

North Ayrshire Council

Community Wealth Building Commission

Note of Meeting of Commission held on 29 March 2021 via Microsoft Teams

Present

Councillor Joe Cullinane, Council Leader and Cabinet Member for Community Wealth Building (Chair)

Councillor Marie Burns, Leader of the Opposition, North Ayrshire Council

Councillor Alex Gallagher, Cabinet Member for Post-Covid Renewal, North Ayrshire Council

Councillor Peter Henderson, Council Leader, South Ayrshire Council

Councillor John McGhee, Leader of the Labour Group, East Ayrshire Council

Councillor Elena Whitham, Deputy Leader, East Ayrshire Council

Craig Hatton, Chief Executive, North Ayrshire Council

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

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

Donald Gillies, Director of Place, South Ayrshire Council

Caitriona McAuley, Head of Service (Economic Development and Regeneration), North Ayrshire Council (Lead Officer – CWB Commission)

Lesley Bowie, Board Chair, NHS Ayrshire & Arran

Gillian Adam, Interim Head of Partnerships, Scottish Enterprise

Kaileigh Brown, Executive Director (Third Sector), The Ayrshire Community Trust

Barbara Hastings, Chief Executive, The Ayrshire Community Trust

David McDowall, Interim Head of Planning and Economic Development, East Ayrshire Council (in attendance)

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

Gavin Cockburn, Service Lead – Director Support Place Directorate, South Ayrshire Council

Jim Johnstone, Economy & Regeneration Coordinator, South Ayrshire Council (in attendance)

Zoe Fance, Procurement Service Lead, South Ayrshire Council (Procurement Workstream Lead)

Derek Frew, Ayrshire Division Partnership Lead Officer, Police Scotland

Allison Craig, Programme Manager, Ayrshire Growth Deal

Secretariat

Julie McLachlan, Senior Manager – Economic Policy, North Ayrshire Council

Mhairi Paterson, Community Wealth Building Coordinator, North Ayrshire Council

Pamela Gilbert, Secretary, North Ayrshire Council

Apologies

Councillor Robert Foster, Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care Partnership and lead member for Poverty, North Ayrshire Council

Councillor Douglas Reid, Council Leader, East Ayrshire Council

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

Michael Breen, Vice Principal, Ayrshire College

Katie Kelly, Depute Chief Executive, East Ayrshire Council

1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence

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

The Chair gave a special thanks to Barbara Hastings for her work and support representing The Ayrshire Community Trust on the CWB Commission and wished her all the very best in her retirement. He also welcomed Kaileigh Brown to the meeting and for the future representation. Barbara thanked everyone for their support over the years and wished everyone well for the future.

2. Minutes of the Last Meeting

The Minutes of the last meeting held on 10 December 2020 were approved with no matters arising.

3. Chair and Partners Update

No further updates were provided.

4. Lead Officers Working Group Update

The first meeting of the Lead Officers Working Group (LOWG) was held on 25 February 2021 chaired by Caitriona McAuley. The LOWG group was created to take responsibility for the Commission workplan and progress actions as directed by the Commission.

At the meeting lead partners were identified to take ownership for workstreams focussing on three key pillars:

- Procurement workstream – led by South Ayrshire Council
- Land and Assets workstream – led by Scottish Enterprise
- Fair Employment workstream – led by Ayrshire College (agreed 26 March 2021)

Work is already underway on the Procurement workstream, an update on which was provided by South Ayrshire Council. Initial discussions have taken place with Scottish Enterprise and Ayrshire College and it is anticipated work on the Land and Assets and Fair Employment workstreams will be underway soon.

The role of the LOWG was discussed, alongside governance arrangements and consideration of the next steps of the procurement workstream. Additional items included an overview of a funding bid submitted by North Ayrshire Council to the Health Foundation and the £3m Ayrshire Growth Deal Community Wealth Building Project.

The next meeting of the LOWG will take place in May 2021 where the agenda will include Conrad Parke, Anchor Network Co-ordinator who is employed by CLES and working on behalf of the Birmingham Anchor Network.

A template to capture the progress of Anchor Charter signatories will also be shared at the next meeting and will be used to capture the progress against the pledges for reporting to the Commission as planned.

The update was noted by the Commission with no further points raised.

5. Presentation on LOWG Procurement Pillar Workstream from South Ayrshire Council

Zoe Fance from South Ayrshire Council provided a comprehensive and detailed presentation on the Procurement workstream laying out the purpose of the pillar, the objectives and an outline of planned engagement with Anchor Institutions.

South Ayrshire Council will have 1:1 meetings with each of the Anchors to discuss local procurement spend and aspirations for progress. Following these discussions a full meeting of workstream representatives will take place. An engagement session and workshop will be held in the summer to agree a new workplan of activity.

The following comments and questions were noted:

- In terms of removing barriers to progressive procurement it was noted that businesses need to be competitive to be able to bid for contracts. A question was posed on how the Procurement workstream will make sure that businesses are in the correct place and ensure that they are in the best position to bid. In response it was noted that close working relationships between procurement and business development staff would be required. It was noted organisations such as NHS Ayrshire & Arran which do not have economic development teams may have to rely on council business development teams for support and guidance.
- It was suggested there is a need to focus on data which indicates gaps in what the Ayrshire public sector procures and what Ayrshire businesses are able to supply and whether there are any higher value opportunities.
- The importance of considering joint procurement opportunities to meet energy needs, including through energy generation was noted as a way of contributing to net zero and sustainability targets.
- A question was posed on whether any analysis is undertaken on the local suppliers that have not been successful via a tender exercise. Anchors were asked to analyse their own data on spend, including suppliers who have not been successful.
- It was noted that long term procurement wave planning is essential to prepare businesses for forthcoming opportunities. It was suggested a procurement wave plan in respect of the Ayrshire Growth Deal would be particularly useful to ensure businesses are made aware of forthcoming opportunities.
- The importance of supporting existing companies, ensuring they remain competitive and are not displaced in the wake of Covid-19 was noted. It was suggested that the Supplier Development Programme are engaged in the procurement workstream to support this work.
- Caitriona McAuley advised that North Ayrshire Council has a specified individual allocated to the Business Support team to help get businesses market ready and to be in a stronger position to tender.
- In discussion of the barriers facing the Procurement workstream team, it was noted there would be challenges in working collaboratively while still taking individual needs into account.
- Lesley Bowie shared that NHS Ayrshire & Arran are tied into national contracts which can act as a barrier to increasing local spend. However it was noted that where there are opportunities to pursue flexible spend, they would try to keep it local.

The presentation and workplan was well received by the Commission who praised the detail and the work undertaken thus far.

6. Health Foundation: Economies for Healthier Lives Funding – Expression of Interest

Mhairi Paterson advised the Commission that in January, a bid had been submitted to the Health Foundation, Economies for Healthier Lives funding stream. The proposal outlined an approach to unite local economic development and public health objectives across Ayrshire through partnership between the Council, NHS Ayrshire and Arran, and Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES).

One arm of the project was to explore and maximise the potential of a health partner as a major Anchor institution by undertaking a CWB diagnostic assessment of NHS Ayrshire and Arran. The second arm was to establish an Ayrshire Anchor Institution Network and develop a programme of collaborative action to embed CWB and amplify the economic potential of institutions to create a fairer and more inclusive economy.

It was a highly competitive bid and unfortunately the proposal was unsuccessful. Cllr Joe Cullinane and Russell McCutcheon acknowledged the strength of the bid and expressed support for maintaining discussions and exploring further options to pursue the proposal.

7. Ayrshire Economic Joint Committee Update

The Final Business Case for the Ayrshire Growth Deal £3m Community Wealth Building Fund project was approved by the Ayrshire Economic Joint Committee in February.

The project is pan-Ayrshire and will take place over three years, providing additional capacity to engage and work with Anchor Institutions, private sector businesses and the social economy to support CWB activity. It will focus on four CWB pillars: procurement, fair employment, land and assets and plural ownership. Specifically, it will establish a dedicated Fair Work Ayrshire team who will work closely with Ayrshire Anchor Institutions and major employers to establish Ayrshire as a Fair Work region.

Following confirmation by Scottish Government, the project will move to implementation and recruitment phase.

The update was well received by the Commission with no further points raised.

8. AOB

There were some points raised under AOB:

- Cllr Peter Henderson advised that there is still European funding to be spent by local councils before 2023.
- Gavin Cockburn wanted to raise awareness of the 'Ayrshire Meet the Buyer' event on 28 April 2021 9.30am – 12pm. This is a great event for businesses to raise awareness, network and exhibit themselves. There will be Tier 1 contractors giving advice free of charge.
- Kaileigh Brown requested to extend an invite to 'Third Sector Interfaces' in South and East Ayrshire. Caitriona McAuley noted the importance of having the right

representation at Commission meetings with people who can bring a practical focus. It was agreed that a further discussion on TSI representation would take place.

The meeting closed at 16.15pm.

The next meeting of the Commission will be held on 11th June 2021.