and a discussion on the Scotland Loves Local programme and CWB and Climate Action.

It was noted that the [NAC Step In Business Programme](#) demonstrates the value of Anchor partners working together to provide placements and recruitment pathways for parents entering or returning to the labour market.

There was a request for a presentation and update on the Land and Assets workstream at a future meeting which demonstrates the exercise undertaken to map existing land and assets of Anchor partners in Ayrshire. It was noted that there are issues relating to ensuring consistency in the level and categorisation of data between partners.

4. Ayrshire Regional Economic Strategy

Louise Kirk provided an update on the Regional Economic Strategy for Ayrshire on behalf of Emma McMullen. The Strategy will be formally launched later in June however a series of events have been organised to support action planning and the development of a delivery plan for the Regional Economic Strategy. This included an enterprise session hosted at Ayrshire College for businesses and Third Sector enterprises on 5 June. A separate session for Third Sector engagement was held on 13 June. Following this engagement a draft action plan is currently being developed.

5. Ayrshire Growth Deal Community Wealth Building Programme update

Jude King gave an update on the progress of the AGD CWB Programme and noted that over 700 unique enterprises have been engaged through the programme so far and it is likely that the programme will exceed its target of supporting 900 unique enterprises. A review of the programme is currently underway which includes surveys with programme recipients to understand the benefits of the programme to enterprises. One of the most beneficial aspects of the programme was considered to be the grant support available to enterprises as well as the one-to-one procurement support workshops. Forthcoming events include a Meet the Buyer event in October, a pan-Ayrshire CWB event delivered by the programme and hosted in South Ayrshire at Troon Town Hall on 27th September. It was also noted that for the first time there would be a CWB category as part of the Chamber of Commerce Business Awards in October.

6. CWB and Climate Action

At a previous Commission meeting there was a request to consider the links between CWB and Climate Action. Mhairi Paterson outlined the relationship to delivering a Wellbeing Economy and a Just Transition to ensure that people and places are not left behind in the transition to a more sustainable future. It was noted it presents an opportunity to use CWB principles to simultaneously deliver on climate targets while reconfiguring the local and regional economy to ensure communities and people benefit from initiatives. Some examples of places applying a CWB lens to the climate agenda include a community owned wind turbine on the Isle of Lewis and Samsø Island in Denmark which is the world's first renewable energy island.

David Hammond, Head of Sustainability, Corporate Property & Transport noted North Ayrshire's commitment to becoming Net Zero by 2030 and provided an overview of the work currently underway including two solar farm projects, the Community Carbon Net Zero Fund, regional Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure project and the development of an Energy Masterplan for Ayrshire.

Partners were given the opportunity to note any climate focussed projects currently underway which could benefit from a CWB lens. Projects noted include:

- A number of Ayrshire Growth Deal projects aim to integrate environmental sustainability to their approach.
- The 9CC group in Cumnock and Doon Valley have a strategic plan which aims to enhance the local employability offer and address fuel poverty.

A discussion raised the following points:

- What kind of investment has there been within Samsø Island and where did it come from.
- Challenge of scaling up energy generation; large scale developments can take several years to bring together. Small scale community energy generation projects provide an opportunity to start this journey.
- There are some challenges associated with renewable energy generation in terms of varying the energy output and some places lend themselves better to renewable energy projects due to their geographical conditions.

- The was interest in how Samsø Island engaged with communities and brought them along in the journey. It was noted that providing communities with an economic stake in the projects was key to building momentum and gaining buy-in and support.
- It was suggested there is untapped potential for councils to pursue energy generation opportunities however grid capacity is an issue for several projects and requires investment at a national scale to overcome.
- It was noted that inward investment inquiries often have significant energy requirements. However this could be an opportunity to create greater security around their commitment to an area if they are investing heavily in windfarms or solar farms.
- It is important to consider training opportunities to develop new green technologies and skills and ensuring alignment with Ayrshire College.

It was agreed that further progress updates and opportunities for developing links between climate action and CWB would be brought to a future Commission meeting when appropriate.

7. AOB

No further matters were raised and the meeting was closed.